



***THIRD ANNUAL***

## **Valley Junction Neighborhood Reunion Labor Day Weekend 2015**

**Music & Spoken Word Thursday, Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> 6:00-8:30 PM**

**Friday, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> 5:00-8:00 PM: The Junction Speaks**

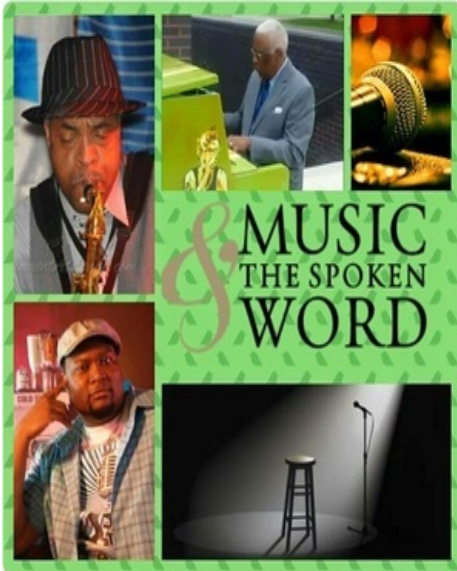
**Saturday, Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> 1:00-10:00 PM: Taste of the Junction Street Festival**

Sponsored by Taste of the Junction, Inc.



# 2015 Taste Weekend Festival

## It's Going Down In The Junction!



### Live Jazz & Spoken Word

**Thursday, Sept. 3rd  
6-8:30 pm**

**Inspired Grounds Cafe  
117 5th Street  
West Des Moines, Iowa**

Spoken Word by Leonard Bell, Poets, and open mic

Jazz Interludes by Don Brown & Dwight Jackson



### The Junction Speaks

**Friday, Sept. 4th  
5:00-8:00 pm**

**Valley Community Center  
4440 Fuller Road  
West Des Moines, Iowa**

Come learn about the Descendants of the Junction

History of Mt Hebron Baptist Church featuring soloist Rev. Alex Crawford, Jr. & Minister Denise Cavil



### Taste Street Festival

**Saturday, Sept. 5th  
1:00-10:00 pm**

**Railroad Park Pavilion 5th Street in Historic Valley Junction**

**BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIRS & YOUR DANCING SHOES!**

2 pm DSM Metro Mix Group  
3 pm Isiserettes Drill & Drum Corps

4-7 pm Sumpin Doo featuring George & Gil Davis

7-10 pm The Tony Valdez Large Band

**Fun For The Whole Family~ Vendors~ Inflatables~ & More!**

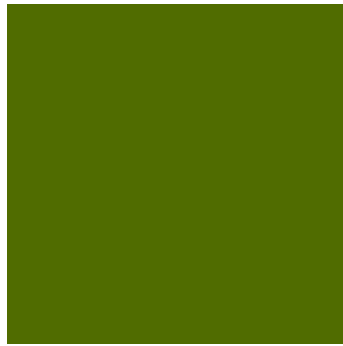


Don  
Brown



Dwight  
Jackson





+

# SAY WHAT! POETRY OPEN MIC NIGHT CHAT BOOK



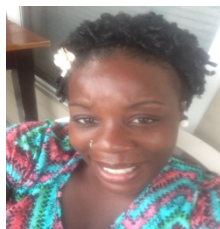
**Rosenna Bakari**



**Louis Fountain**



**Che'rae Hill**



**Tracie Pugh**



**Migue Ramirez**

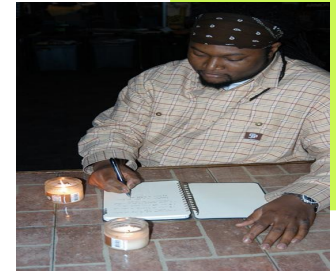


**Annissa Roland**

# How Does A Poet Start Writing?

“Like every kid in school. The first one was in kindergarten. The teacher had us write Valentine’s Day poems, and I wrote to my mom,” Leonard recounted. Leonard “Lenny” Bell, New Orleans native, came to Iowa as a student at Iowa State University and to Des Moines by marriage. The muse for Lenny’s poems comes from his environments and, like most of us, love. The next memorable writing happened at the age of 13 in a creative writing class at the University of New Orleans. He describes the program as an attempt to “get me off the streets so that I wouldn’t be a thug. It gave me an opportunity to get me off the block. I wrote about the troubles I saw in my neighborhood. What troubled me.” To see Lenny on the stage of his 11 year poetry events, Say What! Poetry, you would think he was a born performer. His consciousness fills the room and encourages as well as challenges those to speak their minds, their hearts, their truths. But just the opposite was true of his beginnings. “I was observant and mostly introverted. And didn’t talk much. I wrote, and did a lot of day-dreaming. That was my life. Of course I did things other boys did like football to try to fit in. I didn’t really care. I was different. It depressed me, so I wrote.” A natural poet, and arguably a performer even then, his first audience was a forbidden crush across the alley, his first love. Lenny narrates, “I would write to her like a hip-hop Romeo and Juliet. She was in the upstairs next-door window and I was downstairs. When the crush ended so did my writing. Around 16 I stopped writing anything.”

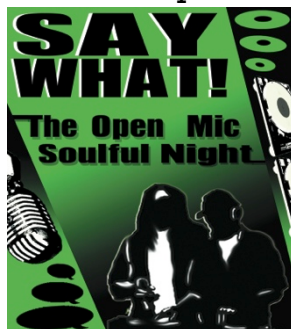
A change of environment awakened the lyrical giant. At 19 as a Iowa State University student Lenny recorded the differences of where he came from, where he was, and aspirations. Thinking back, Lenny reflects, “I was in a low place when I came to



ISU, so it was building me back up.” However, it wasn’t until his poetry was accidentally stolen from a computer lab printer that others read his work. His gift made room for him once he was reunited with his memoirs and appreciated as a poet. “I wrote it for me and not the world, so I was almost offended that they had read it without any knowledge of who I was. I didn’t give it a value, good or bad. It was just what I was talking about. It made me extraordinary. It made me worthy. I had something to offer. I became ‘the truth’.”

Fast-forward to a new environment and loves gained and loves lost, the birth of a cultural phenomenon began, Say What! Poetry. “It was always in the air, doing what I was doing, and who I was rolling with. There was a show going on before. At the time the unknown poet was the last to take the stage. Mic in hand, spitting fire, and with the encouragement of a dear friend by his side, ignited an idea. After several unfortunate events, however, that club closed. The show stopped. There was nothing. No poetry. Lenny and friend found a willing location with a stage and a mic. House of Bricks was the only place that agreed to provide the space with little in return. “No one thought it would last. But here we are 11 ½ years later.”

What affect has Say What! Poetry had on the Des Moines area community? “So, it has gone from nothing to something. It has gone from kids with lyrics to adults and seniors sharing their lives. Some poets have even gone on and started their own shows.” When asked what is Lenny’s role as an artist in this community, he sighs. “People have asked me what is next. Now to the group of poets I run with I am more of a leader, the engine at the front of the train. This would have happened without me; it would just have been different. I encourage others. And as a poet, I write.”



# When the Rains First Came

By Leonard Bell



When the rains first came I was cut off

I was cut off

Not only from the phone

but from the reality I used to call home

A place once feared

now revered for its history

A past that overcasts

the crime and corruption

Of so many unsolved mysteries

where hot boys are decoys

used to avoid a deeper discussion

Within a city still lusting for more self  
destruction

Growing up there I learned the art of  
hustling doing odd jobs

Odd because it didn't involve dope dealing,

killing, or getting robbed

I grew up deep in the belly

where the beast is still hungry

For sex - gold chains

And other people's money

But when the rains first came

I was cut off

Not only from the  
phone



But from the reality I used to called home

Where mothers still cry

While getting high

And American Pie is just a movie

Always outnumbered always outwitted

Always broke yet always outfitted

Get it

A place where I traveled a line that's divine  
by design

so I didn't mind when folks said I straddle

Cause from the fence

I could see the battle

Ward against ward

All herded like cattle

And I too had Mad Cow Disease

Ready to fight my enemies

Until I realized the enemy was me

Me vs. Me

Like he vs. she

Like she vs. he

Like we vs. we

But when the rains first came I was cut off

Not only from the phone

But from the place I used to call home

I remember like yesterday

My Mama say a lil boy got raped

No yellow tape or investigation

Too much chaos and devastation  
Someone stole their water and her purse  
No more Social Security card to prove  
she was her  
Invisible to many no connection to the TV  
And the more I say I see on the tube  
The more she say son that's not true  
Too many kids crying suicide is climbing  
Blood and feces everywhere  
They putting us on the streets like they  
don't care  
Dehydration settling in Grandma is out  
her skin  
She say she can see the buses but they  
won't let them in  
Been there for days now  
Everyone is crazed now  
Not enough cheese to feed the rats in the  
maze now  
Bodies floating by helicopters in the sky  
More and more cries Why Lord Why  
When the rains first came no one could  
have predicted  
The worst ever response to terror all  
documented  
World wide news on TV  
When the Levees broke by Spike Lee  
And me getting a play by play courtesy of  
AT&T  
Amidst a few shoulda coulda wouldas and  
God will see us through  
Came the I can hear it coming, I'm  
scared, this is it, I love you

Amidst a few shoulda coulda wouldas and  
God will see us through


Came the I can hear it coming, I'm scared,  
this is it, I love you

A thunder with so much passion I could only  
hear its scream

Then a click

Disconnect

When the rains first came



## Thank You Mothers (Because of You, I Am Here)

By Leonard Bell

As age settles on me like a mosquito

Digging deep and sucking out my  
insecurities

I bring forth this reflection dedicated to the  
women

Who have truly moved me

And this is also dedicated to the women like  
them

Who helped other young men become a  
man

It is now in my manhood that I truly  
understand

The worth of a woman

You can say I saw first hand how women  
Stand strong in the struggle  
How many a man left them alone to provide  
for the kids  
As men grew fascinated with the hustle  
When it came to the women in my life there  
were many  
9 in one house...that was plenty  
My mother three sisters my aunt three  
cousins  
And my grandma along with my grandpa  
brother and me  
You never seen drama like the drama when  
at the same time we all had to pee  
But seriously my mother inspired me in more  
ways than one  
Even when she was down and out  
She refused to lower her standards for her  
son  
She would say boy  
Come here  
Hold your head to the sky  
Don't deny yourself the  
pleasures  
The infinite treasures  
And keep your eyes on the prize  
Recognize life ain't nothing but a runway  
However long or short we all fly one day  
My grandma kept it real and said the lord  
calls us all  
But it's up to us to respond when we get that  
call  
Nah You could run these streets like a pit bull



Or you could praise his name all day long  
Men are alike in their promises  
But it's in their deeds that they sing a  
different song  
My sisters and cousins they were all  
wired the same  
"You hit me I hit you back I don't play that  
game"  
This was my family dominated by women  
definitely  
Not to mention the women who  
represented the block my truly extended  
family  
I'm talking about Ms. Matilda, Ms.  
Barbara, Ms. Luella, Mrs. Pate, Mrs. Diggs  
Ms. Bergeron and Ms. Sharon and Ms.  
Marlene...  
None of them ever hesitated to share a  
word with me  
Or the word for that matter  
Seeds were planted in all sorts of ways  
Ms. Sharon always thought it cool that  
with the younger kids I would play  
Ms. Matilda always said I was the son  
she never had  
Ms. Bergeron always seem to catch me  
doing bad  
Ms. Luella eventually allowed me to date  
her daughter  
Ms. Barbara was gangsta and protected  
me from the slaughter  
Mrs. Pate had an education and said that I  
should get one too  
Ms. Marlene was the nicest and always  
told the truth



Mrs. Diggs taught me humility as I helped  
her care for her dying husband

All these women taught me what it meant  
to leave footsteps in the sand

They say a woman can't teach a man how  
to be a man

But I believe these women all taught me  
how to stand

Because of them I had to opportunity to  
become one

With them in my life I am happy that I am  
one

Thank you for being strong enough to do  
both jobs when you have to

If not I'd be a statistic, forgotten, and  
never looked to

Thank you

For motivating me to

Live

Give life

Find a wife

Explore

Learn

Know God

Give back more and more

Have peace

Be myself

And travel the road no one else will

To know that God has my back every time  
I do his will

Because of you and you and you and you

I am here



Leonard "Lenny" Bell

# Word Up

By Rosenna Bakari

How do you use words that haven't been  
invented

How do you let him know that at the time you  
really meant it

When time is esoteric with no agenda of its  
own

Like craving love so much that you just can't  
be alone

How do you sort through all of the incoming  
messages in your head

How do you write something that you never  
want read

cuz black and white

can start a fight

but fighting words

are never really heard

Turn up the volume, but the voice is still  
mute

How can you make words powerful enough  
to settle a dispute

Can you change the ending to an unhappy  
story

Do you think a few words can turn misery  
into glory

What language can be spoken

Without leaving you choking

When the vibe ain't working

Or you're trying to fix what ain't broken

Some write books or dissertations

Trying to explain their situation

But nothing works quite like poetry

To illuminate, clarify and set your mind free

A verse can humble us to receive and  
inspire us to give

Cut through hate so that love can live

There's a universal language that lifts you  
higher

The use of words that set your soul on fire

Sometimes a poem is the best expression

When life calls for an intercession



Rosenna Bakari

## Coffee Shop

By Louis Fountain

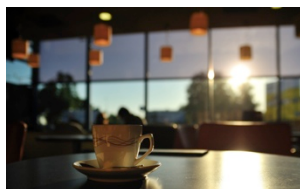
I know damn well I'm not the only back man  
in Iowa that drink coffee  
See, I know you may laugh, and it can be  
funny, but I know damn well there is more  
than me  
Some may see coffee, but I see life different  
than mine  
I see corporate grind  
I see meetings before the meetings  
I see white people eating  
and I'm not talking about the food  
I see democrats and republicans sitting at  
the same tables  
I see Christians and Jews;  
I see them looking at me trying to figure out  
why am I here and I wonder what he do?  
I see laptops and books  
I see lattes and corporate crooks  
I see students from Drake and their 40,000 a  
year education  
I see a lot of white people, a lot of white  
people.....

I see 500 dollar frames and coffee I can't  
even name  
I see privilege, I see exposure, I see kids  
I see cakes, pies, cookies and s\*\*\*  
I see bad clothes, dirty shoes and perfect  
teeth  
I still see those eyes looking at me  
Which is ok, cause I look right back and I  
look back with confidence  
and I'm conscience  
of where I'm at and why  
and at the moment I decide  
I decide that I too belong, but that has taken  
35 years to discover  
Which is too long  
What if I was born exposed to coffee shops?  
What if my mom drank latte's and my pops  
partake in Chai tea?



Louis Fountain

I feel like the black dot on a one point domino  
and I know when I slam it down, I will get no  
points  
My emotions are somewhat outta sorts  
Looking at white people s\*\*\*, like hoodies  
and shorts  
Ease dropping about their summer vacation  
islands and resorts  
ROTH IRA accounts and diversified portfolio  
I see loafers with no socks on, khakis and  
polos  
Armani suits and 200 dollars shoes  
I'm just a black man in a coffee shop  
intrigued, yet confused  
The coffee shop and all these white people  
are currently my muse  
There is no hate, no jealousy or even negative  
thoughts  
I'm just aware of my surroundings and I  
caught  
Myself looking around, smiling and saying to  
myself no one look like me  
Until I bought my son into the coffee shop the  
following week  
He saw his daddy order a medium vanilla  
latte, iced, no whip cream with an extra shot  
of espresso  
and he smiled.....  
Like that's my daddy and I'm his child



# Function in the Junction

By Che'rae Hill, 4th Generation

Birmingham, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; Washington DC; and even West Des Moines are amazing places to visit. Even though I have gone to faraway places, one of my favorites is nearby Valley Junction. Valley Junction is an amazing place to explore. It is the birthplace of West Des Moines, the Jordan House, and a neighborhood area once known as "Across the Tracks."

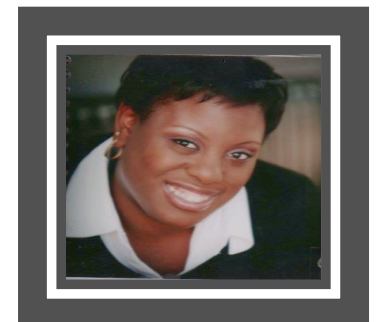
In 1845 James Jordan, a cattle farmer settled in what is now known as downtown fifth street. In the early days, the area was packed with businesses including shipping, trading, saloons, shoe stores, barber shops, and laces to eat. The streets were unpaved, dirty, muddy, and people used horses and horse drawn buggies for transportation, and later Model T cars. It had a small population that was mainly white. In 2013 the population was 56,503 of which 84% were Caucasian, 5.6% Hispanics, 3.4% Blacks, .2% Asian, and 1% American Indians.

The Jordan House was named after James Jordan, who was born in 1813 in West Virginia. In the mid 1800's he started building the Jordan house, as a Victorian style home with the use of Italianate Gothic design. Later on it became part of the Underground Railroad, a network of people who provided shelter, food, and healed slaves who escaped from the south to the north looking for freedom.

Several hundred slaves passed through the Iowa network. The Jordan house is currently used as a museum in West Des Moines and is listed on the national Registry of Historic Places.

In 1920-1921, the Rock Island Railroad Company hired African Americans and Hispanic workers to help build the railroad. Some of the families settled in Valley Junction and lived "across the tracks" south of Railroad Avenue. The area was weedy, dirt roads, so muddy and dark. The area would flood often because the Raccoon River was so close. The families lived in small, shabby houses; some were former railroad box cars. Some lived in large houses that were used as a rooming home for railroad workers.

Families of six to nine people lived in homes that had two or less bedrooms and no bathrooms. Small, narrow, wooden structure about 4x6 feet was called "outhouse." Inside was a wooden bench with a hole to sit on used as a toilet. The families lived in a close, loving and supportive neighborhood. Many years' later grandchildren and great grandchildren became doctors, lawyers, policemen, nurses, college professors, teachers, principals, and business executives who lived successful lives. The area still exists; the houses are gone but the rich history remains.



**Che'rae Hill**

## Hate No More

Tracie Pugh

Annihilate hate

Grab it by the throat

And choke out its insignificant existence,

And slay it's friends called misery and

Ignorance.

Let hate bully no more!

We stand here on a promise of love.

We fight for those who can't.

We fight for those who care.

We fight for opportunities to learn.

We fight for the truth.

We fight to uphold morals.

We fight to enhance values.

We fight for the righteous.

We fight for the meek.

We fight for the poor.

We fight for the ones who say no more...

No more will we let our voices be silent.

No more will we lie inactive and  
dormant.

For right now...

We are awake!

We are alive!

We are here...

And our strength

And our power

Is intense.

Even when some think we are history

We say...

Let them think what they want!

We are not mute

And we are not blind,

'Cause in a blink of an eye

We will soar...

Above the naysayers

Above the haters

Above the unbelievers

And they will learn

That we exist!

And they we learn

That our fight is ceaseless!

And they we learn that they should be  
afraid and aware of us

'Cause we are everywhere.

We are great friends

We are loyal allies

We are earnest sons and

We are stronger daughters.

We will persist!

We will not stray away from what's  
right!

We will stand unafraid...

To annihilate hate.

## Mercy and Grace

By Tracie Pugh

Life's hustle, bustle and grind keeps my mind focused on the little ones that depend on me more than they can ever know today...but in the distant tomorrow they will understand the conversations, the cries, and the laughs were all the lessons I wanted them to learn, to absorb, and to repeat in times when I am not around to remind them to be the strongest in the face of a storm for some day they too may become protectors of their own. My legacy rooted in morality, love, kindness, and truth as I've seen it, as I've lived it, as I've been taught. I usher, I beckon, I welcome the blessings to rain down on me and all I ever loved. Inundate my soul with Your Mercy and cover my days with Your Grace! Words from the heart, mind, and spirit! And I am still evolving into who I was meant to be.

Tracie



Pugh

## Wings

By Miguel Ramirez



Do I not have a voice, for I do not sing

I'll strive and thrive to fly, yet have no wings

Do I not breathe?

When cut do I not bleed?

And when the others are gone I will not flee

I will stand strong

I will stand strong against those who blindly obey

I will stand strong against those who try to take our rights away

I will stand strong

And if need be I'll throw rocks and stones at these clones and drones

For they have the money the guns and the power they have a house on  
the hill which they hind in and cower

But times running up cause this is our hour

Exposing the gap in between the have and have nots

Exposing the gap in United we stand

United we stand, divided we fall

Exposing the sovereignty in truth

Digging deep and exposing the roots

Digging deep on them, you need to dig deep on you

Find yourself a drummer, find a beat you can dance to

Find yourself a lover, find someone to get close to

Find yourself an edge, find yourself a ledge and scream so loud you  
wake the walking dead

Echoing the words inside their empty heads

While coming back to life they'll remember what I've said

Because I do have a voice, for I do sing

And I'll strive and thrive to fly until I spread my wings.

## The Chase

By Miguel Ramirez

Isn't it crazy how these crazy moments  
lead to crazy days turn into crazy nights

Where we just want to live and be loved  
and to touch one another with out  
resistance

And I chased

I chased down alley ways and roof tops

Down fire escapes till I could not stop

And I raced

I raced all the way home

Been drinking about to get stoned

When she sang

She sang a song and strummed a tune on  
a guitar that I never played

And she danced

She danced just like a moth toward the  
flame

And we burned together just the same

And we rocked

We rocket our youth or altered state

We plowed onto each other till we came

And we rolled

We rolled in and out of the flames

There's so much danger in playing these  
games

And it says it stays lingering inside my  
brain

It stays lingering till this very way

How I chased

How I raced

How she danced

How she sang

How we rocked

How we rolled

And it stains on my soul



Miguel Ramirez



## Smoky Griot

By Annissa Roland



I spent the day with my  
grandpa

A griot with a smoky deep voice

He rotisseried stories over the open pit of  
injustice and racism

The flames of which had scorched his eyes  
blurring the changes of the future to look  
like the smoke from the pit

I sat beside him trying to catch the drippings  
from the flesh on the stick

Trying to taste his story by catching some  
wisdom on my tongue

He spun 80 years of degradation

Of hurt, embarrassment, and poor education

Of working and hustling ten hours a day for a  
nation

That might have paid him one dollar for his  
sweat

And demand it back from a decorated vet

If he wanted to vote

For nothing that would change the pit from  
which he spoke

With each fleshy story rotating on that stick

He rubbed on some seasonings he got from  
his mama

Natural, supernatural and some organic

They wafted to my ears , And brought tears  
to my eyes, And smeared on my cheeks

Like eating watermelon to the rind

It's the part of the story that is best cooked  
on C.P. time

Cures the flesh, Brings strength to the  
blessed

And sends saints to drinking moonshine

Through the gray breath of the pit

His million dollar smile still spit

The gospel of his reality

Memories just yesterday before I was  
conceived

Doing what he believed was right

Yet the white man continued to deceive

But ev'ry once in a while ol' brare rabbit made  
away clean

Some scenes I didn't get

Although I didn't let on

The smoke was so thick

Burned my chest, Took away my breath

Watered my eyes, And gave me a headache

But he had been taking it in for so long

It became an accessory to his song

It rattled in his lungs

Became cumulous nimbus visions

That rained on progress and slanted his images

Charcoal ash colored his hair silver

Gray cotton that Eli's gin better beware

He had sat at this pit four scores strong

Turning these stories about in his mind

The swirling smoke became a sauna

Skin pruning and leathered with time

Seeing and hearing all of this

I listened for hours, Still famished & craving  
more

Drippings more, Smoke more, Raspy words

From my Grandpa Griot's pit

# Valley Junction's First Black Church

## Mt. Hebron Baptist Church

Rev. Bobby L. Young, Pastor



Mount Hebron Missionary Baptist Church began in the home of Rev. James Lewis and his family at 136 9th Street in Valley Junction, Iowa on January 18, 1919. Although Rev. Lewis worked tirelessly and faithfully for the new church, Rev. S.D. Warden, another church founder, became Mount Hebron's first Pastor.



In 1919 there were no black churches in Valley Junction. Rev. Dock Slaughter, one of Mount Hebron's founding members, was employed by the Rock Island Railroad. Rev. Slaughter asked the Rock Island for permission to use one of their passenger cars for Sunday School. Permission was granted.



As the congregation grew in the same year Mount Hebron purchased a 20 X 20 barrack from Camp Dodge left from WWI, and it became Mount Hebron's first church. The bathroom, however, was still outside. The barrack building was moved to 131 9th Street in Valley Junction.



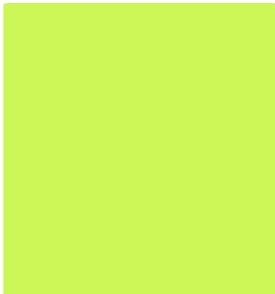
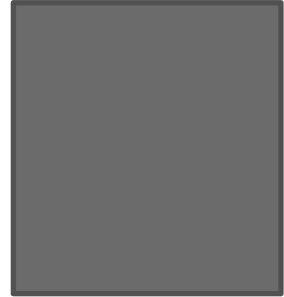
Later in 1919, after much prayer and discussion, it was agreed that **Mount Hebron Missionary Baptist Church** would be the new church's name. Pews and a pulpit were donated to Mount Hebron by other churches. In late 1920, Mount Hebron contacted Rev. Samuel Bates, who was the moderator of the Iowa Nebraska and Illinois Missionary and Education Baptist State Convention's Central District, regarding the desire to have their church dedicated to the Lord on March 23, 1921. Early in 1923 Mount Hebron burned its first mortgage for the land and building on 9th Street in Valley Junction. Mount Hebron remained on 9th Street in West Des Moines until September 1976. On September 12, 1976 Mount Hebron moved its Church home to 1600 E. Capital, Des Moines, Iowa.



In April 1989, Mount Hebron moved to its current edifice at 1338 9th Street in Des Moines. In 2002, Rev. Bobby L. Young and wife of 45 years, Sister Eva "Johnnie" Young became the new pastor. Mount Hebron currently has 175 members plus many family and friends within the community.

Pastor Young's vision is to preach, teach and develop a training program that reaches every person, on every level, whereby they may function within the body of Christ.

All of the text was copied from  
<http://www.mounthebronmbc.com/home>



The committee making arrangements for the 48th anniversary celebrated at Mt. Hebron Baptist Church was headed by Chairman Deedie King. Other members of the committee were, front row, from the left: Co-chairman Irene Swink, King, Lula Belle Harris and Genovia Hughes. Standing are, from the left, Rev. James Harris and Charles Swink.

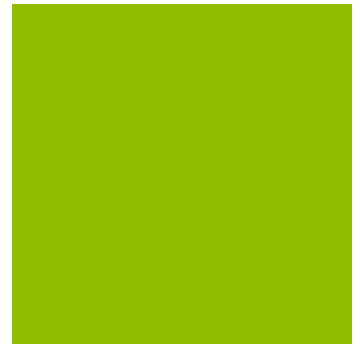
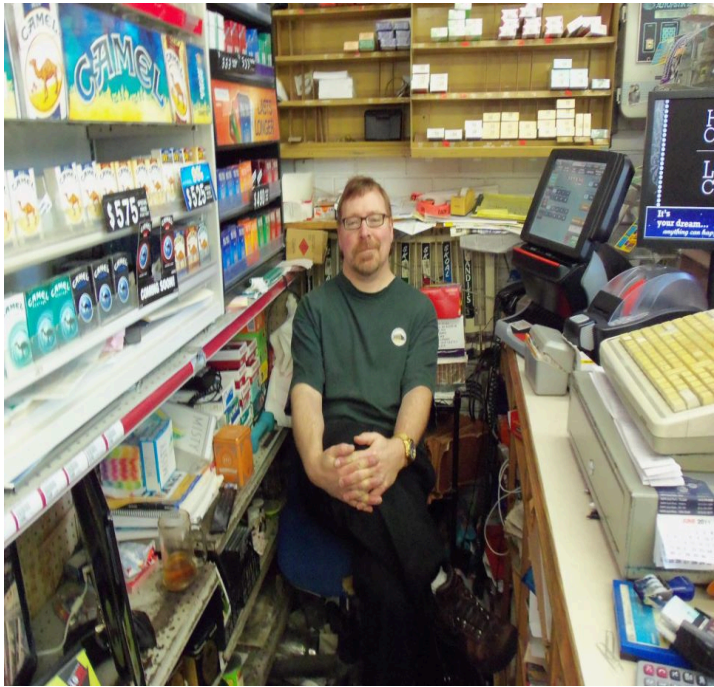


"Dinner's Served!" At Mt. Hebron

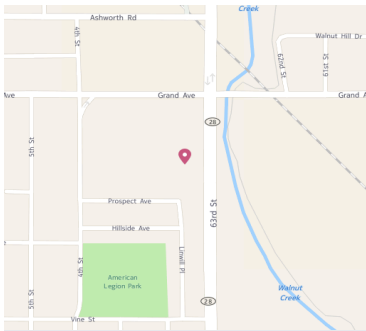
As part of the Junction Jubilee celebration, the women of Mt. Hebron Baptist Church served a noon meal of Southern fried chicken August 6. Ready to serve up some delicious meals are, left to right: Mrs. Pamela Fant, Mrs. Phyllis Hubbard, Miss Jo Ann Hughes, Mrs. Gillie Reed, Mrs. Irene Swink, Mrs. Ellawee Bailey, Miss Paula Swink, Mrs. Jettie Harris, Miss Stella Harris, and Mrs. Gracie Taylor.

Express Photo





Thank you for your long-standing service in our community from 1986-2015! On February 1, 1986 Scott's Shoppe joined the ranks of Valley Junction neighborhood businesses where customers were family. Children of all ages enjoyed walking up to purchase all types of candy for a sugar rush. Do you remember \$.89/gallon gas? No? But you do remember the assistance and help Scott and Krista provided to the neighborhood family. *You will be missed!*



# WEST PORT LOUNGE



Thank you for your long-standing service in our community. Westport Lounge was like the “Cheers” of the neighborhood. It was the place where you would walk in and everyone would know your name! *You will be missed!*


## *Descendants of Valley Junction*

Aguinaga	Frith	Love	Rush
Ames	Fucaloro	Lovelady	Sain
Anderson	Gaitor	Luther	Salazar
Argumedo	Gasca	Lyman	Septer
Ayala	Gallardo	Maher	Shelley
Bates	Galvan	Manferdini	Sherwood
Baty	Garcia	Martin	Shineflew
Bell	Garner	McIntyre	Shostall
Beveridge	Garrett	Lane	Sickel
Bissette	Gaston	McLachlan	Smith
Bohanna	Gilligan	McQuerry	Smuck
Bouma	Gomez	Medina	Snow
Bright	Grant	Meza	Sorenson
Brody	Grgurich	Miller	Stamatelos
Brown	Griffin	Moore	Stewart
Burch	Gustafson	Morelock	Stoddard
Campbell	Hagen	Moreno	Stonich
Canada	Haltom	Morris	Swink
Carlins	Harlow	Munoz	Taylor
Carlson	Harris	Murillo	Tometich
Carmody	Havel	Negrete	Tonelli
Carter	Hayes	Newman	Trachel
Chandler	Heard	Page	Trumbo
Clark	Herndon	Paine	Underwood
Commodore	Hill	Painovich	Valdez
Connors	Hodges	Palacios	Vasquez
Constance	Howelton	Paloma	Wardlow
Cooper	Hughes	Parker	Warren
Crawford	Hull	Peeler	Watson
Davis	Indelacato	Perez	Williams
Dawson	James	Perkins	Young
DeFord	Jamison	Plascencia	
Delatore	Johnson	Plecas	
Diaz	Kamerling	Pryor	
Dixon	King	Radocovich	
Dryer	Kinney	Ramirez	
Duncan	Kirkman	Reddens	
Edwards	Kramer	Reed	
Elliott	Ladd	Relay	
Eppright	Lamar	Renteria	
Fidler	Lane	Rhiner	
Fisher	Lawnsdail	Rhodes	
Fox	Lemke	Richardson	
Frank	Lloyd	Rocha	
Frazier	Long	Runner	

# OUR SPONSORS

THANK YOU FOR  
MAKING THIS  
POSSIBLE!

The logo for True Value, featuring the brand name in a red, cursive script font with a registered trademark symbol (®) at the end.The Budweiser logo, consisting of a red banner with a gold crown at the top center and the word "Budweiser" written in a white, cursive script across the banner.



**Valley Community Church**  
 Rev. Stephen Long  
 WDM, IA 50265

*"As for me and my house"*  
 ~Joshua 24:15

**Valley Community Church**

515-222-1606

Mon./Wed. Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM

Wed. Youth Bible Study 6:30 PM

**Sunday Morning Worship:**

Sunday School 8:00-9:00

Worship Service 9:00




*Faith Tabernacle*  
 Church of God in Christ

*"The Miracle on 9th Street"*

*Faith Tabernacle*  
 Church of God in Christ  
 "The Miracle on 9th Street"

*Superintendent Dr. M.D. Eppright, Pastor  
 & Mother Sandra D. Eppright, First Lady*



**SOUTHPAW IA**  
 FURNITURE REFINISHING & RESTORATION





## **2015 Friends Of The Taste Community Sponsors**

WDM Mayor Steve & Sally Gaer  
WDM Councilman John Mickelson

Mark Rocha

Sandra Elliott

Sheila & Wallace Pedigo

Faith Tabernacle C.O.G.I.C.

JMJ Construction

Jones Cleaning & Remodeling

Johnnetta Long

Moggie Long

Annissa Roland

Hawkeye Elks Lodge #160

Rose Temple #33

VJV Productions

Thanks for your continued support!

<http://www.gofundme.com/tasteofthejunction>



### **Taste Street Vendors**

AirBrush Body Creations

Cafe Su

Chellie's Sugar Shack

Cooking to Heal the Soul ~  
Cookbooks

Diana's Enchiladas

Evelyn K Davis Center for  
Working Families

Elpis Christian Fellowship  
~ Fill My Cup Oils & Jewelry

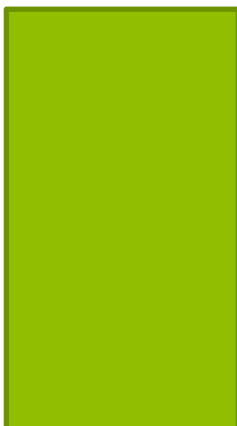
Face Painting by Acts  
Entertainment

Formaro's Stuffed

La Michoacana Mexican  
Groceries

United Parcel Service

Valley Junction Residential





# THE TEAM!

## Officers

Rachelle Long,  
President/Founder

Mark Rocha,  
Vice President

Alonda Long,  
Secretary

Erica Madison,  
Treasurer

## Steering Committee

Annissa Roland, Chief Editor

Nick Valdez, Executive Assistant

Jeff & Dana Duncan, Fundraising  
Directors

Vincent Valdez, Public Relations &  
Videography

Ambrah Calloway

Claudia Hawkins

Connie McGinn

Gilda Garrett Taylor

Marilyn Septer Coleman

Marsha Spears

Morris Smith III

Natasha Haygood

Sheila & Wallace Pedigo

Shirley Ramirez



## Taste of the Junction, Inc.

### Write The Vision...

An early Saturday morning in February 2013, she invited Valley Junction descendants to her home. Dino Rodish, Vincent Valdez, Mark Rocha, Larry McLachlan III, and Reike Plecas came to listen to a vision that resided on the inside of her for several years. She shared her vision and passion for the project ... a neighborhood reunion.

Reike made phone calls to the Mayor, Steve Gaer and others seeking support of this idea. The Mayor said "Tell Rachelle if she incorporates "it" I will support it." Within a week Reike processed the necessary paperwork and the first seed donation came from our own Steve Gaer; and thus the Taste of the Junction, Inc. was born.

Rachelle retired in 2012 after 33 years in telecommunications, however she currently represents Communications Workers of America Local 7102, locally as the Civil Rights & Equity Chair; internationally as District 7 Representative of the CWA Minority Caucus Executive Board.

She is owner and baker of a dessert business Chellie's Sugar Shack Emporium offering cookies, cakes & cobblers.

She is the mother of five children, Natasha (Melvin), Robert, Alonda (Donault) Long, Omar Duncan (Nakitut), and Keesha Gaines. She has been blessed with thirteen grandchildren.



Rachelle Long is a third generation Valley Junction descendant. She is the youngest child of Barbara Jean (Page) Long and the late John Edward Long, Jr.

## About Us

Taste of the Junction was incorporated in February 2013. This is a nonprofit created to advance the awareness and preservation of the diverse cultures of Valley Junction.

# VALLEY JUNCTION NEIGHBORHOOD REUNION



Thanks for your continued support!

<http://www.gofundme.com/tasteofthejunction>

**Taste of the Junction, Inc.**  
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West Des Moines, IA 50265

Phone: 515-650-9352

[TasteofJunction@gmail.com](mailto:TasteofJunction@gmail.com)



**The People, The Culture, The Cuisines**

**Aaah...**

**Taste of the Junction, Inc.**