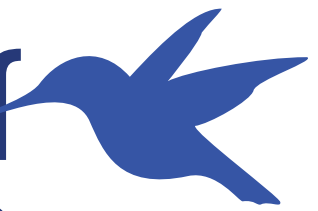


North Briarcliff Civic Association



The Official Newsletter of the
North Briarcliff Civic Association

Oct-Dec 2023

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Email Info@northbriarcliff.org

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**ANNUAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8
AT 6:00 PM IN HAWTHORNE
SCHOOL**

**North Briarcliff Civic Association (NBCA)
2566 Shallowford Road, Suite 104, PMB 132
Atlanta, GA 30345**

WE DIDN'T LAND ON CITYHOOD, BUT WILL CITYHOOD LAND ON US?

by Andrew Heaton, NBCA President

For the past several decades, the question of possible cityhood has been a constant part of the conversation in unincorporated parts of DeKalb County. Here in our own unincorporated corner of the county, the most visible movement was the recent referendum on the potential city of LaVista Hills, which failed to pass by a narrow margin. Recently, the Vista Grove movement was starting to gain traction again before eventually being put on pause indefinitely for lack of necessary legislative support.



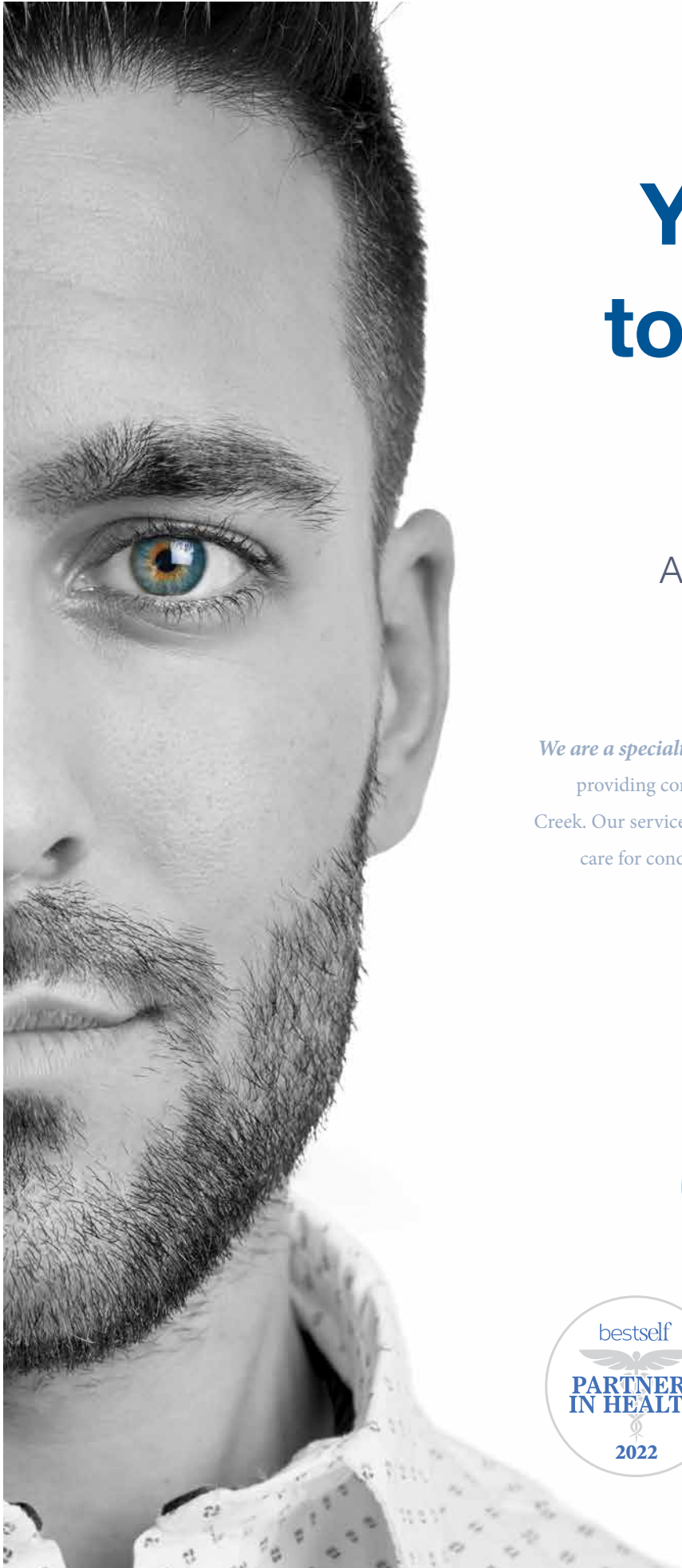
One key argument by those supporting a new cityhood movement was that it was a way to take control of the situation versus being annexed (potentially unwillingly) by a non-preferred existing city. This is what almost happened a few months ago in North Druid Hills, when advocates from Brookhaven initiated a signature referendum to annex large portions of the area near LaVista Rd. and North Druid Hills Rd. That effort was eventually abandoned when questions were raised about the legitimacy of some signatures gathered, as well as a signal from Toco Hill Shopping Center that it would oppose the annexation and remain in unincorporated DeKalb. The loss of the potential tax revenue from the shopping center is likely a major reason that the effort was abandoned.

Now that argument may be finding fresh evidence right here in our own backyard. Several sources have reported that Chamblee intends to annex Mercer University and Embry Hills, an area in the southeast corner of Spaghetti Junction at I-285 and I-85. This would be Chamblee's first move across I-85 to our side of the highway. This would also bring the City of Chamblee's boundaries right next to our neighborhood. The proposed annexation line would go right up the creek line that separates the Mercer University area from the Cravey Trail portion of our neighborhood.

How long would the dividing line stay there? How much longer till the line creeps further south to include us (or some of us)? Especially if there's an opportunity to capture the commercial area around I-85 and Shallowford? These are the questions that must now be realistically pondered as we watch Chamblee officially contemplate crossing the "Rubicon" of I-85. If not Chamblee, who is to say Brookhaven won't strike proactively. Inside sources have confirmed that all of the cities in DeKalb (Chamblee, Brookhaven, Tucker, Decatur, etc.) have had extensive discussions about the future of the unincorporated areas of North DeKalb.

What do you think? If Chamblee proceeds into Mercer and Embry Hills, would now be the time to reexamine an independent cityhood movement? Should we just embrace the eventual annexation into Chamblee, or Tucker, or even Brookhaven? We'd love to hear your thoughts and feedback. Email president@northbriarcliff.org and let me and the other NBCA board members know your thoughts!

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Inside This Issue...

NBCA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We didn't land on Cityhood, but will Cityhood land on us?	1
NBCA Board Members 2023	1

COMMUNITY – ADMINISTRATION

2023 NBCA Membership Form	4
---------------------------------	---

COMMUNITY – AIRPORT

Three Important Updates on the Status of PDK Airport Expansion Plans	5
--	---

COMMUNITY – SCHOOLS

Calling All Neighbors and Community Members	6
---	---

COMMUNITY – LIBRARY

DISCOVER MORE With a Library Card	8
---	---

COMMUNITY – GREENWAY

The Peachtree Creek Greenway	10
Greenway Reflections	11



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CONTRIBUTE YOUR IDEAS Tell us what you think are the most important priorities to improve our neighborhood. What are the biggest problems in the neighborhood? What should the NBCA Board be doing? What should we be asking the County to do?



We Ask for Your Help

Help the NBCA better serve our community by donating two or three hours a month to advise the board about a subject you care about or an area you want to improve. Contact one of the Board members to learn more about how to help us.

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North Briarcliff



Civic Association

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Please return your check for annual dues and this form to:

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Address: _____ Email: _____

I am (We are) interested in helping NBCA with (Circle any of the following):

Newsletter or Website Layout or Updating

Member Recruitment and Benefits

Neighborhood Watch

Board Service

Membership in the NBCA is open for all residents and owners of property within the Hawthorne Elementary School district and residents on other bordering streets who may request inclusion.

The North Briarcliff Civic Association (NBCA) represents you. A civic association is an organization that exists to improve the neighborhood through volunteer work by members of the association. The purpose and mission of the NBCA is to promote the civic interests of the people living in our area. What this means is that this association is dedicated to informing, representing, and supporting the residents of our area in issues of public concern.

Membership in the NBCA is voluntary and is open to any resident or property owner within the Hawthorne Elementary School District and to other residents living on bordering streets who request inclusion. The newsletter is addressed to “Current Resident” to ensure that the newsletter is delivered (free of charge) to every house and condominium in the NBCA area as a service to all the residents.

We want you to help us become better representatives. As our paid membership increases, we have greater authority and leverage in dealing with (or confronting) the county and other organizations on your behalf. Renew your membership or become a member by paying your annual dues. The \$25 dues covers the household for the calendar year (January-December 2023).

Help us to better represent the interests of our neighborhood by bringing to our attention any issues or events that merit our attention. We would appreciate your perspective, and you may know more or care more about

that issue than any board or off-board member. Consider joining the board or advising the board as an off-board member so that the association is better able to address the issue in question. We would welcome your assistance, enthusiasm and expertise.

The NBCA is a non-profit organization that is managed by its board members, all of whom are neighbors who have volunteered to work together to make a difference in our local community. All of the board members are elected by the dues-paying members of the NBCA at an annual meeting in the fall. Some board members have special interests and expertise in specific areas that are important to our area, while other board members are generalists. The board members are supported by off-board members, who are neighbors who have volunteered to help the board by identifying and addressing specific areas. None of the board or off-board members receive any monetary payment for their efforts.

If you want to report something or register a complaint with the county or other agencies, the board may be able to assist you or help you contact appropriate agencies. However, you are responsible for making your report or registering your complaint. Please remember that board and off-board members are volunteers with only so much time and energy.

Email addresses for board and off-board members are listed on the front page of each newsletter and are also found on the NBCA website www.northbriarcliff.org

THREE IMPORTANT UPDATES ON THE STATUS OF PDK AIRPORT EXPANSION PLANS

By Larry Foster, Communication Director, PDK Watch Inc.

Why should a major expansion of DeKalb-Peachtree Airport (PDK) flight operations concern you? PDK Airport is already the second busiest airport in Georgia after Hartsfield-Jackson in numbers of flights. Surrounded by densely settled residential areas in northeast Atlanta, the PDK Airport is approximately two miles as the jet flies from our North Briarcliff neighborhood. Disruptive flights over our area already bother many residents, and such flights would become more frequent with the proposed expansion of PDK flight operations.

PDK Airport is the largest single emitter in Georgia of toxic lead pollution, which causes brain damage and other health problems for young children. This is because the Airport's smaller piston-engine aircraft still use leaded gas. If much larger jets are allowed to use PDK, they will emit huge amounts of ultra-fine particles (under 1 micrometer) that are breathed deep into the lungs and are associated with significant increases in asthma and other respiratory diseases, heart disease and cancer. Such jets also use so much fuel that they are a significant contributor to global warming.

Here are Three Updates on the PDK Expansion Plans:

The First Update is on the Status of the PDK Airport Master Plan: PDK's new Master Plan, first presented for consideration by the DeKalb Board of Commissioners two years ago in September 2021, would guide the development of PDK over the next twenty years. It would authorize the most dramatic expansion in PDK Airport's history in *numbers of flights, sizes of aircraft and numbers of larger jets based at PDK*. The proposed Plan would authorize a 40% increase in aircraft to be based at PDK by adding new hangars and tie-downs, with each new plane averaging an additional 125 more flight operations annually. In addition, the "Critical Aircraft" around which future PDK planning would be based is the Gulfstream 550, a 91,000-lb. business jet that currently cannot even operate at PDK without weight restrictions. Supporters of Airport expansion are seeking approval of the Master Plan before an Environmental Study of PDK Air and Noise Pollution has been completed. That would preempt the major goal of the Study, which is to provide the County Commissioners with objective evidence to help them determine whether or not to allow much larger jets to use PDK Airport on a regular basis.

From the perspective of residents who are negatively impacted by PDK flight operations, the good news is that almost exactly two years after the PDK Master Plan's release, it has NOT

YET been approved by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners. One reason for the delay may be the outpouring of public opposition to the plan in its current form, reflected in a change.org petition signed by more than 2,700 individuals. See: <https://www.change.org/StopPDKExpansion>. If you have not yet read and signed the petition yourself, please look at the petition and sign it if you support it.

The Second Update is on the Proposed Sky Harbor Hangar and Taxiway Construction Project. Last year, although the PDK Airport Master Plan had not been approved by the DeKalb Board of Commissioners, Airport Director Mario Evans decided to bypass Commission approval and take independent steps to begin to build the new hangars proposed in the Master Plan, without securing Commission approval. In August 2022, Director Evans submitted a hangar-building proposal to DeKalb Purchasing and Contracting—*without the prior knowledge of the Board of Commissioners*. If the hangars are actually built, the Airport Director would have preemptively "set in concrete," so to speak, the first phase of the most controversial part of the still-unapproved PDK Master Plan, which is to build hangars for much larger jets than are currently allowed at PDK.

Bids were made on the Request for Proposal (RFP) to build the hangars, and, in June 2023, Director Evans announced that the firm Sky Harbor had been chosen to construct several hangars for much larger jets than are officially allowed to use PDK under current arrangements. What Sky Harbor agreed to do in its slick 11-page PowerPoint presentation sounds "too good to be true." It would build the new hangars and a connecting taxiway "at no cost to the County," and the revenue that would accrue to the County would ultimately bring in hundreds of millions of dollars over the life of the contract!

How could such a deal be possible? Was the Sky Harbor proposal on the level? Something seemed fishy. One factor suggesting the need for caution and further investigation is that only one of the five companies that initially considered applying to do the work eventually bid on the project—Sky Harbor. The other four companies declined to apply, either due to what they thought would be insufficient return on investment or to "workload and construction costs." Yet Sky Harbor seemed enthusiastic to do the project. Why?

Note that the proposed contract itself, per County guidelines, cannot be furnished to the Commissioners or made public *until after it has*

been approved by the BOC. Besides the conundrum this presents to the Commissioners and the public in the approval process, it raises questions about how this development has been structured and what the County may have committed itself to in any qualifications or assumptions included in the contract.

Concerned citizens recommend that the Commissioners reject the Sky Harbor contract outright. This recommendation is based on the sneaky "back door" way in which this hangar-building proposal was developed to circumvent having to secure Commission approval of the PDK Master Plan, Sky Harbor's questionable claims to be able to generate a too-good-to-be-true revenue stream for the County, and the fact that the Commissioners are not allowed to see the contract before they approve it.

The Third Update is on the recent Approval of an Environmental Study of PDK Air and Noise Pollution. This long-sought environmental study is the result of a two-year collaboration from 2021 through 2022 between a total of about 15 representatives from Open DeKalb Inc. (a citizen organization concerned to secure accurate information about PDK operations), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Environmental Protection Administration (EPA), the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and PDK Airport to determine compliance with environmental concerns related to aircraft size limitations previously committed to by DeKalb County.

The collaborative group that drafted the Study's parameters unanimously approved the Statement of Work for the Environmental Study in early August 2022, and a year later, on August 8, 2023, the DeKalb County Commissioners approved the Contract to undertake the \$1.45 million Study. A primary goal of the Study is to provide the Commissioners with reliable data that they could use to decide whether or not to approve the PDK Master Plan's proposal to build hangars for much larger jets than had been allowed by PDK's prior weight-limit agreement. The Environmental Study must be completed before the Commission votes on the PDK Master Plan.

For further information on citizen concerns about the PDK Master Plan and other aspects of PDK Airport's operations, please check out the PDK Watch Inc. website at www.pdkwatch.org.

CALLING ALL NEIGHBORS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS!

By Lisa Limoncelli, Hawthorne Principal

The Hawthorne Hornet Hustle

The Annual Hawthorne Elementary Hornet Hustle is back!! The Hornet Hustle is one of Hawthorne's main fundraisers led by the Hawthorne Elementary School Foundation (HESF). The HESF is a parent organization that raises money to meet the school's long-term academic and environmental needs.

Please help support us and join in our community building fundraiser. Over the past ten years, we have purchased a new playground and designed it to be more accessible. We have updated the school exterior, supported STEM activities, cared for the school grounds, and provided interpretation services to assist our Spanish-speaking families.

We are grateful for the support that our community continues to give us. Last year, our community came together and helped us reach our goal of \$20,000. To continue supporting our school needs, we are asking for your help again to reach our \$20,000 fundraising goal this year.

If you want to support the Hawthorne Hornet Hustle, please donate in one of the following ways:

1. Donate online by visiting the website: www.heshornethustle.com
2. U.S. Mail. Please make checks payable to the Hawthorne Elementary School Foundation and mail to:

Hawthorne ES Foundation
2535 Caladium Drive NE
Atlanta, GA. 30345

Donations may be made from now until October 30th.

As always, we are truly grateful for the continued support of our community. Thank you for making Hawthorne part of your lives and continuing to enhance ours.

The Hustle culminates with a 1K fun run/walk/roll. If you happen to see some little hornets flying through the neighborhood on September 29th, that's us!

You Are Invited to a Movie Night

Every year in the Fall, Hawthorne Elementary hosts "Flick on the Field" (an outdoor movie night). If you would like to join us for an evening of fun, food and entertainment, please meet us on the PE field on October 20th at 7:00pm. There will be a family friendly movie shown and concessions available to purchase.

Exciting Updates from Hawthorne Elementary

In the last issue of the NBCA magazine, we provided information about some of the exciting upgrades taking place at Hawthorne and left you with a "teaser," asking you to stay tuned for the before and after pictures. Well, here you go!

Indoor Projects – Front Entrance and Teacher's Lounge

Our wonderful parent volunteers spent time sprucing up the front entrance of the school with some new paint and a new mural. What a great new look to welcome our visitors into our building!



This was the front entrance before. It was okay but needed to be refreshed



Time was also spent dismantling and removing our aquaponics system. Unfortunately, the system needed too many repairs.



Lots of work painting the new stencil on the wall



This is our new mural



Our front entrance after all our work

CALLING ALL NEIGHBORS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS! CONT'D

Our teachers and staff were greeted on their first day with a teacher’s lounge make-over! The principal spent most of the summer resurfacing and painting the cabinets, putting in a backsplash, painting the walls, and creating a new coffee bar! With some new curtains and furnishings and microwaves from the PTA, it all came together!



Teacher's lounge before



Teacher's lounge after make-over

New Playground

Our younger students are very excited to have a new playground! The school district is in the final stages of the install, and we could not be happier! Our Kindergarten, first, and second grade students now have a safe and colorful playground to burn off some of their energy.



The new playground

Outdoor Projects – Garden and Chicken Coop

Our parent and community volunteers spent many hours in the sun this summer rejuvenating our school garden. Phase I is complete! All garden beds have been repaired; beds have been weeded; new soil put in and summer crops planted.



Many people contributed



Adults and children helped in the garden

We enjoyed tomatoes, basil, peppers, cucumbers, and zucchini during our summer harvest! We even successfully grew a couple of pumpkins that are currently displayed in our front office.

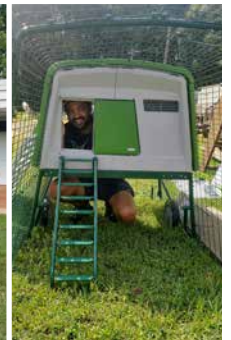
Phase two is underway and will include new hardscape and fall plantings of lettuce, Swiss chard, spinach, carrots, and radishes.



Oh look! Isn't gardening fun??

And, finally, our brand new chicken coop is ready to welcome some new chickens! Two VERY patient dads spent two VERY hot days putting together our new coop.

Soon we will receive twelve eggs and an incubation system. Once our hatchlings have made it out of their shells and into the world, they will be kept nice and warm under a heat lamp for eight weeks before being introduced to the outdoor coop. Our students will observe each phase of development and then learn how to maintain happy, healthy chickens! Not to mention, collecting eggs for classroom recipes!



The coops had to be assembled, which took some time and patience.

What's Next?

Fifth grade students at Hawthorne Elementary study World War II events that include the Holocaust. This year, with the help of parent and community volunteers, we will participate in “The Daffodil Project.” The Daffodil Project is an Atlanta based initiative of Am Yisrael Chai, a nonprofit Holocaust Education and Genocide Awareness Organization, which “aspires to build a worldwide Living Holocaust Memorial by planting 1.5 million Daffodils in memory of the children who perished in the Holocaust and in support for children suffering in humanitarian crises in the world today.” This Fall, our students and volunteers will plant 500 daffodils. I can’t wait to see our school campus brought to life by 500 beautiful yellow daffodils.

Thank you to all our volunteers for continuing to make Hawthorne Elementary a great place to learn and work!

DISCOVER MORE WITH A LIBRARY CARD

by Sarah Helwig, Library Branch Manager



The library card is your free ticket to many adventures

DeKalb County Public Library is conducting a major campaign through the end of October to remind our citizens how important libraries are and to encourage everyone to Discover More about what we have to offer by getting a library card. Library cards are free for DeKalb County residents, property owners and business owners and are available for a fee to non-county residents. Stop in soon to Discover More at your library!

You may already know that a library card provides free access to books, Wi-Fi and computers. You may not know that a library card also provides free access to eBooks and eMagazines, downloadable audiobooks, streaming movies, adult and children's activities, passes to local museums and theaters, live online tutoring, LinkedIn Learning, and more!

Libraries are a place where everyone is welcome, and everyone belongs. Now more than ever, people turn to – and depend on – libraries and librarians for help finding information and becoming part of a community. If you believe in the importance of libraries, please show your support by applying for a card if you don't have one, and by encouraging your friends and neighbors to do so as well.

Summer Reading Challenge

This year's summer reading challenge wrapped up at the end of July. The theme was "All Together Now," and we had activities and challenges for all ages from babies to adults. Here at Northlake, we had over 300 people participate, and 62 people completed the challenge. Congratulations to everyone for keeping up with their reading over the summer break!

Some highlights from our summer activities for families included reading to therapy dogs, a musical performance by Jerry G. White, a magic show by The Great Jeffini, a reptile program presented by 8 Legged Scales, and a mobile science program presented by Fernbank on the Go! Financial support for these programs was provided by the DeKalb Library Foundation.



8 Legged Scales is a reptile, arachnid and amphibian educational and entertainment company. This shows part of the presentation by Germaine Cato from 8 Legged Scales.



Children petting an Argentine Tegu lizard provided by 8 Legged Scales



Fernbank Museum has a Fernbank on the Go! mobile program to support hands-on experiences and exploratory experiments.

Fall Activities

Missed out on the Summer Reading Challenge? Never fear! You may join our Fall Hallow-Read Challenge by visiting dekalblibrary.beanstack.org. Log your time spent reading during the month of October to win a small prize!



Even though summer is over, there is still a lot to do at the library, including our weekly Toddler Times, as well as the return of our weekly meditation and breathing yoga for adults. October brings a lot of fun events including our Halloween Trivia Challenge, a movie night featuring *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* (2021), and a College Readiness Workshop for High School Students. We will also have a monthly Frank Lloyd Wright architectural lecture series presented by a local real estate professional. Please visit dekalblibrary.org/events for more information.

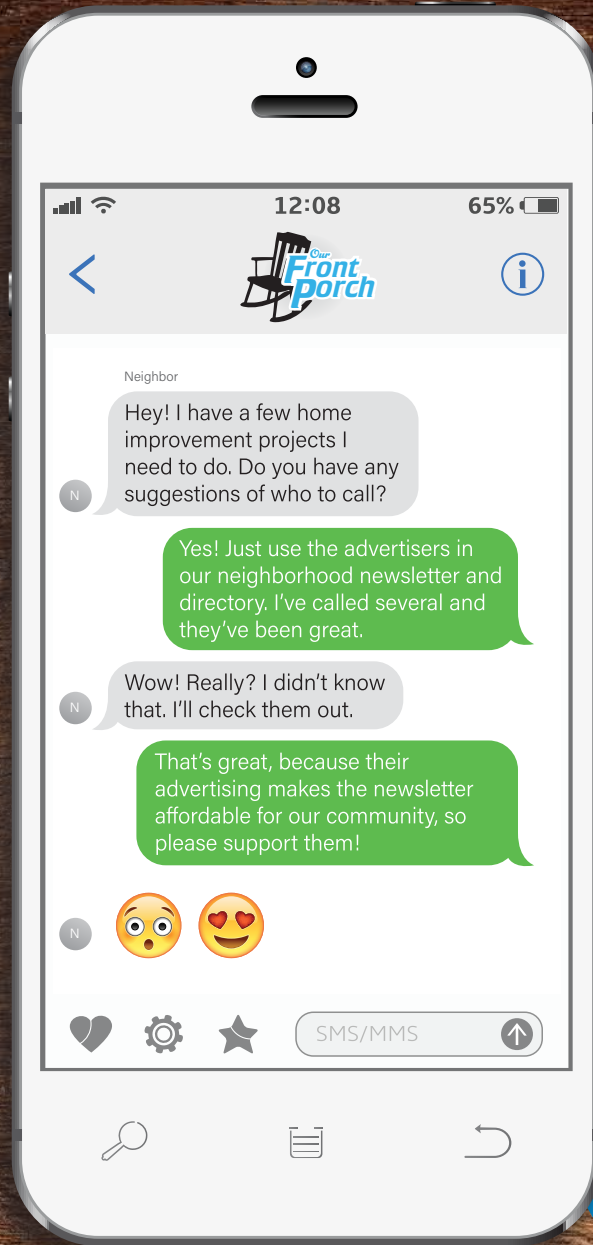
Steven Sandler Lunch & Learn Series

Mr. Sandler was a long-time library patron who left an estate gift to the Friends of the Northlake-Barbara Loar Library. In honor of his career with the Environmental Protection Agency, we are organizing a series of environmental programs at the library.

We hope you can join us for our first two lectures on October 18th and 25th to enjoy a free lunch while listening to speakers from DeKalb Watershed and CHaRM Atlanta. Please visit dekalblibrary.org/events and search "Sandler" to register.

Used Book Sale

Please join us for our fall book sale October 20-21 from 10:00 am-4:30 pm. All proceeds will help fund more programs, activities and materials at the Northlake Library. If you have gently used books, puzzles, games, CDs or DVDs for the sale, you may donate them by bringing your items to the library during operating hours: Mon - Wed 10am - 8pm and Thurs - Saturday 10am - 5pm. Your donations are tax-deductible.



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THE PEACHTREE CREEK GREENWAY

by Josh White, PCGI Executive Director

The proposed Peachtree Creek Greenway (PCG) is a “Trail of Regional Significance.” This 12-plus mile recreational pathway is a symbol of community unity, environmental responsibility, and regional progress.

This is an exciting time of activities and progress. The Peachtree Creek Greenway, Inc. (PCGI) recently sponsored two well-attended community events that gave many people the opportunity to explore the future pathway. More events are planned for October.

DeKalb County’s SPLOST II vote on November 7 provides the potential for funding to commence the planning and construction of the Greenway in unincorporated DeKalb County, so watch for the resolution and cast your “yes” vote.

Fisher Trail Park Event

The Fisher Trail Park event on August 19 was a resounding success, drawing almost 150 attendees, including DeKalb County Commissioners Larry Johnson and Michelle Long Spears. Participants had the opportunity to explore Fisher Trail Park, learn about the Greenway’s eventual path under I-85 and through the Park, and hear about upcoming plans. Everyone could see where Peachtree Creek passed under I-85 and where the Greenway also would cross under the highway. This event was a collaborative effort with DeKalb Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs (RPCA); Toole Design (DeKalb County consultant for the Master Trails Plan 2023); and ChocoLate’ Coffee (which provided coffee and treats).



County Commissioner Michelle Long Spears addressed the group at Fisher Trail Park



Information about the Greenway was distributed, and people had the opportunity to get answers to any questions they had.

A plan of the Greenway was displayed, which helped people see where Fisher Trail Park was located beside the Greenway.

Chamblee Tucker Creek Walk

The Chamblee Tucker Creek Walk on September 16 was another highlight. Despite the looming clouds and rain predictions, the event saw an impressive turnout of over 100 attendees. Participants had the chance to connect with nature, share a vision for the community’s future, and engage in meaningful discussions with local leaders.

Notably, four DeKalb County Commissioners (Steve Bradshaw, Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, Robert Patrick and Ted Terry) and Doraville Mayor Joseph Gierman graced the event with their presence. Their attendance underscored the importance and support the Greenway has garnered from local leadership and emphasized the community’s collective vision for the PCG’s future.



Steve Clowse (PCGI board member) talked about the Greenway before the creek walk



What everyone really appreciated was the chance to actually walk beside the creek along a path that will become the Greenway

Environmental Action – Cleaning the Creek

PCGI has hosted several creek clean-up events. In a beautiful blend of faith and environmental responsibility, the Reverse Tashlich event witnessed congregants from various synagogues coming together for a special high-holy week ritual. Emphasizing the importance of caring for the earth, participants removed trash from water systems. Organizations and businesses interested in hosting their own clean-up events may reach out to the Greenway team for assistance.

THE PEACHTREE CREEK GREENWAY



The Reverse Tashlich participants and all the trash they removed from Peachtree Creek on September 11th.

Progress in Funding and Building

Increased interest in the Greenway is fueled by other developments. Last year, the T-SPLOST passed in Atlanta, and funds have been earmarked specifically for the Greenway's Planning & Engineering (P&E) and construction, with the southern endpoint where Path 400 and the Beltline converge.

Additionally, in June 2023, the US DOT generously awarded a \$25M RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) grant to Atlanta and the Beltline that will facilitate constructing a 2.2-mile network of trails in northeast Atlanta, crucially connecting the Confluence Bridge to the Beltline. Construction enthusiasts should mark their calendars for early 2025!

Brookhaven is a leader in building the Greenway. Phase 1 in Brookhaven is completed, and work on Phase II has commenced. This will stretch south from

North Druid Hills Road to the Atlanta City Limits. Planning & Engineering (P&E) is already in motion, and construction is anticipated to kick off in 2024 and wrap up by 2026. Phase III will stretch from the existing Brookhaven segment north to Clairmont Road, across from Sam's Club.

When the Greenway is completed, DeKalb residents in the North Briarcliff neighborhoods will have the ability to walk, run, bike, scoot, etc. to the Atlanta Beltline using the Greenway. This will be an exciting development!

Events in October

Looking ahead, a series of events are lined up in October. On October 7th, PCGI will be hosting a guided tour of the Greenway in Brookhaven at 10 am. This is a perfect opportunity for residents and visitors to come out to the Greenway, explore its beauty, and get answers to all their questions.

On October 14th, PCGI will proudly serve as a Non-Profit Partner with "A Taste of Chamblee" (<https://www.tasteofchamblee.net/>). If you attend, please stop by our tent to grab a limited edition Peachtree Creek Greenway button and learn more about our initiatives.

The weekend of October 21st and 22nd promises to be particularly eventful as the Peachtree Creek Greenway will play host to the "Brookhaven International Festival." Touted as the most significant event on the Greenway to date, attendees may look forward to a plethora of live cultural performances, international cuisine, an art walk, interactive art creation, a dedicated Kidz Zone, health screenings, and a variety of vendors.

On Sunday, October 22nd, there will be a 5K walk/run benefiting "We Love Buford Highway," providing an excellent opportunity for fitness enthusiasts to contribute to a noble cause.

GREENWAY REFLECTIONS

by Mark NeuCollins, NBCA Board Member

I like to walk. You may have seen me on my daily evening meander through the neighborhood. Our little patch of Atlanta has a natural beauty among its rolling hills. I enjoy watching the seasons change, listening to the conversations of birds and appreciating the majesty of the tall trees.

Before moving to Atlanta, I was also an avid biker. I used to love the feeling of moving through the world at speed by my own efforts, wind on my face -- nothing separating me from the sun and sky. While I read about and appreciate the health benefits of these activities, what keeps pulling me back to them is not some far-off perceived benefit, but the pure joy of being present in these moments.

What breaks this reverie and the reason why I describe myself as an avid biker in the past tense may be summed up in one word – traffic! Our little corner of Atlanta is naturally resplendent, but my pure enjoyment of biking and walking this landscape is thwarted by behemoth steel machines passing at high speeds within inches of my decidedly non-steel body.

Venturing out on the Atlanta roadways by foot or bicycle can be a life-threatening activity. There are no bike lanes, and, inexplicably, sidewalks on busy streets are deemed unnecessary. Flashing lights on pedestrian crosswalks vainly try to assert pedestrians' right-of-way, counterproductively igniting a manic enthusiasm in Atlanta drivers to go faster.

Imagine that there might be a way for traffic and humans to coexist. You might walk to the grocery store or to the coffee shop or dinner out without feeling that doing so was a life-threatening activity. Imagine a bicycle commute through a crisp autumn morning with a birdsong serenade.

Imagine that you could hop on your bike and take a day trip down to the BeltLine with neither the stress of high-speed navigation on interstate highways nor the hassle of finding a parking spot once you arrived at your destination.

These, for me, are some of the promises of the proposed Peachtree Creek Greenway trail running through our North Briarcliff neighborhood. The Greenway will be a people-centric alternative transportation network that ties communities together, enables and promotes a healthy lifestyle, and creates a connectedness to the natural beauty that surrounds us.

The Greenway will allow us to appreciate our place in this environment and naturally promote an attitude of care and stewardship for this fragile web that supports us. It will give us a space accessible within our daily lives that we can step into, slow down, and bathe our senses in the natural landscape. It will allow us to truly take stock of and appreciate our small slice of the natural world.

We have a lot of work to do to make this happen. Let's get started.



Did you know that leaks through small cracks around your windows and doors are responsible for 30-40% of the heat that leaks out of your house?



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It's time to give your house that once over for cracks and areas where the cooler air will seep in and more importantly, your heat will leak out.

Begin outside by looking at places where two different building materials meet and around every opening in your siding i.e. around water spigots, dryer vents, and places where telephone and TV cables enter the house.

Fill all openings and cracks with caulk or expanding insulating foam.

Once inside your home, look at the following:

- Check around electrical outlets. You can get inexpensive foam gaskets to seal every outlet. Make sure your pull down attic stairs are sealed as well.
- Measure the temperature in different parts of the house. Differences of a couple of degrees or more indicate that the room is poorly sealed or that air movement inside the house is poor. If some rooms are cooler than others, your favorite HVAC company can help you zone your house properly to even out the air flow.
- It's time to weather strip windows, doors, and garage doors. It's simple and inexpensive.
- Get your caulk gun back out and seal between baseboards and floors. Remove the base molding and fill in the gap between baseboards and floor. This will not only stop air leaks, but will help seal out insects as well.

One last thing to check – if you have windows in unused parts of the house, think about sealing them for the window with a shrink wrap. Once installed, shrink wrap is virtually invisible and easy to remove.

The best part of all of this work is that when it gets warm out again, all of these steps will help keep your cool air in (and insects out).



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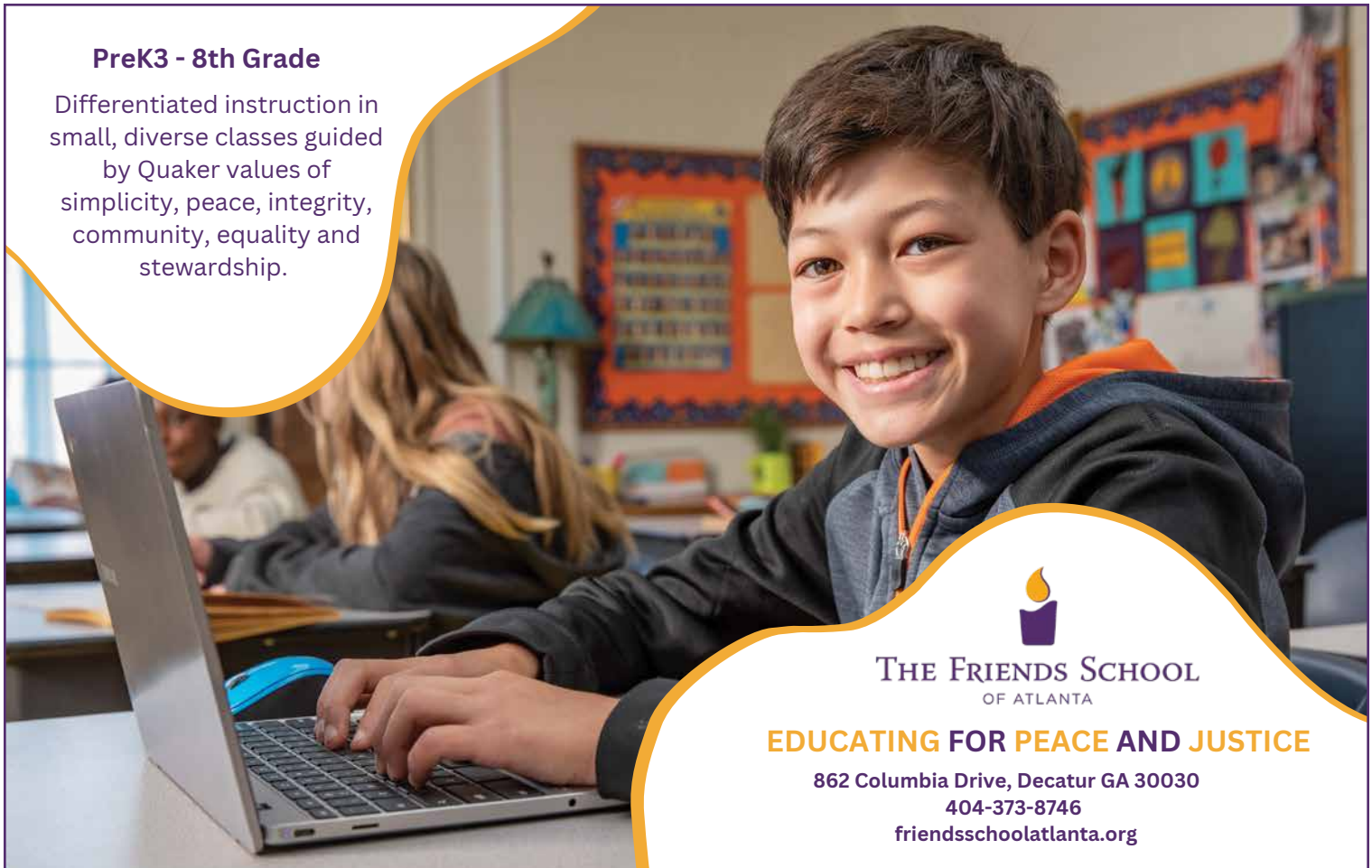
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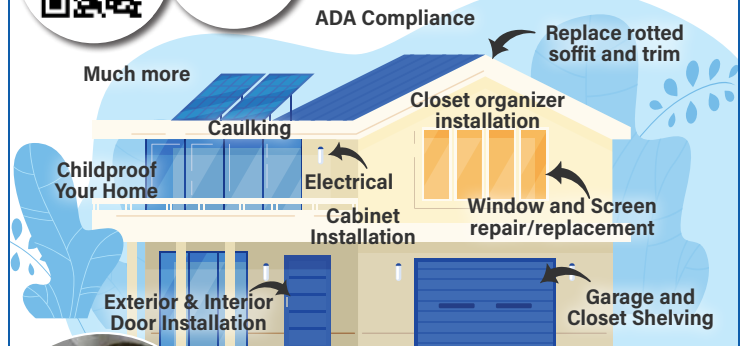
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