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Remembering the Past. Creating the Future.

WESTVIEW *neighbor*

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Jan / Feb
2012
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Hi, Neighbor!

In a world as busy as ours, it's hard to make time to get to know your neighbors. We all have never-ending demands from work, from family, from bills, from ... life. But it's in these stressful times that a good neighbor can be one of your greatest assets. A neighbor is someone to share a story with, to invite over for a meal, or just to extend a wave and a smile to as you make your way to or from home. In this—the first issue of the *Westview Neighbor*—we want to introduce you to some of your neighbors with their own stories and meals to share. Maybe the next time you see them, you'll return the favor by giving them a wave and a smile.

Because the best way to *have* a good neighbor is to *be* a good neighbor.

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Meet Leigh Torrence *NFL Champion and Westview Neighbor*

By Earl Picard

Leigh Torrence is a veteran defensive back and special teams player entering his eighth year in the NFL and his fifth year with the New Orleans Saints. He's also a Westview resident. Here are highlights from the *Westview Neighbor's* interview with Leigh Torrence.

How long has your family lived in Westview?

We moved here in 1986. My parents went to Georgia Tech. I went to the International Preparatory Institute on Cascade Road, St. Anthony's Catholic School in the West End, and Marist High. I got an athletic scholarship to play football at Stanford.

You graduated from Stanford while earning academic honors and starring in football. That's impressive. Were you looking to be drafted?

Yes, I was, definitely. I thought I had a good chance, but it didn't work out. I was signed by Green Bay just minutes after the draft, so I never really got a chance to feel sorry for myself. I just knew it might take a little bit more work to get where I wanted to be.

You went on to play with the Atlanta Falcons and Washington Redskins,

and now you are with the New Orleans Saints. You won the Super Bowl in 2010—how was that experience?

That was great; a dream come true just seeing that run. It was a really special year. It's so hard to win in the league because everything has to come together just right.

I know of your dedication to young people in the community. Do you have any inspiration for the young people of the neighborhood?

Believe in yourself and set high goals. Make the right decisions. Stay out of trouble. Overcome the odds and work hard. That's what I would tell the young people.

Torrence's foundation, the South West Atlanta Youth Foundation (SWAY), offers its annual *4th Down Fundamentals Camp* this summer. Leigh invites neighborhood kids to attend the football camp on June 30. Info: www.leighthtorrence.com.



Opinion:

Can Businesses Survive in Westview?

By Earl Picard

In January, a new branch of Fifth Third Bank opened near Kroger on RDA. That same month, just next door and claiming poor sales, Marshalls announced that they would be closing their neighborhood location.

Why is one business opening and seemingly off to a good start while another is closing after less than a year of operation? A part of the answer may be found in how businesses approach the communities they serve.

Even before it opened, Fifth Third Bank engaged with the Westview Community Organization (WCO). The branch manager has come to our monthly meetings and has expressed a commitment to work with us. All early signs indicate that this will be a mutually beneficial community and corporate relationship.

On the other hand, Marshalls never displayed real awareness of or commitment to the community. They never reached out to their neighbors. There was no grand opening sale, no targeted advertising, and they didn't offer incentives to reward first-time and repeat shoppers. All of these techniques help to generate consumer awareness and loyalty. It is hard to say that Marshalls ever saw the community as anything other than an abstract consumer demographic.

Where the larger businesses are concerned, there certainly is more room for creativity, promotions, and responsiveness to the community. The Deals discount store, located at the corner of Cascade Road and Rogers Avenue, seems to be doing well, but there could be more community engagement. While the Kroger supermarket has been supportive of the neighborhood by providing donations and listening to our concerns, there are still many problems with the store's upkeep and service. Our frus-

trations are longstanding.

There is a bright side. Over the past several years we've had a number of small businesses open in the community—some have succeeded and others have not. What accounts for the wide variation in the small business success rate in our community?

Clearly, planning and finances play a role and small businesses have a difficult time surviving under the best of circumstances. Most cannot afford sophisticated advertising and their ability to offer incentives is very limited. However, it doesn't cost them anything to display awareness and commitment to the communities they serve by engaging with our organizations and supporting community activities. This helps the businesses to understand our concerns and it may help them to more precisely tailor their product lines to our needs. Some of the things they can consider are percentage discounts to community residents and frequent customer cards that provide a free or discounted item after 10 or so purchases. Taking out ads in this newsletter would not be a bad idea either.

In short, businesses have to become organic parts of the communities they serve. It can be a win-win situation. There has to be two-way communication and they have to be aware, committed, engaged, and willing to offer incentives and rewards to their customers. In turn, we will reward them with our business and loyalty.



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Lentil Soup Recipe

Lentils are a bean common in the Middle East but enjoyed worldwide. Try this easy recipe for savory lentil soup. It's inexpensive, quick, and a great source of fiber, protein, and iron. The perfect meal for a cold winter day!



INGREDIENTS:

2 cups red lentils
1 large onion, chopped
3 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp chopped garlic
1 cup diced carrots
1 Tbsp curry powder
1 can tomato sauce
1 can diced tomatoes
or 3 large tomatoes, diced
2 quarts vegetable or chicken broth
2 handfuls spinach, stems removed

Salt and pepper to taste
3 Tbsp Parmesan cheese (optional)

Add oil to large pot on medium heat. Add carrots and cook for 4 minutes. Add onion and garlic and cook for 3-4 minutes. Stir in curry powder. Add broth, tomato sauce, lentils, tomatoes, salt, and pepper.

Cover pot with lid and bring to a boil. Lower heat and cook on

medium-low for about 40 minutes or until carrots are done. Stir every 10-15 minutes, adding more broth or water as needed to reach desired consistency. Remove from heat and stir in spinach until cooked. Add more salt and pepper to taste.

Serve in bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan. Serve with your favorite bread. Serves 4.

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New Year's Resolutions Tips for Getting Back on Track

by Ayana Gabriel

Remember the excitement you felt on January 1st? This was *the* year that you were going to accomplish your New Year's resolutions. Lose weight, exercise more, get your finances together, spend more time with family. So ... how's that going?

If you are still on track to accomplish your resolutions—congratulations! You have a lot to be proud of. But if you've already started breaking your resolutions, don't feel guilty. You've got lots of company. The *New York Times* reports that four out of five people end up breaking their New Year's resolutions.

Here are some helpful tips for getting back on track with your resolutions:

Make it Easy on Yourself. Looking for an easy way to work out? Skip the gym and head for the Beltline. Westview is home to 2.5 miles of the Atlanta Beltline's 22 miles of walking, running, and biking trails. Neighbors

can be seen walking this path every day. If you stick to your resolution, you may even be ready for the annual Atlanta Beltline Southwest 5K held in July.



Keep a Journal. Write down the progress you make and challenges you encounter with your resolutions.

Get Support. You are more likely to be successful if you are not doing it on your own. Family and friends can give you the motivation you need.

Finally, remember that change is a process. Be patient, persistent, and believe that you *can* do it. Good luck!

westview facts...

In 1888, the Ontario Land Company purchased 200 acres of land south of Westview Cemetery to create Westwood Park. When the development didn't materialize, the land was sold in 1910 and became known as West End Park. West End Park eventually combined with other smaller developments to form today's Westview neighborhood.



Westview Youth: Sowing Seeds for the Future

By Ayana Gabriel

In February 2011, just a few weeks after moving into their South Gordon home, John and Pat Perdew were burglarized. "They vandalized everything," Mrs. Perdew recalls. After speaking with neighbors, the Perdwes suspected the burglars were local teenagers. The couple soon made up their mind to leave Westview.

Even after their decision, the Perdwes spent a lot of time in their front yard garden. Neighborhood kids began to stop by. One day, a child confessed that he had not eaten in a while. Mrs. Perdew's response? "Come in, I will feed you." That was the start of the Youth of Westview program.

Recalling their roots as civil rights activists during the '60s, the Perdwes state, "We realized we wouldn't be true to our experience as community organizers if we left." Soon, they began teaching the kids how to garden. "We planted onions, tomatoes, and lettuce," 9-year-old Brandon recounts

"These are extremely bright kids; they simply have many obstacles to overcome."

with excitement. "I learned the most important part is watering the plants and making sure they have sun."

The Perdwes have fed many more kids, thrown birthday parties, and led trips to Six Flags and Braves games.

Many Westview residents have pitched in, buying food and clothes, donating computers, and even helping with homework. The WCO, St. Mark UMC, and Fifth Third Bank also donated funds. Many children's grades have improved, and one mother commented that this was the best behavior she'd seen from her son in a while.

"If this neighborhood is to become a neighborhood of the future, we must prepare our children," says Mrs. Perdew. "These are extremely bright kids; they simply have many obstacles to overcome. We can all make a difference."

To get involved, contact 678-378-9906 or johnperdew@comcast.com.

Important Numbers

Zone 4 Police: 404-756-1903
Pothole Posse: 404-768-4653
Code Enforcement: 404-330-6190
Sanitation: 404-330-6333
Tax Assessor: 404-612-6440
Watershed Mgmt: 404-658-6500
Housing Authority: 404-892-4700

Upcoming Events

Feb 20 — Presidents' Day
March 5 — Westview Community Organization Meeting, 7pm
Calvary United Methodist Church,
1471 R.D. Abernathy Blvd.
March 7 — NPU-T Monthly Meeting,
7pm, KIPP STRIVE, 1444 Lucile Ave.

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