

East Orange Orange Record-Transcript

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Resident comes home for Orange's National Night Out

**By Chris Sykes
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Another year, another National Night Out observance for the residents of Wilson Place in Orange on Tuesday, Aug. 1, but this year's celebration was new for Tiffany Askew, an Orange native who said it was just like old times.

"I'm born and raised in Orange, on this block, 97 Wilson Place," said Askew on Tuesday, Aug. 1, as she enjoyed the National Night Out 2017 festivities with her mother, Cheryl, relatives and other Wilson Place residents, young and old alike. "I've always been down with National Night Out. It is a good thing for everybody in the community to come out, barbecue, listen to music, laugh and have a drink or two."

Askew recently returned to Orange, after having moved out briefly, but she said she's glad to be back home, especially for National Night Out. She also brought the beach to Wilson Place by giving her son and other local children an opportunity to take a dip in her new pool.

"I bought a little pool for my son," she said. "My kids never did the National Night Out thing, because we moved from around

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here for a little bit and a lot of town down do it — don't want to, don't care, whatever, I don't know. So this year, when I heard they were doing it, I really wanted to do it, so my kids could understand what it was. It's nothing like the ones I had when I was young. We did it big, but still, OK."

In many ways, Askew said, National Night Out 2017 was a real homecoming for herself and her sons, and it was very good to reconnect and get reacquainted with Aunt Beanie, Anita Moore, Alison Whittle and the rest of her Wilson Place extended family.

This public housing community is part of the Orange Housing Authority's new Walter G. Complex, which replaced the old Walter G. Apartments, once known as "the projects" before Executive Director Walter McNeil redeveloped the area.

"They're truly like blood aunts," Askew said of the women in the community. "My mom, my aunt over here, we all were just one big happy community. None of this

drama and all of this stuff that's going on now. We were like in our own little bubble over here, I guess. Always good times. Always barbecues, besides just National Night Out. I was in the drill team, we had fashion shows, a big swimming pool. It was just always fun. It's sad that my kids and a lot of the kids now can't see it all, but I try to show my kids as much as possible and still keep them sheltered, because I can't let them go places like I was able to. They can barely trick or treat without me."

Askew's sons are 16 and 3 years old, but she said she's still young at heart and filled with Orange pride that she tries to pass on to her children. She said, "I still love my community and I always will."

"Orange High all the way. Born and raised. Class of 1981 Orange, 97 Wilson Place; once was the projects," she said. "I came back for certain situations. My son is disabled and he needed to go to a specific school and Orange Board of Education was better at helping me do that, so that's why we moved back."

And now, Askew said, she's working hard to teach her sons what "Orange pride" really means.

"Orange all day. It's in my blood. I mean, even though the bad stuff that's going on, it still doesn't take away from the good. Not yet.

"I'm proud to tell people, born and raised in Orange, New Jersey, all day."

Garry Satterfield is another Wilson Place resident who said he understands Askew, when it comes to history, tradition and celebrating National Night Out in Orange.

"Central Place, I'm born on Park Street, Wilson Place. My uncle, William Satterfield, put a lot in this city and died in Vietnam. This is all about Orange's Finest right here, and I'm not talking about the Police Department," said Satterfield on Tuesday, Aug. 1.

"National Night Out is alright. ... It's nothing too serious, but it's great for the kids to get out, cook out, get some free food and it's good for the homeless, too. If the homeless want to eat, they can get something to eat, too."