



HAWTHORNE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

Winter/ January 2005

Distribution: 1400+

Hawthorne Civic Assn
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Atlanta, GA 30345

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Neighborhood Watch

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Rodney Zell 7/934-1824
Future Visioning

Next board meeting: Mar 2

Board Meeting dates:

1st Wednesdays, 7:30 pm,
odd-numbered months.

Call Beth to attend/observe
or to propose agenda items.

2005 Dues: \$20/address

HAWTHORNE, THE FUTURE, AND YOU

Rodney Zell

"Dunwoody gets new middle school." "Druid Hills stops large apartment development." "DeKalb Commission seeks approval of Hawthorne Civic Association." Which of these headlines sound unlikely? If you guessed the last one, then you are correct. Some areas appear to have more influence than others do. One area may get a brand new middle school, while our older schools need massive renovations. In fact, many people are just finding out in this issue that the new DeKalb police and fire headquarters will move from Memorial Drive to Northlake.

Hawthorne is an unknown gem in the heart of metropolitan Atlanta. Few people may realize that Lakeside scored 85 points higher than Dunwoody on the SAT in 2004. The proximity of Hawthorne to Emory and downtown without having to fight traffic on I-285 or GA 400 is a commuter's dream. We live in one of the few remaining areas of cooling and quieting urban forest. We need to protect our neighborhood and ensure we have a voice in what affects our neighborhood.

Hard working and committed neighbors have secured the LaVista Corridor redevelopment at Northlake, a new park and a beautified I-85 interchange, but Hawthorne is at a crossroads with many issues affecting our neighborhood about to be decided. The DeKalb CEO has proposed a large conference center/concert venue with a possible location in the Northlake area. A lawsuit involving the size of planes allowed to use Peachtree-DeKalb Airport is pending. New and very large apartment buildings are being built nearby. Small houses are being torn down and replaced with larger houses, often without regard to environmental issues. Simon Properties seems content to let upscale retailers abandon Northlake Mall at an alarming pace.

We cannot be content to sit back and let others decide our fate. We need to get involved. We need to get our neighbors involved. As the newest member of the Hawthorne Board, I seek your help to develop ideas to shape Hawthorne now and in the future, ideas that can be taken to businesses and government to make our neighborhood the envy of all. If you would like to help with this VISIONING project, please e-mail me at rodneyzell@yahoo.com.

PRESIDENT's MESSAGE Beth Nathan

The year changes and calendars suddenly are full of public hearings and legislative sessions again. In January, public hearings are scheduled for the County's budget, the 20-year Comprehensive Plan and Solid Waste Management Plan, and the state legislature starts its 40 day work session. The public will soon be presented with a draft Master Plan for the Mary & Scott greenspace and with the findings of DeKalb's Future Funding committee. HCA will be informing residents of critical meeting dates electronically and via e-mail.

HCA's new 2004-05 board met for the first time November 3, elected officers from among itself, and set the 2005 dues rate to \$20. The new board had been elected at the October 19 annual meeting held at Shallowford Presbyterian Church. Thanks again to the church for hosting us! Annual meeting attendees heard reports on board activities/projects, approved all the bylaws changes that had been published in the October 2004 newsletter, and then heard a presentation from panelists **Kathie Gannon**, county planning commission member and superdistrict 6 commissioner-elect; **Barton McMillan**, developer and past HCA board member; **John Stock**, past president of Northlake Community Alliance; **Ken Bettin**, local owner/operator of ChocoLaté Coffee; and **Marilyn Steele**, Hawthorne Elementary School principal. They were asked:

- Where do you see us (or north central DeKalb) heading if we continue on our current path (who's going to be living here and why; where will they shop, work, etc; what will their dwellings be like)
- What can this neighborhood (or any neighborhood) do to redirect itself if so desired (LCI? other effective ways of planning and executing?)

In brief, the panelists encouraged us to get more involved in the county comprehensive planning process, to go through a formal visioning process, to expect a rising pace of rehabilitation of housing stock (renovation and total replacement), to take pride in the many accomplishments of our local elementary school, and to think about developing a name to identify our area. After brief audience discussion, we ran out of time. New HCA board member Rodney Zell will lead an effort to develop a local vision for the future of the Hawthorne area. Please see his article on page 1.

ABOUT US

At the annual meeting, an informal survey (small sample) produced the following:

- **Where we say we live** when talking to an Atlanta resident: Northlake-17, I-85/Shallowford-4, Lakeside-3, Chamblee-0, Emory North-0, Northeast Atlanta-0, Tucker-0, Other-1.
- **Where we go** for business, shopping, church, entertainment

| | Daily | 2-3 times/week | Weekly | Monthly |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------|--------|---------|
| Atlanta, city of | 1 | 4 | 0 | 3 |
| Chamblee or Doraville | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Emory area | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| Hawthorne area | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Northlake | 3 | 16 | 7 | 1 |
| Toco Hills | 0 | 1 | 7 | 5 |
| Tucker | 0 | 2 | 2 | 7 |

Demographic information by census tract: <http://www.ffiec.gov/geocode/default.htm>

Safety Reminder: Wear something reflective when you're on the street between dusk and dawn. Reflective vests are available in many sporting goods stores and departments. Face oncoming traffic whenever possible. Protect your family bikers with helmets, too.

How We Voted:

We turned out in good numbers to vote on November 2 according to the posted Official Statement of Vote. The five precincts in which Hawthorne Civic Association members vote had high turnouts compared with others of the 186 DeKalb precincts. Countywide, the precinct turnouts ranged from 77.10% to 49.46%. In the November 23 runoff, turnout numbers were pitiful, but our turnout was comparatively high among turnouts ranging 14.88% to 0.69%.

TurnOut

| Precinct | Registered | November 2 Election | | | Nov 23 Runoff | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|---------------------|----------|------|---------------|----------|------|
| | | Voted | %Turnout | Rank | Voted | %Turnout | Rank |
| HAWTHORNE ELEM | 1674 | 1188 | 70.97% | 17 | 162 | 9.68% | 21 |
| BRIARLAKE ELEM | 1408 | 982 | 69.74% | 25 | 166 | 11.79% | 5 |
| LAKESIDE HIGH | 1773 | 1223 | 68.98% | 34 | 208 | 11.73% | 6 |
| HERITAGE ED | 1413 | 945 | 66.88% | 55 | 110 | 7.78% | 41 |
| HENDERSON MILL ELEM | 2328 | 1541 | 66.19% | 70 | 215 | 9.24% | 23 |
| Average precinct | | | 64.55% | | | 5.04% | |
| Countywide (includes absentee) | 345,423 | 277,539 | 80.35% | | 20,246 | 5.86% | |

Vote Percentages (Rounded)

| Precinct | President | | U.S. Senate | | U.S. House 4 | | GA Senate 40 | | GA Senate 41 | | GA House 82 | | Question #1 | |
|------------|-----------|-------|-------------|---------|--------------|----------|--------------|---------|--------------|--------|-------------|---------|-------------|----|
| | Bush | Kerry | Isakson | Majette | Davis | McKinney | Weber | Garnitz | Burton | Henson | Jennings | Levitas | Yes | No |
| BRIARLAKE | 55 | 44 | 59 | 38 | 78 | 22 | -- | -- | 52 | 48 | 54 | 46 | 50 | 50 |
| HAWTHORNE | 45 | 54 | 48 | 48 | 67 | 33 | 44 | 56 | -- | -- | 45 | 55 | 44 | 56 |
| HNDRSN MLL | 47 | 51 | 50 | 47 | 67 | 32 | 47 | 53 | -- | -- | 48 | 52 | 49 | 51 |
| HERITAGE | 39 | 59 | 39 | 57 | 55 | 44 | -- | -- | 37 | 63 | 37 | 63 | 44 | 56 |
| LAKESIDE | 53 | 47 | 48 | 38 | 76 | 24 | -- | -- | 52 | 48 | 53 | 47 | 48 | 52 |

ELECTED REPRESENTATION

COUNTY COMMISSION: <http://www.co.dekalb.ga.us/commission.htm>

SuperDistrict 7: **Connie Stokes**, (404) 371-3053, conniestokes@co.dekalb.ga.us
[Lakeside, Briarlake & Henderson Mill precincts]

SuperDistrict 6: **Kathie Gannon**, kgannon@co.dekalb.ga.us, 404-371-4909. [Hawthorne & Heritage precincts]

District 2: **Gail Walldorff**, (404) 371-2886, galew@co.DeKalb.ga.us

District 1: **Elaine Boyer**, (404) 371-2844, njmcbrid@co.dekalb.ga.us

STATE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: <http://www.legis.state.ga.us>

Senate district 40: **Dan Weber**, 770-395-9709, djweber@bellsouth.net

Senate district 41: **Steve Henson**, 404-463-1316, stevhenson@mindspring.com

House district 82: **Paul Jennings**, 404-656-0126, pjenning@legis.state.ga.us

SCHOOLS *Beth Nathan with input from many sources*

Parents who are considering public versus private schools should consider attending the **Meet the Teachers** (and parents & administration) evening, **Tuesday, Feb. 1**, 7 pm, at Hawthorne Elementary school, 2535 Caladium Drive. Childcare will be provided. There will be a casual, informative session with administration and the parents of current and former students. Then attendees will meet with teachers of the younger grades to ask more specific questions regarding curriculum and classroom activities. The evening will conclude with a tour of the school, focusing on classrooms. Please R.S.V.P. (to allow for childcare planning) to Leslie Stigaard at 770-938-4956 or lstigaard@comcast.net

New Principals: Marilyn Steele has accepted a position in the administration of the new superintendent; her position has been posted. Henderson Mill and Briarlake principals are fairly new.

Hawthorne Elementary has a **refurbished Nature Trail** thanks to the work of Cub Scout pack 577 and parent volunteers from Oak Grove United Methodist Church, including many Hawthorne students and parents. They moved 8 piles of wood chips onto the trail and marked trail edges with fallen trees and limbs as part of DeKalb County's Day of Community Service in early December. All of the wood chips, mulch, logs and labor were either found in the woods, donated by local tree-cutting companies or provided by the Cub Scout Pack. Coffee and some of the doughnuts were donated by our very own ChocoLaté and the Northlake Dunkin' Donuts. The trail runs for 1000 feet from the front playground next to the upper parking lot, through the woods, up and down hills, and ends at the other playground next to the gym.

HAWTHORNE IS AWARDED GRANT FOR NEW PLAYGROUND

Based on a grant proposal submitted by Mrs. Steele in December, Hawthorne has been selected by a non-profit organization called Kaboom to receive a fancy new playground worth approximately \$100,000. The play equipment will be suitable for children in pre-k through grade 5, and will include transfer stations to provide access for students in wheelchairs. See www.kaboom.org for pictures and information. The playground will replace the primary grade playground in back of the school near the new gym. As has been true in the past, community members are welcome to enjoy the playground during non-school hours. The "build date" is set for **Saturday, March 12**.

DeKalb County Schools will provide the site preparation and Kaboom will provide volunteers to do the installation. **Hawthorne will be responsible for \$10,000 of the cost by February 12. If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution, or if your place of business might make a contribution, please contact one of the people listed below by February 1, if possible.** Contributions of all sizes are welcome, from larger donations of \$500-\$1000 to smaller ones of \$10 or whatever amount you would like to give.

As always, Hawthorne Elementary appreciates the support of HCA and the surrounding communities.

HCA/Hawthorne liaison Ralph Carl (rcarl@attbi.com or 770-723-1024)
PTA co-president Christine Dodge (chdodge@siconsults.com or 770-938-3294)
PTA co-president Jane Sinner (janewestga@aol.com or 770-270-8964)

PDK OPEN RECORDS UPDATE..... *Larry Foster*

Important progress has been made during the past several months in the PDK Open Records Lawsuit. That lawsuit is critical because through its success--and through subsequent legal follow-up based upon the results of the Lawsuit--the public has its best opportunity to force DeKalb County to abide by the binding commitment it made in 1987. Under that commitment, DeKalb County (which owns and operates PDK Airport) will not allow aircraft weighing more than 66,000 lbs. to use the airport. Our best current estimates, based only on fragmentary evidence, are that more than 1,000 heavier jets now illegally violate these restrictions every year, causing significant noise disruption in parts of the Hawthorne neighborhood, which is only two miles away from PDK.

On November 1, 2004, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* issued a hard-hitting lead editorial in which it sharply criticized the County's failure to respond to more than 100 recent requests under the Georgia Open Records Act relating to PDK Airport flight operations: "Using a variety of excuses, the county has stymied residents seeking to find out whether the airport is permitting planes larger than those supposedly allowed to land The county's secrecy about PDK is both baffling and troubling. When government slams a door this forcibly, it suggests that something's going on that it doesn't want the public to see."

The Open Records litigation itself continues to be successful for the community and is moving along as quickly as possible. Just before the holidays, the Open Records legal team won an important victory in the form of a Court Order dated December 2, 2004, requiring DeKalb County to produce witnesses and answer questions that it had been refusing to produce or answer. The Court Order is available on the PDK Watch website (www.pdkwatch.org). This is an important order because the Judge is forcing the County to follow the rules of litigation in Georgia, thus enabling the Open Records legal team to expose the County's illegal conduct. The County's refusal to follow the litigation rules parallels its longstanding refusal to comply with Georgia State law requiring release of information about which aircraft are actually using PDK. That refusal is the centerpiece of the current phase of the litigation.

Also in December 2004, the Open Records legal team questioned County administrator Richard Stogner under oath at the Maloof Building in Decatur. The text of that testimony is not yet public, but the Open Records lawyers can say that it was very favorable to the Open Records claims and not favorable to the County's position. The cutoff for the "discovery" phase of the lawsuit, in which lawyers are permitted to ask questions of witnesses and required to exchange documents and answer written questions, is January 31, 2005. Due to the critical December 2, 2004 Court Order, DeKalb County is now required to produce a witness to answer questions about the CEO's failure to respond to the lawsuit's requests for records under the Georgia Open Records Act.

Soon after the discovery phase is completed at the end of January 2005, the parties will be asking the Judge via written motions and public oral arguments in Court to make the ultimate decision on whether the County is in violation of State law and will be forced to tell the public what aircraft are using PDK.

All this costs money, both to pay our lead lawyer Brandon Hornsby for the excellent work he has already done and to be able to insure that the Lawsuit can continue beyond its current phase in order to insure relief for the community from illegal PDK Airport operations. Please consider making an investment in preserving your property values and quality of life by making a generous donation--any amount is welcome, but our target donation is \$100 to \$500--to F.O.R. DeKalb, Inc., P.O. Box 29604, Atlanta, GA 30359-0604. All funds go directly to pay the legal fees, but note that contributions are not tax-deductible (to preserve confidentiality of donors).

For further information on the Lawsuit or donating to F.O.R. DeKalb via PayPal, you can check the PDK Watch web site (www.pdkwatch.org), or call Evelyn Brethour (404-728-00772) or Mike Principino (404-248-9628). An important PDK Watch informational meeting highlighting the Lawsuit will be held on Thursday, March 3, at 7:00 p.m. at the Clairmont Baptist Church, 3528 Clairmont Road, across from Plaza Fiesta. If you would like a meeting reminder or to receive the most up-to-date information from PDK Watch, please send your e-mail address to the PDK Watch contact (pdkwatch@yahoo.com), or to me (larry.foster@hts.gatech.edu).

EYE ON NORTHLAKEBeth Nathan with input from various sources

Last year the **DeKalb Convention and Visitors Bureau** moved to the Northlake area, just off Northlake Parkway near LaVista.

In 2005, **DeKalb's police and fire headquarters** is scheduled to move to the Northlake area. According to the AJC, DeKalb's Public Safety and Judicial Facilities Authority will use \$18.2 million from a larger 30-year bond issue to purchase two BellSouth buildings just outside I-285 south of LaVista Road, near LA Fitness. An additional \$9.3 million from the bond issue will equip the buildings, a cost described as "dramatically below what it would have cost to outfit new buildings". The buildings will be leased to the county. The existing police building on Memorial Drive will be renovated for other county offices.

Plans are proceeding for **renovation of the LaVista Corridor** in the Northlake mall area. Northlake Community Alliance held public meetings in October and January to describe the project and to take public input.

Crescent Moon restaurant of Decatur opened a Northlake Mall location in 2004. **Le Cordon Bleu Atlanta College of Culinary Arts**, located just off Northlake Parkway near LaVista, is taking reservations for lunches (well booked) and is considering evening meals.

Discussion continues a possible **DeKalb Convention Center** with Northlake having been selected as the preferred location (only by a hair) of 9 locations on the DeKalb Convention Center Authority's short list. That selection was made by weighted voting on such criteria as MARTA service, food, shopping, nearby attractions, auto accessibility, hotels, neighborhood acceptance and political feasibility. The facility is envisioned as a campus of multiple buildings, serving as a center for cultural and tourism awareness, a venue for artistic displays and performances (a theatre larger than the Fox is envisioned), community activities, regional trade shows, and a location for offices and activities which are consistent with these goals and activities. [from Convention Center Authority Status Report, December 2004]. Conceptual drawings show the Center surrounded by Northlake Mall, Northlake Festival and Briarcliff Village, with that triangle morphed into a larger traffic circle.

BITS & PIECES

The police have a new website at www.dekalbpolice.com. Find Code Enforcement at http://www.dekalbpolice.com/v2/sites/code_enforcement/index.htm. Code enforcement phone 404/417-1240, and fax 404/417-1263. Access Animal Control at <http://www.dekalbpolice.com/ac/>

Carjacking Safety Tip: If you've just gotten into your car in a parking lot and you see that a piece of paper is stuck to the middle of your rear window and obstructing your view, DON'T get out to remove it. Just try to deal with it until you're in a safe location. Otherwise, you may be part of a new carjacking scheme ... a new way to get the driver out of an unlocked, running vehicle.

Fire Safety Tip: Keep construction debris containers far enough from your house that a fire caused by a careless cigarette butt can't turn into a house fire.

Watch for information about "sweeping" changes to county animal control. DeKalb's December 15 press release mentions changes to how animals must be kept outdoors (fenced or enclosed area), a revision of the animal cruelty definition to include unventilated vehicles when outside temp is above 80F and the renaming of Animal Control Dept to Animal Services & Enforcement. Other sources tell me that there are new higher fine levels for violations of county animal care code.

'Tis the Season: Report power outages to Georgia Power at 888-891-0938.

GREENSPACE PROJECT

HCA and DeKalb county held a workday November 20 in Mary & Scott Park to continue clearing the overgrowth of English ivy and other non-native invasive plants. Nineteen volunteers signed in, including three Agnes Scott students and an out-of-neighborhood master gardener. Great progress and great piles were made which should be picked up before the next workday ... currently planned for **Saturday, February 12, 9:30 am**. Gather at the site's Briarcliff driveway gate, just north of and across from Briarcliff Methodist church. Please arrive in time to hear the 9:30 am instructions on what to do. Bring a hand tool suitable for cutting small to 2" stems if you can. Wear sturdy work shoes and dress appropriately for the potential hazards, especially poison ivy. RSVP to Beth Nathan HCA@gazebosoftware.com or 404/315-7440 if you want to be notified in case the workday gets postponed.

The contracted **Master Plan** for the park has been being reworked for the past couple months and should be ready to be discussed in public meeting during the next month. Look for e-mails and yard signs announcing that **public meeting**, perhaps Tues Feb 8 or Thurs Feb 10, 6:30-8 PM.

Speaking of removing unwanted invasive plants, you might want to check out these websites when you start working on your yard .. www.noivyleague.com, www.kudzu-free.org. I wonder where the websites dedicated to invasive bamboo and privet are located.

INTERCHANGE PROJECT

The I-85 interchange area just keeps getting better. A November workday cleaned up the summer annuals and spread more wood chips. In the laundromat-to-be area, a lot of ivy and undergrowth have been removed, the crepe myrtles trimmed, wood chips have been spread, and the Bradford pears have been put on the to-be-removed list. In the triangle for which HCA is responsible (northbound exit), a little repair work to some traffic-related wiring resulted in a little repair work to the plantings. There are plans to include some landscape roses and some evergreens in the plantings. Thanks to everybody who has been working on the project and especially to Nikki VanDerGrinten, Debra Staton and Dave Savage. **Look for another workday in the spring**, maybe the daylight savings time weekend (or not).

FUTURE FUNDING ... DeKalb's Future Funding Blue Ribbon Committee is charged with reviewing infrastructure needs unmet by current budgets and recommending a plan of action, e.g. which projects (transportation, sidewalks, parks, libraries, development – convention center, amphitheatre) and how to fund them. The committee has been meeting since November and will hold **public hearings, March 10, 14, 15, 17 and 21**, one meeting in each Commission district. Beth Nathan was appointed to the committee by Kathie Gannon. Some local tidbits gleaned from the meetings:

- Some parts of the Dresden Park master plan are going out for bid this month. The baseball diamond could morph into a soccer field under pressure from soccer fans.
- DeKalb County's Priority Sidewalks list includes a few nearby locations of interest:
 - Code 1: School Pedestrian Safety
 - Briarcliff Road, from Briarlake Rd to Lakeside High School
 - Briarlake Rd – W, from Briarcliff Rd to LaVista Rd
 - Oak Grove Sidewalk & Curb, from LaVista Rd to Woodleaf Ln
 - Code 2: Heavy Pedestrian/Vehicular Traffic Routes
 - N'Lake Area Sidewalks, various locations around N'Lake mall
 - Briarcliff Rd – N(A), from Hawthorne Dr to Brookdale Dr
 - Payton Rd – S, from Shasta Way to Briarcliff Rd
 - Shallowford Rd – E, from Briarcliff Rd to Lake Flair Cir (N end)

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If your mailing label is incorrect, please indicate this on the membership survey form when you return it. The "or current resident" designation on the second address line is necessary to insure proper delivery of all newsletters.

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If there's an neighborhood issue that has you concerned, e.g. traffic, sidewalks, litter, etc, please contact the HCA board. Let's work together !

**MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL TIME**



HCA's membership year is the calendar year. It's now time to send dues of \$20 per household (Cheap!) to support the 2005 activities of the Hawthorne Civic Association. Donations are also very much appreciated. Neither dues nor donations are tax deductible. A remittance envelope is enclosed in this newsletter. If you can spare a little time to be an active member of HCA, please let us know your area of interest. And if you're not already receiving e-mails in one of the four defined areas (General, Neighborhood Watch, Advocacy, Greenspace) and would like to be, please indicate that in your reply. You can also get on the General e-mail list by sending an e-mail to hawthornemembership@yahoo.com -- keep informed of events affecting our neighborhood.