



# Village HeartBEAT

**Building Education & Accountability Together**

A Mecklenburg County Initiative



# Village HeartB.E.A.T.

## Building Education Accountability Together

A Mecklenburg County Initiative

### PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, PRIDE, AND PROGRESS

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# Disclosure Statement

We oversee and participate in all data collection, analysis, and dissemination of the work presented.

Any relevant financial relationships? No.

We agree to comply with APHA Conflict of Interest Guidelines



PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, PRIDE AND PROGRESS



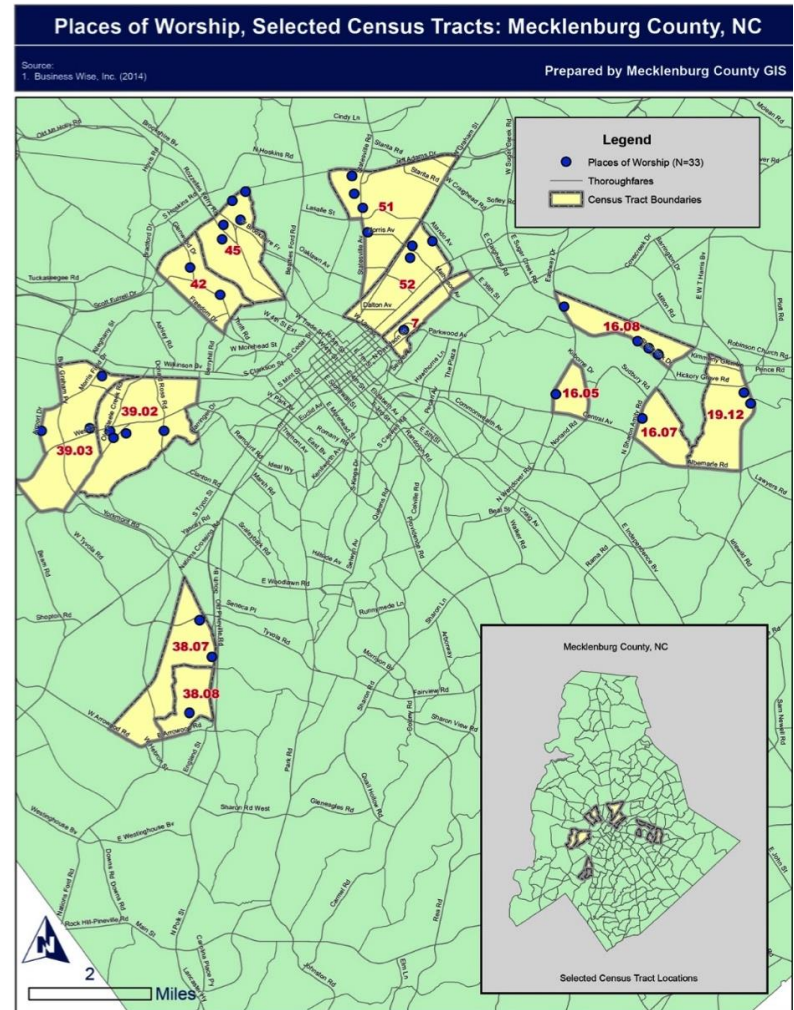
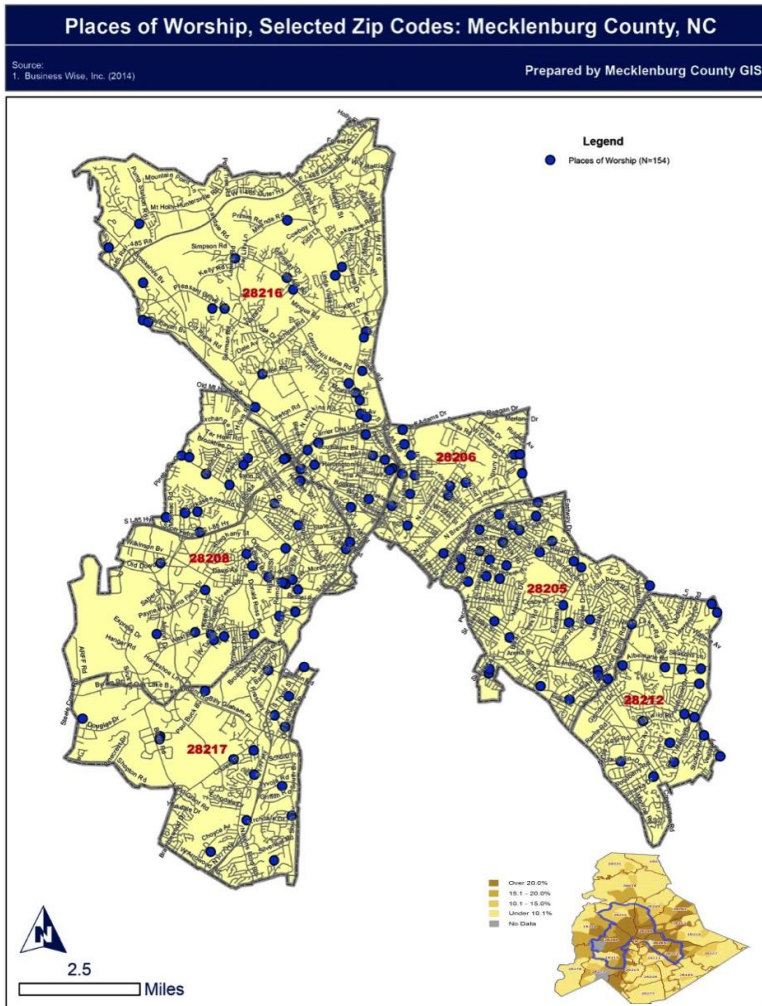
# Overview



- Background
- VHB Purpose
- Framework
- Methods
- Conclusion

- Identify the components of a successful faith-based collaborative to improve health policies.
- Recognize the critical role of faith-based organizations in addressing racial and ethnic disparities in cardiovascular diseases.





Source: Mecklenburg County GIS Mapping





## **Builds off prior collaborative health equity community engagement activities**

*(Racial Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH 2010); Partners in Eliminating Health Disparities (PEHD); Factors of the Seven; Community Health Ambassadors Program (CHAP)*

### 2000- 2007

- REACH 2010 Funding

### 2005-2012

- NC Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCOMHHD)
- Community Focus for Eliminating Health Disparities Grant
- NCOMHHD/Community Health Ambassador Program (CHAP)
- Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Declared Health Disparities Priority
- Partners in Eliminating Health Disparities Strategic Action Plan/Community Health Research Academy PEHD/ CHLA
- Factors of the Seven - Bronx REACH Grant
- Regional Health Equity Council (RHEC-Region IV)

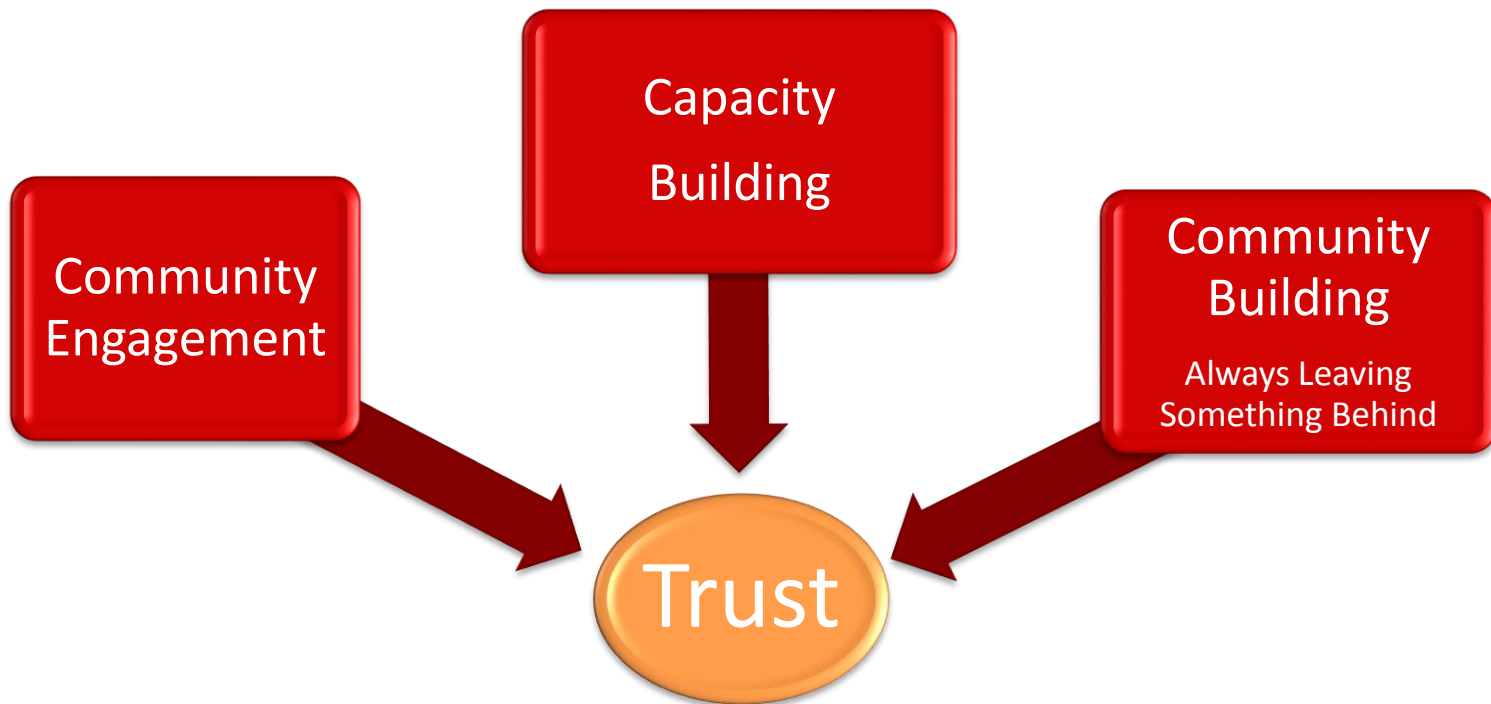
### 2012- 2015

- Village HeartBEAT Initiative (VHB) - 'The Competition Challenge'
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS) Region IV – Faith-based Recognition Best Practice Model



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

*Our Health, Our Priority, Our Community*



“Go to the people. Live with them. Learn from them. Love them. Start with what they know.” – Lao Tzu







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A collaborative partnership approach involving churches in program design and delivery to increase African Americans and Hispanic/Latino access to prevention, risk reduction, and chronic disease management resources to reduce health disparities in the highest risk (defined by high priority rates) of Mecklenburg County.





*CPR Certification Training*



*Healthy Cooking Demonstrations*



*Fitness in the Park*

**BUILDING** the capacity of African American and Latino adults to address their own health needs and the capacity of the faith community to initiate and sustain needed lifestyle changes;

**EDUCATION** on chronic diseases prevention, treatment and control;

**ACCOUNTABILITY** for success in every aspect of the program, including monitoring both individual and partner adherence to program objectives; and

**TOGETHER** - collaboratively working to problem solve, with strong participant input in program design and execution.

## Community Health Leadership Academy “Peer-led Coaching”

### Key Domains:

- Pastor Roundtable
- Congregational Assessments
- Biometric Screenings
- Health Ambassador Training
- Joint Use Agreements (system and environmental policies)
- Policy Environmental Systems (PES)
- County’s Vendor Application
- National Heart, Lung, Blood Institute  
With Every Heartbeat is Life Curriculum



*Trained Community Health Ambassadors*







*Fitness on the Dance Floor*



*Pre and Post Biometric Screenings*



*Fitness in the HealthPlex*

## CVD Risk-Management Challenge

### Pre-Competition Season (12 Weeks)

- Recruitment
- Media Campaigns
- Partnership Coordination
- Orientation Sessions
- Group Activities

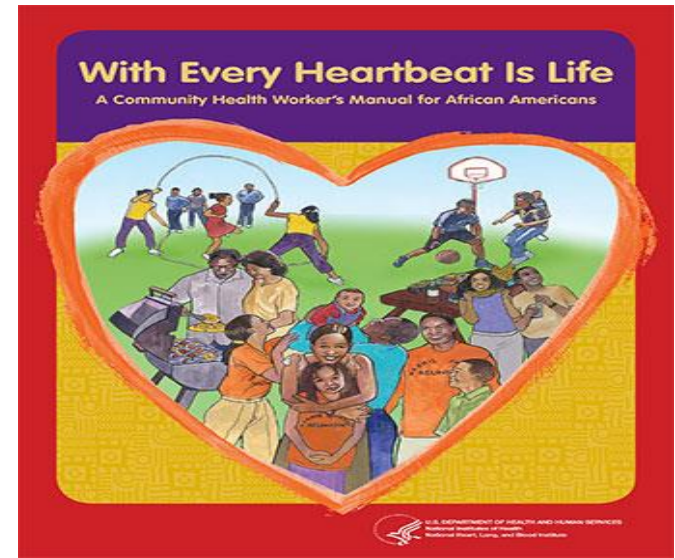
### Competition-Season (16 weeks)

- 10-member team
- Pre and post bio-metric screenings
- Medical referral counseling
- Individual and group wellness activities
- Smoking Cessation Program
- Field Day
- Hearts of Champion Gala



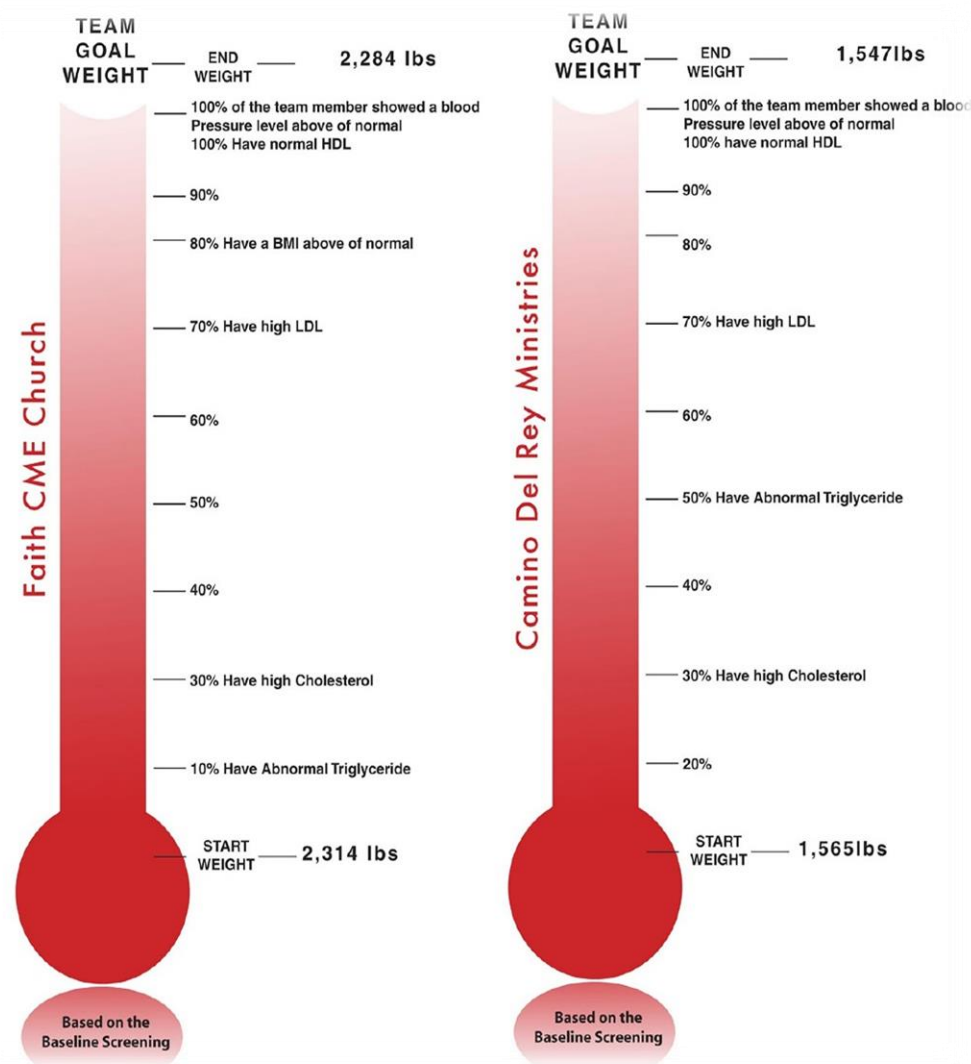
## 12-Lesson Course on Heart Health

- Heart Disease
- Physical Activity
- Blood Pressure
- Cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Weight Management
- Healthy Eating and Spending
- Tobacco



Metrics based on both a quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis:

- Biometrics Screenings
- Photo journaling and photo voice
- Focus groups
- Joint Use Agreements (systems and environmental changes)
  - Tobacco Policy
  - Nutrition
  - Physical Activity





Values	2012-2013 Challenge	2013-2014 Challenge	2014-2015 Challenge
<b>BASELINE VALUES</b>			
Number of Participants	62	140	177
Number of Churches	6	14	17
Mean Weight (lbs.)	210.5	210.0	203.0
Mean Body Mass Index (BMI)	35	34	--
Mean Systolic Blood Pressure (SBP) (mmHg)	144	137	132
Mean Diastolic Blood Pressure (DBP) (mmHg)	89	85	82
<b>POST-CHALLENGE VALUES (Improved in one CVD risk factor)</b>			
Number of Activities/Health Promotion Events	60	122	152
Total Weight Lost (lbs.)	-172	-337	-364
Mean Weight Lost per Person	-3.8	-4.2	-2.6
Mean Change in BMI	-1.1	-0.4	--
Mean Change in SBP (mmHg)	-14.2	-11.3	-1.8
Mean Change in DBP (mmHg)	-10.3	-3.3	-1.7
% That Increased Fruit, Vegetable, or Fiber Intake/Week	41%	26%	--
% That Increased Physical Activity	34%	37%	38%



## Lessons Learned:

- Selecting intentional partners
- Shared leadership and collaborative governance electing
- Increased motivation and growth among participants
- Collaborative partnerships with various cultures
- Identified solutions to care system barriers
- Improved community outreach among churches by jointly sharing resources

## Next Steps:

- Standardize operations and data procedures
- Dissemination of information

The screenshot shows a webpage from citymetro.com with a navigation bar including links for HOME, NEWS, FAITH, HEALTH, LIVING, VIDEOS, EVENTS, DIRECTORY, and SUBMIT. Below the navigation bar is the citymetro logo and the text 'JOIN THE COMMUNITY'. The main content area features the article title 'Sometimes it takes a Village to make a difference.' by Adriana Burkins. The article includes a photo of Rev. Jacob Teasdel on an exercise bike, a quote from him, and information about his health journey and the Village HeartBEAT program. The date 'APRIL 1, 2015' and the website 'www.qcitymetro.com' are also visible.

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**cityhealth** APRIL 1, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### Sometimes it takes a Village to make a difference.

By Adriana Burkins

**Name:** Rev. Jacob Teasdel  
**Age:** 54  
**Church:** Faith CME Church

**Health Factors:** Obesity; medications for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure

**His story:** For Rev. Jacob Teasdel of Faith CME Church, the journey to lose weight has been a "family affair," and he credits his church and his Village HeartBEAT team for being his biggest source of support. Teasdel once weighed 350 pounds and was under medication for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Then, about 10 years ago, a close friend suffered a heart attack and died. Teasdel decided to make a change. He went to a doctor, saying, "keep me alive 'til I'm 50." Although health issues run in his family, it wasn't until that doctor visit that Teasdel really learned the extent of what he was dealing with.

**His advice:** "Don't feel like you have to do the entire program. Take bites and pieces of what you can do and consistently do them...and you'll be able to do more."

**His trick:** Village HeartBEAT encourages its participants to use smaller plates to help control portion sizes. That didn't work for Teasdel, so he started using small Tupperware containers to carry his food. "It's a small container, so it looks like it's full...but you're not eating as much, so that makes it easier to manage your portions."

Teasdel has lost weight before – 10-15 pounds in a couple of weeks – but it always came back. In the Village HeartBEAT program, he said, he is encouraged to make lifestyle changes and focus on losing smaller amounts over extended periods. The key, he said, is sustainability.

Since becoming serious about his weight loss this year, Teasdel has gone from 355 pounds to 338; his goal is to lose between 40-50 pounds. Although he still takes medication for high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes, he said his biggest challenge has been time. He works in the chemistry department at a nuclear power plant in York County, and his days are long. Still, he tries to get in 2-3 miles of walking and between 20-30 minutes on his exercise bike. He said he is excited about where he is, where he is going to be and for the longer days and warmer weather that comes with spring.

At 350 pounds, Rev. Jacob Teasdel knew he needed to make some changes. But after a friend had a heart attack and passed away, he went to a doctor, saying, "keep me alive 'til I'm 50." (Photo: Adriana Burkins)

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Or visit [www.villagehb.org](http://www.villagehb.org) for more details



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## FAITH-BASED VILLAGE HEARTBEAT PARTNERS

### **AME Zion**

*Bishop George Battle, Sr.*

### **15th Street Church of God**

*Bishop Wade H. Ferguson, III*

### **Ben Salem Presbyterian Church**

*Rev. Damiko Faulkner*

### **Camino Ministries**

*Pastor Russell Price*

### **Casita De Amor**

### **Caldwell Presbyterian Church**

*Senior Pastor John Craighorn*

*Pastor Everdith Landrau*

### **City Dive Outreach**

*Pastor Hamani Fisher*

### **C N Jenkins Memorial Presbyterian Church**

*Pastor Dr. Jerry Cannon*

### **Faith CME Church**

*Pastor Laura Wilson*

### **First Baptist West Church**

*Rev. Dr. Ricky A. Woods*

### **First Mt. Zion**

### **Baptist Church**

*Interim Pastor*

### **Friendship Missionary Baptist Church**

*Dr. Clifford Jones, Sr.*

### **Greater Salem Church**

*Bishop Alan G. Porter*

### **Greenville AME Zion Church**

*Rev. Dr. Sheldon Shipman*

### **Grier Heights**

### **Presbyterian Church**

*Pastor Larry James*

### **New Covenant**

### **Bibleway Church**

*Elder C. Marvin Beatty, III*

### **Little Rock AME Zion Church**

*Bishop George Battle*

### **New Life Fellowship Center**

*Pastor John P. Kee*

### **New Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church**

*Rev. Dr. Charles E. Thompson, Jr.*

### **New Zion Missionary Baptist Church**

*Rev. Henry Williams*

### **Rockwell A.M.E. Zion Church**

*Pastor Jordan Boyd*

### **The Living Church**

*Bishop Ronnie L. Parson*

### **Wilson Heights Church of God**

*Pastor Cornelius Atkinson*



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS & VOLUNTEERS

American Heart Association

Heat Radio

PBS,WTVI – Charlotte

Bethesda Health Clinic

Johnson C. Smith University

Pride Communications

Carolinas Healthcare System's  
Department of Family Medicine  
(CHS-DFM)

Mecklenburg County Board of  
County Commissioners

Qcity Metro

CMC-Family Medicine Practice

Mecklenburg County Health  
Department PSI

Stratford Richardson Family  
YMCA

UNCC College of Health & Human  
Services

Mecklenburg County Human  
Services Finance

WBTB and Power 98 Radio

Charlotte Alumnae Chapter of  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Novant Health

Zuri Creative Group, LLC

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library

McCrorey Family YMCA

Gramercy Research Group



PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, PRIDE AND PROGRESS



## cityhealth

JANUARY 6, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### Battling obesity and high cholesterol

By Glenn Burkins



Women from Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church, all members of a Village HeartBEAT wellness program, take part in a 6 a.m. water aerobics class at the McCrone YMCA. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

Today Qcitymetro kicks off a series celebrating people who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

**Name:** Kathy Cuttino

**Church:** Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church

**Health Factors:** High cholesterol and excess weight

**Her Story:** Cuttino moved to Charlotte from Greenville, S.C., in 2011. She came to care for her aging mother, who died nearly a year ago. Over the years, Cuttino says, her weight crept up to 280

pounds, mainly the result of poor diet and inactivity. She joined Village HeartBEAT (along with 15 others from her church) looking to lose weight and stay healthy. Cuttino said she's now exercising more, dining out less and consuming healthier foods – plenty of vegetables, fruits and grains. On a recent December morning,



Kathy Cuttino

Cuttino and other women from her church were at a 6 a.m. water aerobics class at the McCrone YMCA. (Cuttino is team captain and says it's her role to keep others motivated.) Since she started exercising and eating better, her weight has dropped to about 220 pounds. Cuttino said her goal is to get down to about 200 pounds.

**Her Philosophy:** "You've got to keep it going. Yes, you are going to fall off that wagon, but you've got to keep it going."

**Her Quotes:** "There are too many of us who know what we are supposed to do, but we don't do it...We don't know about portion control. We'll put stuff on a plate, the plate is full, and we'll go back and get seconds."

**Impressive Fact:** With exercise, an improved diet, and medication, Cuttino says her cholesterol level has dropped from 329 to 220.

**In Closing:** "I feel great," she said. "I really do."



For questions email Cheryl S. Emanuel at Cheryl.Emanuel@mecklenburgcountync.gov.

Or visit [www.villagehb.org](http://www.villagehb.org) for more details



## cityhealth

MARCH 3, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### Donald Faulkner: A smoker no more

By Adriana Burkins

This article is part of a continuing series celebrating local residents who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

**Name:** Donald Faulkner

**Church:** Ben Salem Presbyterian Church

**Health Factors:** COPD and emphysema, due to smoking  
**His story:** After nearly 40 years of smoking, Donald Faulkner decided to quit – cold turkey – on Thanksgiving Day 2014. Since then, Faulkner says, he has not touched another cigarette, though he's had urges.

Faulkner, 64, said his biggest source of support has been his fellow Village HeartBEAT teammates at Ben Salem Presbyterian Church. He joined the program two years ago with a goal of getting more exercise and developing better eating habits. But somewhere along the way he decided to also kick the smoking habit.

The tipping point came last year during Thanksgiving when Faulkner's son expressed concerns about the effects that



After nearly 40 years of smoking, Donald Faulkner, 64, decided to quit – cold turkey – on Thanksgiving Day 2014. (Photo: Adriana Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

second-hand smoke would have on an unborn grandchild his daughter-in-law was carrying. Later that night, Faulkner said, he flushed all of his cigarettes down the toilet.

Smoking cessation is a new area of focus for Village HeartBEAT, which is now in its third year. In previous years, participants focused primarily on exercise and nutrition. Faulkner said the program made him question why he was exercising and working to prolong his life in one way but killing himself in another.

Faulkner, whose lungs have been damaged, said he could barely walk from his house to the end of his driveway without losing his breath. The problem

progressed to the point that he even had trouble talking on the phone for long periods of time.

Faulkner said the urges still come, especially in the early morning, but he knows the desire eventually will pass. "I don't have to yield to that urge," he said, "so it's really a mental thing."

In addition to giving up cigarettes, Faulkner said he's also eating less often and eating smaller portions. He's moved from fried foods to baked foods, and to more vegetables instead of meat.

"My team, Ben Salem's team, has been my biggest support," he said. "I've been feeling real well."

His advice to smokers: "I just want them to know how good it feels to not be a smoker. Because I'm sure at one point in their life they wanted to be off cigarettes, and when they succeed in that, it feels so good."

**Closing thoughts:** "I feel more better mentally than I do physically. Just to know that I'm in the process of this accomplishment, and I've been wanting to be in this process for so long, and I'm here. I'm in it."



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## Qcityhealth

MARCH 16, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### A 'second birthday' for Henrietta McClain

By Adriana Burkins



After three years on dialysis, Henrietta McClain says she is now doing fine, thanks to a donor kidney. The experience has focused her attention on health. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins, Qcitymetro.com)

This article is part of a series celebrating local people who have made a decision to get healthier by enrolling in Village HeartBEAT, a 16-week wellness program designed to reduce risk factors, especially in the African American and Latino communities. The program, now in its third year, is sponsored by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and works primarily with local churches.

**Name:** Henrietta McClain  
**Church:** First Baptist Church-West  
**Risk factors:** Kidney failure due to high-blood pressure

**Her Story:** Almost every weekday, Henrietta McClain can be found somewhere getting in her exercise, often at the Johnson C. Smith University HealthPlex, where fitness instructors know her by name.

McClain has a good reason for her focus on health. In August 2006, she underwent a kidney transplant – an event she now marks as her second birthday.

McClain said she developed high-blood pressure in her 20s, which led to kidney failure. The transplant, she says, was like a miracle.

She had been on dialysis for three years. Instead of receiving dialysis in a medical

center, McClain chose to go through the treatments in her home. This required inserting a tube into her abdomen every night to flush out the toxins in her blood. She said her children, her church and her job kept her going through those difficult years.

This year marks her second year as a Village HeartBEAT participant. McClain says her blood pressure is now at a normal level and her kidneys work "great." To stay fit, she follows a fitness regimen that includes cardio exercises, circuit training, line dancing and healthy eating.

**Her advice:** "Take medication. I think that's very important because I have to take mine for the rest of my life to prevent my body from rejecting the kidney. People are surprised about the number and quantity of drugs that an organ transplant patient must take everyday. And keep active. If you can get in any programs that can help you...keep active, do that."

**Importance of donors:** "Organ donors can give the gift of love and life. Someone donated a kidney to me, so I feel really strong on that. I'm an organ donor, and I advise my children to do so. You don't realize the importance of it until you get sick."



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## Qcityhealth

MAY 20, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### A family commits to healthier living

By Adriana Burkins



with their three girls, ages 4, 7 and 9, who join their parents on exercise walks.



For Sylvia and Melvin Austin, losing weight and adopting a healthier lifestyle has become a family goal. (Photo: Adriana Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

**Names:** Sylvia and Melvin Austin  
**Church:** New Life Fellowship Center

**Health Factors:** Obesity, medication for blood pressure and a desire to become fit. Their story: For Melvin Austin, it began as a need to get in shape and get well. For Sylvia Austin, it began as a choice to support her husband of 14 years, who is battling obesity and taking blood pressure and water pills. In the year since the couple joined the Village HeartBEAT program at their church, they've experienced some changes, both individually and as a family.

Mr. Austin, who has gone from 399 pounds to 370 pounds, said the hardest part for him has been finding time to

exercise. As a truck driver, he doesn't work a 9-to-5 schedule, so he walks whenever he can. He said his favorite thing is sleeping after a workout.

Mrs. Austin, who won the "biggest loser" competition at her church with a loss of 20-23 pounds, said the hardest thing for her has been eating right. Before the program, she often ate just one large meal a day. They both agreed that the program has forced them to spread out their meals, to actually put things on plates and ensure proper serving sizes.

Aside from the pounds, Mr. Austin said he's able to move around better, has more energy and stamina and sleeps better. Mrs. Austin said the program has given her a "burst of energy" to keep up

The couple said their biggest source of support has been their team members and coach, who will text or call to check on them and let them know about class locations.

**Their advice:** "You've got to stick with it...and being consistent and trying to be self-motivated, that's the hardest thing. When you start off with a team and others go another way, you've got to fend for yourself...so you've really got to have that motivation."

**Quote:** "You have about a million dollars around your belly. You didn't get it over night, so you've got a big investment that you're trying to get rid of, so it's gonna take a little time."



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## cityhealth

MAY 7, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### For Karen Rockhead, getting fit is a gradual process

By Adriana Burkins

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**Name:** Karen Rockhead

**Church:** New Zion Baptist Church

**Health Factors:** Weight and family

history of diabetes

**Her Story:** As a nurse in the Charlotte area, Karen Rockhead has seen how diabetes, heart disease and stroke are all associated with obesity and inactivity. So three years ago, to help improve her own health, she joined the Village HeartBEAT program at her church. Diabetes runs in Rockhead's family, and in recent years she's been battling to lose weight. By joining in with others at her church, she figured she'd stand a better chance of success.

The most difficult part so far has been



For Karen Rockhead, getting fit is a gradual process. The Charlotte-area nurse says she was aware of how diabetes, heart disease and stroke are all associated with obesity and inactivity. (Photo: Adriana Burkins)

finding time for exercise. She sometimes walks on her lunch breaks or after work. She also has exercise equipment at home, and when she wants a cardio workout, she pops in a tape. Sometimes her four children join her in walks, a game a basketball or even a race to the car when they're out and about.

Rockhead says the easiest change has been making better food choices. She uses a portion-control plate and salad bowl to measure her intake, and she's learned healthier ways to cook by attending cooking demonstrations. Turkey chops are now a favorite on the menu. And to avoid empty calories, she's drinking more water instead of sweet drinks.

Gradually, Rockhead has seen weight loss and an increase in energy. Her biggest source of support has been her Village HeartBEAT church members who are always looking out for each other and holding one another accountable.

**Her advice:** "Don't give up, be consistent and don't expect quick changes, because one or two pounds a week is a healthy weight loss. Just make small changes, and then you will see the bigger picture."



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## cityhealth

APRIL 15, 2015  
www.qcitymetro.com

### Amelia Smith: Finding time in her busy schedule to exercise

By Adriana Burkins

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**Name:** Amelia Smith

**Church:** Greater Salem Church

**Interest in Village HeartBEAT:** Fitness and learning about potential health risks  
**Her story:** If you want to catch Amelia Smith, you'd better lace up your walking shoes. The retired accounting technician says she doesn't slow her pace for anyone, not even her husband, who sometimes walks with her.

"He just can't keep up with me," she joked. "I've always walked fast."

Citymetro caught up with Smith at the Johnson C. Smith University HealthPlex, where she exercises each week with her Greater Salem Church teammates.



Amelia Smith, a retired accounting technician, is part of the Village HeartBEAT team at Greater Salem Church. Her team leader calls her a model of consistency. (Photo: Glenn H. Burkins for Qcitymetro.com)

Smith joined Village HeartBEAT three years ago. Before that, she would walk around her neighborhood "off and on." Smith remembered that during her first year in the program she lost the most weight in her group. She gained some of it back then lost it again. This year, the Greater Salem team is looking to win the weight-loss category.

Despite being retired, finding time for exercise remains a challenge, says Smith, who helps care for an aging mother. But despite her busy pace, she has made staying fit a priority.

Smith said she especially enjoys water aerobics and yoga, the latter of which she described as "excellent." "It just makes me feel so good," she said. Although Smith has been taking care of her mother and hasn't been able to exercise as often as she would like, she has a plethora of exercise DVDs at home.

**From the team captain:** Denise Cathey, the Village HeartBEAT captain of Greater Salem, said she likes Smith because of her consistency. The team started out with about 30 people, but over time, all

but 12 drifted away. Cathey said Smith is quick to volunteer and set an example for others. "She's walking every Saturday. Every Monday she's here. Through the years I've seen a person who's grown...who wants to lose weight."



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# MEDIA COVERAGE

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PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, PRIDE AND PROGRESS

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