

WE ARE GLASSHOUSE COLLECTIVE



Glass House Collective was founded in 2012 with the goal of bringing life back to this special part of Chattanooga. But what our founders learned was that life had always been here — and always will be. Instead, we set out to walk side-by-side with neighbors, nurturing a way of life rooted in this place and expressed through the arts and culture.

GHC has always worked as a collective: a team effort, sharing in the work of community-building. Many hands make light work, and the work of the organization is the work of the neighborhood. Together we've grieved losses and celebrated triumphs and worked hard to make positive changes that serve us all.

This work would have been impossible without the support from the organizations and institutions and congregations who shared in our vision for Glass Street. Without our neighbors, partners and businesses, our success would not have spread in the same way. And we're so grateful.

This collective has accomplished so much, and has so much to take pride in. The past ten years have proven the power of creative placemaking to increase pride and strengthen purpose. This community has risen together again and again.

But there will always be ways that this community can do more, for each other

and for the future of East Chattanooga.

We're inviting you, the community, to own Glass House Collective's future. We've hired a transition manager to help create more opportunities for engagement within the neighborhood. And we're excited to see what the community does next.

In this newspaper, published in honor of Glass Street Live 2021, you'll learn more about the team members and neighbors that will be part of GHC moving forward. And you'll learn a little about our past, present and future hopes — plus all the ways you can be a part of making change a positive, ongoing part of the Glass Farm story.

GLASS HOUSE

A NEIGHBORHOOD COLLECTIVE

HERE BECAUSE

WE

LOVE

IT

HERE



A LETTER FROM TEAL

THE UPSIDES OF CHANGE

A lot of things have changed about Chattanooga and the Glass Farm neighborhood in the last ten years — but the important things have remained.

I've worked in this community for a decade, meeting neighbors, building friendships, creating projects that bring us together for a single day, like Glass Street LIVE — and working with you to create structures that will last for years, like our new sidewalks, street lights, and new businesses.

Glass House Collective started with the premise of using creativity as a tool for change, and we were so fortunate to be able to build on the creativity that has and will always be here! Seeing this community's creative capabilities at work has been the honor of my lifetime, and looking back, I never could have imagined how much you would achieve.

You made it possible for the neighborhood to take on a project like Glass Street LIVE and make it

unlike anything else happening in Chattanooga. You helped put over half a million dollars of City Hall's capital dollars into critical infrastructure improvements. You brought a fresh grocery store to the block. You brought together over 75 local artists and 50 partners and engaged thousands for neighbors from within and outside the Glass Farm neighborhood. Together, we collected, dreamed, built, and celebrated. I'm so grateful I got to play a part in it all.

Glass House Collective has been my job, my personal passion, and love for nearly ten years. Change, of course, is another constant, and my role as the director of Glass House Collective will close at the end of this year. That won't change the role you still play in making this the neighborhood you want it to be.

I know there is still a lot of potential to be realized and work to be done here, and in so many ways, the vision for what the neighborhood can be is only now taking shape. The transition manager will come on board in the new year and work with our community Advisory Council and other community members like you to chart the organization's future. While Glass House Collective is changing, the next chapter in East Chattanooga's Glass Farm neighborhood has yet to be written, by the community, with the community, for the community. I can't wait to see what comes next.

*Thank you for ten years of memories
and friendships.*

- Teal Thibauld, *Director*

Real Photo



Tina Stewart
Business Owner



JaMichael Jordan
Pastor



Rosalyn Stewart-Kalaukoa
Business Owner



Latoia Glatt
Business Owner

MEET THE GLASS HOUSE COLLECTIVE

Advisory Council

The Glass House Collective Advisory Council was established in 2021 in an effort to build community power. Council members — each one passionate about the Glass Farm neighborhood — have played an active role in programming and decision-making. They’ve also lent their unique community knowledge to help create neighborhood initiatives — and on top of it all, invested their time in learning the art of community organizing.

They began the year by diving into the history of Glass Farm and the resident-led groups that have operated in the area. Throughout the year they have participated in decision-making related to the Glass Street Gateway Intersection Plan and Glass Street LIVE and co-created the Art Means Business grant program, which utilizes artistic activation to support small businesses along Glass Street.

During Sway: The People’s Guide to Community Organizing, council members learned alongside local

artists through a curriculum developed by Chattanoogaans in Action for Love, Equality and Benevolence (CALEB). Council members studied strategies to strengthen their community and work together on a common goal. They are currently using their newly acquired skills to advocate for Glass Farm residents to be included in the plans for the new vocational school that’s being developed in the old Mary Ann Garber School.

The Art Means Business program awarded grants to four Glass Street business owners to use arts and culture to strengthen their businesses. The first program was Ashanti’s “African American Hair is Art”. This incredible experience taught attendees about the history of African American hair, and wowed the crowd with a showcase of African hairstyles, clothes, and food. H&R Block and Save A Lot are using their grant to beautify the neighborhood through murals on their buildings. First Step Christian Daycare is sponsoring Bethlehem on Glass, a drive-thru live nativity that will take place in December.



Ricardo Nache
Community Partner



Deborah Bledsoe
Resident



Jamila Dunigan
Resident



Audrey McClure
Resident



A PARTY THAT’S ALL ABOUT PLACE!

Started in 2012, the Glass Street LIVE block party has always been a fun way to build relationships while showcasing the good in our neighborhood. It has turned into a vibrant celebration — and attracted over 5,000 people from across Chattanooga.

GHC initially partnered with residents to host creative activities, live entertainment, and food for this unforgettable day, year after year. And in 2019, Glass Street LIVE was organized by a committee of neighborhood stakeholders and a new and exciting committee was formed again to bring you this year’s Glass Street LIVE.

Leading up to each of the events, GHC facilitated community planning meetings and worked with fellow organizers to secure sponsorship dollars. We hope to see this committee continue Glass Street LIVE moving forward. We appreciate the support of Chattanooga Neighborhood Arts Partnership this year as well!



2021 Committee

Ricardo Morris, Tina Stewart, Rosalyn Stewart-Kalaukoa, Mimi Dunigan, Pastor JaMichael Jordan, Audrey McClure, Deborah Bledsoe, Ricardo Nache, Lynesha Lake, Rose Prince, Justine Jones, Katherlyn Geter, Wayne Brown, Myra Cook, Levar Wilson, Joe Lautigar, Ericka Holmes, C-Grimey, Anthony Watkins, Sasse Lamunika, Bishop Freddie Hambrick, Gail McKeel, Terry Williams, Daniel Gamble, Tara Poole, Erika Roberts, Lynesha Lake, and Teal Thibaud

Shout out to our 2019 Committee

Glenda Welcher, Belinda Thronton, Darrell Martin, Carmen Davis, Reggie Campbell, David Raley, Rocksand Martin, Joel Tippins, Tinica Caperton, Janette Richie, Dr. Holmes, Carlos Hampton, Alan Shropshire, Joyce Watson, Erika Roberts, Justine Jones, Deborah Bledsoe, Gail MckKeel, Joe Lautigar, and Greg Alford



MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

While Glass Street is full of engaged neighbors, we're celebrating a few that are close to our work and close to our hearts. Not only do Gail McKeel, Audrey McClure, and Deborah Bledsoe represent the spirit of the neighborhood, they have been a huge part in bringing Glass House Collective's programs to life.

ONE LITTLE LIBRARY AND THE BIG COMMUNITY BEHIND IT

Letter to the Editor:
Gail McKeel



In the spring of 2014, a couple of neighbors and I found ourselves attempting to make temporary improvements on Glass Street in front of the pop-up shop called The Glass Flea.

We had acquired a bookshelf along the way, and tasked a neighborhood teenager, Elijah, to apply a coat of paint on it. Elijah stated it would be a good idea to fill it with books and leave it on the sidewalk for everyone to enjoy a book. Elijah said wheels could be put on it and move it around if needed.

The conversation continued at one of the Good Neighbor Network meetings. The idea of a free public library was tossed around. Possibly with wheels. "We could make it look like a train" someone said. Captain Eddy Chamberlin of the Chattanooga Police Department was in attendance and said they, CPD, would like to help in some way make this a reality, whether with funding or with manual labor. The group became excited as the conversation continued. GNN decided to pay homage to the 630 Steam

Locomotive built in February of 1904 that is currently owned and operated by Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum just up the street from Glass Street.

Katie McAllister, a neighbor and one of the original founders of GNN, quickly sketched out an engine. Well into the meeting, with a sketch in hand, and a list of materials, everyone sighed a big sigh of relief, a plan was made, and the work began. With funding of one hundred dollars from the Chattanooga Police Department, we started gathering materials.

Elise Walker would get busy giving the original bookshelf a fresh coat of paint and then begin hand painting the "Conductor" of the 630 Little Free Library.

As the materials were purchased, donated, and gathered, members of GNN would meet at an open space, borrow power from one of our neighbors to power the welder, and would work into the evening.

Fulmer Concrete donated an empty metal drum, motorcycle wheels from an art installation from the former Custom Cycles shop were used for the wheels, someone donated a piece of tin roofing, neighbors kept showing up to ask what else is needed. After the artwork was done and the paint was dry, the 630 Little Free Library was literally assembled in one day.

With borrowed power, Travis Yeagley and T.J. Mitchell brought out the welder and their engineering skills and crafted together a masterpiece. Katie McAllister and Elise Walker would continue to apply coats of paint as necessary. Rondell Crier at Studio Everything helped with the plexiglass and magnetic closures to protect the books for inclement weather.

Some neighbors were there for moral support. Rebekah Mawuko, Gail McKee, Ron Young, and Amanda Mitchell assisted whenever they could. David McAllister was busy forming



and pouring the concrete slab in the corner park at Glass Street and N. Chamberlain for the new home of the 630 Little Free Library.

The installation was set and the reveal would draw attention from the media, neighbors, passersby, and people boarding and offboarding the bus at the Carta bus stop.

Memorial Hospital took a particular interest in the LFL and they regularly donated books. Members of GNN continued to maintain the LFL, knowing it was an important asset to the community.

But the story doesn't end there.

In December 2020, during the pandemic, SIX years after the creation and installation of the LFL, Ms Audrey McClure made it her mission to register the LFL with the national Little Free Library Organization and receive the Chapter # 114029.

We would like to thank everyone who had a hand in the creation and installation of this unique LFL and more importantly, we are here to thank and acknowledge Ms Audrey McClure for getting it put on the map.

Thank you, all!



ABOUT GAIL MCKEEL

Gail McKeel first connected to Glass House Collective in the summer of 2012 during our On the Lot party — and she's been a committed, passionate volunteer ever since.

As the former past secretary of the Glass Farm Neighborhood Association and founding member of the Good Neighbor Network, she regularly visits neighbors to keep up with their needs.

Together with one of her closest friends, Gail set up a Pop-Up Glass Flea in a vacant storefront for the Better Block day-long event in 2013. Glass Flea was so successful

it continued for another 7 months. A few years ago, Gail became an official homeowner (she discovered her house in the neighborhood at a yard sale, of all things!), and she worked with GHC to stabilize her home through Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization Program. She is also passionate about research and stays in the loop on all things news, zoning, development, and crime.

Gail has been instrumental in so many projects which makes it hard to highlight just a few. There are no limits for Gail and her efforts to bring others to the table to dream big and get things done. She is known as 'Yard Sale Gail' and the "Bulldog of East Chattanooga".

We love her so!



GHC BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: AUDREY MCCLURE

One afternoon, a volunteer led by Dr. Everlena Holmes knocked on Audrey McClure's door to see if she had any interest in becoming a Block Leader. It was the start of something very special.

Ms Audrey was interested, and through her involvement with the Block Leaders she learned about GHC and started attending community meetings for the Good Neighbor Network. She partnered with the neighborhood association and other resident-led groups to host movies in the park and continued working with Gail McKeel and others on decorating Glass Street around



the holidays and assisting with volunteer clean-ups when needed.

Ms. Audrey had a hand in planning resident-led Christmas parties and shared that one of the highlights of living in the neighborhood was walking in the Glass Street LIVE parade in 2016 in her Block Leader shirt.

While working with the Block Leaders, she also got involved in the Area 3 planning process, various back-to-school fundraisers, and backpack giveaways for the local Hardy Elementary youth.

Ms. Audrey loves the Glass Farm neighborhood pride banner hanging from her house and has been actively involved in writing letters to the City for streetscape investment, facilitating meetings about the future of Harriet Tubman, and even spray painting the sidewalks near the East Chatt Rec Center to give kids something to smile about on their walk.

Ms. Audrey leans into her involvement in the Good Neighbor Network, Glass Farm Neighborhood Association, and the Block Leader program every day and is working hard to create one umbrella resident-led organization for everyone to work together and get organized. On top of it all, she serves on our Board of Directors and plans to continue her involvement through the transition as a resident and leader of our community.

GHC STAFF SPOTLIGHT: DEBORAH BLEDSOE

*"Excuse me brother
Is there something wrong?
We've all been places where we don't belong.
But if you feel that you have gone astray
Give me your hand and let me help you find your way*

*Cause
Surely together we can work it out
If there's any anger
We'll just cast it out
Join in together
And there will be no doubt
Surely together we can work it out
Surely together we can work it out!"*

- Song Written and Performed by
Deborah Bledsoe

Glass Farm resident and gospel singer/songwriter Deborah Bledsoe is a shining light in the community — one that just happens to sing beautifully. Deborah has shared her love and positivity throughout Glass Farm since 2009 and got involved with Glass House Collective through her participation in Gospel on Glass in 2015.

Deborah remembers how much fun it was, being out in the open and meeting new people during that first Gospel on Glass festival. That year's event was organized by Marcellus Barnes of Unity Performing Arts Foundation of Chattanooga and featured 17 African American performers, plus local food, t-shirt screen printing, and an interactive arts activity. In 2017, Gospel on Glass took place at the former Harriet Tubman site, as part of the three-day Highlight Festival. Since 2018, Gospel on Glass has merged with Glass Street LIVE, bringing gospel music to the day-long block party.

Deborah and David have been involved in all of the above, whether through the church or with their own band, 2Deepwithin. In 2018 Deborah was hired to curate the gospel music, a role she has continued to this day. Deborah describes her participation in Gospel on Glass as an "honor to be able to bring the spirit of love to the community."



Deborah is an essential member of the Glass Street LIVE planning committee. She believes the block party is good for the neighborhood and the entire East Chattanooga area, giving people something to look forward to.

Deborah has been a huge part of the Glass Farm story, and of the GHC story. As a participant in Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization program in 2016, Deborah became more deeply involved with our work. She attended Good Neighbor Network meetings, hosted a dinner in 2017 to collect input from her neighbors about the Dodson Avenue/Glass Street intersection, participated in the first session of SWAY: The People's Guide to Community Organizing, and then joined our Advisory Council in 2021.

But through it all, she describes her most important work as being the



relationships she's built with so many people, which fulfill and motivate her. "I appreciate and give honor to God for it all and thank my current pastor Alan Harrington for his guidance and encouragement," she said.

If you ask Deborah about her role with Glass House Collective, she'll tell you that she's just a regular neighbor. But she is such an integral part of the organization that she is now a member of the staff. As the GHC Community Coordinator, Deborah specializes in bringing the voice of the community to life through her work. She's a connector and a collaborator with a gift for door-knocking and mobilizing, not to mention her singing and songwriting talents. Deborah is looking forward to continuing on with her neighbors and her new friends that she's met along the way, continuing the ideas and supporting new ideas and all that goodness.

TEN YEARS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



2014: FROM ARTS FUNDING TO ARTS ACTIVATION

Launched **artist residencies** to help activate public spaces and set up studios, including:

- Supporting artist Rondell Crier's woodworking space
- Opening GHC space to Rebekah Mawuko's dance studio
- Supporting the creation of graffiti alley, a spoken word series led by Genesis the Greykid and urban art classes by The Artist SEVEN

Developed **Glass Street Park**, a space built by local architects and volunteers

Co-hosted first **Gospel on Glass** event, which became a recurring event

Launched a **pop-up skate park**



2015: FROM RETHINK TO NEXT BIG THING

Paused to rethink, rebuild, and raise new funding;

Hosted **Next Big Thing conference** to identify new priorities

Refocused priorities to include Public Space & Streetscape; Business Development; Residential

Published second "How To" guide with new strategies laid out

Recruited artists to activate short-term projects from workshop

Studio Everything: Following a GHC artist residency, Rondell Crier secured outside funding to keep his Studio Everything going, serving local youth



2016: FROM PLANNING TO PARTNERSHIP

Recruited **Habitat for Humanity's Neighborhood Revitalization** to help support residential improvements

Worked with **Sherman Reservation National Park** to connect Glass Street to the Greenway

Launched **Active Trails** to help get local kids more comfortable in the great outdoors

Recruited **Shaking Ray Levi Society and artist Wayne White** to host a puppet parade during Glass Street LIVE

Hosted our largest **Glass Street LIVE** block party yet



2017: FROM CELEBRATIONS TO STREET-LEVEL PROGRAMS

Hosted the **Highlight Festival**, a 3-day party on the vacant Harriet Tubman site featuring The Pool, Gospel on Glass, local hip-hop and spoken word performances, and a DJ

Continued to **host GNN meetings** as well as beautification blitzes

Partnered with **green|spaces** on a power program to reduce residents' energy bills

Residents took the lead on an annual **Christmas Party** and handled all details

Organized **early plantings and streetscaping** on Chamberlain Avenue



2018: FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE TO NEIGHBORHOOD PULL

Launched **Neighborhood Pride Campaign** in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, including:

- Addressing resident needs
- Creating banners and yard signs to showcase pride in Glass Farm
- Community-led branding process

Worked with the property owner to turn a vacant building into a **new GHC HQ** and further renovate a historic Glass Street space for use by local business

Turned streetscape focus to the intersection of **Dodson Avenue and Glass Street**

Hosted planning dinners for neighbors to share ideas for the Dodson plan (formalized but never adopted)

Advocated for and helped recruit a **new grocery store** after a local shop was closed by the health department



For nearly a decade, Glass House Collective has worked with the Glass Farm community. Here are a few highlights from our shared story — the events that brought us and our neighbors together.



2019: FROM CITY PLANNING TO LOCAL ORGANIZING

With many **housing improvements underway**, questions arose around whether GHC should invest in properties to avoid encroachment of gentrification and slumlords

In response, we launched **Sway: The People's Guide to Community Organizing**, a program that:

- Answered to resident-identified needs for neighbors to be involved in development
- Provided a curriculum for working WITH communities, not FOR them
- Taught principles of community organizing
- Brought live training sessions to the neighborhood
- Recruited 5 residents and 5 artists to complete the curriculum and create a project together, showcased at Glass Street LIVE

Hosted **Stir It Up workshop** to make Chattanooga's "River to Ridge" Area 3 Plan actionable at the local level

Created list of **ideas and priorities** from the workshop and brought these to residents to set goals for 2020 and beyond

Glass Street LIVE was hosted and led entirely by neighborhood committee

Business on the Rise

We were thrilled to celebrate the entrance of new businesses and opportunities launched by and for residents in 2019/2020:

- All Good Coffee Shop & Used Book Store opened and resident-owner renovated storefronts
- Nippon Paint announced a new facility in area, creating 150 jobs over 5 to 7 years
- Millennial Nail Bar, Chattanooga's first Black-owned nail salon, opened on Glass St.
- The Village Church & Purpose Point, a community-focused church and health clinic, opened in the neighborhood, bringing more resources to residents
- Save A Lot opened and brought groceries and other retail to residents



2020: FROM BIG GOALS TO NEW REALITY

Produced **Through Glass**, an arts response to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, that connected people while remaining socially distant

Emphasized the importance of **racial equity** in our work; conducted formal training for board members and staff and issued a public statement on GHC position towards racial justice

Hosted **Planning by Doing** workshop to improve connectivity, comfort, and access across Glass Street near Dodson & Glass intersection, coined the Glass Street Gateway

Recruited **Build It Green** program from green|spaces to work in former bike co-op space

Hosted **Meet and Eat** community-building events on Zoom to keep community members engaged in the midst of the pandemic



2021: FROM ZOOM CALLS TO STREET-LEVEL CELEBRATIONS

Launched **Advisory Council** of residents and business owners to vet community programming and complete the 'SWAY' curriculum

Launched **Art Means Business**, a grant program to invest in local businesses

Organized **Asphalt Art Mural** on Crutchfield Street in front of new Save-a-Lot and created community programming around its creation to highlight walkability

Installed a temporary **vertical street park** as a pilot to test for a potential future semi-permanent park

Worked closely with **Save A Lot grocery store** as a new neighborhood partner

Partnered with **Build It Green** to weatherize homes, contribute to residential improvements, and create a pipeline for new training and jobs in the area

Worked with the community to bring **Glass Street LIVE** back to the block

Created a transition plan to hire **Daniel Gamble** as the new community liaison

Actively **fundraised** to help celebrate and support the community's future work



GLASS STREET
WORD SEARCH

TVRR TRAIN
SANDYS
WORLD'S CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD
HARDY
EAST CHATT CENTER
HOPE FOR THE INNER CITY
SAVE A LOT
MURALS
SHERMAN RESERVATION
LITTLE FREE LIBRARY
GLASS STREET PARK
LOVE PARK
BUS SHELTERS
ART BENCHES
COMMUNITY SPACE
WILDER
NORTH CHAMBERLAIN
GLASS
DODSON
CRUTCHFIELD
ASHANTIS
PROGRESS BARBERSHOP
HR BLOCK
MARK MAKING
VILLAGE
IDMR
NEW COVENANT
COMMUNITY OF CHRIST
HOPE FOR THE INNER CITY
HARDY ELEMENTARY
EAST CHATT REC CENTER
ALLGOODS COFFEE AND BOOK STORE
THE HIVE

F P L S P V B A L W T T N E W C O V E N A N T X S F M D E T
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I C Q Y R R D Y O X F Z A M I Y Z A R T B E N C H E S S U Q



Through glass...
smudged with the fingerprints of life.
The lens.....
Peering into the sands of future times
From their lives it becomes clear
A community of faces.
History glowing
Learning amidst the fear
A neighborhood of strength.

Taking a hope filled
stand together

Harmoniously moving through time.
Voices speaking to the corners of the
soul.
Spreading faith one note at a time.

Life is Planted
Love is Potted
Legacy is Placed
Living is Plentiful

Proudly proclaiming and owning their
space.
Promising to provide movement.
Pledging to work together.

Through glass cleaned with optimism
Unbreakable bonds
Sharing this moment.
Turning the mute off of memories
hearing them louder.
A community of faces.
History glowing like torches.
A neighborhood of strength.

- ERIKA ROBERTS
Glass House Collective's
Creative Strategist

