

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello fellow neighbors and happy new year! While many of our neighbors start the new year making resolutions, my thoughts turn toward neighborhood resolutions. What can our neighborhood accomplish this new year? I have asked our Board to think of ideas for events and projects our association may want to pursue this year. At our most recent meeting, the Board discussed several of these ideas. The ideas ranged from promoting name recognition for the civic association and neighborhood to hosting an annual signature event. Some of you may have your own ideas, and we welcome your suggestions.

Your dues make the implementation of these ideas possible. In the past, the dues have been used for neighborhood projects such as the sign toppers, the website, neighborhood parties, and beautification projects such as the interchange cleanup. Certainly, our most visible use of the dues is the quarterly newsletter. We would like to continue with these as well as some of the new ideas our Board is now discussing.

In this edition of the newsletter, we have included an easy pay envelope for you to mail your annual dues to support these projects. The 2009 dues are remaining at \$25.00. Please take the time now to mail your dues and then finish reading this wonderful newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support and have a great new year!

*Rodney Zell*

*Ed: A new board was elected by the membership at the NBCA annual meeting in October. The board selected officers from among themselves at a subsequent meeting. 2008-09 board members, their contact information and roles are noted in the column to the right. Off-board chairs are also noted. Thanks to all for your willingness to serve our community. If you can help with NBCA newsletter layout; please contact the editor.*

**-- NBCA Board, 2008-09 --**

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<zoning>  
<newsletter distribution>

**-- Board Meetings --**

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesdays, 7:30 pm.  
Shallowford Presbyterian Church  
Open to all NBCA members  
Verify meeting details with president.



**-- Off Board --**

- June Buechner .....  
*gardens@northbriarcliff.org*
- Linda Dahlke .....  
*database@northbriarcliff.org*
- Kyle Johnson .....  
*webmaster@northbriarcliff.org*
- Billie Sherrod .....  
*interchange@northbriarcliff.org*

Subscribe to listservs (Watch & General) at  
[www.northbriarcliff.org/Comm/Listjoin.htm](http://www.northbriarcliff.org/Comm/Listjoin.htm)  
Send Neighborhood Watch items to  
[nwatch@northbriarcliff.org](mailto:nwatch@northbriarcliff.org)

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## SHALLOWFORD NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

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After meeting with ARC (Atlanta Regional Commission) representatives this fall, it became clear that our area (whether the Neighborhood Center area or the Shallowford Corridor as a whole) stood little chance of being selected for one of their LCI (Liveable Centers Initiative) grants when other areas in DeKalb have greater need. In late fall, a TABASCO core group met with the Georgia Conservancy to apply for their **Blueprints for Successful Communities** program which combines public meetings with graduate student work to develop visions for a future that a community can agree upon. We are in the running for fall 2009 or spring 2010, and expect to hear something around March. If you'd like to see what such a study looks like, see the 2008 Lindbergh-LaVista Blueprints study at <http://www.lindberghlavista.org/> In the meantime, start thinking about what you'd put on a list of Assets and Challenges for the Shallowford Road area. That would be the topic for the first Blueprints public meeting. Contact [tabasco@northbriarcliff.org](mailto:tabasco@northbriarcliff.org) for more info.

**INTERCHANGE GARDENS:** Regular workdays, for cleanup and/or planting, at the Shallowford I-85 interchange will continue, weather-permitting, on the third Saturday of every month, starting at 8:30 am. Contact [interchange@northbriarcliff.org](mailto:interchange@northbriarcliff.org) for more info.

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## ZONING / DEVELOPMENT

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The new year brings welcome changes in the operation of the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners regular meetings. They now have the legal power to preside over and set their own agenda for these meetings. Also, the public portion of commission meetings will precede the business portion, a reversal from previous agendas. The public portion of the meeting includes applications for amending the land use plan, rezones, special land use permits (SLUPs) and public comments. No more long hours of waiting will have to be endured by the citizens there for the public hearings.

The public comments section of the meeting gives every citizen an opportunity to speak to the commission on any topic, whether on that day's agenda or not. The citizen is required to complete and submit a "name card" prior to the beginning of the public comments period (shortly after 9 am). Thirty (30) minutes is allocated for the comments periods; each citizen is limited to 3 minutes.

DeKalb is conducting a re-write of the current Zoning Ordinance. The update will implement the policies of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the Livable Center Initiatives. The Comprehensive Plan designations encourage higher density re-development with taller heights.

Currently in the application process is a request for a "Town Center" designation for 68.25 acres for a new mixed use re-development known as "The Park Druid Hills" located at I-85 and North Druid Hills Road, formerly known as "Executive Park". Included would be 2.8 million square feet of residential, retail, office and hotel space. About 17 new buildings would be constructed including a 12-story tower.

A mixed use re-development application under a "Town Center" designation has been filed for the Williamsburg Apartments 37-acre property near the intersection of North Druid Hills and Clairmont; it has elicited much controversy.

DeKalb County Commissioners deferred to 2009 a proposed ordinance that defines and allows a height limit of 35 feet on new houses. As proposed, the existing "residential infill overlay district" ordinance would cease to exist; no further RIODs (28-foot height restriction) could be established but existing RIODs would be grandfathered and protected. Opposition from citizens was expressed against removing the choice of obtaining a RIOD.



**HENDERSON HISTORY DAY**

On February 19, Henderson Middle School will be hosting Henderson History Day, a program based on The Henderson Project. The purpose of The Henderson Project is to preserve the history of the area and gather historical memorabilia.

History Day will feature Eric Bow, one of two astronauts who graduated from Henderson High School. If you have information about the history of our area and would like to speak, please contact Barbara Heller at (678) 874-2934 to volunteer. Any old friends of Eric Bow are also asked to attend the event. Reservations are required for those wishing to attend.

The DeKalb History Center will be soon offering a scanning day for people to scan their historical memorabilia. For more information, the website can be found at [http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/~henderson/Henderson\\_Project/Project\\_index.htm](http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/~henderson/Henderson_Project/Project_index.htm).

**PAUL WOMACK, NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, interview by Harrison Rogers**

Paul Womack, a long term resident of DeKalb County, is the newly elected District 4 School Board Member. He previously served on the school board 16 years ago. Shortly after retiring as a successful business owner of a large medical equipment company, Mr. Womack was asked to again run and serve on the School Board by family and friends.

I asked Mr. Womack what he sees as the most important issues facing the DeKalb School System as a whole and particularly, the Lakeside School district. Without hesitation, he said the 2010 school system's budget is the most pressing problem. With the failing economy and decreasing tax revenues, the school system will likely have to make substantial cuts. Mr. Womack said his fear is that the Board will start immediately looking at student services and not administration as the place to cut. He believes that the board should first consider cutting administrative costs such as cell phones, personal cars, non-essential staff and annual salaries over \$100,000. Mr. Womack said the Board also needs to look into why DeKalb is losing state funds to other counties.

As a Lakeside parent since 2002, I mentioned to Mr. Womack that for the past several years I have noticed that the school seems less prepared to teach. There is a shortage of desks, certain classes and class schedules, books and teachers. There are now around 21 trailers, up from 18 just a year ago. Mr. Womack said that this is an overcrowding problem and is a direct result of the "No Child Left Behind" federal mandate. The intent of holding schools accountable for student performance is a good idea. The problem lies in the way it is implemented. Lakeside and other Schools of Excellence are forced to receive students from failing schools. The sending schools are losing their best students, parents, and funds. More emphasis needs to be given to building up the sending schools, rather than automatically relinquishing their students to receiving schools like Lakeside. Parents and students need to be informed of what actions the administration is taking to improve their school. He said that this is a national problem and that the Obama administration will hopefully start working on improving the way the program is implemented and funded.

Mr. Womack said that Lakeside has always had an informed and active PTA. As long as parents remain vigilant, the school will remain strong. He encouraged our membership to be organized and express concerns to the Board. He concluded by offering to meet with the NBCA and said he is looking forward to working for a better school system. Mr. Womack's web site is [www.PaulWomack.net](http://www.PaulWomack.net)

**Lakeside Enrollment Update as of October 15, 2008**

	9 <sup>th</sup> grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	11 <sup>th</sup> grade	12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Total
Total students	585	460	308	337	1690
Students enrolled under the No Child Left Behind Choice option	78	32	12	2	124*

\* This number has decreased from the 139 students enrolled in August.

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## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

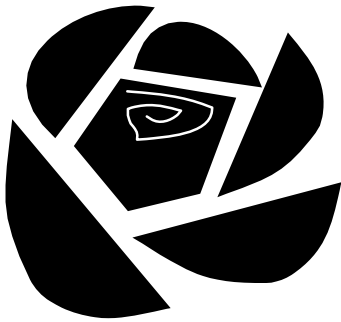
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A new Neighborhood Watch group has started officially within the North DeKalb Police Precinct and NBCA. Totalling 57 homes, the Foster Ridge/Brookdale Drive Neighborhood Watch covers Foster Ridge (from Overlook to Hawthorne), Foster Ridge Court, Brookcliff Way and Brookdale Drive (from Foster Ridge to Overlook). Co-coordinators are Sherry Treco-Jones, 2535 Brookdale and Don Vick, 2534 Brookdale; block captains are Bridget Bassett, Cheryl Cashin, Deborah Donovan, Art Hansen, Brian Murphy and Beth Stevenson.

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## GARDEN TOURS – AN INVITATION

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The gardeners of North Briarcliff invite you to visit their gardens.

And if you are a gardener, we invite you to open your garden on the day it

is at its best. That's right - YOU pick the day. The time is usually 10am to 3pm on a Saturday. Share your specialty with us. It is a great way to meet neighbors and exchange ideas. An early Spring garden is on the list, as well as a peony garden in May. Will you add your name? And, by the way, the gardens are only advertised in our neighborhood and not to the general public. Respond to [gardens@northbriarcliff.org](mailto:gardens@northbriarcliff.org)

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## MARY SCOTT NATURE PRESERVE

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NBCA has no new information about the contract to “develop” Mary Scott Nature Preserve nor its timeline, but we continue to work on obtaining such information. Also, the hoped-for plan for a county-neighborhood partnership in streambank restoration is in limbo. Previously web-published information about Mary Scott Nature Preserve, including its Master Plan, will be restored [www.northbriarcliff.org](http://www.northbriarcliff.org) this winter.

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## PDK / OPEN DEKALB

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Open DeKalb is on the move, having retained a new legal team to pursue enforcement of the 66,000-pound size limit on aircraft using PDK Airport.

Our new legal counsel, Berman, Fink & Van Horn, P.C., are experienced litigation attorneys in a medium-sized law firm in Buckhead. Ben Fink and Chuck Van Horn live in the neighborhoods directly affected by PDK Airport flight activity and are sympathetic and knowledgeable about our concerns. Open DeKalb board member, Susan Gouinlock, Esq., who worked on the successful Open Records case against DeKalb and PDK, has brought the new firm up to speed and will continue to work with them on the weight limit case.

Ben and Chuck's first action has been to seek full compliance by the County with our hard won Court Order of October 2006, pursuant to which the County was to produce ALL of the information it had withheld prior to the Open Records Case victory. As usual, the County is balking at doing its Airport business in public, but our lawyers are on it. Their primary focus is on obtaining compliance by the County with the 66,000-pound weight/size limit on aircraft using PDK, and they are using all available means to do so. We will announce specifics on that effort as soon as they can be made public.

For information on our efforts and how to contribute to them, please see our website, [www.opendekalbinc.org](http://www.opendekalbinc.org).

*Fred Fuerst, M.D., President, Open DeKalb Inc.*



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## FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE KEVIN LEVITAS

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### Looking ahead...

It has been a privilege to represent you in the General Assembly for the past two years, and I greatly appreciate the trust you have placed in me by allowing me to return for a second term. As you can imagine, the major issue facing legislators as we reconvene in January will be the serious budget shortfall, which was worsened substantially by the economic downturn. While working to fix the budget, I will strive to keep education a top priority and continue to work hard on DeKalb County government restructuring, public safety, tax reform, the environment, and other important issues. In advance of the upcoming session, I have filed a number of bills, which you can review on the internet by visiting this General Assembly web page: [http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2009\\_10/fread/hprofile.htm](http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2009_10/fread/hprofile.htm).

If you are interested in following the progress of these bills as well as other legislative matters during session, please sign up for my e-newsletter by sending an email with "Newsletter" in the subject line to: [kevinlevitas@bellsouth.net](mailto:kevinlevitas@bellsouth.net). Please continue to share your views on the issues and bills that are important to you.

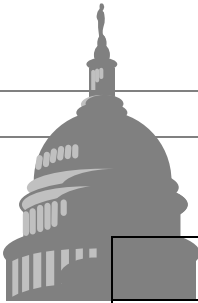
**Kevin**

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### 2009 ELECTED OFFICIALS

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We all know the president and the DeKalb CEO have changed. Locally, many of our representatives remain the same, EXCEPT on the DeKalb Board of Education.



<i>Precinct</i>	<i>State Senate district</i>	<i>State House district</i>	<i>Commission 6 &amp; 7 = superdistricts</i>	<i>Board of Ed 8 &amp; 9 = superdistricts</i>
Henderson Mill	40	82	1 & 7	1 & 8
Heritage	41	82	2 & 6	4 & 8
Hawthorne	40	82	2 & 6	1 & 8
Lakeside	41	82	2 & 7	4 & 8
Briarlake	41	82	2 & 7	4 & 8
	40: Dan Weber 41: Steve Henson	82: Kevin Levitas	1: Elaine Boyer 2: Jeff Rader 6: Kathie Gannon 7: Connie Stokes	1: Jim Redovian 4: Paul Womack (new) 8: Pamela Speaks (new)

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### DEKALB COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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Money to improve DeKalb libraries is flowing from a Bond Referendum passed a few years back. Several nearby library projects are scheduled for completion during 2009.

<see <http://www.dekalblibrary.org/branches/new-libraries/> for more info >

Library	Construction	Opening
Toco Hill – Avis G Williams	July 2008 – April 2009	May 2009
Northlake – Barbara Loar	Aug 2008 – May 2009	June 2009
Embry Hills	Jan 2009 – Nov 2009	December 2009
Tucker – Reid H Cofer	Oct 2008 – Nov 2009	December 2009

Q: What's the overall plan for DeKalb's library system?

A: See [http://www.dekalblibrary.org/media/DCPL\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_2007.pdf](http://www.dekalblibrary.org/media/DCPL_Strategic_Plan_2007.pdf) >

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

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## Community Calendar



1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesdays	NBCA Board Meeting, 7:30 pm, Shallowford Presbyterian
3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturdays	Interchange Workday, 8:30 am, Shallowford @ I-85

*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 !*