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The Observer

Volume 44 • Issue 2



John Burrill retires as Executive Director of MCCA

Yes folks, we finally let him go!

Vikki Baptiste, Marketing Specialist & Fund Development Associate

Blacksmithing, music and woodwork are among John Burrill's hobbies. And now, after seven and a half years as Executive Director of Mid Central Community Action, he can pursue those hobbies on a full time basis.

John's special interest in non-profit management, organizational structure, development of strong governance boards, and board staff relationships has benefitted the organization, it's staff, Board and vendors, and—most importantly—the people we serve.

Graduating from Mount Allison University in Canada with a Bachelors degree in education, John worked as a teacher and a school principal for 9 years. He also spent 19 years in sales, sales training, and sales and marketing management in a major pharmaceutical manufacturing company, including 12 years as the National Sales Manager for Canada.

John was then lured into the world of

nonprofits, and spent 6 years in Executive Director roles with two different Canadian charities, before moving south of the border to the United States.

“Thank you and goodbye!”

Joining MCCA in April 2001 as CFO/ Operations Manager, it was just 18 months before he undertook the role of Interim Executive Director. In January of 2003, the Board of Directors voted John into the position of Executive Director

While serving as Executive Director, John completed the NeighborWorks® America Management and Leadership Certificate program of study. In 2006 he became an American citizen, and also completed Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) requirements in 2008.

Thank you, John, for your leadership, your vision, your inspiration and your friendship.



PHOTO: EMORY DAVIS

John Burrill addresses attendees at the 9th Annual Dreamweaver Awards in June 2010

Track Record

Under the leadership of John Burrill, Mid Central Community Action, Inc. has accomplished much, including:

- attaining NeighborWorks America® chartered member status in 2004,
- the purchase of 3 vacant lots in Pontiac in 2005, for the development of affordable

housing,

- the creation of a new subdivision in 2007, on the site of the old Beich candy factory, which had been previously destroyed by fire,
- moving the organization to a larger building in 2007 to accommodate our

program growth

- piloting a successful Individual Development Account program in 2007
- the acquisition of Life Skills and Second Chance Renters programs in 2008
- the sale of 7 affordable new construction homes in 2009-10

Dates to Remember

■ Friday, July 23

Shear Style Challenge

Fundraiser benefitting Neville House
BlueLine Nightclub, 602 N Main St, Bloomington
from 6.30 pm

■ Monday July 26 & Wednesday July 28

Home Buyer Education Class

4:00pm - 8:00 pm

■ Friday, August 13

1st Annual Neville House Fundraiser

It's a mystery!
Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Normal, IL
from 7:00 pm

■ Monday August 23 & Wednesday August 25

Home Buyer Education Class

4:00pm - 8:00 pm

■ Tuesday September 21 & Thursday
September 23

Home Buyer Education Class

4:00pm - 8:00 pm

Home Buyer Education classes are held at
MCCA, 1301 W Washington St, Bloomington.
For further information or to register,
contact Kathy Shubert, (309) 834-9245



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Mid Central Community Action, Inc. (MCCA) is an Illinois private not-for-profit corporation with the mission of "Promoting safe and stable families, neighborhoods and communities." The agency works with government agencies, private corporations and individual citizens, including those we serve, to develop and maintain programs which address this mission.

Incorporated in 1965, the agency today delivers services to the community in three main areas. First, there is a group of countering domestic violence programs; including a shelter, emergency hot line, counseling, and intervention services for victims. We also offer the whole spectrum of traditional Community Action programs including CSBG/Family Services Programs, energy assistance, home weatherization, transitional housing, and supportive case management. The third area is that of housing; again a group of programs including home ownership counseling, down payment assistance, foreclosure prevention, and rehabilitation of homes.

In addition to being one of 1100 Community Action agencies in the United States, MCCA is a chartered member of the NeighborWorks® America network of housing development and neighborhood revitalization organizations.

In a typical year, MCCA programs serve more than 5000 families. It also assists some 100 families in various ways to become home owners, which is considered one of the best roads to economic stability for a family.

Promoting safe and stable families, neighborhoods and communities

What if Mid Central Community Action, Inc. earned a penny every time YOU searched the internet? Search the web with www.goodsearch.com and money from Yahoo advertisers will go to MCCA without you spending a dime!

Donate now through our web site!

Donating has never been easier! Visit www.mccainc.org to make your donation today. Safely. Securely.



The Observer

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741 W. Washington St., Suite 1
Pontiac, IL 61764
(815) 844-3201*

*McLean County Domestic
Violence
24-hour Hotline
(309) 827-7070*

*Mayors Manor
Supportive Housing
504 W. Washington St.
Bloomington, IL 61701
(309) 827-2967*

*by email:
mcca@MCCAinc.org*

*on the web:
www.MCCAinc.org*

National NeighborWorks Week, June 5–June 12

MCCA Housing Dept staff participate in nationwide program

Rick Barrera, Director of Housing Services



National NeighborWorks Week — now in its 27th year — is a celebration of the accomplishments of the NeighborWorks network and an opportunity to increase the network's visibility and build partnerships. .

During NeighborWorks Week, local NeighborWorks organizations across the nation mobilize tens of thousands of volunteers, businesspeople, neighbors, friends, and local and national elected and civic leaders in a week of neighborhood change and awareness. They rehab and repair homes, paint and landscape properties, conduct neighborhood tours, recognize successful partnerships, and host events that educate, train and inform.

This year, MCCA partnered with Habitat for Humanity of Livingston County during the annual NeighborWorks Week event. Housing Department staff recruited volunteers to install



PHOTOS: RICK BARRERA

the flooring system of a new construction home, leaving it ready for the next group to frame the walls.

MCCA would like to thank Starbucks, who donated coffee; Krispy Kreme, who donated donuts; and Panera, who donated sandwiches to feed the volunteers. Thanks and appreciation also go to Dave Usiak, a loan officer with Mortgage Services III, who donated \$100 to help support the event.



USDA makes smart home buying easy nationwide

MCCA home buyer education goes Illinois-wide!

Sandy Canon, Executive Vice President
– Program Policy, Community Ventures Corporation

The US Department of Agriculture's Office of Rural Development recently issued guidance to its field staff that eHome America's homebuyer education meets the Agency's needs as a provider for on-line homebuyer education.

In English and Spanish with over 50 video tutorials, eHome

America is the most comprehensive online home buyer training course available throughout the nation. Home buyers learn at their own pace and are held accountable with integrated quizzes and tests.

Home ownership counselors nationwide are embracing eHome America as the ideal solution to service more people on a tighter budget.

Launched in May 2009, over 50 housing counseling organizations in twenty-six states, including Mid Central Community Action, Inc., have seen the benefits to partnership with eHome America. Over

4000 potential homebuyers have successfully completed the course.

Some of the feedback from customers include –

'Overall for me as a first time home buyer I felt the course really helped me understand the many process both during and after purchasing a home.' (Texas)

'It was very convenient to be able to take this course at home and at my own pace. Very easy to understand; very helpful. We definitely learned a lot we didn't know about the home buying process.' (Kentucky)

'It was very helpful...there were a lot of things I didn't know

that will help me in the future...I wish I would have taken it earlier.' (Wyoming)

'This is so helpful and easy to do. Hopefully every homebuyer can take it before making the biggest decision of their life.' (California)

'Very thorough information yet maintained an easily understood format, educating the average person in the most intense, complicated transaction they will participate in.' (Ohio)

You can access eHome America's Home Buyer Education by clicking on the link at www.MCCAinc.org

Countering Domestic Violence




In recognition of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, our Domestic Violence Multi-Disciplinary Team, in cooperation with State Farm, the McLean County Chapter of MADD, and the Victim Witness division of the State's Attorney's Office, displayed our Empty Place at the Table™ at State Farm Corporate South. This is an incredibly powerful display representing those that have lost their lives to crime.

Thank you!

A very special thank you to the Normal Police Department for hosting our ICDVP approved 40-hour domestic violence training in May.

Our next training class will be offered Monday through Friday August 23-27 & August 30-September 3 from 8am-12pm.

If you are interested in answering the hotline, responding to medical advocacy calls, and empowering adults and youth at Neville House as a CDV volunteer, this training is required.

For more information or to register for the August training, please contact Melissa at mmlama@normal.org or call (309) 454-9730.

Countering Domestic Violence




McLean County Domestic Violence

24-hour Hotline

(309) 827-7070

Convenient donation drop off

For your convenience, CDV now accepts donations on Fridays at the rear of the MCCA building at 1301 W Washington St, Bloomington, from 11:30 am until 1:30 pm.



Guardians of the Children watch over the balloon launch ceremony to honor the lives of Duncan and Jack on April 10th (Jack's 9th birthday). CDV Advocates appreciate the new partnership with Guardians of the Children to help keep children safe. A special thank you for donating the balloons for this special event.

CDV—Neville House
A program of Mid Central Community Action, Inc.
Invites you to the 1st Annual Neville House Fundraiser

Friday, August 13th, 2010
Marriott Hotel & Conference Center

The evening's schedule: 7:00 pm—Doors open
8:00 pm—Dinner (cash bar) & auction
9:00 pm—Soft Spoken

Countering
Domestic
Violence

from victim to victor

* Discount room rates are available by calling the Marriott at 309-862-9000 and requesting the CDV—Neville House event rate of \$109, prior to July 22nd, 2010.

You & a guest can enjoy dinner, entertainment, & a room for less than the average cost of a one night stay in this 4 star hotel.

Reservations for the 1st Annual Neville House Fundraiser
Friday, August 13th, 2010
Marriott Hotel & Conference Center

Please make dinner reservations by Monday, August 2nd, 2010.

Cost is \$50 per person, includes dinner, dessert, and entertainment.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Guests attending

_____ Total due (\$50 per person or \$450 for a table of 10)

Check choice of entrée:

_____ Espresso rubbed flat iron steak &
sautéed breast of chicken combination

_____ Vegetarian lasagna

Make checks payable to:

MCCA, Inc.—Neville House Fundraiser

Mail to:

Neville House Fundraiser
1301 W. Washington St.
Bloomington, IL 61701

Questions? Call or email:
Deborah or Michelle
309-828-8913
cdvnev@mccainc.org



MCCA receives Supporting Organization of the Year Award

Cathy Grafton, Director of Community Services

MCCA Board member, Gayle Rogers, is Service Facilitator and Public Education/Consumer Billing Manager at Futures Unlimited in Pontiac. She successfully nominated our Livingston County office for the the Futures Unlimited Supporting Organization of the Year award, which recognizes an organization that provides supports in helping people live successfully in their community. Her presentation speech reads:

“Mid Central Community Action is an organization that partners with us in numerous ways to help the people we serve. They were instrumental in saving jobs when they stepped in with federal stimulus funds to keep our client work crews doing janitorial work for the City of Pontiac and they have provided additional federal stimulus funds to help other individuals receive supports to stay in their jobs.

Our two agencies worked together to help victims of the 2008 flood, some of whom were clients and staff, assessing needs and coordinating resources and continue to work together as part of the Livingston County Homeless Coalition.

As part of their community revitalization efforts, MCCA did some planting and sprucing up of the neighborhood on Timber

Street where one of our residential homes is last year and had a cookout for volunteers where one our home’s residents won a new grill for their house.

As a case manager, I often refer people to Mid Central Community Action when they are in crisis and need assistance with things such as paying rent or dealing with an overdue utility bill. They have given our staff training on filling out applications for LIHEAP energy assistance programs so that now we work together on signing our clients up for energy

assistance, which is especially helpful for clients that may have difficulty applying at the MCCA office. They have been an invaluable resource for Medicare issues and questions, especially Part D, and also have provided information on other resources available to the seniors we serve.

I am proud as a Board Member of MCCA and as a case manager who relies on their support and expertise to present the Supporting Organization of the Year award to Mid Central Community Action.”



Livingston County office staff: (l to r) Jane Larkin, Megan Schmidt, Cathy Grafton, Teri McWethy & Amanda Strong

PHOTO: FUTURES UNLIMITED

Furnace program brings warmth

Jackie Baker, LIHEAP case worker

Joyce had never used the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) before, but came in to our office for assistance because her heating bills were so high.

She stated that her furnace was not working properly and needed to be repaired but, with her only income being a pension and social security, she did not have the money to have it worked on.

I mentioned to Joyce that

we had just started the furnace program and explained how it would work. I told her it would only take a few more minutes to complete the furnace application and someone would come to her home to assess whether her furnace would be repaired or replaced. I asked if she was interested in this service and Joyce said she was.

A few weeks later she called me up to thank me so much for the new furnace which was now in place at her home.

At Christmas time Joyce



PHOTO: FLICKR/CHRISTY TVAROK GREEN

called again and said she wanted to thank me by bringing a gift to me. I explained we were not able to accept gifts but I was so happy we could serve her needs. She not only received the LIHEAP benefit but also a new furnace.

I have heard from her once again as she was thanking me for everything we did and her home was the warmest it had been for years.

Please consider investing in Mid Central Community Action, Inc's programs by making a donation today.

Please accept my donation of:

_____ \$100 _____ \$50 _____ \$20 _____ \$10 _____ \$5 _____ \$other

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mail your tax-deductible donation to:
Mid Central Community Action, Inc.
Memuna Lee, Fund Development & Community Engagement Manager
1301 W. Washington St
Bloomington, IL 61701

Thank You

Donate online with just one click at www.MCCAinc.org

Management and staff of Mid Central Community Action, Inc.
would like to thank you for your continued support. Thank you!

MCCA Executive Director honored with state award

Cathy Grafton, Director of Community Services

In June, John Burrill was presented with the prestigious 2010 Harry Ring – Outstanding Services Award

The nomination reads:

“The virtues John brings to MCCA are his personal integrity, his strong work ethic, his steady leadership and vision for our agency.

John has been a leader at our agency since he first arrived. He began as our CFO/ Operations Manager in April 2001 and became our Executive Director 1/1/03.

John came to MCCA at a time of change and growth. He completely reorganized the agency into our three main “lines of business” which are Community Services, Affordable Housing Services and our Countering Domestic Violence (CDV) programs. John began regular manager meetings, bringing together key staff to update each other and help with agency wide planning, as well as bi-monthly staff meetings which provide staff with training and helps to keep them informed. He brought our MCCA Board together for several planning retreats to create and also update a 4 year strategic plan. John

has strengthened our agency on many levels during his time as Executive Director.

He became the first at our agency to become a Community Action Professional (CCAP). He did this to broaden his own knowledge of the Community Action movement, its vision and values and because he wanted to set a good example for other staff. He has demonstrated both leadership and vision at every level of the agency, by his participation in 40 hour training with CDV and housing training programs. Since MCCA became a Neighborworks® America Chartered Member he has worked to develop that affiliation. He has also deepened our relationship with State Farm and other local partners, and made sure we maintain good working relationships with the human services network that serves McLean and Livingston Counties. Several years ago he managed the MCCA move to a much larger building. This has helped to encourage stronger partnerships in several areas — providing space for GED and tax preparation programs and currently renting overflow space to Heartland Head Start.

John is active in our local community as well, serving on several human service

boards and committees; he is involved in his church and is a member of the Normal Rotary Club. He is also involved in the community through his abilities as a musician and woodworker. He continues his love of learning as a student of blacksmithing and knife making. He has used his woodworking and metalsmith skills to donate items to IACAA and MCCA events and fundraisers.

He has contributed in various ways to the Illinois Community Action network by his participation as a board member with IACAA, our state association, his work in training other agencies on board governance and development and by attaining CCAP status.

John’s encouragement of his staff to develop their own skills and become the best leaders and managers they can be, will stay with us long after his retirement in June of this year. He has “looked after” Mid Central Community Action, Inc. and helped build our agency into a strong community leader which continues to find ways to create opportunities for people to move out of poverty. “

Congratulations, John!



PHOTO: WIKKI BAPTISTE

The **Observer**

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Our Mission: Promoting safe and stable families, neighborhoods and communities
Mid Central Community Action, Inc. serves McLean and Livingston Counties



Thank **You**

Thanks to everyone who attended our 9th Annual Fundraising and Awards Dinner on June 18th. This event has been renamed the “Annual Dreamweaver Awards”, celebrating the accomplishments of our clients, our volunteers and our community partners. Thanks also go out to our sponsors, our supporters, and our Events Committee! You can find event photos in our album at flickr.com/photos/mccainc.

We appreciate our Gold Sponsors, State Farm Bank; Silver Sponsors, PNC Bank; Blue Sponsors, Busey Bank, CEFCU, Mobile Home Stuff Store, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network, and Progressive Impressions International; and our many other program sponsors.



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IMPRESSIONS
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