



Virginia-Highland VOICE

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A publication of the Virginia-Highland Civic Association

August 1998

SUMMERFEST '98 REPORT

It's history, folks. The 16th Annual Virginia-Highland Summerfest is a wrap. It was, to coin a phrase, "the best ever". With a record turnout, a record number of artists (one in particular), better sponsorship, hard working volunteers, wonderful neighbors, and Chamber of Commerce weather, the 1998 VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND SUMMERFEST was an event unlike any other Intown event ever held in Atlanta. No question about it, SUMMERFEST has taken a quantum leap in image and respect from the metro Atlanta community. Tom Houck said, "...the burbs came to Virginia-Highland". The press gave rave reviews as did many of our visitors and neighbors. If you missed the festival but read the July issue of 30306, you got a good look at the event. I can't thank the staff of 30306 enough for their unqualified support of SUMMERFEST. As a result of all this effort, the Virginia-Highland Civic Association has enhanced its financial position - one that will provide more financial resources for its grant program.

The festival wasn't without problems. Next year, a volunteer will monitor the Virginia-Highland hot-line and website to respond to the plethora of calls and questions that come in the last days prior to and during that busy weekend. A lot of "770" people called for directions and had specific questions about the events that occurred at the festival. Thankfully, there were no harmful incidents, no ill-behaved masses, and the infrastructure worked very well. We had only one lost parent looking for his kids, and we survived the near panic when we ran out of beer cups. That won't happen again.

To accommodate the crowds expected for next year, the food and beverage area will be altered slightly to alleviate some of the crowding. More electrical power will be available to accommodate some of the crafts persons. And, yes, there will be portable restroom facilities near the volleyball area. More and better signage is being designed for our visitors. Parking and traffic control will be improved

by closing off some additional streets from the general public, so residents can get in and out of their streets more easily. A special effort was made to caution our visitors not to park illegally or face the consequences. Unfortunately, quite a few visitors inconvenienced the neighborhood by illegally parking their cars on medians and in other "No Parking Anytime" and "Tow Away Zone" spaces. They paid the price. MARTA was touted as the smart way to get here and route numbers were printed in the media. Next year I hope that we can get MARTA to "recognize" this event by running shuttles from the 10th Street station.

I couldn't end this report without thanking our volunteer committee people: Kathy Barkley and Jennifer Newman, Artists Market; John Askew, Cash Management; David Bass, music; Andrea Casson, T-Shirts; Jerry Dubner, 5-K road race and Tot-Trot; Mike Bendiger, Neighborhood Flyers; Bob Jaric, Treasurer; Nena Peltin, Kidsfest; and Steve Peltin, Volunteers. We are sorry to note that Steve and Nena Peltin are moving to Seattle, and Jerry Dubner has decided to "retire" after 6 years of chairing the road race. New faces for these positions are in the works. Some people have already expressed an interest in filling these positions, but additional folks are needed as co-chairs or as back-ups. If you're interested in being a part of this event, please call me via the Virginia-Highland Hot-Line, 404-222-8244, and leave me a message on the "SUMMERFEST General Information" extension.

My thanks also go to all the sponsors, major and minor. Without them this festival could not have been a financial success. These include Red Hook Beer, Coca-Cola Enterprises, WZGC-Z-93 Radio, Harvest Restaurant, Creative Loafing, Dish Restaurant, Mindspring, Chrysler Motors, Hyundai Automobiles, Moon Communications, Aqua Sun Vacations, Atlanta Journal, Dr. Anthony Biz DC, AAA South Motor Club, Pumpcorn, American Express Investments, Atlanta Orthotics, Toco Hills Kroger Store, Sage Hill Harris Teeter, Harry's Farmer's Market, Toco Hills Bagel Palace, and The Great Frame Up.

Obviously SUMMERFEST would not be a success without the wonderful Virginia-Highland neighborhood. I cannot tell you how many compliments we received from our visitors on the warm welcome they received from the residents of this neighborhood. No doubt about it, you all make this "The Best Living In Town".

ANNUAL MEETING

Where: Inman Middle School Auditorium

When: September 2, 1998, 7:30 p.m.

BE THERE!

JOIN THE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

**Dues are just \$10 per year!
You get a subscription to The Voice.**

If you did not receive this newsletter through the mail, then you are not a dues-paying member. Call 404-222-8244, listen for "membership," leave your name and address and we will send you an application. Or send \$10 to P.O. Box 8401, Station F, Atlanta, GA 31106, with your name, address and phone number.

ON-LINE ACCESS IS HERE!

The Va-Highland Civic Association is on-line! To access, simply go to www.accessatlanta.com, click on the "Community" and then go to "Local groups on Line". Scroll to "Neighborhoods" and click on "Virginia-Highland Civic Association." We have just begun with this effort so keep your eye out for new information. It's there, it's available, and we're looking forward to hearing from our neighbors.

TREE NEWS THE ATLANTA TREE ORDINANCE

In 1995 I wrote about the then new tree law in Atlanta. Since that time many new people have moved into the neighborhood and are unfamiliar with this ordinance. Unfortunately, people often move into a house and one of the first things they do is cut down a tree. They are very surprised to find out they have violated the law!

The reason for the city ordinance is obvious. We need every tree to help reduce pollution and make the city cooler. The main purpose of the law is to protect Atlanta's tree canopy which has been seriously weakened by the recent tornadoes and constant death of our old trees. Here is a brief review of the ordinance and how to get a permit if you want to cut down a tree on your property.

All trees that are at least 6" in diameter when measured at chest height, or 4.5 feet, are protected. No tree 6" or larger can be cut down by either an individual landowner or a commercial tree service or landscaper without a permit. The permit is free and can be obtained at City Hall East, 645 Ponce de Leon Ave. If the permit is granted another tree or several trees must be replanted to replace the tree that is removed. The replacement trees must be shade trees such as oak, maple, sycamore, or cypress. They cannot be small understory trees such as dogwoods or crepe myrtles.

The ordinance allows a landowner to cut down a single tree if it is declared a hazard by the City Arborist. A hazard tree is one that is either dead or potentially dangerous.

If you see someone cutting down a tree of the size described above, ask to see a permit. If the person does not have a permit and it is during business hours, call the City Arborist, Frank Mobley, at 404-817-6814. If the tree is being cut down after hours or on the weekend, call the police. They have been instructed to enforce the tree ordinance and stop the cutting.

The fine for cutting down a tree without a permit is \$1,000 and replacement. The City Arborist takes violators to court as well as supervises replanting. If you have new neighbors, let them know about this ordinance. It is really difficult to ever replace large trees!

LATE SUMMER HELP FOR TREES! Mulch your trees to protect against weeds (and weed-eaters), maintain the moisture, and moderate the temperature around the tree. Use pine straw, chopped bark or other mulches. If you water your trees, water deeply and periodically rather than with frequent, shallow sprinklings.

FALL PLANTING WILL BEGIN! The VHCA pays for tree plantings in the right of way in an effort to help create a pleasant, cool walking atmosphere and cut down pollution. If you are interested in a tree(s) for your right of way, fill out the coupon below and send it to Stephanie Coffin, 1021 Highland View, Atlanta 30306. I will contact you to discuss the trees available and work out a time to install them.

Stephanie Coffin
Chair, Parks Committee

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

On Wednesday, September 2, 1998, at 7:30 p.m., at the Inman Middle School Auditorium, the Virginia Highland Civic Association will hold its annual meeting and election of Board of Directors. During this meeting individuals in our community who truly stood out in the past year will be recognized. We will also be distributing half the proceeds from Summerfest back out into our community. Highlights of the past year will be remembered. Most important, there will be an election of the Board of Directors.

Before a new Board is elected, I would like to thank the present Board members for all their hard work in the past year. Each person on the Board put in hours and hours of work toward this neighborhood. When you see them, say "thank you."

This is my last term as president. The past two years have been fun, hard, enlightening, time consuming and too many other things to describe. Thank you all for your support.

Amy Waterman
President

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TRAFFIC AND PUBLIC SAFETY

You may have noticed a few new traffic signs around the neighborhood. For example, across from Murphy's on the triangle there are some "Tow Away - No Parking" signs. These are due in large part to the efforts of Arnold Gross. In early June, Arnold had a curbside meeting with Guy Rousseau, Principal Traffic Engineer for the City of Atlanta, regarding the traffic situation in Virginia-Highland. They discussed the need for various signs and lights including a flashing 3-way red light at Virginia Avenue and Barnett to facilitate crossing for pedestrians, particularly Inman School students.

The response from Mr. Rousseau has been less than satisfactory. Only after a series of letters including one to City Councilperson, Cathy Woolard, have any signs whatsoever gone up. Seventeen issues were raised by Arnold and almost none of them has been addressed. Arnold reports that he has only just begun. If you are interested in joining him in improving the traffic and parking situation in the neighborhood, call the neighborhood hotline and leave your name and number. That's 404-222-8244. Get involved!

DONATIONS NEEDED

Grady High School needs golf clubs, balls, tees, and bags for its new boys and girls golf team. Contact Phil Mosier 404-373-7537.

DOES YOUR STREET NEED BETTER LIGHTING?

The City of Atlanta, in conjunction with Georgia Power Co., is interested in finding dark areas on your street to light. They are looking not just for burned out existing lights, but also for places where new lights need to be installed. No alley or private drive lighting will be provided. If you know of areas on streets in our neighborhood that need lighting, please call Randie Siegel at (404) 872-1765 to advise and a list will be compiled and provided to the City and Georgia Power.

Call Ruthie the Realtor for Residential Real Estate Sales Ruthie Penn-David



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SOMEONE TO SPEAK FOR FEET

If you enjoy walking in Virginia Highland but find crossing the street difficult, you're not alone. In 1997, a national non-profit group ranked the Atlanta region as the nation's third most dangerous place to walk. In 1998, *Reader's Digest* said drivers here were the fifth worst in the country.

Walkers in Virginia-Highland have an energetic ally in Pedestrians Educating Drivers on Safety (PEDS), a grass roots advocacy group that is working to make Atlanta a pedestrian-friendly city. Brian Karpinski, for example, a PEDS member and recent Virginia-Highland resident, rides MARTA to work everyday and loves the neighborhood's pedestrian scale. Cars parked on sidewalks and motorists barging through crosswalks generated different feelings. Brian called the Atlanta Police and wrote to Major Carlos Banda, requesting that they make protecting pedestrians a top priority. After hearing from Mayor Campbell, Deputy Chief B.J. Rocker investigated the issue and assigned the Bicycle Patrol and Mini-Motorcycles as extra patrols in Virginia Highland to enforce traffic laws relating to pedestrians. Bill Dunkley, another Virginia Highland resident, has helped out with numerous letters regarding upcoming legislation on transportation funding decisions.

PEDS cannot succeed without more grass roots community involvement. If you are interested in getting involved, see our web site, www.peds.org, and our e-mail is PEDSATL@aol.com, or call 404-873-5777.

By Sally Flocks

THANKS and KUDOS

To Amy Waterman for two excellent years as VHCA President.

To Arnold Gross for a fantastic Summerfest.

To Jerry Riemer for his help with The Voice.

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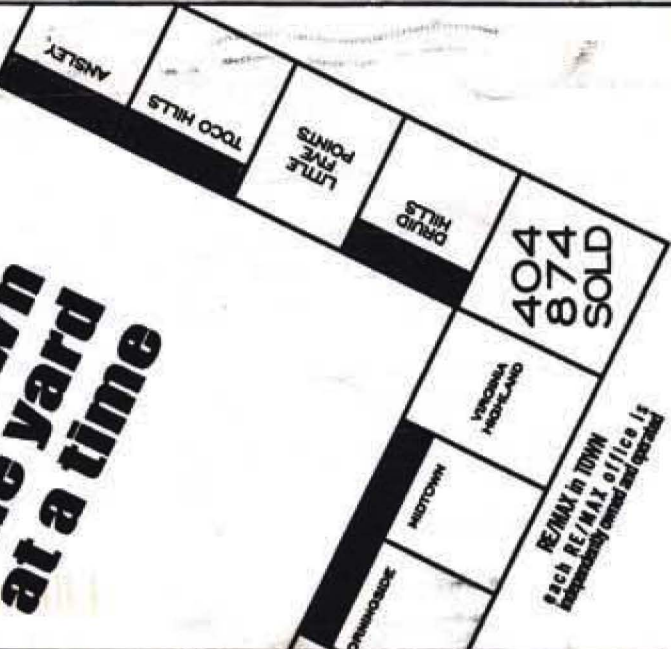
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