

**age
friendly**
CENTRAL BROOKLYN

THIRD CHAPTER LIVING



Tell Us Your Story

ISSUE 31 | MARCH and APRIL 2024

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Making Central Brooklyn A Great Neighborhood To Age-In-Place!

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**For information about Age Friendly Central Brooklyn, Inc. (AFCBI) and THIRD CHAPTER LIVING (TCL), or if you are interested in writing for TCL, contact:
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IN THIS ISSUE...

Greetings Age-Friendly Community,

In this March/April 2024 issue, we feature ***Tell Us Your Story*** articles by two of our AFCBI members **Wanda Hickson-Dobson** and **Sharon Lyons**. Here's hoping their stories are the first of many shared by our members.

We give a quick nod to those in our community whom we spotlighted in our **March** and **April Happy Birthday Shout Out** emails and share reflections from **Debra Sanchez** and **Sylvia Cheeks** about our **Aging Aspirations Vision Board Party** in March.

Best,

Donna Williams
Editor in Chief
THIRD CHAPTER LIVING

On the cover: Sharon Lyons (left) and Wanda Hickson-Dobson (right), members of AFCBI, "Tell Us Their Story" in this issue.

Happy BIRTHDAY

MARCH

6 – Harriet Atkinson
6 – Victoria Graves Cade
7 – Thonia Frazier
10 – Wilhelmina “Billie”
Roberts
19 – Bondell Lighty
20 – Frankie B. Jackson
28 – Pamela Judkins

APRIL

4 – Patricia Morris
7 – Paulette G. Jackson
11 – Glendoria Jones
12 – Holistine Grant
16 – Grace Derrick
21 – Velvet Hall
21 – Barbara Jackson

22 – Beverly Groce
25 – Theresa Phillips
26 – Princess Benn James
26 – Dorothy Hall
27 – Mable Gibbs
27 – Portland Zinerman
29 – Brenda Watts-Larkin

TELL US YOUR STORY

WANDA HICKSON-DOBSON

Your Name: Wanda Hickson-Dobson

Birthplace: Brooklyn, NY, County of Kings

School Attended: Canarsie High School, CUNY Baruch College

Occupation: Retired. Part-time Senior Assistant w/Brooklyn Public Library



1. Who or what experience has had the greatest impact/influence on your life?

Growing up under the teachings of spiritual church leaders since age 10 has greatly impacted my life. Many early lessons taught in church reinforced those first learned at home. To love others, share with and care for others, listen, learn, and always do my best still fuels my spirit. Church leaders also nourished and developed many talents that have enriched my life and allowed me to pursue my calling progressively and successfully even now.

2. What is your Dream, your Vision for 2024 and beyond?

My vision is simple although blurred at times. It is to see that spark of sunshine, feel that flicker of warmth, taste that dewdrop of deliciousness, sniff that bouquet of blessings, and hear that gentle guarantee no matter how dark the day, cold the night, sour the season, deafening the distraction, and scary the situation --- for life is but a gift to be enjoyed and shared momentarily -- and may that gemstone my legacy be!

3. Tell us about your journey, how did you come to be where you are?

My journey has mostly been an uphill one of trying to balance four institutions that have governed my life, namely family, work, church, and school. Home was my first classroom; my parents my first teachers.

Learning to walk taught me to step out on faith, get back up when I fall, and keep striving to succeed. Learning to talk taught me to use the gift of words in ways that uplift and produce positive change.

4. What attracted you to join Age Friendly Central Brooklyn, Inc. (AFCBI)?

Since reaching this older adult stage of the aging process, I've been pursuing ways of aging with more Sass N Class as the late artist Annie Lee depicts. Likewise, I seek catchy titles to tag to phrases like aging gracefully, aging creatively, and aging with attitude that I own and wholeheartedly embrace. So, when stumbling upon "Age Friendly Central Brooklyn" I thought, wow—a friendly community right in my backyard. And the rest is her story!

5. What else would you like to share?

Creating and sharing collages, found-object art, one-page books, or literary art is one of my greatest passions and my most time-consuming leisurely activity. My focus is creating art that helps me heal while overcoming the challenges of chronic illness diagnosis and its side effects, grief and loss, and other pungent life experiences. Shhh. This is just between us! I hope to become better acquainted with my younger set of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

I STILL HAVE A DREAM

Since 2020, Age Friendly Central Brooklyn, Inc. (AFCBI) has hosted an Aging Aspirations Vision Board Party which encourages everyone to get in touch with their dreams. If you've never created a Vision Board, it is a visual tool where you build a collage, consisting of words and images representing your goals, desires, and dreams. It is a motivational workshop designed to help folks manifest their dreams.

This March, AFCBI presented ***I Still Have a Dream*** inviting members to visualize the life they are dreaming of for 2024 and beyond. Presenters **Tameeka Nicole** and **Terri White** led attendees through practice to reflect on their aging aspirations, followed by designing a visual board to keep them inspired.

REFLECTIONS

It was a wonderful experience, and the atmosphere was joyful and enjoyable.

Thanks— Debra Sanchez

This is my fourth Vision Board Party with AFCBI. It really helps me focus on how I want my life to be. And it's big Fun!

— Donna Williams

Smile and the world smiles with you. Smiling makes you more courteous and you feel relaxed when you smile. Turn that frown upside down. My vision board represents living my best life. I am thankful, grateful & blessed. While my family is always there it's always family over everything. Laughter is like medicine that's what the word says. I want to be the reason someone smiles today. On my board, I have a vision of showering everyone in my presence with a smile. I want to throw kindness around because I believe in myself.

It's always a good day to be happy. God will come through and everything will be ok.

Thank you Emergesoul for opening up my inner me while I enjoy loving my life.

— Sylvia Cheeks



Facilitator
Tameeka Nicole

Selma Jackson



Supply table



Facilitator
Terri White

MY STORY

Sharon Lyons



Born and raised in Brooklyn, I attended St. Joseph's College and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Community Health and Human Services, attended Adelphi University in Garden City and earned a Master's Degree in Social Work.

My journey thus far has been some decades, years in the making. Between my childhood years, and up to now, I have forgotten, I assume a great many things. What I will always remember, which has been the greatest experience for me, is motherhood and grandmotherhood. Recalling how it felt to have a child that I created nested inside of me, the feel of life developing and kicking inside of me is an experience that I am glad that I can hold.

I have lived a life not too close to the edge, but there certainly have been some bumps along the way, and I have stepped on and over some thorns. My vision for 2024, and beyond is to see no reason why the rest of my life can't be the best of my life. I look at my life now as an extraordinary one, because I am still alive. I love life with all of its ups and downs, and it loves me back because I'm still waking up.

My strong sense of faith, along with contemplating the myriad of choices that lay before me each day, even before the morning's first sip of coffee – or is it tea? Maybe just some warm water.

These seemingly mundane decisions are the architects of my daily routine. The very essence of my habits has helped me along the way. I am careful with my choices, and I try to focus on the right ones – how I spend my time and who I spend it with. In doing so I believe it primes me not just for a life marked by years, but one rich in health and vitality.

Age-friendly Central Brooklyn attracted me because I wanted to be among my peers and learn, and participate in activities in my community.

Although I'm all grown up now, that little girl never left me. I still have childhood fantasies. And I see myself today as a piece of art, a masterpiece always in the makings.

Making Central Brooklyn A Great Neighborhood To Age-In-Place!

FACT SHEET

Contact: secretary@agefriendlycb.org
Website: <https://agefriendlycb.org/>

What is Age Friendly Central Brooklyn, Inc. (AFCBI)?

Formerly Age Friendly Bedford-Stuyvesant & Crown Heights, AFCBI is a community-based organization led by a volunteer group of older adults that builds upon the rich experience of adults age 62 and older to ensure they can age in place. Through intentional outreach, AFCBI leverages local resources to improve their overall quality of life. We engage other older adults in a myriad of activities to meet the social, economic, cultural, and civic needs of this growing population.

Who are the AFCBI members?

AFCBI members are 62 and older, predominately African descent, living in Central Brooklyn. AFCBI pays particular attention to those who may be living in isolation and/or leading sedentary lifestyles. Membership is based on certain requirements. All applicants must:

- o Be at least 62 years of age
- o Complete a membership application and pay an annual membership fee of \$25 due in October
- o Make a one-year commitment to the program
- o Attend orientation (held 2nd Tue of the month)
- o Volunteer at least six hours per month: two-hour monthly meetings and four hours in a cohort group

Members are required to attend a monthly meeting held every second Tuesday of the month. Meetings are generally held in person, however in case of an emergency such as COVID-19, our monthly meetings are held electronically via Zoom.

A core requirement of membership is to join one of the seven Cohort Groups below. Members can self-select based on their interests: **1. Advocacy; 2. Communications; 3. Economic Empowerment; 4. Health & Wellness; 5. Intergenerational; 6. Membership & Volunteer Services; and 7. Social Inclusion.**

What programs or services does AFCBI provide?

AFCBI offers a variety of programs and services to promote healthy aging and longevity including Cooking Classes, Chair Yoga and Meditation Sessions, Arts and Crafts, Technology Skills Acquisition, and more.

Where are AFCBI programs offered?

Programs are offered in a variety of locations throughout Central Brooklyn including community and faith-based organizations, schools, libraries, museums, restaurants, theaters, health facilities, and parks.

What are the funding sources for AFCBI?

Age Friendly Central Brooklyn, Inc. (AFCBI) is grateful for the generosity of funding sources that have provided general operating support. We give thanks to NYS Children and Families, NYC Discretionary funding, and Brooklyn Community Foundation. Additionally, we also received funding from the Buckhorn Association, Citizens Committee for New York (CitizensNYC), EBC (Emmanuel Baptist Church), NYAM (New York Academy of Medicine), and SDOP (Self Development of People).

