

North Briarcliff Civic Association



WINTER 2007 NEWSLETTER

Dear Neighbor:

My husband and I moved into the NBCA community last February. We're so pleased to be here and we are ecstatic that our new community has such an active neighborhood association and a first-class newsletter. As a former neighborhood association president in an equally large area that faced awful developmental pressure, it is wonderful to know that we can make a simple, yet crucial, investment in our community just by joining our terrific Association.

We urge you to do more than pay lip service to our great neighborhood, by paying \$25.00 for a year's membership. OUR neighborhood association was heavily involved in the successful fight against inappropriately rezoning property at the corner of Cravey and Caladium. Group action benefits all of us.

There are few sure things in life, but if you invest \$25.00 in the North Briarcliff Civic Association, you are guaranteed to gain in the following ways:

1. Your quality of life and enjoyment of our community will be advocated
2. Protection of home values will be a high priority
3. Random, poorly planned in-fill overdevelopment will be challenged
4. You'll have access to the NBCA's updates, crime data and event schedule
5. You'll learn about opportunities to participate in worthwhile projects
6. You'll have a chance to interact with the terrific folks who are your neighbors

All this for just \$25.00! Invest today in your home and in our community! One of my favorite sayings goes like this: "If I am not for myself, who am I? If I am for myself alone, what am I? If not now, when?" Today is the day!

Won't you join our Association in 2007? Many thanks!

Yours for our great neighborhood,

Laura Bulbin and Ron Stein



2677 Flair Knoll Drive
Atlanta, GA 30345

2007 Dues: \$25

Board Meetings: 1st Wednesdays

Next newsletter deadline: 3/15

PRESIDENT

Beth Nathan 404-315-7440
nbca@gazebosoftware.com
Greenspace

VICE PRESIDENT

Larry Foster 404-362-2192
PDK Airport

TREASURER

Betty Phillips 404-634-6498
Zoning/Dues

SECRETARY

Rodney Zell 770-934-1824

BOARD

June Buechner 770-938-5550

Laura Bulbin 770-939-4636

Ralph Carl 770-723-1024
Schools

Edward Frost 404-550-0398
Joys & Concerns

Michael Gross 404-636-7887
Neighborhood Watch

David Markus 770-491-6325

Gary Powell 404-633-0189
TABASCO

Off Board

Linda Dahlke, *Membership List*

Billie Sherwood, *Interchange*

In 2006, nearly 60% of NBCA's expenditures were for newsletter production and distribution, another 16% for insurance (both for General Liability which is required in order to use various meeting spaces and for Directors and Officers insurance), and another 11% for the production of re-usable yard signs. Smaller costs included support for the I-85 corners landscaping project, SpringFest, Candidates Forum, corporate registration, office supplies and domain name registration. 2007 planned expenditures include many of the same expenses with the addition of webhosting costs and North Briarcliff "toppers" on street signs. Funds may be used for zoning or other issues that arise in the neighborhood. PLEASE SUPPORT North Briarcliff Civic Association by promptly returning your annual dues check along with info about how you would like to participate during 2007 in the enclosed return envelope.

Great things are happening at Hawthorne Elementary!

Positively Hawthorne (PH) is a PTA-sponsored organization, which seeks to bring families with young children together and to inform families about the great things happening at your neighborhood school, Hawthorne Elementary. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about **Positively Hawthorne**, please contact Angela Maki, angela.maki@comcast.net or 404-248-0224.

A Hawthorne Elementary School tour is currently scheduled for January 26th at 9:30 am. Community members are invited to attend, regardless of the ages of their children. Space is limited, so please call HES today to reserve your family's place (678-874-2802).

"Meet the Teachers" has been scheduled for January 25th at 6:30 pm. This event provides opportunities to learn more about Hawthorne Elementary School from our administrators, teachers, and parents of current students and graduates. It's also a great way to meet neighbors with young children. Free on-site childcare will be provided with advance reservations. Contact Angela Maki for details at 404-248-0224 or angela.maki@comcast.net.

PTA Hawthorne Elementary has achieved 100% PTA membership! This means that we have a PTA member for every student and teacher at Hawthorne. Our school is strong thanks to the numerous people who give of their time. The teachers and students are most appreciative for our many involved parents, grandfriends, relatives and neighbors.

Volunteers help make a difference in the lives of our children.

SCHOOL SYSTEM CONSIDERING CHANGES

Your DeKalb County School System (DCSS) has two efforts in the works at the present time. First, Dr. Crawford Lewis, DCSS Superintendent, and his staff have worked to address the concern of elementary schools with student enrollments of less than 400. Of the county's 88 elementary schools, 22 have enrollments less than 400. Schools in the area that fall into this category are: Hawthorne and Briarlake in the Lakeside High School cluster and Livsey and Midvale in the Tucker cluster. Dr. Lewis announced at several town hall meetings last week that redistricting would take place to better utilize many school facilities (e.g.; combining some schools into others). No redistricting was announced for the Lakeside or Tucker clusters and the statement was made that present lines should remain stable through the end of the 2011-2012 school year.

The second effort underway is called a Design Team. High school clusters have been aligned into six regions. Our local Region 2 includes the Lakeside HS, Tucker HS, Druid Hills HS and Avondale HS clusters. Each Design Team is comprised of one representative from each school. The Design Teams are extending the work done by the Blue Ribbon Task Force two years ago and they have been challenged to dream a dream of what each of the schools in their region could be, including a list of potential Schools of Choice. A School of Choice would focus on a particular area of education (e.g.; Math and Science; Foreign Language Immersion; School of the Arts) and would be open to students across its region. The Region 2 Design Team has largely completed its assessment of these options and has submitted its preferences to the superintendent. Hawthorne wants to remain a neighborhood-focused school, to keep its inclusion program in partnership with Coralwood and to build on its current Communication and Technology designation by requesting a full-time instructor for the newly refurbished computer lab.

Each school, elementary, middle and high schools, welcomes input from residents in our community. The easiest way to offer input is to stop in the office of your school and ask to fill out a comment card that will be forwarded to DCSS offices and will be calculated among all comments received.

As for that newly refurbished computer lab at Hawthorne Elementary, the new Apple Macintosh computers have arrived and been installed. Kids have been working on them for about five weeks and most have been awestruck by how much better and faster they work compared to their old computers. Please feel free to stop by the school for a tour and demonstration in the lab.

CIVIC ASSOCIATION NETWORK

North Briarcliff Civic Assn is part of the new Civic Association Network for central DeKalb. At the end of November, leaders of a number of neighborhoods, including NBCA president, Beth Nathan, met to discuss issues facing central DeKalb. Items discussed include ...

NEARBY DEVELOPMENT. A **Sembler project** proposed for North Druid Hills Road at Briarcliff Road would develop 100+ acres, including 30 acres of DeKalb County School System property not currently available to them. The current plan for the 70 available acres is mixed use -- about 3000 condos and commercial units but no office space. A "Briarcliff Coalition" is forming to represent the interests of civic associations and local religious and commercial entities.

SPLOST-3. There is another school funding vote coming in **March (SPLOST-3)**. If it doesn't pass, will the Board of Education be more likely to sell existing schools to raise funds?

PARKS/RECREATION. Our parks region has the fewest recreation centers—just one—and the least park acreage of any region in DeKalb. There was a call to support actions to improve Mason Mill park, our designated Regional park.

PDK. PDKWatch (the citizens organization keeping tabs on DeKalb Airport developments) talked about **pollution caused by airports** (seldom taken into account in air quality studies) which is roughly equivalent to that of a power plant. Unfortunately quieter planes are often more dangerous in terms of pollution. While the county has claimed that 3-4 planes per month

exceeded the 66K weight limit, public records have now shown that number to be greater than 200 planes per month, based on maximum gross takeoff weight. The FAA is supposedly making a statement on aircraft weight limits but no statement has been forthcoming.

INFILL OVERLAY DISTRICTS. The existing **infill overlay districts** are finally getting printed on county maps and leaders in those districts have had to correct and re-correct the boundaries. Activists in this arena will be asking for an extension of the **Quality of Life ordinances** to include a requirement for posting of a notice of demolition 7 days in advance.

DEKALB COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. The plan is past deadline, on an extension, and there are fears that the recent weakening of statewide requirements for such plans may allow the plan to be adopted with no specific Land Use Plan, which would make rezoning so much easier for developers.

DEKALB CEO POWERS. There was a call for all neighborhoods to support possible changes to the **powers of the DeKalb County CEO** that may come forward during the 2007 legislative session, now that the state senate's study committee has completed its public hearings.

NBCA Annual Meeting

On October 24, NBCA held its annual business meeting. The slate that had been published in the fall newsletter was elected (see the roster of Directors on the front page). Treasurer, Betty Phillips reported our healthy financial status. President Beth Nathan reported on activities past and future.

In process is action to create street "sign toppers" identifying the North Briarcliff geographic area. This area now includes around 1500 houses & condos and 1700 rental apartments.

Board member, Edward Frost, suggested that when a Zoning Code violation occurs, neighbors first try to speak to the neighbors

involved. The DeKalb County Code Enforcement Department may be contacted at 404-417-1240. Neighbors may also contact Mr. Frost via e-mail at eagle37@comcast.net with questions about zoning codes (not building codes) or with news of joys and concerns in our neighborhood.

Speaking of Codes: Yes, in spite of what you may have heard, you *may* park your non-business vehicle on the street overnight. However, for the safety of us all, if there is a vehicle on the street opposite your vehicle, be very sure that even the largest of emergency vehicles, such as a full-size fire truck, could pass between them. This bit of common sense applies 24/7.

Be a good neighbor. Follow the Sanitation Department rule and bring in your empty trash cans within 24 hours of pick up.

ZONING

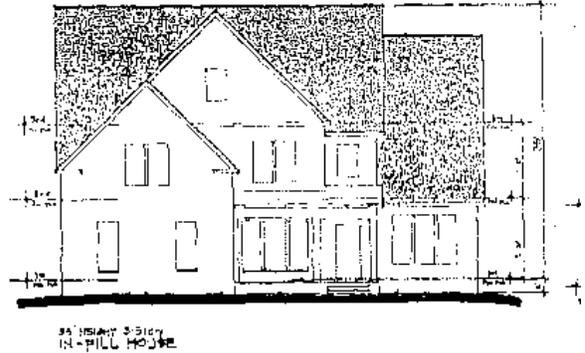
CHANGING VIEWPOINTS. The present county tax base is now more residential than commercial; there is a new emphasis on enhancing the commercial base for tax purposes. New commercial development categories with multiple stories are having a greater impact on adjacent homeowners. Attached townhomes are replacing individual homes in existing established neighborhoods.

INFILL OVERLAY DISTRICTS

What's that? An ordinance was passed in 2006 to help protect existing residential neighborhoods from replacement of existing houses with much larger houses incompatible with existing neighborhood characteristics. A height limitation of twenty-eight (28) feet measured from the front door threshold of the existing residential structure to the highest point of the roof of a proposed residential structure is used for new construction when a house is demolished. The complete ordinance adds a new Division 8 to Code Chapter 27 and new Sections 27-722.1 through 27-722.12. Ten overlay districts are now in effect in DeKalb, five approved under an old ordinance and five under the new ordinance.

A Briarmoor Manor / Brookdale Park Overlay District has been proposed to cover an area of 376 homes. When the project was submitted for the zoning lottery in October 2006, only Sylvan Ramble and Briarmoor Road were mentioned, but the area swelled as other nearby streets heard about it. Well in excess of the required 55% "Yes" signatures were obtained from homeowners.

Signatures are now being collected in Flair Forest. All RIOD proposals move from signature collection to public hearing at a Community Council meeting, then on to Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners meetings for approval.



GENTLEMEN, GO ELSEWHERE

In October, there was widespread concern over the future of what used to be Olive Garden restaurant at Northlake as we heard that the new owner had applied for a business license for a "gentlemen's club". Since the old Olive Garden was and is still zoned "M", no rezoning would have been required for an adult entertainment facility. Other legal requirements for adult venues include a minimum of two acres of land and various distance requirements from schools, residences, and public buildings.

If all those things had come together, the law and the zoning would have legally permitted an adult entertainment facility. The business license was not issued. Best information suggests the denial was based on the site being too close to a government facility ... the old BellSouth properties, purchased by the county a few years back. So, no "Gentlemen's Club". The owner now plans to establish a restaurant / sports bar on the site.

Dear Neighbor: I don't have a maple tree in my front yard, so these leaves must be yours.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT!!

NBCA's Watch Listserv periodically sends email notices of concerns about possible criminal activity in or neighborhoods. The purpose of these notices is not to alarm us but to remind us to be alert—for our own sake and for the sake of our neighbors. The police can't watch everywhere at every moment, so citizens need to be their eyes and ears and report suspicious people. With a little persistence, citizens will have the police on site before or while a burglary is in progress and the perpetrators will be caught. Again, the purpose of the neighborhood watch alerts is to remind us that things are happening around us and that we have to be ready to **call 911** if we see something suspicious. Please copy your detailed information to NBCA@gazebosoftware.com



THANKS for the BEAUTY

Garden Clubs in the NBCA area make our mailboxes festive each year with those bright red bows. Thank you!

Flair Forest Garden Club thanks George & Andie Heyburn, Mary Kay and Dean Wilcox, Linda Dahlke, Stefanie Hanagud and Carol Rudd for holiday décor and corners maintenance.

MARY SCOTT NATURE PRESERVE

Speaking of nature.. DeKalb Parks is looking for a replacement for Connie Gray, who was the county's manager for the development of Mary Scott. Connie is now part of Trees Atlanta. We understand that the county may need additional financial resources and volunteerism to complete the park as planned.



REPRESENTING US 2007: New & Familiar Faces

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: **Jeff Rader**, 404-371-2863, jrader@co.dekalb.ga.us

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

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

Senate district 40: **Dan Weber**, 404-463-2260, dan.weber@senate.ga.gov

Senate district 41: **Steve Henson**, 404-656-0085, steve.henson@senate.ga.gov or stevenson@mindspring.com

House district 82: **Kevin Levitas**, 404-656-0116, kevin.levitas@house.ga.gov or kevinlevitas@bellsouth.net



Wouldn't it be nice if we had simultaneous as opposed to consecutive leaf-blowing ☺

COYOTES

Coyotes? In our back yards? Yes, Sightings of coyotes began in our neighborhood in 2005—not surprising, given the increase in development and the destruction of habitat that has driven the creatures into our streets and yards. Suburban coyotes are often drawn to backyards by garbage, by outdoor feeding of pets and perhaps by feeding stations set up to attract birds and small mammals such as rabbits, squirrels and chipmunks.

You may have seen a coyote and thought it was a dog. How to tell the difference?

The coyote resembles a small German Shepherd dog, but can be distinguished by it's yellow eyes, black lines on the legs and a curled, low hanging tail. Body coat color varies from brownish yellow to reddish gray, with darker colors more common in the northern reaches. There is a wealth of information on the web about coyotes, including ...

<http://www.canismajor.com/dog/coyote.html>

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/08/0806_020806_coyote.html

<http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=91>

Should we fear the suburban coyote? An article by a wildlife expert in a 2005 edition of the *New York Times* tells us that coyotes will behave as long as people do not feed them or provide them with a source of food. Leave nothing tasty outside in an open trash can or food dish and definitely nothing small and fluffy at the end of a leash. The author says with confidence that the sensible suburban toddler has little to fear from the suburban coyote but, he writes, he will not say the same for the suburban Shih Tzu (no offense to companions of Shih Tzus). Urban coyotes do take advantage of swimming pools, dog water dishes, ponds and water hazards at golf. However, the majority of coyotes never see people.

“Urban coyotes are here to stay, so we need to learn how to coexist with them,” says a recent issue of *National Wildlife* magazine. Published by the National Wildlife Federation, the magazine says that we probably can live in peace with these animals as long as they don't lose their natural fear of us. It offers these tips for getting along with the lanky creatures:

- Don't feed coyotes on purpose or accidentally, such as letting bird feeders or compost bins overflow. Keep food bowls inside.
- Obey leash laws and keep pets safe.
- Keep garbage cans closed and inaccessible. Spraying the containers with ammonia or pepper spray will discourage rummaging by coyotes and other wildlife.
- Make coyotes unwelcome. If one shows up in your yard, wave your arms, shout, spray it with a water hose. Make it believe you are a threat.

PDK Watch: What's Next?

- Meeting with CEO Vernon Jones about the status of 66,000 lb. weight limit, securing mandatory flight paths changes that will give relief to surrounding neighborhoods, establishing night-time landing fees for PDK Airport, avoiding further disruptive jet engine repair incidents like the recent one experienced at the Nancy Creek Elementary school.
- Holding Meetings with neighborhood associations about the serious pollution and health hazards caused by the approximately 200 over-sized jets per month that are now using PDK Airport.
- Participating in further PDK Master Plan discussions, as soon as work on the Master Plan is resumed.
- Developing a broader community base of support to maximize political attention given to residential concerns about PDK Airport.
- Supporting Open DeKalb Inc.'s efforts to raise funds to file suit to secure enforcement of the 66,000 lb. weight limit at PDK Airport, a critical air pollution mitigation measure for all of north Georgia.
- Securing the establishment of permanent greenspace around PDK airport.
- Supporting the legal property rights and air space rights of property owners impacted by PDK Airport operations.



SIMPLE WAYS TO BRING IN 'FREE MONEY' TO HAWTHORNE SCHOOL

- **BOXTOPS4EDUCATION.COM - & - SCHOOLPOP.COM**– These sites have tons of merchants you already use! The difference is when you shop you will help Hawthorne with every purchase you make. Participating retailers include Barnes & Noble, Disney Store, Oriental Trading, Lands End, ToysRUs, Macy's, Target, Walmart, L.L.Bean, 1-800-Flowers, Gap, Office Depot & many, many more!! Once on the Box Top website go to 'Box Tops Marketplace' for online shopping & designate Hawthorne to receive credit for your online purchases. On the Schoolpop

website click 'Join', designate Hawthorne and start shopping! What could be easier?! You can also renew subscriptions for newspapers (AJC & Wall Street Journal) and magazines (1200 listings) at the Schoolpop site. The lowest subscription price is guaranteed! Additionally, both of these sites offer VISA credit cards that pay 1% cash back to our school.

- **PUBLIX and KROGER CARDS** – Don't forget to use these grocery cards when you shop! Pick up Publix cards in the school office, and have the cashier scan them each time you shop. Each year you must reactivate your Kroger Plus Card with Hawthorne's UPC code. Please pick up a Kroger flyer at school or visit krogerearningpluslearning.com to print one. Take the form to Kroger & have the cashier scan it with your Kroger Plus Card to activate.
- **BOX TOPS for EDUCATION** – Collect the box tops off participating General Mills brands (GM cereals, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Yoplait Yogurt, Kleenex etc.) and drop them off in the collection can by the school office. See boxtops4education.com.
- **CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS** – Collect Campbell's Soup product labels from participating Campbell's & Pepperidge Farm brands (such as soups, Prego sauces, Swanson broths, Pace salsas; Pepperidge Farm cookies, crackers & breads).
- **TARGET CREDIT CARD** – Designate Hawthorne as the school you wish to support on either a new or existing Target Guest Card or Target Visa.
- **PIKE'S FAMILY NURSERY RECEIPTS** – Save your Pike's ORIGINAL receipt (you may make a Xerox copy to keep for your plant warranty) & turn them in to Hawthorne to earn free landscaping supplies from Pike's for Hawthorne.
- **OFFICE DEPOT** - If you designate Hawthorne when you shop for school supplies at Office Depot, Hawthorne will receive a 5% credit from Office Depot for supplies. Hawthorne's # is 70024841. Your cashier can also look up the number for you if you don't have it handy.
- **NORTH DEKALB MALL** - Hawthorne is now enrolled in the 'CASH 4 SCHOOLS' program at North DeKalb Mall. When you shop at North DeKalb, please take your cash register receipt to the customer service desk in the mall for validation by the 15th of the month following your purchase. Receipts can be from any North DeKalb merchant (stores, food court, restaurants, movie theatre etc.). Hawthorne has the potential to earn \$4000!!
- **PRINTER CARTRIDGES & CELL PHONES** – Bring in empty printer cartridges, old cell phones, laptops, PDA's & iPods from your home & workplace; Hawthorne can receive money for them.
- **NEWSPAPERS** – Drop off your newspapers in the bin outside school.

North Briarcliff Civic Association
 2677 Flair Knoll Drive
 Atlanta, GA 30345

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 STANDARD
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Winter 2007

2007 Membership Drive
 Reply envelope enclosed.

If your mailing label is incorrect, please notify nbca@gazebosoftware.com or Betty Phillips at 404-634-6498. The "or current resident" designation on the second address line is necessary to insure proper delivery of all newsletters.

Signed articles in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the North Briarcliff Civic Association.

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**Community
 Calendar**



March 1	Deadline for application to "freeze" property value for tax purposes (see form mailed to homeowners in mid-November). Deadline for application for any county property tax exemption (homestead, age, income, disability)
March 20	Election including SPLOST question
early May	NBCA SpringFest ... would your group like to participate with booth or display?

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