



THE DRUID HILLS News

SUMMER, 2007
Volume 21, Number 2
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Burbanck Park Dedication Draws a Crowd

Over 200 guests attended the April dedication of the newest jewel in Druid Hills, Burbanck Park, located at the corner of Oxford and Clifton roads. The event, held on Earth Day (April 22) was the culmination of months of work that will soon transform the residential site into a community park on Peavine Creek.

As guests at the dedication planted native species and mingled with friends and neighbors, the Glenn Children’s Choir and the Emory University Jazz Quartet performed.

The non-historic house at 1164 Clifton Road, which was home to the late Drs. Madeline and William Burbanck—both Emory professors—is one block from Emory Village. The community site will act as a green buffer between the residences of Druid Hills and businesses in the Village.

Emory purchased the 1.2 acre site in 2006 and is working with the Druid Hills Civic Association, the Alliance to Improve Emory Village, the Peavine Watershed Alliance, Park Pride and the Clifton Community Partnership to create the park. At the printing of this article, over \$22,000 had been raised by the community, including private donations, Emory Village fundraisers and a donation by the Druid Hills Civic Association. For more information on how to make a tax-deductible contribution, go to www.parkpride.org and select Donate, under Gift Info, then select on behalf of and enter "1164 Clifton Road," or make a check payable to "Park Pride – 1164 Clifton Road" and mail your contribution to: Park Pride, Atlanta, 675 Ponce de Leon Ave, NE, 8th Floor, Atlanta, GA 30308.



Burbanck Park will have a few more planted native azaleas, thanks to the hard work and entrepreneurship of Junior Girl Scout troop 21456, made up of 5th and 6th grade girls from Druid Hills and Fernbank. On the Saturday of the Tour of Homes, these girls took advantage of the prime real estate on lower Harvard Road to sell drinks and snacks to hot and thirsty tour goers. They raised \$102 dollars to buy native plants for Burbanck Park. They are also scheduled for several May Saturday workdays, to plant native azaleas and pull ivy. Thank you to these nature loving and civic minded young ladies!

Druid Hills Parents Network Launches in the Neighborhood

by Claudia Edwards

Are you looking for summer activities for your children? Do you want to find a playgroup for your son or daughter? Perhaps your daughter babysits and wants to get the word out. Have your children attended local schools and you feel you could give good advice to others? The newly formed Druid Hills Parents Network is a portal for these needs and many more.



Druid Hills Parents Network Planning Committee (From Left to Right) Tammy Carroll, Suni Diez, Holly Simmons, Claudia Edwards, Beth Blaney, Lacy Henderson

Holly Simmons, President of the Druid Hills Parents Network, initially had the idea after her daughter was born two years ago. She was going back to work part-time and was looking for a nanny. She found the best lead from her friend who lived in Morningside and was involved in the Virginia-Highlands Morningside Parents Association. It struck Holly that Druid Hills needed the same type of resource for Druid Hills neighborhood parents.

Druid Hills has thousands of families in the area and Holly recently stated her goals for the Parents Network that launched in March 2007. She said, “I hope to see a robust network of information sharing as it relates to neighborhood parents and children. As most moms know, other moms are often the best resource for information. Druid Hills has much to offer in the way of our historic preservation, a neighborhood rich in history, culture and architecture, but, with so many young families, the need for a more family-oriented focus is strong.”

Joining the Druid Hills Parents Network (DHPN) is easy. First, you must live within the boundaries of Druid Hills and secondly, you must be a Druid Hills Civic Association (DHCA) member at any level. If you qualify for these, then you can register to have access on the members-only portion of the DHPN which includes a discussion forum. All of this can be found online at <http://www.druidhills.org>.

A planning committee, which happens to be a group of moms, was formed at last year’s Fourth of July Parade. They are parents who want to help and involve other parents and their families in events like the parade, playgroups and neighborhood parties so families can meet one another. The committee is also responsible for moderating the various forums found online in the members-only portion. The forum covers topics such as healthcare, local services, parks, new parents and schools. Druid Hills has a plethora of resources and parents are the ones who can share this information with their neighbors both in person and online.

One new member to Druid Hills, Laura Bendoly noted, “As a newcomer to Druid Hills, the new Parents Network has provided the occasion to meet families that I wouldn’t have met through my child’s school or on the byways about town. Since my son goes to day care full-time, it’s hard to meet other moms through the park/playgroup route many stay-at-home moms use. So an internet solution, where you can set appointments and invitations to meet others with similarly aged kids is a great idea. I have already hosted a play date through the Parents Network discussion board. I am also looking for a jogging partner and a book club through the same vehicle. This method worked very successfully in Candler Park where we lived. I hope we have similar results in Druid Hills.”

Bruce MacGregor, President of the Druid Hills Civic Association, noted, “We are gratified to see the large number of young (and not so young) parents in the neighborhood. These are the future of Druid Hills. DHCA is very happy to incorporate the Parents Network into your Civic Association. With people like this coming on board, Druid Hills has a bright future.”

Go online and get registered. Contribute your ideas and information to the discussion board today. If you have any questions about the DHPN, email communication@druidhillsparents.org.

THE DRUID HILLS NEWS
*Newsletter of the
Druid Hills Civic Association*
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—Druid Hills News deadlines—

The deadlines for the summer issue of the *Druid Hills News* are:

Advertising—July 27

Copy—August 3

Publication will be in mid-September

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- 7 Becky Evans
- 4 Dick Spangler
- 9 Steve Misner
- 6 Ellen Nemhauser
- 4 Katherine Davey
- 5 Elise Riley
- 4 Thea Roeser
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- 2 Carolyn Riordan
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- 7 Thomas Winn

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- 2 Tara Adyanthaya
- 9 Rob Benfield
- 9 Natalie Di Santis
- 1 Craig Matakis
- 4 Mac Platt
- 5 Paul Shanor
- 1 Alida Silverman
- 4 David Winston

Eat Now, Play Later...



Nina Evans, Jenny Lee, “Mo-Mo” Lee, and Eve Evans enjoy dining at Saba during the “Eat Now, Play Later...at Burbank Park” fundraiser in Emory Village.

Congratulations!

Eighteen-year-old Druid Hills resident, Anna Harney, was awarded the first Mariel Hannah Humane Heroes Award by the Atlanta Humane Society "for her dedication to homeless pets and to the Atlanta Humane Society." Since 2002, Anna’s backyard "Art from the Heart" Art Sale has generated more than \$4,000 for AHS.

For more about the award, contact Mailey McLaughlin, Education Manager, The Atlanta Humane Society, 404-875-2600 (ext. 261).



Recommended Services

I highly recommend **Peace Painting Company (770-317-0070)**. I renovated a house in Morningside ten years ago and they did an incredible job. I am now renovating a Neil Reid designed home in Druid Hills and Peace Painting is again exceeding my expectations. They are reasonably priced, highly skilled, and reliable. (Diana Getz)

Sign up for complimentary eLerts for news, events, neighborhood updates, and more, at elert@druidhills.org.

Here is how to sign up for elerts – the civic association’s current means of keeping you up to date about current and impending events in Druid Hills.

The elert system replaces the paper notices you used to get in or on your mailbox. It is less expensive and more efficient.

- 1. Go to our website, www.druidhills.org
- 2. Click the "sign up today" button & complete the form.
- 3. Click "subscribe" button. There, you’ve done it!

Subscribing to the *Druid Hills News*

While residents of Druid Hills receive the newsletter each quarter by bulk mail, those who leave the neighborhood often want to stay in touch. How can they do that? It’s easy—take out a subscription.

This is what you do: Find the membership application—in this issue it’s on page 11. Fill it in, joining at whichever level you choose. The least expensive is \$25. In the section entitled Membership Involvement and Interests, in the center of the application, write “DHN subscription” in the line “Other—specify.”

Send the application and your check to the regular post office box address (see the bottom of the application) and you’ll continue to know what’s going on in the old neighborhood.

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Newsletter of the Druid Hills Civic Association

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Your Letters Are Welcome

In Memoriam

The Druid Hills Civic Association and Druid Hills News extend deepest sympathy to Julia Wynne, long time resident, on the death of her son Brian, who drowned recently saving his son. Brian Wynne was a 1985 graduate of Druid Hills High School.

HELP WANTED

Two Druid Hills Civic Association Committees need volunteers! **Community and Lifestyle**

- Plan neighborhood events
- Assist with fundraising for neighborhood parks and common areas
- Create an increased sense of community in Druid Hills

To volunteer, please contact Chad and Lacy Henderson at 404-872-5964.

Membership

- Welcome new DH residents
- Assist with administrative tasks
- Create new opportunities for residents to join DHCA

The DHCA is also looking for a **Coordinator**. To volunteer, please contact Thomas Winn at 371-0670 or email adminvp@druidhills.org.

Get the Most Out of Your Advertising Dollars

The *Druid Hills News* is published in April, July, September and December. It reaches thousands of people who live, shop, and work in Druid Hills. With thousands of copies of each issue distributed in the area, the publication’s advertising rates are a bargain for businesses that want to reach Druid Hills customers. For information on ad sizes and pricing:

404-523-3422 (DHCA)
www.druidhills.org/news/advertise.htm
email: admin@druidhills.org.htm

Recycle at Emory

Emory Recycles encourages the community to use its 24-hour drop off site, located near the end of Peavine Creek Drive and the Lower Fields parking lot. Magazines, newspapers, white paper, tin cans, aluminum cans, plastics #1 and #2, phone books, cardboard, and green, brown and clear glass are accepted.



For more information, call 404-727-1796 or visit <http://www.emory.edu/FMD/web/Recycling/recycling.html>.



President’s Column

by Bruce MacGregor

“AFTER ACTION REPORT”

The past few months remind me of my (long ago) army experience. Along those lines, it may be useful to consider an “after action” report on recent events: What happened? What will be the impact? What can we learn from the experience? This issue’s column addresses “what happened,” since that is the most straightforward (and easiest to write). It is interesting to note that the Clifton Mixed use project (50 acres, 4 stories over retail, a 10-story condominium, a major addition to the Conference Center) has been far less controversial than the much smaller Emory Village zoning overlay. I believe this is due primarily to their relative locations, and partially to their treatment of buffers. It has been my experience that most land use issues boil down to buffers, traffic, and precedent. Recent actions include:

Emory Village Overlay passed. On May 22, the Board of Commissioners adopted the Emory Village Overlay district. DHCA was able to negotiate some modifications regarding stream buffers (and also the) building height on a small portion of the “BP Quadrant.” A detailed explanation of the overlay, including a map of the Village “regulating plan” can be found in this issue.

Tour. Despite the almost palpable tension among many on both sides of the overarching Emory Village development conflict, the neighborhood came together in great form to conduct another successful Home and Garden Tour. All the expenses have not been tallied, but it appears that the 2007 tour profits were up significantly from 2006.

Burbanck Park Opening: The 1.2 acre Burbank Park at the corner of Clifton and Oxford Roads was officially dedicated by the Clifton Community Partnership on “Tour Sunday.” This is the neighborhood’s first new park in 50 years. Folks met to socialize, eat, and hear speeches from Emory, DHCA, and AIEV. Almost 200 people attended and had a great time.

DeKalb County Comprehensive Development Plan passed. May 22, DeKalb County adopted a new “Comp Plan” which will guide the county’s development and budget for many years. This plan will also serve as a guide for major revision of the County’s zoning ordinance. While the concepts of town, neighborhood, and employment centers are straightforward, the details associated with them are far less so.

Clifton Road Mixed Use Development. May 22, DeKalb County deferred the 50-acre rezoning for one month. The proposal requests a change from Office-Institutional zoning to PC-3 zoning, a new classification allowing both mixed use and the county’s densest development. The DHCA generally supports this project. We believe the site is suitable for the uses and density requested for the Clifton Road frontage. We are pleased that the rear half of the site will be preserved as open space, and the entire project will be developed as LEEDS project. We have, however, requested that the setbacks and height be toned down on the Houston Mill corridor. We believe these details will be worked out prior to the next hearing.

Briarcliff Road (Sage Hill) Development. Recently, the County approved rezoning for 271 units of graduate student housing near Sage Hill. While the density is high (30 units/acre), DHCA supported this development, with conditions. We believe the site is suitable for the use and density proposed.

New Atlanta Public Elementary School. The Atlanta Public School System (APS) has purchased the former site of the Howard School on Ponce de Leon Ave. APS will preserve the two historic buildings, and build a new classroom wing on the site of the circa 1950’s Howard School addition. APS will abide by the Druid Hills Landmark District requirements and will seek a certificate of appropriateness from the Atlanta Urban Design Commission.

In summary, this has been a busy and contentious time. It is important to keep things in perspective and remember that while neighbors may differ, concur, or be indifferent to specific issues, we are still neighbors. Based on past experience, there will be other issues. (Trust me). We are indeed fortunate that we do not have to deal with arguably more serious issues such as public safety, bad schools, absentee ownership, landfills, and general neighborhood deterioration.

DHCA Board Meeting Highlights

Dick Shuey, secretary

complete minutes may be viewed at www.druidhills.org

JANUARY

Mike Mandl, Emory’s Executive VP for Finance and Administration, presented an update on Emory’s plans, including a graduate student housing project on Briarcliff Road near Sage Hill, expected to house 390 students; a bookstore on N. Oxford Road; and a mixed-use project on Clifton Road providing 850 housing units and retail for Clifton Corridor workers.

Becky Evans reported the park (at Oxford and Clifton) will be named Burbank Park in honor of the former property owners and dedicated on Earth Day, April 22.

Alida Silverman reported the Atlanta Public School System has purchased The Howard School (on Ponce de Leon between Briarcliff and Springdale), and will be asked to present its plans to the Board.

Jim Morawetz reported on DHCA negotiations with the AIEV. Elise Riley, Oxford Road resident and DHCA member, said neighbors directly affected by the overlay were not adequately represented and are distressed that the DHCA is divided on this issue. They expect the DHCA to protect the neighborhood’s interests.

FEBRUARY

Davis Fox presented the AIEV statement concerning the Emory Village controversy, reporting that the AIEV and DHCA had met and resolved several issues. Still to be resolved are height and transition to the surrounding neighborhood. Davis said a fourth story is essential to make this development economically feasible.

Thea Roeser, leader of the Revitalize – Don’t Supersize movement, presented the neighborhood statement. Thea acknowledged the DHCA has done a good job of maintaining the neighborhood’s sense of time and place, but that if this overlay is approved it will break every guideline in the design manual.

Bruce MacGregor reported that lot coverage was one of the issues resolved at the meeting. Paul Shanor reported the remaining issues are height, setback, and transitions. Ed Henderson offered, and the Board approved, a motion to ask the Board of Commissioners to deny the zoning overlay if they fail to grant a full cycle deferral permitting negotiations to continue.

Steve Misner elaborated on the Hummingbird Lane situation. The neighborhood opposes allowing developers to subdivide the lots and put large houses on lots only 50 feet wide. The developer has sued the County for denying COA applications for that purpose. The Board previously approved funds for a study to develop a Chelsea Heights special character area. At this meeting it voted to appropriate up to \$5,000 to intervene or file an amicus brief in support of the County’s defense of the developer’s lawsuit.

Bruce MacGregor reported DHCA is assisting Emory and the CCP through Park Pride in fundraising for development of Burbank Park, and has raised approximately \$8,000 to date. Chad Polazzo reported he has nominated the Nunan property (adjacent to Burbank Park) as green space with the County. A motion was passed for DHCA to explore acquisition of this property as green space.

MARCH

Rob Benfield reported the Lullwater Park project on the south end of Briarcliff Road presents four issues: We are working with DOT on waiving requirements for deceleration and left turn lanes, and with the developer on density and eliminating a planned gate.

Bruce MacGregor and Chad Polazzo reported on Emory’s Briarcliff Apartments project consisting of 271 apartments for foreign graduate students. The recommendation was to support the development, including requested variances, with conditions. The Board approved an amended motion allowing the Land Use Committee to draft a set of conditions to be submitted to the DHCA officers for approval and subsequent review by a Board member whose original motion was to approve Emory’s applications “as is.”

Regarding the Emory Village zoning overlay, the Board approved the Executive Committee’s motion to delegate to the president and negotiating team authority to decide how to preserve the Association’s appeal rights in the event of an adverse decision by the Board of Commissioners, and to expend up to \$5,000 for that purpose.

Bruce MacGregor reported he has selected Mack Platt as Chair of the Nominating Committee.



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“I work hard to make it easy for you.”



ING Marathon

by Sheila McIntosh

On March 25, our community had the privilege of hosting some 4,500 fast-moving guests—runners in the inaugural ING Georgia Marathon. Nearly 7 miles of the 26.2 mile course was run in Druid Hills and touched many of our streets, including North Decatur, Lullwater, Oakdale, and Springdale. Residents and friends turned out to cheer and support these visitors.

Like all new experiences, you can expect some surprises and special entertainment. This year's race day brought record high temperatures on a weekend more suited to surprise cold and rain. Missing water stops earlier in the race resulted in some hot and thirsty runners. Some of the runners appeared surprised to find actual hills in Druid Hills.

As spectators, neighbors and friends stepped up to encourage and assist our guests. Impromptu water stations popped up complete with volunteers to hand off the cups. One group was using, washing, and reusing their limited cups—much to other neighbors' horror—but thirsty runners didn't care. (I can tell you, most of us will drink almost any thing from anyone).

Some neighbors offered Peachtree Road Race-like water showers. Mobile cheering sections moved from corner to corner. Signs were posted and held by enthusiastic kids. My favorite was the one near the 16-mile mark that proclaimed; "only 9 miles to go." Let's hope that little artist is planning for a career in sales!

Watching from near a medical tent at Clifton and North Decatur, I saw some curious sights. At that time, I wasn't aware of the "water shortage" but started to see hints. First was the guy who stopped at that tent to ask for ice. Was he hurt? asked the EMT. No—just thirsty. Next was the woman who ran by carrying a nearly-full gallon of water. I was awed by the guy who ran with a broken arm. I learned later that he's lives on Oxford Road.

There were the usual race day costumes... clown hair and superman capes... but none quite so memorable as the guy in a speedo—and the little spectator who asked, "Mommy, what happened to his pants?"

So, for those of you who think running is a boring sport...maybe you should try it from the sidelines! Next year's race is planned for March 30. Just bring your camera, hook up the hose, and stock up on cups!

The Revitalized Druid Hills Patrol

by John R. Paddock

Almost 20 years ago, concerned homeowners formed the Druid Hills Patrol (DHP), a nonprofit organization managed by volunteers, to ensure our neighborhood remains safe and special. Currently, the DHP employs off-duty City of Atlanta or Dekalb County police officers to patrol an area roughly within the rectangle of Lullwater, North Decatur, Briarcliff, and Ponce de Leon, as well as portions of Fairview and South Ponce. Following an external review of DHP policies and procedures conducted last fall by Col. Wayne A. Mock, Chief Public Safety Officer of Midtown Blue/Green, the DHP Board of Directors implemented five important changes.

First, Sgt. Tony Singh, a long-time City of Atlanta police officer with significant community policing experience, assumed duty as DHP Officer-in-Charge (OIC). Sgt. Singh determines and assigns patrol shifts to his three DHP Officers based upon weekly analysis of neighborhood crime trends, budgeting, and member concerns; manages member voicemail (404-373-1060) and email (patrol@druidhillspatrol.org); patrols the neighborhood, and fully embraces the Board's charge to create and maintain a visible and accountable force. His creativity, administrative skills, street-smart experience, and laser-like focus bring significant personal and organizational strengths to the Patrol.

Second, DHP officers now patrol in full uniform and in direct communication with 911, with emergency response capability and full powers to arrest. Officers perform routine checks and special property watches for those on vacation, provide home security assessments with suggestions to enhance the safety and protection of family and property, continually monitor vehicular and foot traffic for suspicious and illegal behavior, and investigate crimes reported by the membership.

Third, the DHP purchased a used, black, 1998 Ford Crown Victoria for a patrol car, and detailed it with yellow/white strobe emergency lights, logo, and appropriate markings to identify the DHPmobile as a security patrol vehicle.

Fourth, the DHP arranged with purchasers of the Howard School to locate temporarily a staging area on this property to provide Headquarters, an office to house supplies, communications equipment, and a place to meet with officers.

Fifth, the DHP now has an administrator, Sophia Terranova, with significant financial, administrative, and organizational development experience. She has worked intensively with Sgt. Singh and spent endless hours updating the DHP internet presence (www.druidhillspatrol.org); coordinated development and production of marketing materials with Publicity Chair (Muffie Michaelson); facilitated member communication with Membership Chair (Peter Ash); and helped update DHP financial management systems with Treasurer (John McMullan).

The DHP Board encourages residents to talk with Sgt. Singh and his staff, peruse the website, and contact Board members to learn more about the revitalized Patrol, and then join!

The "Ghost Lots" of Chelsea Heights

by Steven Misner

For several years, developers have sought to redevelop Chelsea Heights (roughly bounded by East Clifton, Dyson Drive, the CSX railroad tracks, Woodview Drive, and Chelsea Circle) with fairly large homes built on small lots. The developers are using the 1914 platting of the Chelsea Heights subdivision to justify redevelopment on the original 50-foot lots. Of course, the neighborhood was developed from the 1940's through the 70's without reference to that plat, primarily on much larger lots. In fact, most conforms to current zoning regulations: DeKalb County's R-75 zoning (75 street footage and at least 10,000 square feet). At first, these new homes on 50-foot lots were not contested. However, as their number and size grew, the Association and the neighborhood resistsd.

Fortunately, Chelsea Heights is within the Druid Hills Historic District and applications for demolition or construction require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the DeKalb Historic Preservation Commission. Once the neighborhood made clear to the HPC the threat posed by widespread redevelopment of large homes on 50-foot lots, the HPC and the Board of Commissioners refused to permit such redevelopment, finding it antithetical to the basic character and nature of our neighborhood: a wooded, moderately developed area with low horizontally oriented homes on large lots.

Currently, developers of two lots on Hummingbird Lane are suing the County for refusing them permission to build five large tall homes on five 50-foot "ghost lots" where two modest ranch-style homes now exist. The developers have filed three lawsuits, directly attacking the process by which the entire Druid Hills Historic District was designated under DeKalb County's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and alleging that the HPC and County Commission abused their discretion in denying them COAs. The Association and the neighborhood are monitoring that lawsuit, currently defended by the County Attorney's office. Recently, permission to construct large tall homes on 50-foot lots on Vickers Drive and Coventry Road, vehemently opposed by the neighborhood, has been denied by the HPC.

To be more proactive, the neighborhood and the Civic Association (with additional County discretionary funds generously contributed by Commissioner Gannon) are seeking to have the drafter of the Druid Hill Historic District devise a "character area" to preserve the uniquely wooded and sparsely developed nature of Chelsea Heights. The character area would have its own set of guidelines governing development, which should prevent the redevelopment we are now fighting.

One collateral benefit in Chelsea Heights is that the neighborhood seems to have discovered itself! Folks from all over the neighborhood fought these proposals and quickly raised nearly \$10,000 for the effort! Large numbers have attended meetings and are starting to develop awareness of Chelsea Heights' unique character.


But the fight is hardly over. Significant economic pressure to redevelop the area so close to Emory University, currently with modest homes, will strongly motivate developers to make ours another neighborhood of large homes on small treeless lots. But the unique character of our neighborhood is worth fighting for, and we are confident we will be able, with the Association's and County's help, to retain the unique character of our neighborhood.


DROUGHT

Georgia is currently experiencing severe drought conditions and new outdoor watering restrictions are in place for homeowners. Odd-numbered addresses may water on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. Even-numbered addresses may water on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. All watering must take place between midnight and 10:00 am. There are many other restrictions and exceptions, so if you have questions, please visit www.gaepd.org/drought1/html for details.

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SPEAKING OF HISTORY:

A very old house on North Decatur Road

Its construction date is uncertain but it is believed built by Dr. Chapman Powell, early DeKalb County doctor. It was on the land when the Tufts family purchased “Woodland,” where Arthur Tufts, Emory University’s master builder, built his home. The Tufts boys called it the “Hardeman House.” Mr. Strickland, the caretaker, lived in the one-story, three-room house after Arthur Tufts died, and farmed the land. In the 1930’s, the Jones family rented the house and then bought it.

A May 28, 1936, article in the DeKalb New Era describes the house and how the Jones family furnished it. A photo shows a front porch, which a neighbor remembers.

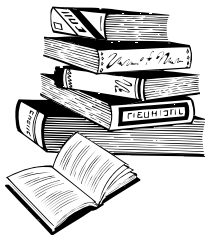
Clearly, research is needed to piece together the history of this house. Is it truly an ante-bellum structure?

Fortunately, an effort is at long last underway to capture this house’s story and assure its future. The immediate impetus is the request of Emory University’s Vice-President for Governmental and Community Relations for participation in the decision-making process for the house. Stay tuned!

BOOK CLUB NEWS:

Informal Extensions of Shared Interests

by Faye Andresen



Book clubs are unlike the normal clubs with membership roles, dues, and elected officers. There are no by-laws. No one was ever accused of being a card-carrying member of a book club. And that’s part of the reason why joining is difficult. Book clubs just seem to be the natural extension of neighborly friendship and shared interest. Cropping up informally, each club exists because of a comfortable connection among individuals—a shared desire to read, to think and to discuss...and to drink wine.

Never shirking their duty to read, think and discuss is the North Decatur Road Book Club. They were so enamored with Rohinton Mistry’s *A Fine Balance* that one member went back and reread all 603 pages—noting the plots, sub-plots and numerous characters.

Their next choice, *The Black Book* by Orhan Pamuk (a recent Nobel Prize winner for literature), offered the readers a challenging labyrinth-like investigation of identity. All agreed it could not be considered a “beach read.” Again, in agreement, all were dismayed by India’s social rigidity in *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai, but they thought it was a terrific read.

Tales of a Female Nomad by Rita Golden Gelman split the Deepdene Club. Some thought this tale of a middle-aged, middle-class divorcee becoming a low-budget vagabond showed an adventurous spirit; others believed it showed nothing but self-absorbed narcissism. Again disagreeing, members could not decide if *Delirium* by Laura Restrepo was fascinating or just dark and difficult. The book is a recently translated Spanish tale dealing with the causes of the main character’s madness.


Combining their membership, Harvard Road Book Club and the Beer and a Book Club, hosted a discussion led by local author Melissa Faye Greene concerning her newest book, *There Is No Me Without You*. B & B’s next choice was *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang. It is a true story of three generations of Chinese women during the rule of Mao. Harvard chose to follow with *Salt—A World History* by Mark Kurlansky.

The Wine, Women, and Words Club enjoyed discussion prompted by *The Memory Keepers Daughter*, while a late 70’s sci-fi book, *Ender’s Game*, surprised them. The author provided an uncanny degree of accuracy in predicting current technology. Proud Mary Club enjoyed the light and fun *Zorro* by Isabelle Allende, followed by Janet Wallach’s *Desert Queen*. Wallach chronicles the fascinating life of Gertrude Bell, a Victorian adventurer and part-time diplomat who was close to Lawrence of Arabia and helped draw the current boundaries of Iraq.

Forrest Lover by Susan Vreeland is also about a Victorian woman—an artist in British Columbia struggling to capture her true artistic style and the true greatness of the indigenous totem pole carvings she paints. The Last Tuesday Book Club enjoyed the book but their high praise came for their next selection, *Jayber Crow* by Wendell Berry. Berry is a well-known poet and agrarian philosopher. His stories of the fictional Port William are captivating. Everyone loved *Jayber*.

The Emory University Women’s Club (EUWC) Book Discussion Group has recently tackled *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, the Pulitzer Prize winner by Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Theocacy* by Kevin Phillips, and *The Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion. While being the busy bibliophiles they are, the Busy Bibliophiles read only one book, *Stiff—the Curious Lives of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach. A funny yet dignified examination of cadavers.

Now, just so you don’t think all the reading is in book clubs, Druid Hills High School requires some summer reading from its students—don’t let them convince you otherwise. Ninth graders are asked to read *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom; sophomores are assigned *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich. OHH... Juniors get a John Grisham novel—*A Time to Kill*—and the 12th grade British Lit students are asked to read *‘Tis* by Frank McCourt.



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Hidden Treasures of Druid Hills Sparkle in the Sunshine:
2007 Home and Garden Tour a Success

By Becky Evans

Beautiful spring weather and the lure of exploring the unique cottages and castles of Druid Hills brought throngs of tour goers, more than 1400, to our Druid Hills neighborhood. More than 350 volunteers served as docents, shift chairs, house managers, and on the planning committee to pull off this tremendous annual event highlighting our historic neighborhood. In addition to being the only fundraiser for the Civic Association, the tour is a wonderful community builder among our residents, where we can work together to share our pride and delight in our community and its featured homes and gardens.

So many images come to mind when reflecting about the 2007 tour experience. The incredible antiques and collectibles of the Steward/Thompson home; the calm décor and warm family feel of the Cross home; the tour goers walking down Harvard passing several enterprising youngsters selling their snacks; the peace and privacy of the Bushes' woodland garden; soaring airplane models and bright reds of the second story balcony of the Tauxe home; the pastoral endless backyard of the Colby/Baroco home, with the delightful pygmy goats snuggling up for a pat on the head; the gorgeous garden rooms opening up one after the other at the Tillman/Andrews property; and finally, the beautiful vistas of Emory's .Lullwater Estate and the seamless backside perfectly matched granite of the addition to the Wagner's home. Our community owes a debt of gratitude to these generous residents for their incredible time and energy preparing their homes and gardens for us to enjoy.

The Cliff Shuttle, courtesy of the Clifton Community Partnership and Emory, provided a welcome service in transporting several hundred tour goers along the route. Two shuttles operated on Friday and Sunday, and three on Saturday, with peak ridership on Saturday afternoon. For some of the children accompanying their parents on the tour, riding at the front of the shuttle was the best feature of the day!

The final numbers are not in, but our revenue exceeded last years, and we anticipate meeting our goal of \$34,000. Look ahead for news for the 2008 tour, when we will be celebrating the centennial of the founding of Druid Hills!

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Becky Evans and Thomas Winn board the Cliff shuttle on the Tour of Homes.

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Druid Hills Artist Market

This year’s Druid Hills Artist Market, the second full-fledged market for the neighborhood, was again a success, cementing it as an annual event in conjunction with the Home and Garden Tour!

Kicking off the market was an opening reception Thursday evening prior to opening day, free to the entire neighborhood and invited guests. The 270 people attending took advantage of first choice of sales from the forty-one artists represented. Reception guests also enjoyed the fabulous array of foods donated by Ponce de Leon Whole Foods, visited with neighbors, and shared in the beauty of the surroundings in the historic St. John’s Lutheran Church. There couldn’t have been a more beautiful, appropriate setting for an artist market; the mansion is a work of art in itself! Very special thanks to Whole Foods and St. John’s for their support of our neighborhood through this event. Adding to the atmosphere, music flowed throughout the site, thanks to the time and equipment donated by sound and media expert neighbors Doug Pharris and David Hardy.

The Druid Hills Civic Association received a small percentage of artists’ sales, totaling more than \$18,000.. This year’s artists were from the Druid Hills neighborhood and invited from throughout Georgia. They included teachers and students from the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center. Next year, the juried market will be open to artists who apply from any locale as the market expands.

So, spread the word to neighbors, artists, and all you know that next year’s 2008 Druid Hills Artist Market will be the place to be! Information on next year’s market will be available by this fall on the Civic Association website at www.druidhills.org.

The Only Constant by Chad Polazzo

Our world is changing at a pace that seems to quicken every year. One result of Atlanta’s growth over the past few decades is a population boom. It naturally follows that when there are more people there is more need for housing and for the infrastructure we use for daily living. In Atlanta, buildings are getting larger and undeveloped areas smaller, as the pressures of our growing city demand more and more. Vacant lots are built on, others are subdivided. Roads are widened, airports expand, and even whole new cities are built—seemingly overnight, as was the case with Atlantic Station. The result of all this is a dramatically changed urban landscape with profound social and ecological implications for our quality of life.

While it can be exciting to witness the things happening here, and while the economic boom that accompanies change is welcome, something else about the pace at which it is occurring makes it difficult to grasp and understand. As a lifelong resident of intown Atlanta, I know the city like I know an old friend. Recently, when I drive by a new development or learn about some huge, pending change, I feel I have lost something.

Moving to my home in Druid Hills has helped me gain a new perspective on these changes and my sense of loss. Much of my formative childhood was during economic recession. Shops were empty, homes were vacant and dilapidated. People had bars on their windows. There were a good number of vine-covered buildings and empty lots and my friends and I played games in the kudzu tunnels and created impenetrable forts, built on the stacked brick foundations of homes that were long gone—missing from the street like a plucked tooth. These places were my neighbors as much as the occupied homes.

While many disliked the way things looked, I believe that these undeveloped spaces helped promote a slower pace of life. By undeveloped spaces, I don’t just mean the ruins of old buildings – I include in that definition open, accessible green spaces where people can gather to do fun things—things that do not have anything to do with making or spending money. Things that aren’t errands or chores. Things like reading a book on a bench by the creek or climbing a tree with your child, tending a community garden plot or playing a game with your neighbors who have become your friends.

Many of these spaces are now gone. And I feel their absence. What I realize now is that these lots and abandoned places did more than provide a place for hide-and seek, they shaped the very culture of the intown neighborhoods. Upon reflection, much of the development that has filled in these spaces has eliminated this informal open space and has adversely impacted our community in a subtle but profound way.

In my professional role as a local real estate agent I see, every day, what people look for in a home. Those looking to move intown are drawn by the community, the vibrant business districts, the easy walks on wide tree-shaded sidewalks to nearby parks and wooded paths. These are the amenities that constitute a great neighborhood and they are precisely why neighborhoods like Candler Park, Decatur, and Inman Park are so popular. When a new community is planned developers now routinely incorporate open and green space into the design because it is what the customers want. More people are looking beyond the big dream house and are asking for places to live that are “walkable,” some place less hectic where you don’t have to drive everywhere you want to go.

Slowing the pace and providing a common space has a profound impact on community. Studies have found that residents living near green common spaces “had more social activities and more visitors, knew more about their neighbors, reported their neighbors were more concerned with helping and supporting one another and had stronger feelings of belonging” (Environmental News Network). This begs the question: What about in Druid Hills? What are we concerned about? Where do we find our sense of belonging? Why do my clients tend to leave Druid Hills off their list of “walkable” areas?

While Druid Hills has long been prized for being a “neighborhood in a forest” and has amazing woods and creeks, we do not have the public infrastructure that other intown areas enjoy. There is not one public playground I can walk to from my house without crossing a major road, and the only parks close by are watershed greenspaces unfit for much more than pass-by scenery. While they are certainly beautiful, they do not meet the need for a community gathering space.

When Druid Hills was originally built, most of the surrounding area was undeveloped. Planners took into consideration things like sidewalks and parks but over time, newer neighborhoods were built without these things and the existing amenities became obsolete (sidewalks that don’t connect) or eroded (parks separated from neighbors by long hikes and major roads).

Neighborhoods like ours are now faced with the challenging task of working with the existing infrastructure, amenities, land, and land owners to retrofit a solution.

Community planning for Druid Hills requires committed people willing to help with this effort. Many of you are already out there, working on various quality of life issues like traffic control, sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, stream restoration, greenspace creation, land use and zoning, and historic preservation. But it appears much of our effort is duplicated. We need to bring together those trying to preserve history, those trying to build community, those protecting the environment and those working to improve the pedestrian experience. After all, aren’t these things all undertaken for similar reasons?

I am getting involved in Druid Hills because I believe it can become the neighborhood where I want to raise my children. My response to the pace of change is going to be to get involved so that I can help shape that change in a positive way. What about you? I know your schedule is busy, but would you like to see a new park with a playground nearby? Would you like to have a conversation at your mailbox without fear of being run down by a commuter? Would you like to walk on a well-constructed sidewalk to your school or work? Would you like to meet a friend for a game of basketball or tennis by going down the street? If you are interested in these ideas and would like to share ideas of your own, please contact me at chadpolazzo@bellsouth.net.

HAS THE CREATOR FAILED?

Can it be that God whose wisdom controls everything in the Universe from the embryo inside the egg of a gnat to the Quasars farthest removed in light years from the earth now finds Himself helpless before man?

It sometimes sounds that way. God is described as being “unable to perform His will because of the resistance of the sinner.” Or, in the plan of salvation “He has done all He can and the rest is now up to you.” Men are led into this error because they have failed to achieve a realistic comprehension of the Almighty.

Some of us are concerned for the preservation of those noble principles regarding the Being and Nature of God. Your help is greatly needed.

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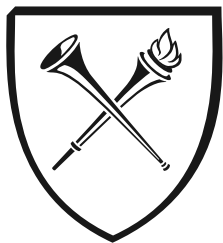
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- Increased awareness of and ridership on Cliff shuttle buses, which are alternatively-fueled, free for the community to ride, and reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles
- Increased awareness for safe pedestrian and bicycle access on local roads
- The development of new urban design guidelines that will create public streets and areas of distinction in the Clifton community, and places that invite community activity and pride
- The initiation of an advisory group where community leaders join with Emory to tackle significant community issues

EMORY



Our CCP Advisory Group includes neighborhood, civic, business, and education leaders from the Clifton Community.
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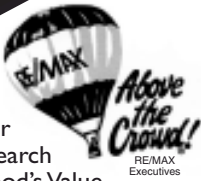
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Treasures of Druid Hills:
Dr. Mary Ellen Perkins
by J.J. Williams

Dr. Mary Ellen Perkins, now 96, was born in Lakeland, Florida, and soon moved to Wadley, Georgia. Her mother died in childbirth when Mary Ellen was just three years of age, and she and some of her siblings were sent to live with their maternal grandparents on their farm.

On the Wadley farm, Mary Ellen and her siblings were taken care of by their grandmother and aunts. One aunt was a teacher, and sent Mary Ellen to Georgia Normal and Industrial College where she graduated after two years. “Normal” was an old fashioned name for a school that trained teachers. “Industrial” was what is today home economics. She then taught school, at age 18, to about 60 children ranging in age from five to fifteen in a one-room schoolhouse.

Mary Ellen returned to college for her four-year degree in math. She later taught second grade in Brooklet, earning just \$55 per month for the then seven months of the school year. Entering the University of Georgia, she earned a master’s degree in education supervision and curriculum. In 1948, a Fulbright program paid for her to go to South Korea to instruct teachers in the Korean school system. “My aunt thought I was crazy for doing this,” recalled Perkins. But she was determined despite the fact she’d never been on an airplane, nor left the southeastern United States. Her trip to Korea was on board a U.S. B-52.

After leaving Korea, Perkins worked for the Georgia State Department of Education at Berry and Shorter Colleges in Rome, helping these private colleges develop a program of practice teaching to qualify their teachers for state certificates. In 1964, she finally received her Ph.D. In 1969, Perkins said, “I felt I’d worked for the state of Georgia long enough—I had 42 years of service” and took a position at Georgia State University. By 1974, Dr. Perkins was ready to retire. “I felt there were some other things I wanted to do,” she said

Instead of retiring, she worked on a history of student teaching at Morehouse College for two years, and then joined Oglethorpe University part time advising students on state certification. While teaching, she was also consulting for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Dr. Perkins moved to Atlanta in 1957, purchased her home on Ridgewood Drive in 1958, and soon knew most of the neighbors on Ridgewood, Emory Drive and Vickers Drive. Perkins stated that not much has changed on Ridgewood in 50 years except for a few new homes, and renovations. Two things that have changed are housing prices and taxes. “In 1958, my three-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath home sold for \$21, 000,” she said. Another change was neighbors aging and moving to retirement homes. The newcomers were often young families. Ridgewood had a long tradition of community get-togethers in neighbors’ yards. “It was a way to have a picnic and get to know each other better,” recalls Perkins.

As her elderly siblings became unable to stay in their own homes, she took them in. Her three living siblings are in their nineties—one almost one hundred. “Six out of seven were living into their nineties,” stated Perkins. “That isn’t too bad.” There must be excellent genes in the Perkins family! Sisters Blanche and Louise came to live with Mary Ellen on Ridgewood. Louise died at age 93 and Blanche moved into Wesley Woods when Mary Ellen sold the Ridgewood home and also moved to Wesley Woods. Mary Ellen’s living siblings include Blanche, nearly 100; Edward Eugene, 95; and Dick, 92. Mary Ellen is 96 and still in good health. Another sister, Evelyn Perkins Allnut, is deceased. “Evelyn died young at age 82,” said Perkins.

How did Dr. Perkins manage to live such a long and interesting life? “I think people need to be more concerned about exercise and what they eat,” she said. “These two things are essential for the body to feel good. Enjoy people and take advantage of events that will help you grow and continue to learn throughout your life.” This advice she follows. She also attends Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church, where she became a member in 1959. “I’ve seen a lot of preachers come and go,” she said. Perkins also socializes with church friends, attends Wednesday family church suppers, and participates in classes and other educational opportunities at Glenn.

Other advice from Dr. Perkins: “Everyone has problems that come into their lives that they have to face. Face them and find a way to keep going. Accept help and gifts from people who help you when you’re in trouble. Your problems won’t last the rest of your life, so just find a way to keep going.”

When asked about the educational situation in the United States, Dr. Perkins was quick to reply. “Things were mighty bad when I started teaching. Students were not required to attend school, and many did not have the advantage of an education. Black children had schools, but they were not as good as the white schools. They were definitely separate and much unequal. Once I was talking openly and freely to leaders at Atlanta University. I asked them what we could do to help things and was told that it would take 100 years for things to be equal in every way—and this was back in the 1960s. We’ve made a lot of progress on this issue, but we’re not there yet.”

Perkins recalls seeing her first radio, first automobile and first television “without color or cable” she adds quickly. She believes important changes during her lifetime have been in transportation and communications. But the biggest change, she says, has been the growth of urbanism, where people flock to large cities and rural life continues to diminish.

“Your brain continues to grow throughout your life, if you’ll use it,” stated Dr. Perkins. “There’s so much more to learn, and so much more to do.” At 96, Dr. Perkins shows no sign of slowing down, and leaves no doubt that she will continue to grow and learn.



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School News

by Susan Merritt Jordan

Padeia School

The total of pledges and gifts to the capital campaign at The Paideia School has topped \$20 million. The school anticipates breaking ground sometime this summer on the site it purchased at the corner of Oakdale and South Ponce de Leon. Paideia has plans for a theatre, fitness facilities, and a building for the junior high, along with various improvements around the campus.

Druid Hills High School

Druid Hills High School is anticipating \$22 million in capital improvements promised with the March passage by DeKalb voters of the extension of the special local option sales tax (SPLOST). DHHS is also expecting that plans for the redesign of Haygood Drive and the front portion of the high school campus should be decided by August. This process, an initiative of the Clifton Community Partnership, is currently in the hands of a consultant charged with presenting four options incorporating community suggestions for the redesign. The consultant should be reporting back in June. Druid Hills High School Class of 2007 Valedictorian is Stephanie McLeod. Salutatorian is Yiwen Hu.

Shamrock Middle School

Shamrock Middle School welcomes rising 6th graders for a half day of orientation Friday, August 3, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm. Planned activities include a scavenger hunt and practice at opening lockers. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Buses will pick up at feeder elementary schools.

After an evaluation of community response to his proposal to consolidate Montessori programs in DeKalb County, Superintendent Crawford Lewis’s revised plan leaves Montessori programs in the three schools where they currently are in place, including **Briar Vista Elementary**.

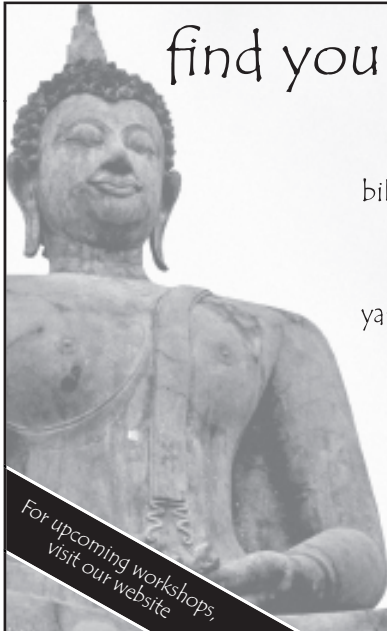
Fernbank Elementary School

A new Assistant Principal is in place at Fernbank Elementary. He is Rajnish Singh, who was most recently the Administrative Intern at Laurel Ridge, another DeKalb elementary school. Before that Mr. Singh taught for six years at DeKalb’s Kittredge Magnet School (high achievers grades 4-6) and for three years at an aviation and aerospace magnet school in Orlando, FL. Mr. Singh replaces Jeanette Roberts, who had been in the position since 1999. Ms. Roberts was promoted in May to Principal at another DeKalb school, Sky Haven Elementary.

For more information on what’s happening in our neighborhood schools, visit their websites, listed below:

- Briar Vista Elementary School**—
www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/briarvista
- Druid Hills High School**—
www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/druidhills
- Fernbank Elementary School**—
www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/fernbank
- Mary Lin Elementary School**—
www.marylinelementary.com
- Paideia School**—
www.paideiaschool.org
- Shamrock Middle School**—
www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/shamrock

Susan Merritt Jordan does freelance writing and editing from the Druid Hills home where she has lived for 10 years. You may send editorial comments to susan.merritt@yahoo.com, subject: *Druid Hills News*.



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Druid Hills Civic Association

Not yet a member of DHCA? Use the form below and join today!
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1077 McLynn Avenue



4 Bedroom/4.5 Bath in Morningside, \$1,099,000

406 Sinclair Avenue



4 Bedroom/4.5 Bath in Inman Park, \$859,900

1304 North Avenue



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1265 McLynn Avenue



4 Bedrooms, 4.5 Baths in Morningside \$995,000

1723 Inverness Avenue



4 Bedroom/4.5 Bath in Morningside, \$1,049,000

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