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## **Membership**

### **Current vs. Lapsed Member Numbers**

Only 24 current of approximately 60! The response rate was low from a simple form letter email request. After the Data Fair, I plan to change the website member section password for all non-current members and mail & email new reminder letters. To be followed by phone calls for non-responders. All renewing members will be required to create a new password to access the site.

### **New Members (4)**

- Cooper Grant Neighborhood Association (organization)
- Dr. James Dickinson (patron)
- Dr. Barry Truchil (patron)
- Atnre Alleyne (resident)

### **Membership fees to be payable via website**

We have developed a web form (using Google Checkout) for members to pay/renew their dues via credit card. We are awaiting approval from the Cooper Foundation before the page goes live. Once in use, it would be possible with some additional coding for members to setup automatic recurring payments. Which should cut down on the number of lapsed payments, and reduce paperwork.

## **Projects**

### **Website Work**

- Public Document Finder ([camconnect.org/publicdocuments](http://camconnect.org/publicdocuments)): Using the open-source programming language 'Exhibit Simile', we have developed a searchable online database of Camden-related public documents. Users can search the document titles and producers, browse by subject, and sort by most recent. Taking all of the government documents CamConnect has collected over the years (audits, budgets, school board reports etc.), we are in the process of converting everything to text-searchable pdfs. This will allow users the ability to search from within the document's text to find a particular word or phrase.
- Camden Calendar ([camconnect.org/calendar](http://camconnect.org/calendar)): We are developing methods to automate grabbing public organizations' event listings and pull them into our website's calendar. This will limit staff time involved by allowing our calendar to automatically update and remain accurate as organizations change their listings. Users can import the events directly into Outlook, Google and Apple iCalendar. Auto-update is currently working for School Board meetings (with a ~3-4hr delay). Events are currently manually added for: City Council, DRPA/PATCO, DVRPC, County Freeholders, Mayor's Office. We're planning to add DCCB, Planning Board, CCMUA, Zoning Board, & sheriff's sales as time permits.

- Updated Datalogue: A members-only resource, the datalogue employs the same software as our Public Document Finder to search our stock of CamConnect Reports, External Reports, and Internal Documents by subject type, producer, and date. We're improving the document categorization.
- Camden Reports: Updated look, content, organization, & simplified navigation.
- Camden Facts: We have updated the Camden Facts section of the website to display interactive graphs for a selection of "top-line" indicators for subjects including demographics, economics/employment, education, and crime statistics. We will be working to create subject-dedicated pages for more detailed statistics. We are investigating alternative techniques to improve interactivity.
- Camden Geography: A new page with downloadable Camden-related base maps. More to come (B&W versions etc.)
- Translation: The outdated, static, Spanish section of the website is gone from the menu. We are starting to implement automatic, multilingual translation through Google. We will be updating the navigation so that it translates as well.
- Recent Documents: new, compact, animated recent document tabs on the homepage.

### **Census**

As the deadline for mailing in the paper-form for the Census passed, CamConnect continued to provide support for the Census Complete Count Committee including an additional presentation to the CCDA. With the Census slow to release a listing of Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QAC's), I managed to get a hold of an early version of the list which we geocoded, checked, adding contact information. We distributed the map as a quickfact to the entire distribution list. We also created a census-dedicated webpage tracking city & neighborhood participation rates, CamConnect reports on the Census, and census-related resources ( $\approx$ 100 unique viewers since March 22nd). Final Camden mail participation rates will be released on April 26th. Currently the City has topped its 2000 mailback...by 1%.

### **Quickfacts**

We continue to release quickfacts on a roughly once-per-week basis. Most of our quickfact reports are available exclusively to members. We have made a few public as a teaser for the Data Fair. The following quickfacts have been released since the last executive committee meeting:

- Internet Access
- School Performance (3 page quickfact)
- PATCO Daily Ridership
- Camden's Underbanked Population
- Census QAC locations

The following quickfacts are in progress:

- detailed commuting patterns 2002-2008
- detailed employment demographics 2002-2008
- Census participation update
- Charter School Performance
- Alternative measures of Population
- PATCO & River Line Ridership over Time
- Vital Statistics: Births & Deaths
- Open Space Access (to be featured in my Data Fair presentation)

### **Coalition of Healthcare Providers**

- Health Database: We are working to clean the newest batch of data, standardize diagnosis, race & insurance codes, deal with compound names & and create a comprehensive data dictionary. PhD student, Hilda Razzaghi, has been helping with the IRB process, research requests, & data cleaning. We have also started preparing Social Security death records & obituaries to match into the database.
- We continue to prepare maps and handouts for the Coalition. The most recent reports detailed areas of Camden with no receipts from hospital visits and a profile of Cooper Hospital's Internal Medicine Chart Data relative to diabetes care goals.

### **Camden News Update**

Working on efficient new aggregation from multiple sources (Al Dia, El Hispano, Philadelphia Tribune, Inquirer, Daily News, Courier Post, Philadelphia Weekly, Philadelphia City Paper, NY Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Christian Science Monitor, NJ.com, NJ Politicker.com, NJN, WHYY, WRTI, Philadelphia Business Journal, Philadelphia Metro, Trentonian, Star Ledger, Times of Trenton, NJ.biz) as well as the federal register.

### **Eds & Meds Data Management Proposal**

The \$6,650 proposal to collect and analyze the group's 2009-10 employment, capital project, student, and client data has begun. I've signed a Cooper non-disclosure agreement & collected much of the Cooper data via Andy Bush, and Cooper HR. I've also spoken with Tom Jones about collecting UMDNJ data.

## **Funding**

### **Camden Partnership for Healthy Kids, United Way of Camden County - \$10,800 confirmed**

United Way of Camden County has just received funding through Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Campbell's Soup to address childhood obesity in Camden City using the Community Healthy Living Index among other tools through 2012. CamConnect's role in the project is funded for 1 year and includes a \$10,800 subcontract for CamConnect to collect BMI and other metric data from the schools as well as oversee the management, security, and analysis of collected data.

### **Camden News - Pepsi Refresh -\$50,000 sought**

Atnre Alleyne is helping CamConnect develop the Camden news hub proposal (formerly known as CamDenizen) for submission to the Pepsi Refresh competitive grant process

### **Meetings & Contacts**

#### **Dr. Andrew Seligsohn** (Director of Civic Engagement, Rutgers-Camden)

I met with Andrew Seligsohn to brief him on our work and to discuss possible collaboration. Andrew agreed to fill in for Wendell Pritchett (who will be out of town on April 30th) as the keynote for the Data Fair. We also discussed the potential for Rutgers student volunteers to help with CamConnect projects. Andrew is particularly interested in the issue of vacancy and abandonment which will feed into my preliminary work with the CCDA and CCOP. He put me in touch with Cati Coe, a Rutgers Anthropology professor who is creating a course centered around qualitative research and interviewing technique in a Camden neighborhood. I raised the idea of a multi-institution Community Research Repository that would collect and store local-community-based student research from Rutgers-Camden, UMDNJ, Rowan, and Camden County College. While supportive of the idea, he believed Rutgers would be reluctant to engage in any cross-

university programs and that the effort might be limited to a collection of links to repositories at each of the institutions.

**Professor Cati Coe** (Rutgers-Camden Anthropology)

On Andrew Seligsohn's recommendation, I met with Anthropologist Cati Coe. I suggested the effect of real estate vacancy and abandonment as an ideal community project for ethnography and interview. She is interested in building the entire 2011 Spring semester course around a project with CamConnect. She is currently working to receive Rutgers IRB approval.

**Scot McCray** (Deputy Director of Code Enforcement)

Liza Nolan (CCDA) and I met with Scot McCray to examine Code Enforcement's role in the vacancy/abandonment process. Scot pulled all of the department's paper files on 6 known abandoned properties and we walked through the practical, data, and institutional hurdles. I learned more about what data isn't available in the City. As always, the challenge is figuring out what intervention in City Hall can be effective, semi-durable, and funded.

**Liza Nolan & Josh Chisholm** (Executive Director of Camden Churches Organized for People)

Building off of the meeting with Scot, I met with Liza Nolan and Josh Chisholm to go over the City's vacant property "management" "system". CCOP has done a great job of starting to map out the flow chart from a citizen and developer perspective. I owe Josh a timeline and budget proposal for a "cost of vacancy" estimation project.

**Dr. Greg Allen** (CamdenMatters)

I spoke with Greg Allen regarding our intentions to start a new news aggregation site and ask for feedback based on his experience. Camden Matters was last funded in 2007 by Annie E. Casey. Greg still owns the domain name [www.camdenmatters.com](http://www.camdenmatters.com) and claims rights to the name. He was skeptical of the viability of a project not run exactly as CamdenMatters was. He intends ("maybe") to pick up the project and begin providing news to his distribution list again, though he has no time table.

**Camden City Youth Services Commission - "A Salute to Success" Award**

CamConnect was presented with a "Salute to Success" award by CCYSC for education-related work. At the event I spoke about the release of the 2009 school report card data and touched on the facts highlighted by our education quickfact.

**James Marchaman, RPM Development, Director of Support Services (Fairview)**

James approached me through Fran Grabowski (who works with The Camden Coalition) to discuss data tracking for the programs he intends to run in RPM's supportive housing project. There may be an analysis or data collection instrument creation project in the future.

## **New Data & Sources**

### **PATCO & Riverline ridership data**

New contacts with both PATCO (via a transportation planner acquaintance of mine) and NJ Transit's RiverLine (via Joe Myers) have provided large amounts of detailed transit rider data and have agreed to provide it on a quarterly basis. Beyond demonstrating the importance of Camden residents and employment to the transit agencies (and vice versa) the data will be used in GCP's next

annual report to track trends and estimate daytime peak population. The final component will be acquiring NJ Transit bus data and RiverLink Ferry figures.

### **State Property Sales data**

After unsuccessful attempts to obtain property sales records from Data Universe (The Courier Post's online data source), we have OPRA'd the State Treasury Department. Data is available dating back to 1990 and would allow us to see each time and for what price a property has been sold.

### **Social Security Administration Death data** c. 1967-present

Collected and cleaned 24,000 records (and growing) of birth date, death date (after c. 1988), name, SSN, for most deceased SSN-holding individuals with a last known residence in Camden. Though incomplete, the data appear so far to have a consistent relationship with NJ Health & Senior Services published death data 2002-2006 and might allow estimation of death rates from c. 1970-1989 and 2007 onward. Matching 2002-present data with the health database would improve the HDb's potential as a population estimation tool, and add a previously absent demographic variable to patient analysis.

### **Provided data for:**

Phatsi Masire (MPH student) - the cost of gun violence, other assaults, & stabbings from the Health Db; Industrial and land vacancy in Cramer Hill and Waterfront South for a student of Dr. Howard Gillette (Rutgers-Camden) and ACS poverty data for Andrew Selighson.

## **Administrative & Logistical**

### **Welcoming new Board of Trustees and Exec Committee**

The new Board of Trustees and Executive Committee is now in effect.

The Executive Committee consists of *chair* Dr. Bernadette West (UMDNJ School of Public Health), *vice-chair* Sean Brown (resident), *treasurer* Joe Myers (Cooper's Ferry), *secretary* Merilee Rutolo (Center for Family Services), *fiscal agent* Dr. Jeff Brenner (Cooper Emergency Medicine), *governance chair* Dave Foster (Greater Camden Partnership), *data chair* Gwendolyn Harris (Walter Rand), and *funding chair* G. Lynn Brown (Planned Parenthood).

Board Members at large include Atnre Alleyne (Resident), Josh Chisolm (CCOP), Hillary Colbert (CPAC), Manny Delgado (Cramer Hill CDC), Dr. Stella Horton (CCYSC), Robert Jakobowski (BBBS), Tom Jones (UMDNJ Urban and Community Development), Ray Lamboy (LAEDA), Liza Nolan (CCDA), Carrie Sargeant (HOC), and Dr. Bill Whitlow (Rutgers Psychology).

### **Data Fair**

8 of 13 previously arranged table presenters are still confirmed available. 2 cancelled and we have yet to hear from 3 more as well as 3 possible but unlikely new additions.

Surveys need to be printed. The presentation is nearly done being updated and the room and lunch for the Board needs to be confirmed.

### **Summer Intern via Shepherd Poverty Program**

Through board member Dave Foster, CamConnect secured a full time college intern from Washington and Lee University Shepherd Poverty Program that will be working for CamConnect starting in June. The intern will play an integral role in getting our vacancy project off the ground. Space and an extra computer will be an issue. I've started the ordering process for a new PC but I

doubt it will arrive in time.

### **Email Software**

We are evaluating mass mailing management software (Emma, EmailNow, VerticalResponse, Salsa Labs) to manage quick facts, custom updates, and eventually news digests with CAN-SPAM compliance, secure sign up, response metrics, form letters, etc.. Our previous open source solution proved too customization intensive & ConstantContact was too inflexible. Any board member experience with limitations of this kind of software would be a useful resource.

### **National Neighborhoods Indicators Project Conference, Washington DC**

Aaron and I will be attending an NNIP Conference from May 12-May 14. I will be giving a presentation about the Health Database as part of a session soliciting funder & partner interest in a cross-site health-data project.