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1348 Fairview



822 Lullwater



1741 S Ponce De Leon

Home and Garden Tour Returns for 2022

By Kit Eisterhold

I am thrilled to announce that the Druid Hills Tour of Homes and Gardens will be back this Spring, from April 29 to May 1st, 2022.

In conjunction with the broader "Olmsted 200" celebration that honors the 200th birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., we will be opening up a dozen of the finest homes and gardens we have ever had on the Tour. And, working with our "Olmsted 200" sister organizations, such as the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance, Callanwolde, and Emory Village Alliance, we will be a part of something even greater: A broader celebration of Druid Hills and its unique heritage as the only neighborhood in the South designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the most renowned landscape architect in the history of our country.

The homes this year are truly exceptional.

At 822 Lullwater Rd. we have a gorgeous brick and limestone Tudor designed in 1922 by architect DeFord Smith Sr. in the English Manor Revival Style. Situated on the heights overlooking the Lullwater Conservation Garden, it is arguably the most famous home in the neighborhood, having had a starring role as the home of Mrs. Daisy Werthan in the Academy Award winning film "Driving Miss Daisy." I practically got down on one knee and begged the owners, Jim and Cyndy Roberts, to put this one on the Tour. If you've seen their house you'd know why. And if you haven't.... Let's just say you have to see it.

Thanks in large part to our new wunderkind house recruitment chair Molly

Carter Gaines we've assembled an amazing collection of homes along Fairview Road: including 1348 Fairview, a gorgeous two-and-a-half story French Manor Revival designed by Neel Reid, and built in 1916 for Walter Rich, heir to the Rich's Department store fortune. At 1384 Fairview we have a Tudor Revival with asymmetrical facade and half timbering, reminiscent of an English Renaissance-era country home. And at 1296 Fairview, we have an Arthur Neil Robinson designed English Vernacular Cottage built in 1926.

After you tour these homes, feel free to take a stroll down the Olmsted Linear Parks just to the north of Fairview -along Springdale, Virgilee, OakGrove, and Shadyside- all the way to Dellwood Park, where we have two truly incredible homes fronting directly on the Park itself: 1741 S. Ponce de Leon, a High Style Tudor Revival with elegant brickwork and lavish limestone casings and trim, and 1783 S. Ponce de Leon, a miraculous renovation/resurrection of a magnificent two story Classical Revival which features a grand and inviting full length front porch. It was a house that sat abandoned for a number of years but has recently been lovingly restored to its former glory by its current owners. Just a little further to the East, fronting directly on Deepdene Park at 2126 N. Ponce, we also have a gorgeous two-and-a-half story Adams/Federal Style Revival with an elegant rounded front portico and slate roof.

Be sure to check out 956 Springdale Rd., where we have a gorgeous Italian Renaissance Revival with arched windows, broad eaves and barrel tile roof, as well

Continued on page 3

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2022 Tour of Homes (continued from cover)

as sweeping views of the surrounding landscape, including an extensive and beautifully manicured backyard. Afterward, you can wrap up your Tour just off the Olmsted Linear Park at 797 Springdale, at arguably one of the most famous gardens in Atlanta. Under the loving care of Drs. Ann and Frank Critz for the better part of the last half-century or so, and currently curated by their son, John, it explodes in color every early spring from tens of thousands of bulbs, and has hosted countless weddings over the years, including that of local legend Bobby Jones. You may want to take a stroll amongst their extensive collection of Japanese Maples, and tour the many gardens within the garden, such as the "White" Garden and the "Secret" Garden, named after the Critz's daughter, Julianna.

Olmsted 200 Related Events

Lastly, be sure not to miss any of the other events our "Olmsted 200" sister organizations will be putting on in conjunction with the Tour.

Callanwolde will be hosting a grand Olmsted 200 Birthday Celebration Gala on the evening of April 26. It will be a black tie affair, with croquet and cocktails on the lawn, cuisine catered by ZestAtlanta, and music by famed jazz artist Joe Gransden. Wander the halls of Callanwolde, a magnificent 27,000 sq. ft mansion designed in the Gothic Revival Style by renowned architect Henry Hornbostel and built over four years from 1917 to 1921 for Howard Candler, eldest son of patriarch Asa Griggs Candler. Admire the stained glass, the soaring vaulted ceilings, and sweeping staircase with bronze balustrades, all steeped in history, as the sounds of jazz and the smell of fine dining waft through the air.

There will be a concert in the Village put on by the Emory Village Alliance Saturday afternoon, April 30 which I personally will not miss. And the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance will also be hosting their annual Plein Air event from April 16-24, as well as a 5K run, and an Artisan market in Dellwood Park on

Saturday, April 30. Make plans on dropping by after you've had a chance to tour 1783 and 1741 S. Ponce. It'll literally be just out the front door!

And if you do nothing else be sure to take a walk through the Olmsted Linear Park. Druid Hills is famous principally because of its landscape architect; and the linear parks, designed by Olmsted himself over a century ago, are arguably the heart and soul of the neighborhood. Admire the soaring oaks overhead, leaves rustling in the breeze as light cascades through their canopies, illuminating the simple unadorned pastoral landscapes below.

As you walk, it is my sincere hope you will come to an appreciation of all the painstaking work OLPA has done over the years restoring these parks to their original Olmsted pastoral aesthetic. And I hope you will come to feel what Olmsted's work was originally meant to convey: tranquility, peace of mind, and a sensation of the sublime in the unadorned beauty of mother nature. The Olmsted Linear Parks are more than just a window into the man's soul. In their finer moments they allow us to commune with it, to share in it, to be a part of it.

As the stewards of the only neighborhood in the South designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the DHCA, and its sister organizations at OLPA, Callanwolde, and EVA, are proud to be a part of the Olmsted 200 Celebration. We work tirelessly to preserve the unique character and historical heritage of Druid Hills, and we hope you will join us in celebrating that heritage this Spring.

As DHCA's main fundraising effort for the year, it is the Tour that makes much of what we do possible, so please plan on attending! And please consider volunteering; whether as a docent, a house manager, or as a member of the Tour Committee. We need your help! Come join us and be a part of it all! I look forward to seeing you on the Tour!



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DRUID HILLS NEWS WELCOMES YOUR ARTICLES

The Druid Hills News is published quarterly by the Druid Hills Civic Association. Articles are welcome for consideration. Please limit unassigned articles to no more than 600 words or notify the editor in advance. Submissions may be edited for length or grammar. Please send articles and photos to editor@druidhills.org or JJRichar@bellsouth.net. Send copy as e-mail attachments and photos as jpg attachments if possible.

DEADLINES

The Druid Hills News is mailed to be received in homes during the second week of the month of the issue. The following are the deadlines for the next two Druid Hills News issues:

MARCH 2022

February 10

JUNE 2022

May 10

EDITORS

Editor: Jennifer J. Richardson
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WRITERS/CONTRIBUTORS

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William Tomlin, and Pam Woodley.

Chair's Corner

By *DHCA Chair, Van Biesel*

Collaboration and good partnerships are key to the success of any organization and the DHCA is no exception.

A great example was this year's Open Streets celebration in Emory Village. Organized and hosted each October by the Emory Village Alliance (EVA), this year's event was the largest and (in my opinion) the most successful so far. Local businesses helped to cover the costs of entertainers from musicians to circus performers, and community organizations returned with "fan-favorite" activities like the South Fork Conservancy's Duck Race on Peavine Creek, Glenn Memorial's Trunk or Treat, and the combination parade and costume contest (dog and human) hosted this year by DHCA. It was great to see so many in the community working together and so many of all ages coming out and enjoying the results of their efforts.

Open Streets provided a nice reminder of how for-



Van Biesel

tunate we are to live in a place like Druid Hills where there is a strong sense of community and a commitment to working together, sharing time, talents, and resources on its behalf. We look forward to working with EVA and other great organizations on the Olmsted 200 celebration in April (see related articles in this issue for more information), and again next October for Open Streets **tenth annual** festival.

Emory Graduate Student Housing Update

Emory University's Graduate Student Housing Project at Haygood Triangle has progressed, and rezoning of the property was approved by the Atlanta Zoning Review Board on Oct. 21. In the months leading up to that decision, the DHCA and Emory came to an agreement in writing on 18 points. These include a redesign that removes approximately 50 feet of building frontage along North Decatur Road to open more greenspace toward the neighborhood. The full agreement and a list of all conditions may be found here: <https://druidhills.org/neighborhood-news/12102988>. You may also find information in Gary Tapp's District 5 report on page 18.

DRUID HILLS HOLIDAY HOME DECORATING CONTEST

The DHCA has had so much fun this year with community events we decided to squeeze in one more... the Druid Hills Holiday Home Decorating Contest! Put your creative caps on, pull out all of those great outdoor decorations, and show us your bright lights & winter holiday cheer!

- Residents, you are invited to nominate ONE HOME for outstanding decoration; it can be your own house or a neighbor's.
- Visit druidhills.org to submit a photo and the address of your nomination between December 1 and December 19 at noon.
- Nominated homes will be judged by the DHCA Membership Committee in the evenings on December 19, 20, and 21 so make sure they are lit and looking their best on those evenings!
- The winning house will be announced on our website and via eblast on December 22nd and will be awarded a beautiful metal Historic Druid Hills yard sign.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE DRUID HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION!

NICOLE DAVIS

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Help us build on our momentum from 2021!

From the time the Druid Hills Civic Association was established in 1938, we've accomplished some remarkable things. 2021 was a year of change for the DHCA. Our goal last year was to "do better" by adopting and starting to live by our new mission statement, **"Connect neighbors, foster civic engagement, and steward the neighborhood's beauty."**



We think we are well on our way, with a restructured board, some very fun and successful community events, and lots of progress in our newly formed Parks & Greenspace committee. Join the DHCA or renew your membership to help us build on this wonderful momentum!

Together, we're building a true sense of community

A huge focus for the DHCA is to foster a genuine sense of community and a real neighborhood feel in Druid Hills. As people become more and more comfortable participating in-person, we are helping neighbors:

- get to know one another and cultivate friendships through more and more community events
- take pride in Druid Hills through service projects around the neighborhood (seen our "Better" signs?)
- have a voice in our organization and feel welcome to take part in shaping its future

{ With your membership and participation, we can host or sponsor even more social events here in Druid Hills! }

Protect what is ours

Owning a property in a historic district goes a long way in ensuring that your home's value is protected and consistently increasing. The DHCA can help you navigate your district's regulations when planning modifications to your property. ➔

Let us be a partner who can offer guidance on what changes will likely be acceptable (or unacceptable) to your district's planning board.

We will always be stewards of the amazing green space that Druid Hills is so fortunate to enjoy. ➔

We established a new Parks & Greenspace Committee in 2021. This very active committee is doing great things! Your DHCA membership will help us invest in the protection of our Lullwater and Peavine Creeks.

Make safety a priority

We recognize that our county is focused on fixing some major infrastructure issues, like replacing old sewer and water lines. Repairing sidewalks and addressing other public safety hazards have fallen to the bottom of their list of to-dos.

{ The DHCA is a strong voice representing our interests with elected officials to get these issues dealt with. Your membership helps fund our Safe Sidewalk campaign to help repair some of the more dangerous walkways. }

Our Neighborhood Watch program helps keep our residents in the know with monthly crime reports. We believe that neighbors who know each other look out for each other, and that is our most effective method of deterring crime.

We have high aspirations for the DHCA in 2022 and beyond. We are on our way to being an organization that consistently demonstrates its value to the neighborhood.

"Connect neighbors, foster civic engagement, and steward the neighborhood's beauty."
Our new mission statement for the Druid Hills Civic Association

Bet you didn't know that the DHCA...

- ✓ Was formed in 1938 over concerns for the community's school, and has repeatedly advocated for our neighborhood schools to keep them in tact during periods of redistricting/rezoning
- ✓ Worked diligently over 25 years to prevent the expansion of the Stone Mountain Freeway and the proposed Presidential Parkway from being built straight through Druid Hills
- ✓ Helped form the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance (OLPA) to ensure that our linear parks are cared for in a responsible way; committed funding to help implement their master plan including the burial of utility lines and lighting replacement with period-style street lamps along Ponce de Leon
- ✓ Was instrumental in saving the Callanwolde estate and establishing it as a DeKalb County park
- ✓ Is the reason that the integrity and historic legacy of our beautiful Druid Hills homes and parks have been preserved as Atlanta has gone through massive changes and explosive growth

JOIN YOUR DHCA TODAY!

With your membership, we can...

- ✓ Host or sponsor more social events here in Druid Hills to help foster the sense of community in our neighborhood
- ✓ Continue improving our communication with neighbors and provide a warm welcome to new residents so they feel at home
- ✓ Continue to invest in the protection of Lullwater and Peavine Creeks
- ✓ Invest in improving neighborhood amenities such as repairing sidewalks, installing better lighting, adding signage to mark gateways to Druid Hills, and more
- ✓ Help fill gaps in funding for our schools and other neighborhood organizations (think OLPA, Freedom Park Conservancy, Frazer Center, neighborhood schools like Fernbank Elementary, etc.)

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Snap me!

Simply take a picture on your phone and join or renew now!

Join or renew today!

The DHCA membership cycle begins every January. Once you join or renew, your membership will be good through the end of Dec. 2022.

We encourage you to join or renew online!
Go to druidhills.org/join-us or take a photo of the code above.

Member Name(s) _____

Want to get involved with the DHCA? () Yes! () Not at this time If you mark yes, you will be contacted soon!

Address _____

Email _____ Phone Number _____

As we plan our budget, your membership is vital. Simply said, the more that you can contribute, the more we can achieve as an organization. Thank you for your consideration!

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Marching band at DHCA's Annual July 4th Parade. Photo by Lisa Hill Photography

Kicking Off 2022 Membership Campaign

By Thea Roeser, Membership chair

This past year has been a banner year for the Druid Hills Civic Association, with fun community activities, distributing 108 welcome bags to new residents, the addition of a new Parks and Greenspace Committee, in addition to a 25 percent increase in membership! Thank you for your support! We want to continue to be the kind of organization that appeals to ALL of our neighbors.

Last August, after 47 years of flying for Delta Air Lines, I retired. It was a great career, providing me the flexibility to raise a family, work for my husband's business, meet people from all over the world and give me great "airplane" stories to share at social gatherings. If we run into each other, ask me about the "Bad Potato" story.

It also provided me with insight to achieve the goal of providing good service, bringing value to passengers who purchase a ticket on Delta Air Lines. I wanted them to fly Delta again.

I use the same approach as the Druid Hills Civic Association Membership Chair.

What value does DHCA bring to our residents? Look around and you'll see the commitment since 1938 (83 years) of residents working to protect and nurture this amazing community, by not only volunteering to be on the DHCA Board and different committees, but by becoming members. Our DHCA mission statement is to "Connect neighbors, foster civic engagement, and steward the neighborhood's beauty." Your membership helps to support this mission statement.

With your DHCA membership, we can host more social events. We had two great ones this year -- the July 4th parade and the Halloween parade/costume contest, part of the Emory Village Alliance Open Streets great community event. These events, including the once a month community workdays, help foster the sense of community and pride in our neighborhood.

This year, your membership dues also went to support the Druid Hills quarterly printed news and the monthly e-News updates, Olmsted Linear Park Alliance, Emory Village Alliance, funding for several neighborhood schools, sidewalk repair, and maintenance on Burbank Park.

The Druid Hills Civic Association committee reports included in this edition of the Druid Hills News, will give you insight into the time and dedication the DHCA board and committee members work to tirelessly protect, nurture our beautiful community and address community issues in a timely manner, bringing value to your membership.

The DHCA membership committee is grateful for your continued support as we head into 2022. I also want to personally thank my committee, giving them credit for all their time and dedication, to making this a great year for membership!

Michael Ross

Hillary Kilfeather

Andrea Hill

Steven Mathias

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A Less Formal Parent Network in Druid Hills

By Hillary Kilfeather

Parents are busier than ever these days! The DHCA understands that, and it is the reason we no longer have a formal Parent Network committee. Instead, we have created an informal networking group on Facebook for historic Druid Hills neighborhood parents. The goal was to create a space where we can ask each other questions, request local recommendations, share information about neighborhood activities, and much more. Although we realize that there are parents who do not actively use Facebook, it's proving to be a great avenue for a local parents' group to organically grow and be active without formal leadership. We encourage all neighborhood parents of children living at home to join our Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/druidhillsparents

Neighborhood Moms' Night Out - Children in Druid Hills go to a variety of schools and represent a wide range of ages. Some moms work outside the home and some don't, and we are all extremely busy with everyday life. That makes meeting and getting to know one another, simply as neighbors, a little more difficult. One of the big successes that has developed out of our parent group, is a monthly Druid Hills "moms' night out." Thanks to resident Corie Oliver, who initiated the first monthly get-together and has organized those subsequent, moms in the area have enjoyed the opportunity to meet and



socialize with each other. Each meet-up has been somewhere different, from local restaurants to backyards. Some moms, like Corie, are regulars, and some are brand new each time the group gathers. She hosted about 15 moms at November's casual meet-up in her backyard around her fire pit. Moms - make sure to join the parent group (facebook.com/groups/druidhillsparents) or email membership@druidhills.org if you aren't on Facebook, so we can keep you in the know about when and where the next meet-up will be!

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Druid Hills residents and volunteers staff the table selling Druid Hills merchandise, Lisa Hill Photography



Performance artist Jeremy Ray paints for the world to watch, Lisa Hill Photography

Ninth Annual Open Streets Soars to New Heights

By Sarah Banick

On a beautiful October Sunday, more than 1,000 people wandered the streets of Emory Village browsing the artisans at the craft fair, participating in Trunk or Treating, and taking in the smooth sounds of local musicians.

The 9th Annual Open Streets Emory Village, produced by Emory Village Alliance, was the most successful yet, featuring a broadened range of activities, as well as allowing visitors to enjoy a beer while watching live music.

As ever, the Bubble Man attracted swathes of children to follow the adventures of his outrageous bubbles on steroids. The Imperial OPA Circus acrobats spread cheer throughout the event, culminating in the fire-eating finale. The celebrity appearance by R2D2 captivated the younger children.

Druid Hills Civic Association sponsored this year's parade and costume contests, and the Druid Hills High School marching band stole the show with fun costumes and uplifting music. Special thanks to parade leaders and judges: State Senator Elena Parent, Commissioners Ted Terry and Jeff Rader, Representatives Becky Evans and Mary Margaret Oliver, Master of Ceremonies Graham Carroll, and Phil Moise, Kit Eisterhold, and Sharon Day.

Even the South Fork Conservancy Duck Race stretched its wings, increasing the distance of the race to go under the Peavine Creek bridge. Some say the bridge shook as children peering upstream

moved as one across the bridge to see Commissioner Rader proclaim the winning duck. DeKalb County Police escorted the ducks to the starting line in the SWAT truck.

Children and adults alike lined up for caricatures created by Chris McGehee. Performance artist Jeremy Ray put on a show with his graphic method of painting. All to a musical soundtrack by Soft Rock Jams by Greg Lee & Friends (from Yacht Rock), Glenn Church's The Gathering, Cledus Jones & the Broken Bones, and Emory acapella group Aural Pleasures.

In addition to the annual Trunk or Treat festivities, Glenn Church also offered a blessing of the pets and provided pumpkins for decorating, another children's delight. Children visiting All Fired Up got to paint their own free ornaments.

We are indebted to our Presenting sponsors: Savi Provisions, Classic Entry Systems, Hammersmith, Tribridge, and Druid Hills Civic Association, as well as to our additional sponsors: All Fired Up, Atlanta Fine Homes, Bill's Yard Service, Bonner Buchanan, Custom Pool Crafters, Engels Volker, Glenn Memorial Church, Lisa Hill Photography, Malone Construction, Northwest Pest Control, Pop Custom Homes, and Wolf Design Group.

Planning has already started for the 10th annual event. If you'd like to be a part of it, contact eva@emoryvillage.org.

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Druid Hills Celebrates the 200th Birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted

By Julie Ralston

April 26, 2022 marks the 200th birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted — author, journalist, public official, urban planner and founder of American landscape architecture. Olmsted and his successor firms designed thousands of landscape projects across the country. His democratic vision of public parks and their capacity to bring communities together is more important than ever.

The national Olmsted 200 campaign engages a creative coalition of landscape architects, design professionals, city planners, public health professionals, conservationists, community leaders, historians and educators to explore the many ways in which Olmsted's values can address today's challenges. Rooted in Olmsted's values of universal access to parks and the health and environmental benefits of open space and resilient designs, the celebration will examine the life, leadership and enduring influence of this American visionary.

In Atlanta, a weeks-long celebration is being planned by the Druid Hills "Olmsted 200" Celebration Committee to commemorate Olmsted's vision and contributions to this community's quality of life. The local effort will highlight Olmsted's many contributions to the Atlanta community, including the design of the historic Druid Hills subdivision with its sylvan Olmsted Linear Park and include a series of events, including:

- February 12 – Olmsted Linear Park Alliance (OLPA) Annual Gala - Fall in Love with the Park registration now open - <https://atlantaolmstedpark.org/event/2022-olpa-gala>
- April 16-24 – 2022 Olmsted Invitational Plein Air
- April 25 – Olmsted 200 Tennis Tournament, Druid Hills Golf Club
- April 26 – Olmsted 200th Birthday Celebration, Callanwolde Fine Arts Center
- April 29-May 1 – Druid Hills Tour of Homes
- April 30 (morning) – OLPA 5K and Artisan Market in Olmsted Linear Park (Dellwood)
- April 30 (afternoon) – Concert in Emory Village

For more details about these events and how you can support Olmsted 200, please visit www.atlantaolmstedpark.org/olmsted200. If you'd like to become a sponsor or volunteer, contact Sandy Kruger at 770-843-2507.

Olmsted 200 is managed by the National Association for Olmsted Parks, along with founding partners The American Society of Landscape Architects, The Garden Club of America, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, City Parks Alliance, National Recreation and Park Association, The Cultural Landscape Foundation, The Trust for Public Land, American Public Health Association and The Landscape Architecture Foundation.

Olmsted200.org - A Treasure Trove

By Alida Silverman

By now, the Olmsted 200 logo has become a familiar sight: at the top of the DHCA website home page and in the monthly DHCA E-News. Clicking on the logo is an easy way to get right to the Olmsted 200 website and all its offerings. Here is a sampling of what is up now under Shared Spaces and Events.

Shared Spaces

Article about the "Writing Life of Frederick Law Olmsted" with a map of "The Cotton Kingdom"

- Story by a staff gardener in Prospect Park in Brooklyn, NY, that should resonate for anyone who has volunteered in our linear park
- Olmsted Insider for October that gives a link to an "exhibit" about FLO that can be downloaded (and may appear somewhere near us as a real exhibit as part of the Druid Hills/Atlanta celebration)

Events: (first quarter of 2022 THE BICENTENNIAL YEAR!)

- Talk - February 2 at 3 p.m. "Atlanta's Parks and Greenways as Agents of Urban Transformation" on "how Atlanta's investments in new parks and greenways build on the city's Olmsted legacy." Zoom/Registration
- Carillon Music live from Bok Tower Gardens in Florida. Streaming beginning March 16
- Conversations with Olmsted: "Civil War, Abolition and the American Park Idea" March 22 at 3 p.m. Zoom/ Registration details TBA
- Live in Atlanta! April 6 at 7 at the Atlanta History Center. The Cherokee Garden Library Spring Talk "Olmsted and Yosemite: Civil War, Abolition, and the National Park Idea" (fee)



Druid Hills Celebrates the *200th Birthday* of Frederick Law Olmsted: Father of Landscape Architecture



General Information

The year 2022 marks the *200th anniversary* of the birth of Frederick Law Olmsted, social reformer and founder of American landscape architecture. His legacy lives on in iconic spaces around America including in New York's Central Park, Boston's Emerald Necklace and in Atlanta's Druid Hills and its Olmsted Linear Park.

A celebration of his life and legacy will be coordinated nationally by the National Association for Olmsted Parks (www.olmsted200.org) around his April birth-date in 2022.

In Atlanta, a week-long celebration is being planned by the Druid Hills "Olmsted 200" Celebration Committee to commemorate Olmsted's vision and contributions to this community's quality of life. The local effort will highlight Olmsted's many contributions to the Atlanta community, including the design of the historic Druid Hills subdivision with its sylvan Olmsted Linear Park and include a series of events, including:

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Druid Hills Olmsted 200 Partners



Public Safety Report

By Doug Rollins, Public Safety Chair

Greetings Druid Hills residents! The past 12 months have been busy ones despite the pandemic. With the new structure of the DHCA, Public Safety gained additional responsibility for transportation-related issues and our new, larger Committee has been working to add value to the collective quality of life in Druid Hills.

Ellen Meshnick, our **Neighborhood Watch** lead, has been extremely busy, recruiting new street captains and diligently publishing the monthly crime report via those captains, on our website and via Next Door. Gary Tapp, her “partner on crime,” has brought a new level of analytics to the DHCA. His efforts have helped us realize that 80%+ of our crimes occur in commercial parking lots and the apartment complexes that ring our neighborhood. We have continued to build relationships with the police departments of DeKalb, City of Atlanta and Emory and welcomed our DeKalb Police precinct leadership to a meeting in Emory Village to focus on crime reduction in those lots. Additionally, we provided boxed lunches to those officers that worked across our precinct on Thanksgiving Day. We also conducted and published an analysis and recommendation on the efficacy of our Flock camera pilot which is available on our website.

In the area of **transportation**, we have also been busy. Mike St. Louis effectively hounded County government on the installation of mini roundabouts at the intersections of North Decatur and Oakdale and at Springdale. Construction is now planned for Q2 on these much-needed improvements to pedestrian and vehicular safety. In addition, we drew county visibility to the storm water flooding occurring at the corner of N. Decatur and Ridgewood and secured a project team to replace sidewalks, install ADA compliant ramps and add new curbing. In that area and others around the neighborhood, you may have actually seen a street sign! We leveraged our DHCA Community Service Days to clean over 50 road signs (thanks Karl Ots and crews!).

Our committee worked with several streets on **reducing traffic speed**. Speed tables have been approved for installation on Springdale Rd., and petitions are in process on several other streets including Oakdale, Lullwater and

South Ponce. We met with residents of Emory Grove to discuss volume and speed concerns, helping Westminster and Edinborough Terrace with the process. We convinced DeKalb County that 35mph was too fast for the school zone around Druid Hills High School and you will soon see updates to signage to ensure those passing through during morning and afternoon school hours do so at a more leisurely pace.

Working with OLPA, we pulled together a cross-stakeholder team to build a single, comprehensive **pedestrian improvement plan for Ponce de Leon Avenue** including school zone speed cameras, new pedestrian crossings and improved sidewalks. We successfully gained the support from our elected representatives, and we will be working over the coming year with GDOT to ensure our residents can safely take advantage of the amazing linear parks at our doorstep. On another main artery, we have been working with residents off Briarcliff across from Fox 5, to lobby DeKalb County and GDOT on pedestrian improvements to ensure residents can safely walk to Emory and to Sage Hill. While these are longer term endeavors, we remain optimistic that our pressure will have positive results for the residents of Poplar Grove Drive, Briar Hills, Carol Lane and Anita Place.

Looking forward, we will continue to push these efforts forward while working to create a comprehensive transportation plan; defining a vision of how people will move through our neighborhood and helping us more effectively prioritize needed improvements and investments. A big piece of this plan will undoubtedly be our **sidewalk infrastructure**. In DeKalb County, where the County is responsible for maintaining our sidewalks, we continue to lobby our CEO for investments and are working on ways to partner with residents wishing to make repairs such as streamlined permitting and subsidized work. As we kick off 2022, we look forward to continued partnership with the leadership of the Druid Hills Patrol and will find ways to more effectively streamline all the work done to make Druid Hills as safe as we can.

We are always looking for volunteers. Even if you only have an hour, we can put your time to good use. Please email me at publicsafety@druidhills.org.

Special Opportunity for Atlanta/DH Landmark District Residents

Betsy Marvin for the LD Preservation Committee

Ever wondered just exactly what goes on in an on-site review by our District's Preservation Committee? What's the advantage of involving these neighbors? How can they help?

The Committee would like to extend an invitation to attend these meetings, focused at young people 11 and up, but open to their parents and others living here, subject to the homeowners' approval.

We'll welcome one or two at a time, to observe our process and ask questions. Our meetings are informal, mostly outdoors, and technically oriented. We may focus on roof lines, windows and doors, landscaping, or building heights, with references to historical precedents and official rules and regulations. The sessions usually last about an hour.

Please register (name and address) at atlantahistoric@druidhills.org to be invited to an upcoming review, and we look forward to seeing you.



DeKalb County Commission District 2 Update - Druid Hills

By Commissioner Jeff Rader

The Druid Hills News asked Mr. Rader to report on the ways in which he advances the interests of Druid Hills as the DeKalb County Board commissioner representing our neighborhood.

Representing Druid Hills on the DeKalb County Commission for almost 15 years, I find many opportunities to advance neighborhood interests to my colleagues on the Board of Commissioners and to the CEO's Administration, advancing both your expectations as one of our many welcoming neighborhoods, and also meeting special needs unique to DeKalb's premier historic district. Here's a summary of some currently timely issues.

WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT

Most of the disruptive work to replace hundred-year-old water mains in Druid Hills and the Briarcliff Corridor is completed, but our office continues to press for the repaving of those streets affected by the construction. Work began last year, as we raised the visibility of falling water pressure throughout much of the community. An investigation revealed that the old mains were obstructed by scaling, a consequence of their age. In addition to inconvenience, the low pressure constitutes a fire risk, and our office worked to prioritize the emergency replacement of the system. Now as we complete the project, our office is working to ensure the Watershed Department returns the streets to good condition. We are meeting on a biweekly schedule with management to this end.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Further up North Decatur toward Briarcliff, a traffic calming program is under design, which will place "mini roundabouts" at the Oakdale and Springdale Rd. intersections to impede speeding in the corridor, and to make it safer for pedestrians and drivers. We also were able to work with Senator Elena Parent and Atlanta City Councilmember Jennifer Ide to secure additional funding to install a roundabout at the Cumberland Rd. Intersection, and a mid-block pedestrian beacon between Briarcliff and Cumberland. That work should begin in the spring. A community petition has also been filed for speed tables on Oakdale Rd.

EMORY VILLAGE

Another paving problem that we're working to resolve is the failure of some of the decorative brick work at Emory Village. A series of stop-gap repairs by county crews helped to alleviate immediate hazards, but the overall effect is a piecemeal of ugly and uneven asphalt in this high traffic area. The County Public Works Director has been tasked to develop a comprehensive strategy to stabilize and rehabilitate the Emory Village Streetscapes.

The road is not all that needs attention in Emory Village, and at community request, a stakeholders group has been convened to review the Emory Village Zoning Overlay to meet the needs of current conditions. One important first step is to consider whether the Overlay should accommodate beer and wine sales in the new Savi Provisions Market specialty grocery that will occupy the old Slice and Pint space. That decision should be made before the market opens after the new year.



DeKalb County Commissioner Jeff Rader

EMORY'S GRADUATE HOUSING

Further up North Decatur toward Clairmont, Emory University is seeking zoning from the City of Atlanta to erect a large Graduate Student Housing Complex in the area known as the Haygood Triangle. Emory's annexation into Atlanta has limited DeKalb's ability to protect your interests there, but we are working with DHCA and other stakeholders to improve traffic congestion and pedestrian safety.

STORMWATER

Working with my Commission colleagues in programming American Rescue Plan funding assigned to DeKalb, I was able to obtain a commitment to improve storm water management in parks, including Deep Dene Park and Zonolite Park. Designs to stabilize our streams and to prevent flooding to be developed over the next six months should yield several millions in dollars for improvements there next year. This will complement new green space acquired where Peachtree Creek crosses Briarcliff near Fox 5 TV, and OLPA's stewardship of storm water improvements to be implemented by GDOT on Ponce de Leon. Also on Ponce, we're working with community stakeholders and our legislators, Senator Parent and Representatives Oliver, Evans and Nguyen to implement safety improvements consistent with the historic landscape of the Linear Parks.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

Finally, in response to some insensitive tree cutting along The Byway, we will convene DHCA and other community stakeholders to review and potentially revise landscape preservation elements of the Historic District Guidelines. New rules regulating the subdivision of historic lots are also under preparation. These rules contribute much to our community's unique character, and more attention to the natural aesthetic here is a worthwhile effort to preserve the Olmsted legacy.

Please don't hesitate to contact our offices to share your ideas and expectations, or for assistance in obtaining County service delivery. We're at jrader@dekalbcountyga.gov, 404/371-2863, or you can make a request at our website: www.commissionerrader.com. Please also sign up there for our email list.



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Druid Hills District 5 Update

By Gary Tapp, District 5 Chair

Street Party!

Residents of Emory Circle, Durand Drive, Burlington Place, and parts of North Decatur held a successful street party on Oct. 31. Originally set for the day before, the party was pushed over to Halloween Day by the cold, rainy weather on the 30th. Many kids (and parents) tried out their Halloween costumes and welcomed a visit from movie star R2D2 (or a close relative). Despite the rain, some musicians from the streets played to an appreciative crowd on the night of the 30th. It was a great chance to meet new neighbors, catch up with old ones, and to meet outdoors before the cold weather sets in. We learned (or rediscovered) that our neighborhood is full of fascinating people doing amazing things. Many new, younger families have arrived, bringing energy, enthusiasm, and lots of adorable little ones! Food was from Community BBQ, provided by a group of host families with many contributors. Thanks to all who attended and contributed! Plans are already underway for another get-together during the winter.

New Neighbors

Between November 2020 and November 2021, DHCA District 5 Reps Renee Nelson and Gary Tapp delivered 12 welcome bags to new families who have moved into the neighborhood.

Emory Building Project Update

After extensive negotiations with Emory resulted in agreements on design, parking, traffic, and other issues, the DHCA Board voted to “not oppose” Emory’s planned 1,000-bed housing project for graduate students. The Atlanta NPU-F, which includes the Emory property, recommended that the zoning change for the project be approved.

Specifically, Emory agreed to change the design to remove a “notch” of five stories (roughly about 25 feet) that would extend along N. Decatur and to remove four stories above the second “notch,” which would then have just the one-story glass-walled coffee shop with nothing above it. These design changes would widen the “green gap” in the original 375-foot, five-story facade facing N. Decatur from the original 70 feet to 120



Neighbors enjoyed getting together for a fall party.

feet, providing more green space facing the neighborhood.

Emory also agreed to work with DeKalb County to add two signaled crosswalks across N. Decatur at Ridgewood and Haygood and add a flashing school zone and MPH sign to slow traffic entering Haygood. Emory also proposed changing the shape of the curve from N. Decatur on to Haygood to help slow traffic, although that would have to be done in consultation with DeKalb County. Emory also agreed to provide some parking spaces for Druid Hills High School, which could relieve some of the parking pressure in the neighborhood. The lease will include a clause prohibiting the grad students or their guests from parking on the nearby residential streets.

In addition, Emory agreed to contribute to improved sidewalks (including ADA ramps) on the south side of N. Decatur, improved storm drainage, and planting more replacement trees. Finally, Emory agreed that the project would never be used for undergraduate housing. Emory hopes to break ground in fall of 2022, with the first of the two phases open in the summer of 2024 and the second phase completed in 2027.

Neighborhood Planning Units

By Carol Sleeth

If you have ever attended a Druid Hills Civic Association meeting or read “In The News” on the NEXTDOOR newsfeed you have probably heard or read about City of Atlanta Neighborhood Planning Units. There has been a lot of chatter recently about the NPUs and the proposed text amendments to the City of Atlanta zoning ordinance (Z-21-74 and Z-21-85). Maybe it would be appropriate to say “heated chatter.” If interested, you can look online for those two amendments.

The NPU system was established in 1974 by Mayor Maynard Jackson as a way for citizens in each city neighborhood to have a voice in what was happening in their communities and to give input into the City’s Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). There are 25 NPUs – A to Z, except U. Each NPU represents the citizens of a specific geographical area within the city. They meet once a month to review and vote on issues such as zoning applications, variances, changes to the zoning ordinance, liquor licenses, applications for festivals, and to recommend changes to the CDP. At each meeting reports are given by representatives of city departments, the police zone captain and the fire department.

Each NPU operates according to a set of guidelines and each NPU creates its own bylaws. Some NPUs permit anyone from the member neighborhoods to vote. Other NPUs have a representative form of governance with each neighborhood within that NPU sending a representative to the NPU board. These representatives vote as the voice of their neighborhood organization.

Druid Hills is unique in that, in addition to DeKalb County, we are represented in two different City of Atlanta NPUs – F and N. NPU F includes the neighborhoods of Atkins Park, Edmond Park, Lindridge/Martin Manor, Morningside/Lenox Park, Piedmont Heights, Virginia-Highland & recently, that part of Druid Hills that was annexed along with Emory into the City of Atlanta. NPU F has a policy of one resident or business owner – one vote.

NPU N includes Cabbagetown, Candler Park, Druid Hills (Fairview Road, Ponce De Leon, and those parts of Briarcliff, Springdale, Oakdale, Lullwater and Clifton which are within the Atlanta City limits), Inman Park, Lake Claire, Poncey-Highland, Reynoldstown, L5P Business Association, and L5P Community Center. NPU N is a representative form of governance with only the neighborhood representatives voting. NPU N includes three Atlanta City Council districts – 2, 5, and 6.

Many politicians have come up through the ranks of the NPU system, such as Vincent Fort, Cleta Winslow and Felicia Moore.

Druid Hills Patrol Welcomes New Leaders

By Claudia Edwards

For more than three decades, the Druid Hills Patrol's law enforcement officers have added an essential layer of police protection for all of us in Druid Hills. As two long-time board members retire from their positions and shift into advisory roles, the new board members and officers will continue running the Druid Hills Patrol along with our six stellar police officers.

Recently, dues-paying members elected this slate of officers and board members. Please meet the neighbors who are so generously donating their time and considerable talents:

OFFICERS

President – Kent Murphy – Kent has lived in Druid Hills for more than 30 years and spent an equal amount of time working in corporate law. His family includes two Emory graduates. Kent has served as an officer or director for several non-profit organizations involved with adult literacy, amateur baseball and Lou Gehrig's Disease. He is interested in maintaining a vibrant Druid Hills.

Vice president – Carol Bush – Carol and husband Aubrey Bush have lived in Druid Hills for 43 years. Their daughters attended Fernbank Elementary and Druid Hills High schools. An Emory graduate, Carol is a retired professor of nursing. She is active in many organizations, including: Glenn Memorial UMC; Caregivers Support Group; the Harvard Road Book Club; DHCA and the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance. She is eager to help the Patrol continue its work. She shared, "The current feeling of freedom to walk the streets and enjoy our homes is due at least in part to the Druid Hills Patrol."

Treasurer – Jim Sustman – Having worked in the software industry for more than 40 years, Jim is very numbers-oriented. He was involved with developing electric-utility economic planning and simulation systems. He also has had experience with budgets, having served as treasurer for his church. Jim, who is the husband of Jane St. Clair, enjoys working in his yard and walking our neighborhood.

Administrator – Jane St. Clair – An Atlanta native, Jane is a graduate of Emory's School of Medicine. She and her husband, residents of Springdale Road since 1977, joined the Druid Hills Patrol when it was first started. They appreciate the enhanced security that the DHP has provided. Jane stated, "When I read that the DHP needed volunteers this year, I decided that it was time for me to give back."

BOARD MEMBERS

Peter Ash – Peter moved to Druid Hills with his family in 1993 to take a faculty position at Emory, where he is a child and forensic psychiatrist and directs the Psychiatry and Law Service. In that role, he's done considerable work in the Fulton County Jail, evaluating and treating mentally ill offenders. He first joined the DHP Board in the mid-1990s. He sees promoting a sense of community as an important component of the DHP safety mission.

Pope Bullock – Pope, a Druid Hills resident for more than 35 years, has served on numerous boards over the years, including the Druid Hills Civic Association. He is an architect who designed several buildings on Emory's campus and his wife, Dr. Sarah McPhee, is chair of Emory's Art History department. He plans to focus on boosting DHP membership.



James Dabbs – James grew up in the area, attending Fernbank Elementary and graduating from Druid Hills High School. He raised his own children here as well. James, who earned an Electrical Engineering degree from Georgia Tech, works with digital radio systems and 5G cellular technology. He holds several patents in wireless communications.

Matt Nozemack – An Oakdale resident, Matt and his wife and two children have been living in Druid Hills since 2017. He is an attorney with more than 20 years of experience advising boards and management teams, and executing corporate transactions. He also volunteers as a youth basketball coach at Haygood UMC.

Aja Pascale – Originally from New York, Aja has lived in Druid Hills with her husband, Michael, and four daughters since 2010. Aja's professional experience spans 20 years of operations and business management. She is the president of a Norcross-based company and co-founder of a software company, both in the food services industry. Aja played a pivotal role in establishing a quiet zone on East Lake Road at the CSX crossing and wants to continue contributing to Druid Hills through involvement with DHP.



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Traffic Triangles – Small but Important

By Pam Woodley

Traffic triangles are those small, generally triangle-shaped, islands of foliage at certain street intersections. They help direct and calm traffic, and they add flair to our streets.

I live on Ridgewood, where we are fortunate to have two triangles. Both had been lovingly maintained by neighbors whom I knew had moved away. Unable to take these on myself, since my only gardening experience is alternating between overwatering and neglecting the one plant on my desk, I decided to create an inventory of all the triangles in Druid Hills and how they were being maintained. For one thing, those caretakers deserve our thanks! This little project was adopted by the DHCA Parks and Greenspace Committee, of which I am a member.

Here is the inventory we've made of DH triangles. Please let me know of any we've missed.

- **Ridgewood Dr. and Emory Dr.** – This was most recently planted and maintained by Lois Berthume. After Lois moved to Florida, March Lofton, a Druid Hills High student, took over until her family also moved. Now, Tim and Mandy Sweeney, who moved into Lois' house, have generously offered to add the triangle to the duties of their yard guys.
- **Ridgewood Dr. and Burlington Rd.** – Laura Roberds did a fantastic job on this pretty, stone-lined triangle. She planted colorful annuals each spring and fall and even put in several whimsical frog statues. Luckily for us, when she moved out of her house, her son and daughter-in-law Lin and Ellie Roberds moved in and have said they will carry on their mom's legacy as best they can.
- **Oxford Rd. and Clifton Rd.** – This highly trafficked triangle by Burbank Park is tended by Wanda and Stan Bokowski, Perry Mitchell, and Mark Goldman. They keep it colorful and lush with lots of azaleas and roses.

“Traffic triangles may seem like a small thing, but they are highly visible, and a little love thrown their way can go a long way in keeping the neighborhood beautiful.”

Kit Eisterhold, DHCA past-President

• **Harvard Rd. and Emory Rd.** – Kit Eisterhold designed and executed this interesting triangle to be beautiful and virtually maintenance-free. He put in 7 tons of boulders, plus plants that require little to no pruning or watering in normal conditions (a Natchez crape myrtle, a dozen gumpo (dwarf) azaleas, and 30 flats of dwarf mondo grass). As Kit hoped, the boulders are developing a lovely patina of lichens and mosses.

- **Westminster Way and N. Decatur Rd, Westminster Way and Edinborough Terrace** (6 small triangles) – This neighborhood has great spirit – over half the households contribute to a fund to pay a landscaping service to maintain these six plots and ensure the shrubs do not cause visibility problems. Rex Hardaway oversees the landscaping company's work.
- **N. Decatur Rd. and Oxford Rd. Roundabout** – This large circular plot at the entrance to Emory University is maintained by Emory, although Druid Hills residents help out on occasional work days in the Village.
- **N. Decatur Rd. and Lullwater Rd. Roundabout** – This important roundabout is the West entryway to Emory Village. Plantings were originally designed by neighborhood landscaper Joanna Stroud and installed by neighborhood volunteers. After damage from too-frequent drive-overs by cars, porous pavers and boulders were installed by a landscaping company that subsequently maintained the island in exchange for posting their sign in this highly trafficked area. This arrangement seems to have ended and, as far as we know, no one is now caring for this space. Also, a lamppost installed by DeKalb County to illuminate the circle at night appears to be non-working. We are looking for another landscaping company willing to take it on in exchange for free advertising – let us know if you have a company in mind we can contact. Contact: Pam Woodley, pamwoodley@comcast.net; 404-884-5283.

Thanks to all the above neighbors for helping to keep Druid Hills beautiful!



Traffic Triangle at Emory and Harvard roads



Triangle at Burlington Road and Ridgewood Drive



Triangle at Oxford and Clifton Roads



Artist Tony Ragunas

Local Artist Helps Support the Community

By Andrew Keenan

If you've ever worked with a non-profit organization, you know that raising money through donations is pretty much a full-time job. You can imagine my delight when Druid Hills neighbor and Callanwolde painting student, Tony Ragunas, informed us that whenever he sells a painting all the proceeds are donated to non-profit organizations, Callanwolde among them.

Tony has a background in art going back to his undergraduate studies at University of Notre Dame. After selling his company in 2016, he began taking ceramics classes at Callanwolde. Impressed by the quality of the facilities and the faculty, he enrolled in a series of oil painting classes taught by Pat Hobaugh that helped focus his development as a visual artist.

Although their styles of painting are very different, Tony and Pat share the same artistic ethos, which is playful and very engaging. Tony's work, however, is looser and more spontaneous. He takes a lot of chances and draws inspiration from popular culture. His painting entitled "Delta Tigers – Stay Strong," is perhaps my favorite and was featured on outdoor advertising boards around the metro Atlanta area, including Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, in a partnership with ArtPop.

In addition to supporting Callanwolde, proceeds from Tony's art sales have benefited Camp Sunshine, Cure Childhood Cancer and The Paideia School. Recently, he sold a large painting at a Ferrari of Atlanta-sponsored "Rides to Remember" auction for \$17,500 - a record-high for a work by him. The money we receive from donors like Tony make it possible for us to provide financial aid and art classes to underserved communities like veterans who live with PTSD and elementary-aged kids at Title I schools.

It is heartwarming to witness Callanwolde artists supporting not only Callanwolde but other Atlanta charities with skills learned right here in Druid Hills. To learn more and see Tony's artwork, go to Method-atTZ.com. To learn more about Pat Harbough's classes and other art education classes at Callanwolde, go to callanwolde.org.

Creek Rising Lifts South Fork Conservancy Trails

By Dorothy Sussman

Through an auction of artisan quilts and a raffle of handmade jewelry, mountain cabins, penguin adventures and more -- many generous folks recently lifted up South Fork Conservancy's (SFC) Creek Rising event, which was stuck in the mud due to Covid.



"For the second year in a row, South Fork Conservancy had to hold its annual fundraiser online, instead of in person on the banks of the beautiful South Fork of Peachtree Creek," said SFC Chair Julie Ralston.

"We so missed the communion with friends, but miraculously, this year's Creek Rising was the most financially successful in our history, due to our wonderful community of supporters."

Kathy Dorough (left), the high bidder on Jennifer Leavy's gorgeous "Fantasy of Flowers" quilt, with Dorothy Sussman, chair of the 2021 SFC Creek Rising event.

Many thanks to the Druid Hills community whose residents were among those who sponsored or hosted the signature event; bought raffle tickets; or bid on a collection of glorious, nature-inspired quilts made by talented Atlanta quilters. Initial plans had been to hold an in-person celebration, but a rise in cases of COVID-19 meant changing Creek Rising to an online event. Supporters and friends of the nonprofit understood the importance of this event in raising funds for SFC programs, and they rose to the occasion, putting SFC over the top for its fundraising goal.

"The success of this event means that we will continue to be a force for providing access to our natural systems for all residents," said Kimberly Estep, South Fork Conservancy's executive director.

Next, SFC looks forward to working with volunteers on a variety of trail projects to connect the Atlanta BeltLine to Emory University and beyond. And with the opening of South Fork's \$2.5 million Confluence Pedestrian Bridge this December, the connections to nature will grow exponentially.

Nature has been a solace to all of us during the last year and a half. I think we all have a new appreciation for the gifts of our parks, trails and streams.

Please join us for a hike soon.

For SFC trail maps and volunteer opportunities, please visit www.southforkconservancy.com.

Parks & Greenspace

By William Tomlin

The Parks and Greenspace Committee held its first meeting in June 2021 after the DHCA Board of Directors created the committee earlier this year. Feedback collected by the DHCA during its recent neighborhood listening effort showed an interest in greater efforts to steward the parks and natural environment throughout Druid Hills. To that end, the Parks and Greenspace Committee has undertaken projects including

- Partnering with Trees Atlanta to promote their Yard Tree program and plant more trees in Druid Hills
- Supporting our neighbors who maintain traffic islands
- Encouraging neighbors to register their property as part of the National Wildlife Federation's Certified Wildlife Habitat Program, and
- Building community through a plant swap hosted by Amy Durrell.

The committee hopes to continue these projects and more in the coming year. If you are interested in volunteering with the committee, please reach out to parks@druidhills.org. The committee would especially like to encourage participation from anyone involved with the dedicated groups caring for the various parks throughout Druid Hills.



Druid Hills is a Certified Wildlife Habitat

By Pam Woodley

A big part of living in Druid Hills is preserving and celebrating our gorgeous natural surroundings – old-growth forest, rushing streams, parks and wildlife. Almost every issue of this Druid Hills News is packed with articles highlighting our outdoors in one way or another. So it made sense when – in 2015 -- the Civic Association Board asked for volunteers to explore earning the National Wildlife Federation's

(NWF) Certified Wildlife Habitat designation for Druid Hills. Given our starting point and the enthusiasm of our residents, we reached that goal the very next year. As a community, we certified 150 individual yards as “wildlife habitats,” along with all our schools and parks.

Projects such as restoring Heaton Park on Vickers

Drive and Parkwood Park on E. Parkwood, holding a native plant sale, and hosting walking tours also contributed to this accomplishment.

To maintain the certification, we need to certify a small number of new homes each year. Certifying your yard is easy and can be done on-line. You need to certify (honor system) that your property contains the four elements necessary to support wildlife: food (e.g. acorns, flowers), water (e.g. a stream, pond, or bird bath), cover (e.g. bushes, trees), and places to raise young (e.g. old trees). All the information you need is available at nwf.org/certify or you can email Pam Woodley at pamwoodley@comcast.net.

With the NWF Community Habitat Certification and its designation as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, Druid Hills continues with its original vision of providing habitat for wildlife in a lively urban setting and also with honoring Frederick Law Olmsted's vision of Druid Hills as an area “well shaded by handsome, umbrageous, permanently thrifty trees” in a neighborhood with a “pleasing rural, or, at least, semi-rural, character of scenery...”



Frazer preschool buddies on a scavenger hunt in Frazer Forest

Senator Rahman Visits Frazer's Outdoor Classroom

By Dina Shadwell

Frazer Center welcomed State Senator Sheikh Rahman for a visit in our outdoor classroom, Frazer Forest. Senator Rahman, of Georgia's 5th District, is chair of the Senate Outdoor Learning Study Committee. Spurred by the pandemic and the urgent need for safe and healthy educational settings, this bi-partisan committee is exploring the possibilities and feasibility of outdoor learning across the state of Georgia. As part of this study, Rahman is visiting several sites around the state. Frazer Center caught his attention thanks to our nature-based early education initiative.

Senator Rahman joined Frazer CEO Paige McKay Kubik in the forest to observe a classroom of 3-year-olds. The "Ocean" classroom was on a scavenger hunt. Each child was partnered with a buddy, and each pair carried a laminated card showing an image and word for various items to search for in the forest: acorns, logs with moss, insects, for example. Once the children found an object, they marked its image on the card with a dot.

Through these on-site observations, Rahman is recognizing that the benefits of outdoor learning spread far beyond fresh air. As Kubik explains, "There's definitely a STEAM component to these types of activities. Hands-on engagement encourages creativity, innovative thinking, curiosity, questions. But it also provides opportunities for social and emotional development. These children are learning to work in teams toward common goals."

The mental health benefits of outdoor learning are significant as well. Increased screen time during the pandemic is taking a toll on the mental well-being of children and adults. Research is showing that natural settings provide a restorative antidote not just for students, but for teachers who tend to experience less burnout by working outdoors (Paddle and Gilliland, 2016).

Kubik shared with Rahman some of the specific challenges Frazer faces as an early education nature-based program in Georgia, such as the lack of regulatory standards for outdoor learning.



Frazer - Senator Sheikh Rahman (R) joins Frazer CEO Paige McKay Kubik in Frazer's outdoor classroom.

Frazer is accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and is Quality Rated through the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). These agencies provide regulations for maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment. But when that environment extends beyond the school playground, guidance is lacking for early education centers.

The Frazer team "figures out what will work best to keep our children safe while learning in the forest and then makes sure that we are still in compliance with DECAL regulations," says Kubik. But without state accreditation standards, nature-based early learning programs in Georgia will remain rare and inaccessible, especially to communities that are under-resourced.

Rahman and the committee are examining ways to invest in outdoor learning programs, looking at the dollars that are already going into education and rethinking how they're used.

There's no doubt that children benefit from outdoor learning, whether they live in an urban or rural setting. The Frazer Center team is honored to be a resource for Senator Rahman and the Senate Outdoor Learning Study Committee as they strive to make nature-based learning a natural part of Georgia's education system.

School News

Fernbank Elementary

Contributed by Dana Borda



Fernbank Elementary Fun Run 1st grade boys winners Indiana Dillard, Webb Collums, and Ivan Allen

As our school year continues, Fernbank Elementary is happy to have our students and staff back at school together every day. We are working hard to keep everyone as safe as possible as our school community keeps learning through this pandemic.

We were also happy to bring back our annual Fun Run, one of our special traditions that had been paused by COVID! On October 2, approximately 220 students in all grades and their parents gathered on our back field to run and cheer for each other.

Our annual "Fund the Fern" fundraising campaign was also very successful. We met our goal and through funding the Fern, our students earned a special YES Day in December. We are grateful for the donations from our families and neighbors.

SPARK

Contributed by Kimberly Ryan

Springdale Park Elementary School has had a great start to the school year! Students and staff are very excited to be back in the classroom. The students were even able to participate in an annual SPARK fundraising tradition-the Fun Run! This event took place on October 22, 2021 and the students had a BLAST running for a great cause. Students raised over \$60,000 for the school! This money will go towards

new interactive learning opportunities, STEM curriculum enhancements and media center updates. The school will also use some of the money raised to get new stage curtains to benefit the arts program.

Springdale Park welcomed a new assistant principal this school year - Mrs. Denise Bringslid. She most recently worked at Mary Lin Elementary School where she was an instructional coach. Denise believes that in order to develop critical thinking skills, we must begin to *spark* each child's sense of wonder at an early age - which is why she loves working with elementary students. SPARK is so excited that Mrs. Bringslid joined the school community!

Druid Hills Middle School

For school information, visit: <https://www.druidhillsms.dekalb.k12.ga.us/>

Druid Hills High School

Compiled from online sources

Congratulations to DHHS senior **Sage Walker**, who is the 2021 4A Boys Cross Country state champion and to DHHS teacher, **Mme. Michelle Kubiak**, who was named the American Association of Teachers of French Georgia Chapter High School Teacher of the Year!

DHHS is excited to present RDTV, the school's new TV show for all things Druid Hills!

Visit: <https://sites.google.com/dekalbschoolsga.org/dhnewsfeed/home>

Ben Franklin Academy

Contributed by Angela Cassidy

Ben Franklin Academy celebrated its' 34th birthday with a small party recently. Even the school cats, Benjamin and Franklin, enjoyed the party! BFA is incredibly proud of all that our alumni, students and faculty have achieved this year, and look forward to many more years of success.

The **Franklin Players** were excited to return to a live performance this fall with a production of three short plays from emerging New York-based writers that each portray a

unique view of romantic relationships at a time of painful change. Billed under the title "Three Plays Three Ways," each production featured scripts and demonstrated the versatility of the BFA actors as they performed a variety of roles and worked with changing stage partners. The tech crew was challenged with a stage set that needed to quickly shift from a chic restaurant to a split stage featuring a jail cell on one side and the Greyhound Bus Station on the other and then, finally, to a romantic retro bar. Excited by the artistic possibilities and the issues presented in each of the three plays, there was a post-show conversation with the audience as a continuing part of our goal to involve the whole BFA community.

The school continues its long history of rolling admissions. Please visit the website at: <https://www.benfranklinacademy.org/admissions/getting-started> for more information.

Paideia

Contributed by Anne Dukes

Junior **Athena Assikis** was awarded the Most Outstanding Female Performer Award at the Georgia Bar's mock trial Law Academy, a highly selective program for the best Mock Trial Students throughout Georgia. She is the first Paideia student ever to win this award.

Three Paideia high school robotics teams competed in a VEX Robotics tournament, and two teams advanced to the semifinal and final rounds. **Brendan Brown, Nicholas Fuenzalida, Quinn Dyer, and Felix Graves** earned a second-place ranking in the qualification rounds and made it to the finals. The team of **Kenan Orlovic, Alex Crowley, and Rohan Chanani** made it to the semifinals.

Twenty-four Paideia seniors were recognized by the National Merit Scholarship program. Nine students were semi-finalists and 15 students were commended. Paideia's junior varsity academic bowl team placed second in their division at the Georgia Academic Team Association fall tournament. Team members are **Michael London, Vivi Belkin, Brendan Brown, Quinn Dyer, Thomas Grant and Daniel Sommerfeld**.

*Aspidistra Before**Aspidistra just new growth, none of last year's tatters.*

In Praise of Deciduous Plants

By Hillary Hart

Atlanta recently enjoyed a spectacular fall. I found myself pulling over repeatedly to photograph trees aflame with color. Some plants, like oakleaf hydrangeas, show all seasons at once with leaves varying from sharp green to deep burgundy, whereas the ginkgo's glory is a single yellow tone that burns incandescent before the leaves fall dramatically over an afternoon or two.

The showstoppers of autumn are easy to celebrate, but not all deciduous plants participate in nature's blazing season finale. The fig in my yard gave a half-hearted attempt at yellow, but mostly the leaves curled up and dropped without ceremony. Around this time I receive worried texts from my clients with photos of leaf spot and browned tips. I assure them that their red twig dogwood or mophead hydrangea is healthy, just tired and ready to lose its leaves. In fact, many plants look downright bedraggled this time of year, slouching toward winter. Even the Japanese anemones, those long-necked beauties now blooming, draw our eyes away from brown crisps of leaves below.

One person who had no problem with the sometimes unlovely trip to dormancy was George Sanko, Georgia botanist and founder of the Georgia Perimeter College Native Plant Botanical Garden and Ferns of the World collection. I had the good fortune to attend a plant sale at which Mr. Sanko was volunteering and overheard another shopper seeking evergreen plants. Mr. Sanko gave a great sigh and said something like, "Evergreen. The very idea exhausts me. Don't you need a break now and then?" I have to agree. By the end of November I am ready to go dormant. Wake me when the days are reliably longer than the nights.

There is a very practical side to the curl-up-and-die foliage of many deciduous plants. Take two evergreens favored by landscapers, autumn fern and Japanese holly fern. These retain their fronds through winter; however, wind, rain, and freezing temperatures batter them. Come spring, these ferns have a ratty appearance. Moreover, last year's now-ragged growth will obscure the new fronds as they unfold in their unblemished perfection. Unless, of course,

you cut away the shabby bits once the fiddleheads begin to crown. Meanwhile, many deciduous plants that melted to nothing are free to set out new growth unobstructed by last year's tat.

Aspidistra (aka cast iron plant) is another evergreen dry-shade warrior that often fails to receive needed grooming. Soldiering through winter, its tall, broad, lance-shaped leaves have the persistence and appearance of plastic. Nevertheless, the wind will pick up an aspidistra leaf like an improperly secured sail and whip it into itself and its neighbors. While an aspidistra planting could be a proud, unbroken stand of green, it is almost invariably mixed with the shredded and bleached shrouds of old foliage simply because no one has removed the damaged leaves.

This time of year many plants are tarnished or entirely blackened by sooty mold. If any part of your yard is overhung by a hackberry tree, you know of what I speak. For decades, hackberries have been beset by woolly aphids. These creatures suck the sap from the tree's leaves and secrete honeydew, which rains down and then grows moldy. By summer's end, everything beneath the afflicted tree has a thick black coating. While unsightly, sooty mold is not a problem for deciduous plants. They will shed their leaves, maybe with a little extra glee, and start afresh next year. Evergreens, like gardenias, camellias, and pittosporum, suffer terribly as the coating builds up year after year, inhibiting photosynthesis.

In conclusion, have not coneflowers, peonies and maidenhair ferns done us good service through the growing season? Is it not churlish to resent them for turning into a pile of blackened sticks or dropping their leaves in an exhausted heap? They do us a favor by leaving little to tidy at season's end and nothing to mar the tender days of spring. Who does not cherish a period of rest followed by a fresh start?

Hilary Hart is a garden designer in Atlanta and can be contacted at floraphile-gardendesign.com.

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