

North Briarcliff Civic Association



*Serving 1400 houses / condos and 1700 apartments
in the Hawthorne Elementary school district and adjacent streets*

Fall 2011 Newsletter

2566 Shallowford Road, Ste 104, PMB 132
Atlanta, GA 30345-1200

ANNUAL MEETING Monday, October 17

At Annual Meeting, we **elect new board members** (pg 2); **review the past year**, and discuss a **topic in depth** (below & pg 2). This year we're taking a critical look at whether **CITYHOOD** is the road to **BETTER GOVERNMENT**.

A panel will present what it means for an area to become a city, the current status and expected path of Brookhaven cityhood, and the impact, especially financial, on the rest of us. This will be followed by Q&A period. The panel will consist of Rep. Elena Parent (her district includes many "Brookhaven" neighborhoods), Mr. James Eyre (citizen of one "Brookhaven" neighborhood), and Commissioner Jeff Rader (commission district 2).

What do you do when you have a problem with your current service provider?

- A) You talk to whomever answers the phone; when *that* doesn't work,
- B) You talk his supervisor. Then,
- C) You try to talk to upper management or policy makers.
- D) What's left? You fire that service provider and hire someone else.

Dunwoody felt the need to create its own city, and now handles some of its own municipal services, while retaining the county for other services. Though only residents of a new city are entitled to vote on cityhood, the repercussions are felt beyond that city's borders. Now another region of DeKalb, calling itself Brookhaven, is considering whether cityhood is the best solution to its frustrations with the county.

A study of the feasibility of that area's cityhood and the per-person cost of doing so is due out in a few weeks. The study area includes what is left of unincorporated DeKalb inside 285, down to I-85, with the exception of the Dresden East Civic Association neighborhoods. See map at http://citizensfornorthdekalb.org/documents/city_map.pdf.

Don't miss Annual Meeting: **Monday, October 17th**. Social time begins at 6:45 with the meeting proper **7:00-9:00 pm**. The location is **Heritage Hall, Shallowford Presbyterian Church**.

All neighbors are welcome, but only those current on 2011 dues may vote. Dues may be paid at the check-in table; 2012 dues will not be collected until January, 2012.

Please bring a donation of non-perishable food for the Church's Food Pantry. **SEE YOU THERE!**

-- NBCA Board, 2010-11 --

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Betty Phillips.....	404-634-6498	
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-- Board Meetings --

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



-- Off Board --

June Buechner	<i>gardens@northbriarcliff.org</i>
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Subscribe to listservs (Watch & General) at
www.northbriarcliff.org/email-lists

Send Neighborhood Watch items to
nwatch@northbriarcliff.org

NBCA BOARD CANDIDATES FOR 2011-12

Here are nine identified Board Candidates; three more slots are open. Is your subdivision represented? Nominations will be taken from the floor at Annual Meeting. Let's make 2012 a great year for our community!

Ralph Carl: Canna Ridge; (schools/kids); Past Hawthorne Elementary School Advisory Council, Emory LaVista Parent Council; Lakeside Cluster Group, chair of Shallowford Presbyterian Preschool.

Larry Foster: Echo Lake area since 1986; (PDK) American history professor at Georgia Tech; Three children attended Hawthorne; NBCA President 1994-2003.

Michael Gross: Flair Forest since 1999; (generalist, neighborhood watch); Neighborhood native; Property management professional.

Randy Hollingsworth: Echo Hills since 2004; Hoe & Grow Garden Club. I-85 Interchange volunteer. Experience with Oak Grove Acres Civic Association. Former restaurateur and Fast Casual Restaurant Franchise Consultant.

Donna McPherson: Sherbrooke Forest since 2005; (infrastructure, involvement/membership, neighborhood watch). Neighborhood native, Hawthorne/Lakeside/Oglethorpe grad. Owner/Veterinary Technician/Pet-Sitter, Pawsitively Pets Inc. Condo Board president 2000-09.

Betty Phillips: Flair Forest since 1969; (neighborhood integrity & value; zoning; newsletter dist.); NBCA founding member; Retired CPA; Community Council member.

Jennifer Sedlack: Brookdale since 2007. Member, Coralwood (School) Foundation; professional grant writer; former PTA President.

Donald Vick: Brookdale; Retired accountant, employed by GM before opening Vick Accounting and Tax Service. Owned & operated a florist shop in Tucker.

Wanda Walton: Briamoor since 1998; (neighborhood safety, property values, opportunities for healthy activities in our community).

FACT SHEET: CREATING A MUNICIPALITY

General Information

- Incorporation requires a 200 person population, with an average of 200 per square mile. Regular elections and public meetings must be held, and provision for three of the following services – police, fire, street maintenance, solid waste management, water supply, waste-water treatment, storm water collection, electric, natural gas, code enforcement, planning/zoning, and recreation. A state legislature-approved bill must be signed by the governor. Then, a majority of the citizens in the city boundaries must vote in a referendum in favor of incorporation.
- County taxes would decrease proportional to the county services discontinued. Whether one's overall tax bill increases would depend on the level of municipal expenses, size of the tax base, and sources of revenue (insurance premium taxes and hotel, alcohol, and commercial business taxes).
- The citizens of a newly incorporated city would continue to vote for county commissioners and CEO.
- The state constitution forbids the creation of school districts separate from those that currently operate, so the creation of a new school district in Georgia would require the amending the state constitution.

Potential benefits

- A government representing fewer people and responding to more specific community needs
- More control over land use (zoning) and development to decide on things like new subdivisions, teardowns, construction, nightclubs, nude bars, and strip malls.
- Local control over services such as police, fire protection, and parks and recreation.
- More local investment per tax dollar paid if community pays a higher percentage of county taxes than its percentage of county population.
- Improved community identity.

Potential risks

- Requires substantial time and expense, and a tremendous volunteer effort to carry out the incorporation process.
- State legislature requires financial feasibility by funding a professional study, which can cost upwards of \$30,000.
- Lack of experience of the new city government relative to the county government.
- Without infrastructure, city would have to hire 3rd party (as Sandy Springs did) to take over services.
- Start-up costs have to be financed up front since the a new city will not have financial assets to rely upon

Source: A Study on the Incorporation for the Community of Tucker, Georgia 2006)

SOMETHING WILD

SNAKES ON A PLAIN...BY THE CREEK...IN THE YARD...

Bill Murray was clearing yard debris out of his pool one morning when suddenly, something latched onto his hand.

"I stuck my hand in the pool trap - and I felt a sharp intense pain. I looked down, and there was a copperhead in the skimmer basket."



Mind if I slither through?

A quick trip to Piedmont Hospital revealed his was not an isolated incident. Piedmont reports that copperheads have sunk their fangs into six metro Atlanta residents this year, compared with two in 2010, one in 2009 and none in 2008. September alone has had two.

Doctors eventually sent him home with antibiotics to prevent infection. Four days after the incident, Murray said his arm was still swollen about 50 percent larger than normal and it could take several weeks before he regained range of motion.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources lists copperheads as one of six venomous snakes in Georgia – the others are the cottonmouth, eastern coral snake and three varieties of rattlesnake. But the copperhead is by far the most likely to be encountered in the Atlanta area,



This is not 'Where's Waldo?'

They thrive in brushy areas and woodpiles, especially if there's water or a creek nearby. The drought might have something to do with the recent snake-human encounters.

"There's not as much water out there," says Brad Lock, assistant curator of herpetology at ZooAtlanta. "They're trying to find water. We're watering our lawns, we have standing water around."

July/August/September is also both birthing season -- baby season -- and the fall mating season -- males moving around more to find females," he said.

Lock recommends that people not leave debris piles of wood, leaves or heavy brush in the yard where snakes can hide; and that they keep garbage that can attract mice and rats, which snakes eat, away from the house.

And here's an easy rule to follow: if you see a snake, don't try to kill or move it, the reptile will move off on its own soon enough.

"Leave them alone and they won't bite," Lock said.

Anyone who's been bitten by a snake should call 911 and immediately seek medical attention. Try to remember the color and shape of the snake to aid in treatment, and stay still and calm. If you can't get to the hospital right away, lie or sit down with the bite below the level of the heart. Wash the bite with soap and water, and cover it with a clean, dry dressing.

Never try the old Boy Scout remedies of putting ice on the wound, applying a tourniquet, slashing the wound with a knife or sucking out the venom.

The experience taught Murray to be more careful poking into concealed places, and "don't assume you're not going to see a snake just because you live in Buckhead."

We'd say that goes double for Peachtree Creek.

Edited from the AJC

SCHOOLS / EDUCATION / KIDS

HAWTHORNE ELEMENTARY

Hawthorne Elementary welcomes new Assistant Principal Ed Connor! Connor is a neighborhood resident and has a daughter attending Hawthorne.

The recent Hornet Hustle Fun Run raised an amazing \$50,000! A hearty congrats to all who donated time and/or money.

The new roof is scheduled for completion by the end of October, and will be followed by landscaping projects around the school.

Additionally, Hawthorne is the proud recipient of a \$30,000 grant, written by Ms. Maggie Defilippo, parent of a grade two student at the school. The grant will fund voice amplification systems for the campus.



NEWS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOODS

DO YA FEEL LUCKY? WELL, DO YA? *By Sherry Treco-Jones*



Sherry Treco-Jones

I don't think Dirty Harry got his start this way...but if you'd like to know more about how our police department really works, ways they work within the community and how we can help the police stop crime, congratulations! You're a candidate for the next DeKalb Citizens Police Academy, coming later this year.

The Academy is DeKalb's innovative, new program designed to help residents understand the hows and whys of law enforcement, and to strengthen communication with police to better serve and address our concerns.

In August, two NBCA residents – NW VIP Arnold Kurth and myself – graduated from the first Citizens Academy - among 38 community residents selected from across the county, representing each of DeKalb's five precincts. Weekly classes covered every aspect of police services – from code enforcement, SWAT to K-9, gangs and traffic enforcement, plus the court system and domestic violence.

Our teachers were top policemen from each unit and their experience and training were impressive. They volunteered their time to give us a true insider's look at how law enforcement really works.

The Academy's last class was a ride-along with a North Precinct officer on shift. Although they team up when needed, officers ride alone. There is no such thing as a 'routine' car stop; every time they stop a car; there is potential for harm. To help bridge the numbers gap, officers have updated technology to help them make decisions about who and how to approach people.

My ride along included a local 'madam', picked up from apartments near Plaster Avenue; two (!) high-speed rides to support another officer; another speedy ride to a three-car accident; three car stops; support for another officer who had pulled over a suspicious driver (this required K-9 assistance to determine the presence of drugs), patrolling through numerous apartment complexes, and more. The officer continuously checked vehicle plates on his computer to identify criminals.

The Academy was an experience unlike any other. Information and insights gained will serve the NBCA well as we continue to work with the police to keep our neighborhoods safe and secure. If you have questions or are interested in signing up for the next class, feel free to email or call.



DeKalb's Finest

OUR COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Kudos to our own NBCA President Beth Nathan! She was chosen as a semi-finalist in the Community Champions program in September. The awards program is sponsored by The Champion newspaper and honors a community servant, community organization or an individual in DeKalb County who tirelessly volunteers his or her service for its betterment. Beth was nominated for her leadership in the Mary Scott Park as well as her service to NBCA and numerous other community organizations. She certainly has earned it!

A PERSONAL VIEW

“Wrangling” on the streets of Briarmoor Manor

by Susan Metzloff

I brake and stop, if necessary, for all living things in the road - kids, dogs, walkers, geese, Bigfoot, whatever! I must admit however, that repeatedly avoiding kids playing in the Briarmoor Manor streets with little to no regard to traffic, or even traffic signs, becomes a little distressing. Daily, there are any number of what appears to be pre-teens, riding street bikes and skateboards in our neighborhood. Rarely do they wear a helmet. And just as rarely do they move to the side when a vehicle approaches.

I watched one day as a woman in a large van stopped, and shooed the boys out of the middle of the road. Another neighbor has complained of youths' refusal to move out of the street as he heads down Cravey. On occasion he was both sworn at and the recipient of obscene gestures. This guy drives a very large truck - if I were in the street I would move post haste!

My primary concern is for the safety of these youths, but I also know that if I accidentally contributed to an accident, it could haunt me for years.

One afternoon I was behind a young boy on a bike (no helmet – surprise!) riding with no hands in the middle of the road. At a cross street, where our direction had a stop sign, he rang his bike bell and rode through with no stop. Yes, a car was coming, but disaster was averted. I would have been tempted to chase him down, give him a piece of my mind, and then call his parents.

So parents, some food for thought:

- Speak with your children about the dangers of playing in the street.
- Know where your children are (you might be surprised-don't be afraid to check!).
- Bicycle riders under 14 are **REQUIRED BY LAW** to wear a helmet.
- Remind your children to be polite and respectful of street traffic.
- There is an under 18 weekend curfew. Kids are roaming our streets in the middle of the night. Vandalism, at night and in broad daylight, is a problem in Briarmoor Manor.
- As an adult driver, respect the speed limit!

Always call 911 if you see unusual activity in our neighborhood! Let's keep it safe!

DEKALB POLICE TOWN HALL

Reprinted & edited from The Patch

Super heroes? Nah. A nosy neighbor is the most effective crime fighter, according to DeKalb Police.

Watchful neighbors, trimming shrubbery, recordings of barking dogs were among the prevention tips by the DeKalb County Police Department at a town hall meeting hosted by the Northlake Community Alliance and State Rep. Scott Holcomb.

“If you see something, you’ve got to call us,” said Captain Sonia Porter, assistant commander of the central precinct. “Too often we hear, ‘I didn’t want to call 911 for that.’ It’s okay to be nosy.”

If you witness a crime, call 911, but remain on the phone to give police a description of the criminal.

“A lot of times, witnesses don’t want to meet with us,” after they phone in crime, Porter complained. “If you won’t answer your cell phone or call me back, there’s not much I can do.”

Car break-ins and burglaries are common, she said, but many arrests have been made to clear burglaries. Police cleared 20 burglaries in June, 17 in July, and 13 in August.

Landscaping, lighting and locks prevent burglaries. Lock doors, even when working in the yard, she said, and keep a cell or cordless phone with you.

Porter also offered tips for safe shopping.

“When you leave, put the cell phone up, have keys ready, be observant. When you see other people, give eye contact. You see me, but I also see you.”

Carry your purse in front of your body, not dangling at your back where it might easily be grabbed.

Think twice about loading packages into your trunk and returning to shop. Once inside your car, all a thief needs do is push a little trunk release and – voila - your packages disappear.

“Get in your car and go and park on the other side of the mall,” suggested Porter. “It gives the illusion you’ve already left.”

Grant Knox of the Volunteer In Police Services program, says his group patrols neighborhoods.

“If something happens, I’m fixing to call,” said Knox. “I know of at least a dozen opportunities that would probably end up being pretty bad, but by calling 911, they sent out guys and gals and stopped the crime.”

MARY SCOTT NATURE PARK

Have you visited Mary Scott Nature Park lately? It's being put to good use by visitors arriving car or on foot, kids and on-leash dogs. Judging by participants in the three **Last-Saturday-of-the-Month Guided Tours** thus far, they're not just from our North Briarcliff community, but also from Tucker, Druid Hills and other DeKalb communities. Thanks to tour guides Jeff Pendergrast (July, meditative experience of nature), Beth Nathan (August, native plants), and Dave Butler (September, birds) for introducing the MSNP trail and sharing their expertise.

October's tour features arborist & recreational tree climber Peter "Treeman" Jenkins. Tours will skip December to resume in either January or February with both repeated and new topics. Look for a tour for children and one for Civil War buffs. Thanks to Nancy Love and Jeff Pendergrast for organizing these tours! Suggestions for topics and leaders are welcome. We apologize for confusion on the time of tours. In general, 10 am is the time and the front benches the gathering area, but summer tours will likely be 9 am. If in doubt, check what's posted in the park info kiosks and/or a growing number of electronic sources.

Communications capabilities have improved by leaps and bounds thanks to volunteer efforts. MaryScottNP now has a presence on **Facebook** with nearly 50 followers, a website at <http://www.maryscottnp.org/>, a new group email address (friendsofmsnp@gmail.com) and three new information kiosks in the park. A big round of thanks is due Lou Whiteman for the electronic communications work. Look to these sites for basic, historical, workday and ongoing project info. MSNPfriends@yahoogroups.com continues to be the focus of day-to-day discussions of what-next. Deeper discussion and decisions are being made at **regular third-Wednesday-of-the-month open meetings**, now held at Shallowford Presbyterian Church (thanks SPC !!) in the chapel basement starting at 7 pm.

The new info kiosks are the work of Eagle Scout candidate Thomas Penland with materials funded by North Briarcliff Civic Association. Thanks, Thomas!! Now, visitors can readily get answers to basic questions. There should be a Trail Map, but the county has no as-built diagram for anyone to work from. Anyone out there with experience (or interest) in surveying for maps?

Local professionals with other talents have spoken to the Friends of MSNP about interpretive signage design (Faye Goolrick) and a preliminary landscape design for the MSNP entry area (Shane Griffin).

Friends of MSNP hopes to see such projects flourish in the next couple years, with fingers crossed that we might have some November 2011 workdays adding plants in the entryway. Both of those projects are going to require fundraising, as does professional control of invasive plants that is high on the Friends wish list. MSNP will host a Briarcliff Baptist workday on October 16 for general improvements.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

AARP tax-aide is seeking volunteers for 2012.

The nation's largest free volunteer-run tax counseling and preparation service is in need of volunteers to assist in tax preparation. Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds are welcome; you do not need to be an AARP member to volunteer nor do you need to be a retiree.

If you have ever prepared a tax return, even your own, and if you are available to work during the day during the week from February 1 through April 15, this is a great opportunity to learn new skills, meet people and give back to the community.

Tax counselors receive free tax training and become IRS certified by passing the IRS exam. They help customers one-on-one at tax sites.

For more information about becoming a local AARP Tax-Aide volunteer, call toll-free 1-888-OURAARP (1-888-687-2277) or use the online registration form on our website at www.aarp.org/taxaide.

If your mailing label doesn't indicate that you're a paid member , please join NOW !!

By mail (send check + form below) to the address on the front of the newsletter -- OR --

Via the website (with credit card or PayPal) -- www.northbriarcliff.org/membership

North Briarcliff Civic Association membership. Enclosed is my check for \$_____ covering 2011 annual dues for my household (\$25) plus a donation of \$_____.

I can help with _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ Atlanta, GA 30345

Phone / E-Mail(s): _____

Membership in the North Briarcliff Civic Association, Inc. may include all residents and owners of property within the Hawthorne Elementary School district and such other residents on bordering streets as may request inclusion. Neither dues nor donations are tax deductible.

Get connected! Receive **NBCA emails** about general news and/or neighborhood watch alerts. Visit www.northbriarcliff.org, click on the "starburst" and fill in the requested information. You can unsubscribe the same way.

From State Representative Scott Holcomb

On August 31, the General Assembly concluded the special session in which the maps for the new State Senate, State House and U.S. Congress districts were passed. I have significant concerns about the new maps because, among other failings, the new lines eviscerate communities of interest. *Both the Tucker and Northlake communities, including their main business areas, as well as the North Briarcliff area, Embury Hills, and Pleasantdale, would be divided into a number of long, thin districts that do not maintain the communities of interest that presently exist.*

You can view the maps here:

http://www1.legis.ga.gov/legis/2011_12/house/Committees/reapportionment/2012Maps/congressional/congprop2-met.pdf

The maps will likely be sent to the Department of Justice for pre-clearance under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. However, the Governor could decide to bypass the Department of Justice and go directly to the D.C. Circuit Court. If that occurs, the DOJ will still evaluate the maps as a party to the case. Either way, litigation is expected that will challenge the legality of the proposed maps. I'll keep you updated on these developments.

Once a filing is made for preclearance, there will be several filings in response, outlining why the maps are unfair to communities and individuals. These filings will include letters and statements from individuals and organizations. You are invited to submit your comments to gafairdistricts@gmail.com.

Please also feel free to contact me at scott@repsscottholcomb.com. I want to hear your views, and I very much hope to be able to continue to represent you.

Sincerely,

Rep. Scott Holcomb

North Briarcliff Civic Association
 2566 Shallowford Road, Ste 104, PMB 132
 Atlanta, GA 30345-1200

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Fall 2011

Mailing label incorrect? That must mean you need to JOIN NBCA! Or notify database@northbriarcliff.org. "Or current resident" on the second address line insures delivery to every house and condo in the NBCA area – member or not – as a service to our community.

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

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Community Calendar



1 st Wednesdays	NBCA Board Meeting, 7:30 pm, Shallowford Presbyterian
3 rd Saturdays	Interchange Workday, 8:30 am, Shallowford @ I-85
3 rd Wednesdays	Friends of Mary Scott Nature Park Meeting, 7 pm, Shallowford Presbyterian
Oct. 2nd & 9th	NE Expressway Wetland Reserve Corridor Cleanup. I-85 access road between Shallowford & Chamblee Tucker.
October 15 th	Hawthorne Elementary 50 th Anniversary Carnival, 12noon-4 pm. Come celebrate! 2535 Caladium Dr., Atlanta. Admission is free!
October 17th	NBCA ANNUAL MEETING, 6:45-7:00 pm social, 7:00-9:00 pm meeting. Shallowford Presbyterian Church Heritage Hall
October 29 th	Guided MSNP walk, 10 am. Focus on the trees with Peter Jenkins, recreational tree climber and certified arborist

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!