

Man-UP!



Vanguard of the Black Family

Man-Up! Highlights in this issue:

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- **18th Annual Mechanicsville Neighborhood Reunion (August 17, 2007)**



Welcome to the *first edition* of the man-up newsletter. We invite you to not only read up on the activities of our committed members, but we charge you with joining us on our mission to elevate our community!

"A race of people is like an individual man; until it uses its own talent, takes pride in its own history, expresses its own culture, affirms its own selfhood, it can never fulfill itself."

El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X)

18th Annual Malcolm X Festival



By: Billy J. Martin, Jr.

On May 19, 2007, the Brothers of Man Up participated in the 18th annual celebration commemorating the birthday of Brother Malcolm X. Sponsored by the Malcolm - X Grass Roots Movement and held in Atlanta's historic West End Park, this celebration served as a revival of spirits for all those who were fortunate enough to attend. Skillfully organized, the event's program featured a vast array of participants from across the world that honored Brother Malcolm through poetry, music, dance and other displays of expression.

Though this day was a joyous celebration, filled with positive energy and good times, it was no mere social outing for the Brothers of Man Up. The Brothers came to work, answering the call made by the festival organizers for assistance in providing security for this event. In order to accomplish this mission, Man Up members met with festival security personnel prior to the day of celebration to formulate a sound security plan that proved absolutely successful.



While patrolling the grounds of the park, the Brother's presence was felt and greatly

appreciated by all those who benefited from the safe environment created. The collective efforts of the Malcolm - X Grass Roots Movement and Man Up made this event possible which many think of as a relic of the past. May 19, 2007 is a day that will be remembered by all those who were gathered in Atlanta's West End Park.





2nd Annual Fatherhood Appreciation Day

By: Dr. Jahti Maasai

Father's Day was on June 17th and as we all are aware it is not a holiday celebrated in a progressive community wide manner. The Man UP organization has accepted the challenge of breaking the cycle by launching a community wide event known as "Fatherhood Appreciation Day" at the Dunbar Center in Mechanicsville.



The organizations which offered financial support were: Reach for Wellness, Morehouse School of Medicine Prostate Study, Stic from dead prez, Sankofa Center, Georgia State University, Ahimki Center for Wholeness, American Income Life Insurance Company, Kroger Food Stores, and individual members of the Man UP organization.

Organic Fest

By: Jeric Murphy

On Saturday June 30th 2007, the Man-Up Organization took part in the 5th Annual Organic Fest, which took place at the Dunbar Center. A variety of vendors, entertainers and organizations braved the



A comprehensive health fair sponsored by Fulton County's REACH for Wellness Program, with a focus on men's health issues covered the grounds of the Dunbar Center. There were booths offering information, screening and testing on everything from blood pressure, prostate cancer, breast cancer to holistic healing including massage. REACH for Wellness provided free haircuts, a day spa for the ladies and a nutritious cooking class.

The day's main event was a basketball game between the Harlem Legends which is made up



of members of the Harlem Globetrotters and former NBA players and members of our Man UP All-stars.

During half time the Brothers of Man UP provided entertainment with spoken word performances and a rap set. The Sankofa Center founded by one of our members, Baba Jim Cameron, provided an inspiring drill formation performance. There were guest speakers includ-

heat and came out to network, fellowship and inform participants on a number of topics, mainly dealing with environmental issues and organic living.



Man UP Senior Cadre Member, Dr. Jahti Maasai, conducted a workshop discussing the plight of black men in America. Highlights included: the high numbers of black men that are incarcer-

ing a rousing challenge by the Director of the REACH program and DeKalb County Commissioner, Larry Johnson.

The main event between the world renowned Harlem Legends and the indomitable Man UP All-stars began at 2:00pm and the Dunbar gym was filled to capacity with neighborhood residents who were eagerly anticipating victory for their Man UP All-stars.

The game was so fast paced that the Harlem Legends were barely able to perform the tricks and stunts that they have become famous for.



The pace and the tension were unbelievable but the Harlem Legends squeaked by winning by three points.

As neighborhood residents poured out of the Dunbar Center everybody expressed gratitude to the brothers of Man UP for their organizational skills, creating a safe environment through handling the security and parking duties, and making the community proud, especially the fathers who attended the event!

ated, social services pushing black men out of the family structure, the truth behind the history of drugs in the black community and how all of this plays a role in the problems black men face everyday. The workshop attracted a lot of attention and positive responses.



Organic Fest Continued...

Members of Man-Up were also called upon to provide security and assist attendees with parking.



This was necessary because of the larger than expected number of participants. Event organizers stated that the assistance of Man UP was invaluable and facilitated the overall success of the event.

said, "It was a new experience. The whole vibe...I was in a special place. People were real natural and down to earth." He continued by telling how one of the vendors volunteered to look after his daughter while he helped with security and parking.

The Organic Fest was a great event for the Man-Up Organization to be apart of. Our contributions to the overall success of the event were fulfilling and very much appreciated by event organizers. The organization looks forward to participating in these types of events in the future.



Man-UP members and their families were also the recipients of kindness from some of the vendors. Member Willie Mayfield



Solutions Meeting At Morehouse College

By: Ramessu Amen Usermaat

The Man UP Organization was invited to attend a monthly solutions meeting at Morehouse College. The meeting was moderated by Warren Green. Topics discussed ranged from Technology to Hip-Hop. Some of the proposed solutions offered after the discussions were: business model development to assist in self-funding, analyzing the role of language in our oppression (i.e. saying Rap vs. Hip-Hop), focus on the barriers in communication that keep us divided, and creating literacy and educational initiatives which impact young Afrikan males before 3rd grade.

These meetings are designed to provide valuable networking opportunities for grassroots organizations. The organizers put together a directory of organizations

that can be a great benefit to people looking for assistance or other organizations looking to pool resources. The group, Stand Up Inc., was represented by Wahiyaddin Sabir. This group deals with men's health and wellness services such as ; Chiropractic, Acupuncture, Nutrition and Naturopathy, and is putting together a network of black doctors to address these focus areas.

Michael Johnson was in attendance representing "Prodigy", a program for mentoring children and promoting literacy. This program might prove to be a great networking opportunity for Man Up that will allow us to interact with children and be a living example especially for those who may not have a positive male figure in there life.

The main focus of these meetings is to get organizations working together to pool resources in order to collectively help improve the conditions of our people. There is no need to re-invent the wheel. It was a wonderful experience to see brothers and sisters coming together to foster collective planning and action. Man Up looks forward to continued collaborations of this type.



18th Annual Mechanicsville Neighborhood Reunion

By: Dr. Jahti Maasai

The Mechanicsville Reunion is an institution in the Mechanicsville community. Started 18 years ago by the Community Association under the leadership of Ms. Rosa Burney, it continues today under the leadership of Ms. Sharon Collins. The Reunion, which was celebrated this year on August 17, 2007, has been a celebration and a constant reinforcement of power that the close knit neighborhoods posses.

The members of Man UP volunteered to assist the Mechanicsville Civic Association with security and parking duties. A small squad of Man UP members arrived about noon. The grounds had been secured and all the vendors were set up. The mood was celebratory as folks prepared for the day's festivities.

There were moonwalks and other activities for the children and BBQ grills were blazing. Various groups and individuals began to sing and perform on the main stage. By 3:00pm it became obvious that the crowd, which ordinarily would be swarming over the grounds of the Dunbar Center, were just not there. As someone who has attended at least 10 of the last 18 reunions, a smaller crowd spoke to larger issues.

It wasn't that the Reunion has become unpopular over the years but that other forces have been working overtime to empty out the original residents scattering them around the city and surrounding counties. The McDaniel-Glen public housing units alone that were recently bulldozed contained over 300 families. Up-scale townhouses are currently being built on the property.

How did this happen and why? The reality is that Mechanicsville has become prime real estate and the value of the land on which the community sits is being coveted by developers and their ilk because of it's proximity to the downtown area.

There has been a paradigm shift once again on the urban landscape. Where once (50's and 60's) white folks and their integrationist followers fled the inner city taking resources with them, now partly due to the rising price of gasoline and murderous commutes, communities like Mechanicsville seem very attractive right about now. Of course in this community, massive change is a done deal since the designs for this displacement were put in action years ago. The visibility of this theft is just now becoming evident to the everyday resident.

As the evening wore on the crowd began to thicken as the music morphed from gospel and old school R&B to Rap. The crowd became more exuberant and boisterous as people loosened up with their favorite rituals. The multitude of BBQ grills were going steady, the scent probably carrying for miles. The Reunion may after all be considered another success but how many more Reunions will take place before they fade out in unfamiliar surroundings?



Shun Not The Struggle For It
Is God's Gift To Be
STRONG!

About Man-UP!

The Man-UP Organization is committed to empowering men to reach their full potential in their professional, personal, and civic lives. By formulating a support network the Man-Up Organization takes a holistic approach in working with men. Man-Up helps them reunify with their families, improve their quality of life and address their individual and systematic barriers in life thus producing more successful and engaged participants in their community. Man-Up members are committed to enhancing their community by participating in neighborhood functions, organize back-to-school events and many other events where they can serve as ambassadors for the cause of redefining and reclaiming manhood. If you would like more information about Man-Up, feel free to contact senior members at the following numbers.



Dr. Jahti (770) 605-8057

Baba Jim: (404) 349-2586

“Liberate the minds of men and ultimately you will liberate the bodies of men”
Marcus Garvey