

SAVE OLD CENTRAL CAMPAIGN DONOR'S WALL OF HONOR

Old Central's rich history reaches beyond Galveston Island.

Your donation or pledge of \$1,000 or more to the Save Old Central Campaign will go towards the historic Old Central Center Building to preserve our past for our youth about the history of Galveston's African Americans citizens.

We hope you will donate or make a pledge today.

Donations can be made in honor or in memory of someone.

Pledge or Donations can be made over 10 month period.

Every gift is meaningful to us and will help us preserve our history for future generations.

Pete Henley
Board President

Douglas Matthews
Board Campaign Chairman

Please Get Involved!

The Old Central Cultural Center, Inc. received its Certificate of Incorporation on October 23, 1973. Old Central received its 501c3 Nonprofit Tax Exempt Status on March 11, 1974 and the financial impetus to the Old Central Center movement started with a \$75,000 grant allocation from the Galveston Moody Foundation. Old Central is one of Texas' oldest historic African American landmarks in the state which was established to preserve the legacy of Texas' first African American high school in 1885 and Texas' first public library for African Americans in 1905.

Old Central Cultural Center Inc. P.O. Box 2111 Galveston, Texas 77553

Date _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

Email Address Optional: _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ or Amount Pledged \$ _____

In honor of _____ or In Memory of _____

Please check category that applies:

____ Paid in Full ____ 3 month pledge ____ 6 month pledge ____ 10 month pledge

All pledges need to be paid within 10 months in order to have name on Donor Wall.

Signature

Date

A plan for Old Central

The Old Central Cultural Center has launched a campaign to raise at least \$150,000 to save a Galveston treasure.

At the kickoff ceremony this week, members of the center's board outlined plans to raise money — and also talked about their vision of what Central could be.



JENNIFER REYNOLDS/The Daily News file photo

Lillie Little, front, and Gloria Ellisor discuss photos of the various Central High School building throughout the school's history Tuesday during the kickoff for the "Save Old Central Campaign" at the Old Central Cultural Center in Galveston.



Want to help?

Two Old Central Cultural Center board members are leading this drive: Pete Henley at 409-392-0317 and Douglas Matthews at 409-599-5520.

For those who don't know, Central was the first black high school in Texas. It was founded in 1885.

During Jim Crow, there were not a lot of good educational opportunities for African-Americans in the South.

But in Galveston, the city's most famous architect designed the new school in 1893. It was a gem. In an era in which one-room schoolhouses were the norm in Texas education, Central was extraordinary.

People who are exposed to good educational opportunities turn out differently than those who aren't. It's interesting to think what those opportunities did for African-Americans who grew up in Galveston.

Central shaped its graduates, and those graduates shaped the views of people of all races who came in contact with well-educated people, trained to be good citizens, who just happened

to have come from a segregated school. Central is part of what made Galveston a bit different.

The question now is how to preserve that legacy. The era of segregated schools ended in 1968 in Galveston. In 1974, Old Central Cultural Center was organized to preserve the building and its heritage. The Moody Foundation made that original move possible with a generous grant.

Now, the center has lost a longtime tenant, the Community Action Council. It's going to need to find new sources of revenue to be able to continue.

The financial situation is not dire, but it's not sustainable either, and the board is wise to be pushing now for more community support.

In listening to the plans of board members, you can catch several recurring themes:

- Old Central's collection of old photographs and other memorabilia must be preserved. The Gulf Coast climate is unforgiv-

ing, and many of the old photographs, especially, are fragile.

- The center should be made ready for regular tours. Students in public schools and in summer programs could learn a lot of history during a field trip to the cradle of African-American education in Texas.

- The center should be more of a destination in many ways. It should become a destination to history buffs and to those who want to have business meetings, weddings, birthday parties and other events. The new Jack Johnson Park, a wonderful outdoor venue, is part of the campus.

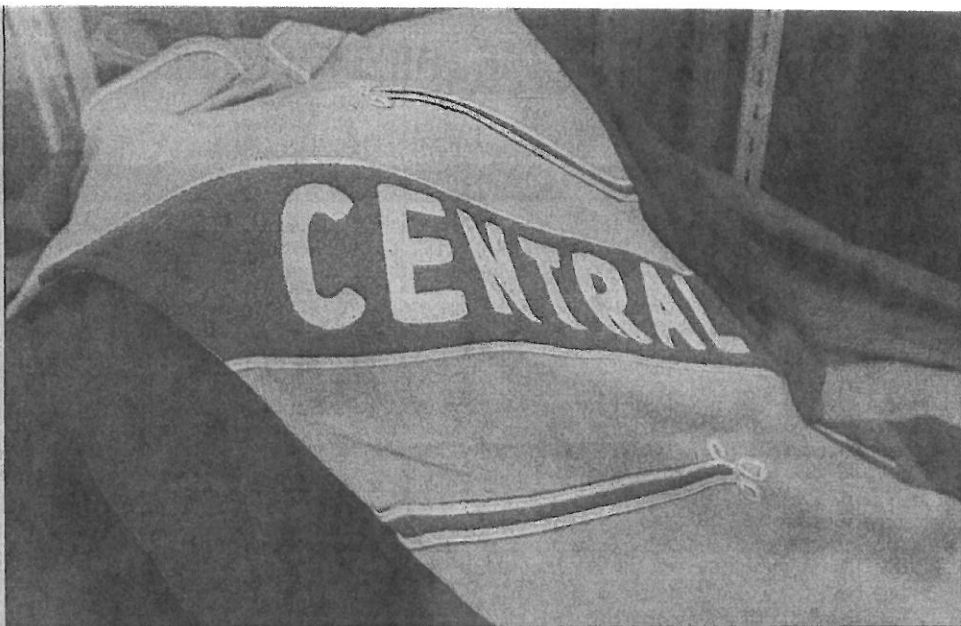
The new energy behind this effort was inspiring.

If you want to be a part of it, plan now to become a member. The annual fee is \$35. You can become a member or make a contribution by writing the Old Central Cultural Center at P.O. Box 2111, Galveston, Texas 77553

• Heber Taylor

A band uniform and other memorabilia from Galveston's Central High School are on display at the Old Central Cultural Center. The center is launching a campaign to raise \$150,000 to cover the cost of federal budget cuts that were the source of operating revenue for the center.

KEVIN M. COX/
The Daily News
file photo



The plan to save Old Central High

The Old Central Cultural Center is going to launch a campaign to raise at least \$150,000.

Details will be announced Tuesday, but the short version of this story is that a new approach is needed to sustain one of Galveston's irreplaceable historic treasures.

It's not overstating it to say that Old Central is the cradle of education for African-Americans in Texas. It was established in 1885 — the first black high school in Texas.

African-Americans suffered many wrongs during the era of Jim Crow, but one of the worst was the systematic denial of access to meaningful education.

However, decades before the Civil Rights Movement, African-Americans in Galveston had an opportunity to get a fine high school education. For a time, Central was the only place in Texas where that was available.

Some families that have been on the island for generations are here

Heber Taylor



Heber Taylor is editor of The Daily News.

because their ancestors saw that opportunity for their children and moved. Old Central was a beacon.

Because of that tradition, the African-American experience in Galveston was somewhat different from the standards that prevailed in the South. Nicholas Clayton, Galveston's most famous architect, designed the new school in 1893. An annex of the public library was added to the campus in 1904. Old Central had a strong academic tradition until segregation finally ended in 1968.

In 1974, the Old Central Cultural Center was established to preserve that legacy.

The cultural center opened with a \$75,000 grant from the Moody Foundation. Without



At a glance

Details of the "Save Old Central Campaign" will be announced at 2 p.m. Tuesday at the Old Central Library, 1302 27th St. in Galveston.

Two board members are leading this drive: Pete Henley at 409-392-0317 and Douglas Matthews at 409-599-5520.

that gift, there would be no cultural center.

For more than 25 years, the center has had a major tenant, the Community Action Council, which paid \$2,000 a month rent. With federal budget cuts, that contract ended in October, and the cultural center must find another source of operating revenue to keep its doors open.

In March, Old Central's board agreed to establish a general membership program, with an annual fee of \$35. If 1,000 people decided to support the cultural center, that move alone would off-

set the loss of its major tenant.

Many other moves are planned. The board hopes to expand marketing in the Houston area and increase the rentals of Jack Johnson Park, which is on the campus. The board also plans to create a Donor Appreciation Board to honor gifts of at least \$1,000. The gifts can be made in honor or in memory of family members and friends.

Two board members are leading this drive: Pete Henley and Douglas Matthews.

The board deserves the community's help.

Old Central should be a focal point for African-American history — not just in Galveston but across Texas.

If you're interested in details, drop in on Tuesday's news conference.

If you're already convinced this is worth your support, contact one of the leaders of this drive. They could use your encouragement and help.