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Introducing West Side Connect by QCity Metro 🏡

West Side Connect [ewright@qcitymetro.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 08, 2020 7:36 AM

To: Steve Johnston

WEST SIDE

CONNECT

NEWS, ARTS & EVENTS FROM THE SOUL OF CHARLOTTE

Editor's Corner

A West End Welcome

Charlotte's Historic West End is rich. Our stories, icons, creatives and possibilities have created more than a reputation; they've made our side of town a character unto itself.

The neighborhoods along the Beatties Ford corridor--Biddleville, Five Points, Seversville, McCrorey Heights, Oaklawn Park, Washington Heights, Lincoln Heights and University Park--are the living, breathing, soul of Charlotte.

I've been lucky enough to live on the West Side nearly all of my ten years in the Queen City. My home is in McCrorey Heights, I volunteer at First Baptist Church-West, run into neighbors at Food Lion and socialize at Claiborne's, soaking up the historical significance, creative enterprise, and community activism that makes this place home.

Now I'm privileged to oversee West Side Connect, a new media outlet under QCity Metro dedicated to amplifying the voices of the Historic West End. With funding from the Knight Foundation, we will tell the stories of these communities through the lens of the experts: the people who live, work and invest here. West Side Connect will land faithfully in your email inboxes every other Friday with civic, business and arts news. Be on the lookout for a printed publication as well.

We can't undertake this without you, and therefore humbly ask: What's going on? What are your triumphs and concerns? What are you seeing, and what do you want to see for the future of our communities? What needs to change, and what should we hold tight to? Who are the

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neighborhood pillars and newcomers showing the community love? Don't hesitate to share your tips, questions and feedback at [ewright@qcitymetro.com](mailto:ewright@qcitymetro.com). We're also putting together the most comprehensive calendar of West Side events in the city, so send announcements to [ewright@qcitymetro.com](mailto:ewright@qcitymetro.com), too.

West Side Connect is more than a media outlet. Our mission is to strengthen the community bonds that make the West Side so tough and so tender. I look forward to working with you and for you!

Best,

Emiene Wright

Community Engagement Editor

**OAKLAWN PARK**

**In one West End community, residents hope 'historic' designation can stave off gentrification**

After three years of work, Oaklawn Park is nearing its goal of becoming Charlotte's seventh locally recognized historic district, and the only one in the Historic West End.

Supporters hope the label will prevent the construction of ultra-modern, high-priced homes that would drive up real estate tax rates, displacing long-time residents. Others, however, fear the designation may trigger a similar effect.



If approved by City Council, Oaklawn Park would join Fourth Ward, Dilworth, Hermitage Court in Myers Park, Wesley Heights, Wilmore, and Plaza Midwood as historic districts.

Renee Pride-Dunlap, president of the Oaklawn Park neighborhood association, said residents simply want to “control the way our neighborhood changes.” [Click here to read more...](#)

## WASHINGTON HEIGHTS

### Booker T. mural paints large the legacy of Washington Heights

A new mural installed at Booker Street and Beatties Ford Road safeguards the history of Washington Heights in bold and welcoming colors.

Commissioned by the Washington Heights Neighborhood Association, the mural features an abstract portrait of Booker T. Washington.



“I think it matters that this mural was commissioned by a Black organization and created by a Black artist to signal the vitality of a Black neighborhood,” artist Georgie Nakima told Westside Connect. “This isn’t art to make someone from outside of the community feel ‘safe.’ It’s a statement that reflects our stories and marks out our territory as deserving of respect.”

[Click here to read more...](#)

## ASKED & ANSWERED



### Where did the name 'Historic West End' come from?

Wayne B. McLurkin, who grew up on Charlotte's west side, remembers when the Beatties Ford Road corridor was called West Charlotte, so he asked West Side Connect to research the origin of the new name.

"How can the neighborhood's history be respected if its former name can't be respected?" he said.

We did some research and came up with an answer.

[Click here to read more....](#)

### Quick Hits

[City of Charlotte Facade Grant Program matches up to 50 percent for renovations to local commercial or industrial businesses. Next deadline May 15.](#)

[City of Charlotte Business Security Grant Program seeks to reduce crime by helping business and property owners create a safer environment.](#)

[NFL Foundation Grassroots Program offers grants to refurbish neighborhood athletic fields](#)

**EVENTS: March 7-19**

**3/7**

Oaklawn Park Neighborhood Clean-up, 9 a.m., Waddell Street Park, 1505 Waddell St.

Dr. Tom Hanchett presents Stuff Smith and Jazz at JCSU, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Randolph Room, Beatties Ford Road Regional Library, 2412 Beatties Ford Road.

**3/10**



Soul Line Dance class, 11a-12p, West Charlotte Recreation Center, 2401 Kendell Drive. FREE. 980-314-1120, [Purple Charlotte Steppers Club](#).

EthnicByAli's Youth Bead Making Series, 4 – 5:30 p.m. Beatties Ford Road Regional Library, 2412 Beatties Ford Road. Free.

Cardio Blast Dance & Fitness, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., Bette Rae Rec Center, 2921 Tuckaseegee Rd.

Detroit Ballroom Made Easy, 7-8 p.m. West Charlotte Recreation Center, 2401 Kendell Drive. FREE. 980-314-1120, [Purple Charlotte Steppers Club](#).

### **3/11**

African American Alzheimer's Group, 6-7 p.m., West Charlotte Recreation Center, 2401 Kendell Drive. FREE, RSVP required to [Jvwade605@gmail.com](mailto:Jvwade605@gmail.com)

### **3/12**

JCSU Library History Programs, 7-9 p.m., James B. Duke Memorial Library, 100 Beatties Ford Rd. A community-wide Kujichagulia course that explores key concepts and principles of African and African American culture.

### **3/13**

West End Food Truck Friday, 5-9 p.m., Blue Blaze Brewing, 528 S. Turner Ave.

### **3/14**

For the Struggle Inc.'s Elder Response Initiative team is going door-to-door in Lincoln Heights, helping residents complete a survey on what they need in order to remain in their homes, be it repairs, taxes or estate planning. This is in response to rapid gentrification in the area. [To register, click here.](#)

### **3/17**

Soul Line Dance class, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. West Charlotte Recreation Center, 2401 Kendall Drive. FREE, 980-314-1120, [Purple Charlotte Steppers Club](#).

Cardio Blast Dance & Fitness, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Bette Rae Rec Center, 2921 Tuckaseegee Rd.

Detroit Ballroom Made Easy, 7-8 p.m. West Charlotte Recreation Center, 2401 Kendall Drive. FREE, 980-314-1120, [Purple Charlotte Steppers Club](#).

### **3/19**

Visual Art & Music Workshop for Adults & Seniors, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. West Charlotte Recreation Center, 2401 Kendall Drive. Learn new skills and techniques while being entertained by live jazz musicians.

JCSU Library History Programs, 7 – 9 p.m. James B. Duke Memorial Library, 100 Beatties Ford Rd. A community-wide Kujichagulia course that explores key concepts and principles of African and African American culture.

Got an event you'd like to post? [Click here to get started.](#)

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