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New Community Hour
Thursdays at 8 p.m.
on Cox Channel 22

Building Homes,
Fulfilling Dreams...
Enhancing Communities

April 2008

The Beacon

A new beginning

New years are often synonymous with new beginnings. For Cacetriss Burns, 2008 meant the realization of a dream.

A moment that has been several years in the making, Burns closed on her new home Jan. 4. She holds the honor of being NCDC's first home closing for the year.

"It was important to me to own a home," she said. "I wanted my money to go toward something that was mine."

From the outside in,



Cacetriss Burns

the house is truly hers. Burns was able to pick all the details that make a house a home, from the kitchen appliances and counters to the light fixtures and carpeting.

Burns enjoys being able to decorate her home anyway she wants. Her three children, Demar, 16, DeJohn, 10, and Davion, 6, are just as excited as their mother.

"My kids are happy and they really like the house," she said. "They have a big backyard with lots of space to play."

Along with the extra space they were able to add, the family also gained a sense of safety with the move.

"I feel more secure now that I own a home, and it's in a better area," she said.

Burns' dream was realized with help from NCDC, and she said staff members were always positive and ready to answer any questions and guide her in the right direction.

"Owning a home has just been a big accomplishment," she said.

2008 features exciting new projects

NCDC has several exciting new projects on the horizon that will benefit the communities of both North and South Omaha.

Improvements in North Omaha will take the shape of 10 new townhomes that will be built in the Long School Redevelopment Target Area, bounded by Patrick Avenue and Blondo Street and 24th and 25th streets.

The Long School Neighborhood “Live-and-Work” single family townhome project has a budget of approximately \$2,076,000. Ground is slated to be broken for the three bedroom unit townhomes this summer, and the project is hoped to be completed within a year.

Housing Director Gloria Kellum said this project will improve the neighborhood by bringing more owner occupied units into the area. The townhomes, built on vacant land, will target low to moderate income buyers.

The city of Omaha also will be participating in the project. It will be assisting home buyers with the purchase of their townhomes by giving purchasers grants of \$50,000 to subsidize their mortgage on the units.

“The Long School neighborhood has always been one of our major focus areas,” Kellum said. “We have been able to see this area improve block by block, and it just means everything to us that we can actually see our efforts.”

The construction of a single family home in South Omaha marks an exciting new arena for NCDC.

The property, NCDC’s first single family home in the area, will be located at 2509 Jefferson Street. Contractors are expected to break ground this spring and finish within a year.

The home will be sold to a qualifying buyer.

“We really want to have a market in South Omaha,” Housing Director Gloria Kellum said. “We see that there is truly a need



The “Vancouver” model will be NCDC’s first single family home in South Omaha. The 1,378 square foot home will have three bedrooms and two baths and feature such amenities as a stove, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher, garbage disposal and security system.



The Long School Neighborhood “Live-and-Work” single family townhome project features spacious floor plans.

there for affordable housing so we decided to branch out.”

By showing that they can construct an affordable home in a timely manner in South Omaha, NCDC hopes the city will assist it in the identification of more potential lots.

“We’ll be building on lots that have sat vacant and become dumping grounds,” Kellum said. “Now there will actually be a structure there and a family living in that structure.”

“We see that there is truly a need there for affordable housing so we decided to branch out.”

NCDC helps bring structure to Cooper's businesses

Monique Cooper has owned and operated Just Your Child Childcare & Learning Center for the past four years, and eight months ago she opened her second childcare development center, Kids Complete.

But Cooper was still missing something. She needed structure to her budgeting, and a better way to manage her accounts.

With a little help from NCDC and the eBay Techquity program, Cooper's two businesses are now running smoother than ever, and a third childcare center isn't far off on the horizon.

NCDC helped Cooper take two Quick Books accounting classes, and a Techquity grant enabled her to network her computers to make her billing process more efficient.

"When you understand accounting, you can have reports that give you meaningful information," she said. "The reports show me what I should and shouldn't spend money on and help me make better and more practical choices that are driven by my resources."

Cooper said the Quick Books classes brought a structure to her business that was needed. The information she gleaned from the reports allows her to be more proactive in her business approach.

She has given each area of her business a budget and requires them to operate within that budget.



Monique Cooper

"The budgeting is driven by the health of the business' financial status," Cooper said. "I find myself better able to make budgeting decisions based on whether or not it fits in line with the other things I need to accomplish."

Her business has experienced what Cooper describes as a 'trickle down effect.' Due to the better structuring of the financial side of her business, childcare teachers are now able to have the materials they need in a timely manner and the quality of the program can increase.

"All of these things lead to a better experience for the children," she said.

Cooper, interested in developing a Web page, recently took a Web design class through NCDC to learn more about the process. The class prepared her for the project and armed her with information she needed to get started.

"I learned the questions to ask to get the best deal and best design possible," she said. "I wanted to know enough about the subject to have an intelligent conversation with whomever I contract with."

With the experience learned during the past four years and the knowledge gained with help from NCDC, Cooper is looking forward to the possibility of a third center in northeast Omaha.

"NCDC helps people acquire the training and tangible skills they need to start a business, and communities benefit when jobs are created," she said. "I employ 28 employees at one of my centers, and 15 at the other. That's a lot of jobs and a big responsibility, but it's one I feel really excited about everyday and work hard to make sure they are successful."

Jackson Miller presented Economic Empowerment Award

Terrie Jackson Miller, NCDC's Director of Economic and Community Development, was presented a Legacy Award for Economic Empowerment May 8 during the Omaha Metropolitan Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women's "2008 Women of Color in Leadership Summit."

Joining Jackson Miller are other Legacy Award honorees:

- Education: Carolyn Green, Girls Inc.
- Health: Valda Ford, Center for

Human Diversity & Red Dress Heart and Soul

- Leadership Development: Jamesena Grimes Moore, United Way of the Midlands
- Political Advocacy: Carol Woods-Harris, Nebraska Board of Education

The day-long summit featured professional development workshops from local, regional and national speakers. Topics ranged from 'Effective Communication' to 'Accessing Networks of

Leadership & Power' and 'Balancing Personal & Professional Goals' to 'Accessing Corporate Diversity Initiatives for Career Advancement & Success.'

The Summit's target audience was women of color who hold positions within non-profit, civic and corporate organizations, who seek ways to advance their careers through personal and professional development and want to develop a powerful network of support, encouragement and mentorship.

The next step in starting a small business

The New Community Development Loan Fund, designed to encourage the start of small businesses, is now available.

The program consists of three categories for lending: the micro-loan, \$3-10,000 category; the direct loan, \$11-20,000 category; and the Gap/Bridge funding, \$21-40,000 category.

Terrie Jackson Miller, Director of Economic and Community Development, said these loans are the next step for people who attend NCDC's business classes.

When people complete the classes and business plan class, it is usually in anticipation of

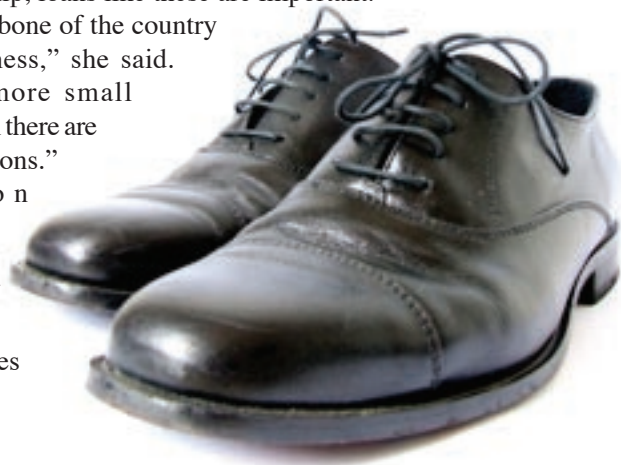
starting their own business. One of the qualifications for the loans is a completed business plan.

"For those who do want to take the next step of getting a loan to start their business, we want to be there to help them take that step," she said. "It's just a natural thing for us to offer these loans."

Jackson Miller said the loans will help people who are not able to get a loan from a bank because they may not have a business history. Because more people are beginning to pursue entrepreneurship, loans like these are important.

"The backbone of the country is small business," she said. "There are more small businesses than there are large corporations."

Jackson Miller said the loans will be comparative, if not better, than the interest rates of a bank.



NCDC partners with UNO to open new business center

NCDC has partnered with the University of Nebraska-Omaha to open the doors of a new business center located next door to its own offices.

The center will be used to house NCDC's business classes, loan program

and business computer center.

The added space will accommodate for the increase in participation in the computer classes, allowing two classes to be held at the same time.

The additional classroom space is ex-

pected to be ready for use in time for the July summer sessions.

UNO students will be serving as mentors to students in the computer classes; they have been mentoring students in the eBay classrooms the past two years.

For information on NCDC's summer business class schedule, contact Jackie Hankins at 402-451-2939



Building Homes,
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Mission Statement:

New Community Development Corporation rekindles pride in neighborhoods and ignites investments in the community.

Beautify your home with color

Born without a green thumb? Don't worry.

Lanoha Nursery Landscape Designer J.T. Savoie said it's easy to add a splash of color and life, whether you live in an apartment or house.

"The biggest request home owners make is they want something with a lot of color and no maintenance," Savoie said.

Though it's impossible to get away with no maintenance at all, Savoie said management is the biggest thing that sets aside a good garden from a bad garden. It is possible to have lush plants without a lot of work.

For beginner gardeners, Savoie recommends a combination of knockout roses, Karl Foerster feather reed grass and purple salvia.

"This will give you a high color palette and it is all very low maintenance," he said. "They will blossom all summer long and give you a lot of color."

Savoie said these plants are popular because people enjoy both the curb appeal and the minimal work required to keep them thriving.

If a gardener is willing to put a little time in, Savoie said these plants will become established and begin to take care of themselves.

The biggest tip Savoie has for home owners is to make sure they don't spread themselves too thin. Rather than spending an entire budget on several spots of a yard, he recommends concentrating the budget into one area.

"Let that one area establish and thrive before you move on to the next one," he said.

For apartment dwellers, Savoie suggests placing pots of annuals on balconies.

"Annuals are like fireworks because you get a big bang effect," he said. "You get a lot of color out of them for one season."

Savoie suggests purchasing a decorative pot and including different combinations of plants. If the pot is large enough, a tropical plant can be used as a centerpiece and surrounded with colorful cascading petunias.

"With annuals, you can play around with them and change them all the time," he said.

No matter where you live or what you use, Savoie said it is still important to maintain your plants.

"The biggest contributor to a successful garden is how you manage it," he said. "When you do, you'll get tenfold out of it."

Savoie said Lanoha Nursery employees are always available to answer questions or suggest ideas.



salmon vein trailing petunia



knockout roses



dark coral vein trailing petunia



dark lavender vein trailing petunia



dianthus



salvia

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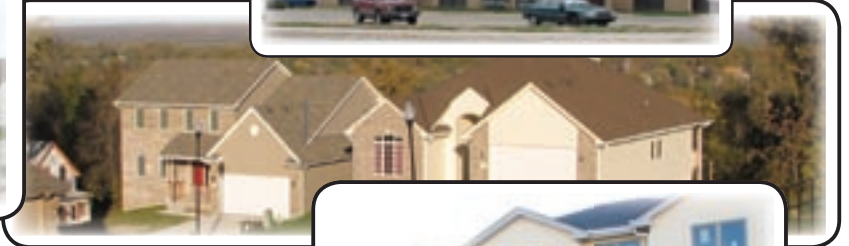
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Housing Developments

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