



# Belle Haven Action

advocacy • inclusion • collaboration

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM



**Angie Bautista**



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**Shontelle Watkins**



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Photo by BHA Team Member, Sean Watkins. Right; courtesy photo. Above, Karl E. Clark Park stands as more than just a neighborhood park—it is a living symbol of community, culture, and legacy in the heart of Menlo Park located at 313 Market Place. Right, we honor the enduring legacy of Karl E. Clark, a man whose impact reached far beyond his military achievements. Clark dedicated his life to uplifting the community as a mentor, activist, educator, and advocate for Black and Brown families.

# Remember the Fallen. Celebrate the Freed.

In the heart of Menlo Park, community, culture, and history come together in a powerful way every year during the Juneteenth celebration at Karl E. Clark Park. More than just a gathering, the celebration represents unity, remembrance, liberation, and love—a reminder that freedom is not only remembered, but lived, protected, and shared across generations.

Juneteenth, often called America’s “Second Independence Day,” commemorates June 19, 1865—the day enslaved African Americans in Texas finally learned they were free, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed. Today, Juneteenth stands as a sacred celebration of Black resilience, survival, joy, and cultural pride. Families gather for music, food, storytelling, dancing, and education, ensuring that the sacrifices and struggles of the past are never forgotten.

The celebration in Menlo Park also carries another layer of meaning through the legacy of Karl E. Clark, a respected community figure whose name now lives on through the park that honors him. Karl E. Clark and his family fought to ensure his contributions, service, and impact on the community would be recognized and remembered. Their determination reflects a broader truth within Black history: that recognition often comes through persistence, courage, and collective community effort.

As Memorial Day reminds America of the brave men and women who sacrificed their lives in military service, Juneteenth reminds us that freedom itself came at a cost. Together, these observances create space to honor veterans, freedom fighters, ancestors, elders, and everyday people who paved the way for future generations. At Karl E. Clark Park, those stories come alive through celebration, reflection,



Angie, Marlene, Shontelle and Sean from the Belle Haven Action team poses for a group photo and creatively plans to pay homage and celebrate Memorial Day and Juneteenth simultaneously.

Courtesy Photo

and togetherness.

The Juneteenth celebration is more than an event—it is living history. Children run through the park while elders share stories. Music fills the air while families reconnect. Culture is passed hand to hand, plate to plate, song to song. It is a place where Black history is not hidden in textbooks, but celebrated openly in the community with pride and purpose.

Juneteenth is not just about looking back—it’s about moving forward with knowledge, dignity, and collective strength. And in communities like Menlo Park, that spirit continues to rise every year through celebration, storytelling, and the ongoing fight to ensure Black history is seen, honored, and remembered.

A gifted author of three books, he believed deeply in the power of knowledge, leadership, and creating opportunities for future generations.

His legacy continues through the institutions he helped build, including the Onetta Harris Community Center and the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula—spaces created to

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empower youth, strengthen families, and nurture community pride.

Karl E. Clark didn’t just serve his country—he served his people. And today, his name remains a reminder that true leadership is measured not only by accomplishments, but by the lives you inspire and the doors you open for others.

Learn more about Karl E. Clark here: <https://www.menlopark.gov/Parks/Karl-E.-Clark-Park>\*



## 10 Cool Facts About Memorial Day, Juneteenth & Karl E. Clark

1. Juneteenth marks the true end of slavery for many African Americans after Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865.
2. Memorial Day honors military members who sacrificed their lives while serving the United States.
3. Juneteenth is widely known as America’s Second Independence Day because it celebrates Black freedom and liberation.
4. Black soldiers played major roles in American wars even while facing discrimination at home.
5. Juneteenth celebrations often include music, dance, storytelling, barbecue, education, and community fellowship.
6. Red foods and drinks are commonly served during Juneteenth celebrations because the color red symbolizes resilience, sacrifice, and strength in many African and African American traditions.
7. Karl E. Clark Park serves as a community gathering space where culture, recreation, and history intersect.
8. Karl E. Clark’s family worked to ensure his contributions to the community were recognized and honored publicly.
9. Community celebrations help younger generations learn history in ways that feel alive, personal, and empowering.
10. Events like the Menlo Park Juneteenth celebration strengthen unity by bringing together families, elders, youth, veterans, artists, activists, and neighbors under one shared purpose: remembrance, freedom, and community pride.



# SHONTELLE'S STORY

## Up Close And Personal With BHA's Creative Organizer

Creative. Confident. Compassionate. Those are just a few words that begin to describe Shontelle and the energy she brings into every room she enters. Whether she's speaking in front of a crowd, creating content, or supporting those around her, Shontelle carries herself with authenticity, humor, and purpose.

Since joining BHA in 2020, Shontelle has become a dedicated and dependable presence within the organization and the community. After learning about BHA through Facebook, she stepped into the work with a genuine desire to give back and make a difference. Over the past six years, she has remained committed to uplifting others through service, leadership, and encouragement.

One of the things people remember most about Shontelle is her ability to keep spirits high, even during difficult moments. While canvassing in the community, there were days when exhaustion could have easily drained the team's motivation. Instead, Shontelle helped turn frustration into momentum by trading tasks, giving pep talks, and encouraging everyone to push forward together. Her positive outlook and supportive nature made the work lighter and reminded others that teamwork matters.

Another unforgettable quality about Shontelle is the confidence she brings during videos and public interactions. She enjoys speaking, engaging with people, and making others feel comfortable. Her "public battery" seems endless, and her outgoing personality naturally draws people in. She has a gift for communication that allows her to connect with others in a meaningful and memorable way.

Outside of work and service, Shontelle is known for her love of art, fashion, anime, and creative expression. Conversations about shows like Solo Leveling often bring out her playful side and sense of humor. She has an overdramatic personality in

the best way possible—funny, expressive, and full of life. Her loyalty also stands out deeply; she is the kind of person who shows up, has your back, and keeps you laughing at just the right moments.

Shontelle's passion for community is rooted in service and mentorship. Her involvement with organizations like the Boys & Girls Clubs of Peninsula and her role as a big sister and middle child in her family reflect her heart for young people and

her desire to inspire the next generation. She believes in leading with integrity, supporting others, and using her gifts to create positive change.

Above all, Shontelle is a dedicated family member, a creative spirit, and a young woman determined to leave her community better than she found it. Through her voice, her energy, and her commitment to others, she continues to make an impact that people not only notice—but remember. \*



Courtesy Photo  
BHA team member, Shontelle's  
fashion collages, as she is study-  
ing becoming a clothing designer.

*"... she is the kind of person who shows up, has your back, and keeps you laughing at just the right moments."*

