



NEWSLETTER
April 2003 Vol. 8 No. 2

GENERAL MEETING
DEKALB COMMISSIONER GALE WALLDORFF
MAY 14, 7:00 PM
TORAH DAY SCHOOL LIBRARY, 1959 LAVISTA ROAD

From Your Team (Linda, Val, Sally and Pat)

What a beautiful spring we have this year! Warm weather, trees and flowers budding ... it is wonderful to see our neighbors outside. Our spring General Meeting is scheduled for May 14 and features a terrific speaker, DeKalb Commissioner Gale Walldorff, District 2. This meeting is an excellent opportunity to meet Commissioner Walldorff and learn of plans for our area of DeKalb County. Bring your questions and concerns. Our neighborhood surveys, yielded some good concerns which have been forwarded to Commissioner Walldorff.

We welcome two new Section Representatives to the Board. Steve Bighouse has agreed to handle Section 1. Steve is a longtime supporter of MHHA and helped write the Bylaws in 1995. Rod Gary, at Weatherstone, is representing the townhomes and has been very helpful.

Neighborhood surveys have returned and given us great information. We are finding some wonderful volunteers as a result. The survey is open to all neighborhood residents (members and nonmembers), and it is not too late to return your copy to any MHHA officer, Section Representative, or mail to Pat Jenkins. We want to hear from everyone! We also hope you will join MHHA. You can send your check with the membership form and neighborhood survey in one envelope. Please remember that all previous MHHA members owe dues for 2003, as we changed to an annual system with all dues due January 1 of each year.

Below are the major discussion items from the surveys:

- **Winter gutter and curb clean-up:** The four entryways to our neighborhood are completed. Take a moment to notice how the cleaning improves our neighborhood. If each resident will hire help or clean the gutter (removing all vegetation and dirt) and clip the vegetation to the back of the curb in front of each house, it would really improve the look of the whole neighborhood. Let's have a big April cleanup!
- **One of the most frequently discussed survey items was the use of carports for storage.** Storage in carports is against the County code ---carports are for cars only. In the past, County Code Enforcement Officers have reviewed our neighborhood and distributed many citations for carport storage. As a part of our April neighborhood cleanup, County Code Enforcement will again review our neighborhood.
- **Late trash and garbage can retrieval after pickup:** This is also a county violation as well as inconsiderate.
- **Street parking on both sides of the street:** This is a safety issue as fire trucks and ambulances, school buses and garbage trucks cannot pass through. Please consider through-traffic when parking on the street and avoid parking on the street if possible.
- **Children playing in the street:** The street is not a playground! Please keep your children safe.
- **National Nightout and Block Party:** The surveys tell us that Merry Hills neighbors want these events to continue. We must have volunteers to manage each of them, if they are to continue. Contact Linda to volunteer.

MHHA DEBUTS WEBSITE CREATED BY BOARD MEMBER FLO WOLF

The Merry Hills Homeowners Association (MHHA) now has a home on the World Wide Web. You can find us at www.merryhills.com. The purpose of the Merry Hills website is to enhance communications between residents and the Association, and we encourage you to visit our new home and look around.

The website includes:

- a listing of MHHA board members, section representatives, and committee chairs
- a calendar of MHHA meetings and events
- a membership form you can use to join MHHA or renew your membership
- a request form you can submit on-line to join the mailing list that distributes our newsletter and other notices to residents
- a volunteer form you can submit on-line to join our team of hard-working volunteers

Two innovative features of the website you might find interesting are the Contractor Referrals and Yard Sale. The Contractor Referrals feature allows neighbors to share their recommendations for reliable home maintenance contractors and individuals. The Yard Sale provides a place where neighbors can list and find household items for sale.

Send your comments and suggestions about our website to Flo Wolf (webmaster@merryhills.com). If you would like to join the team that will enhance and manage the website, by all means contact Flo.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM REJUVENATED

One of our association's goals for 2003 is to make the Neighborhood Watch program more effective and efficient. We have new leadership, with Rosa Landers and Sarah Duwell, and aided by Steve Jenkins. In place are 19 new Block Captains, including Weatherstone Townhomes. The Block Captains have lists of residents within their block and magnetic cards bearing the block captain's name to distribute to residents in their area. If you have not received your list and card, please contact Rosa or Sarah. The lists of your neighbors and their telephone numbers are for your use if you see something suspicious. Get to know your Block Captain. We need to watch out for each other.

Neighborhood Watch works as follows: if you experience or see a crime, you should first call 911. Then notify your Block Captain who, in turn, will contact Rosa or Sarah to determine whether a neighborhood alert is needed. If needed, Sarah or Steve will activate our new e-mail alarm system. Residents without e-mail access will be contacted by telephone.

Listed below are crimes occurring since the January 2003 newsletter:

- Two radios stolen from cars on Merry Lane weekend of March 15
- A birdbath and statue stolen from a front yard on Christmas March 29
- Money stolen from a car on North Holly the first week in March

MERRY HILLS RESIDENT — SGT. CONNIE LOCKE — RECEIVES NEW APPOINTMENT

Connie Locke enjoys a nearly 15 year career with Atlanta Police. Since January 2002, she has served as sergeant in the Field Operations Division for Zone Five, is commander of the reserve unit of retired police officers, and also supervises police recruits. Additionally, in October 2002, Locke was appointed police liaison to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community. "As a police department, we need to be able to reach out to the community, address issues and concerns the gay community may have, and establish a dialogue. And with that dialogue comes trust," said Locke. (*Atlanta Real Estate & Community Living*, Feb. 2003)

ZONING NEWS

Intown Community Church, 2059 LaVista Road, applied for a Special Use Permit to allow them to build a new education building for their school (grades 1-8) of up to 400 students and a new sanctuary. They own the first five houses on Houston Mill Road, from LaVista Road south, which they now use for classrooms, but planned to tear down. The County Commission denied their permit, mainly due to the height of the sanctuary (60') exceeding the limit for residential neighborhoods. The church can ask for reconsideration, appeal, or file a lawsuit. Linda Billingsley and Margarete Tigges, Zoning Chairperson, met for several hours with the church planner, architect and lawyer, Commissioner Gale Walldorff, two Planning Commissioners, and other interested homeowner groups.

Another rezoning of interest is the northwest corner of North Druid Hills and Briarcliff Roads, where the St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church stands. The church will be demolished, and the trees cut down for a Walgreen's and convenience store. This intersection is listed as one of the worst in the state.

NEWS OF INTEREST

- **Arden's Gardens Reprieve:** Our neighbor Arden Zinn is the founder of Arden's Gardens. Publix notified Arden's company that their stores would no longer carry her juices. Customers started an e-mail campaign, and her company received a reprieve.
- **DeKalb Animal Control** has reported more rabid raccoons in central DeKalb. Please notify the county if you see any wild animal acting strangely. Telephone 404-294-2996, weekdays and Saturdays, and 404-294-2519, Sundays and evenings.
- **Toco Hill Additions:** Office Depot will open where Linen Loft was located. A new Dollar Store is expected.
- **CEO Vernon Jones** wants citizens to call him about how to improve key services. He wants residents involved. Call him on his hotline number, 404-371-3000.
- **Open Campus High School Relocates:** In August 2004, the Open Campus High School, currently located on North Druid Hills Road, will relocate to Mountain Industrial Blvd. in Stone Mountain.
- **Road Work:** Road work underway on Briarcliff Road between Hopkins Terrace and Sheridan will straighten a bad curve and replace the bridge over the creek. Also, the bad sidewalks will be replaced, and a new turn lane onto Sheridan designated. Sheridan Road is getting new sidewalks, too.
- **Barking dogs** have been more frequently reported. A new County Noise Ordinance will bring relief to this noise violation. Visit merryhills.com for more information.
- **Blinking Porch Lights:** Soon a blinking porch light will be one sign of an expanded crime prevention effort by DeKalb County law enforcement agencies and advocates for the county's senior adults. The emergency beacon light is a special bulb that will blink continuously after it is toggled on and off twice. The intent is to allow senior citizens, who have called 911, to make it easier for emergency personnel to find their house.
- **Operation Fresh Start:** This event is a community beautification campaign will be held Saturday, May 17, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00. Keep DeKalb Beautiful organization will provide supplies.
- **Dirty Water:** A portion of Merry Lane recently experienced several days of "dirty water." Visit merryhills.com to learn how to return your water back to a safe water supply and to perform maintenance to protect your hot water heater.
- **Rat Infestations:** Visit merryhills.com for more detailed information on discouraging rat infestations.

NEW MERRY HILLS NEIGHBORS

Amy & Todd Brown and 5-month-old Hannah
David Bowen

From Weatherstone Townhomes –
Jonathan Sachs
Alyssa & Shean Parr

MARRIAGES

Bess Bagwell & Shawn Allen
Mellissa Matthews & Tim Walker

BABIES

Joan & Harry Ankeny, formerly of Merry Lane, a son. Harry designed our logo and served as our first MHHA vice president.
Michele & Mitchell Bolga, a son, Ben, born one year ago on April 1, 2002.
Hannah & Steven Wiggins, a son

CONDOLENCES

Arden Zinn lost her mother, Karola Schwarcz, who was 94.

NEW MHHA MEMBERS

Welcome to all new members!

Jim Kuske
Zahava Kurland
Juana & Apolinar Alzaga
Amy & Gilbert Zapatka
Gail & Phil Silverman
Jean Bellisard
Stephanie & Sean Boswell
Dawn & Bill Bell
David Bowen
Amy & Todd Brown

From Weatherstone Townhomes –
Rod Gary
Pam & Aidan Connolly
Ariana & Leroy Fass

MERRY HILLS HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS

SECTION REPRESENTATIVES

Your section representative is your neighborhood contact for any comments or problems.

Section # 1: 1252-1330 Merry Lane, 1235 Christmas Ln., 2002-2066 LaVista Road & 2178 LaVista Rd

Representative: Steve Bighouse
section1rep@merryhills.com

Section # 2: 1331-1413 Merry Lane, 2771-2801 North Druid Hills Road

Representative: Tom Ingram
section2rep@merryhills.com

Section # 3: 1246-1341 Christmas Lane, 1724 and 1725 Pine Tree Circle

Representative: Arlene Gross
section3rep@merryhills.com

Section # 4: 1348-1448 Christmas Lane

Representative: Traci Lanford
section4rep@merryhills.com

Section # 5: 1722-1755 Reindeer Drive, 1708-1798 Holly Lane

Representative: Shirley Brickman
section5rep@merryhills.com

Section # 6: 1260-1402 Holly Lane

Representative: Harriet Koonin
section6rep@merryhills.com

Section # 7: 1406-1519 Holly Lane, 2487-2515 North Druid Hills Road

Representative: Flo Wolf
section7rep@merryhills.com

Section # 8: Weatherstone Townhomes

Representative: Rod Gary
section8rep@merryhills.com

SPECIAL THANKS ...

Flags were distributed by MHHA with the help of the Section Representatives and our "Flagman" Larry Gilger. Channel 46 reported on our flags and showed them on Merry Lane. If you need a replacement, contact Larry.

OFFICERS

President: Linda Billingsley
president@merryhills.com

Vice President: Val Schlorff
vicepresident@merryhills.com

Secretary: Sally Rosenberg
secretary@merryhills.com

Treasurer: Pat Jenkins
treasurer@merryhills.com

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COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Zoning: Margarete Tigges
zoning@merryhills.com

Neighborhood Watch:
Rosa Landers
neighborhoodwatch@merryhills.com

Neighborhood Watch Assistant:
Sarah Duwell
neighborhoodwatch@merryhills.com

E-mail Administrator:
Steve Jenkins
mailinglist@merryhills.com

Newsletter: Lauri Trainor
newsletter@merryhills.com

Webmaster: Flo Wolf
webmaster@merryhills.com

Flagman: Larry Gilger
flagman@merryhills.com

Have an item for the MHHA Newsletter? E-mail to newsletter@merryhills.com by July 1.

GARBAGE AND YARDWASTE SCHEDULE

Monday, May 26, Memorial Day: Tuesday/Friday pick-up will be Wednesday/Friday. No change for yardwaste pick-up.

SPEEDING!

Speeding continues to be a problem within Merry Hills. Neighborhood residents are some of the worst offenders. Please slow down! Resident safety is at stake!