

VOICE

VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND

August, 1991

The Taming of Piedmont Park

For residents on Park Drive, Orme Circle and Elmwood Drive, Piedmont Park can be a challenging neighbor. Recently, a group of residents met with a member of the Piedmont Park Conservancy to air complaints about traffic and illegal activities along the park's perimeter.

Speeding and cruising traffic are perennial problems for residents during major events at the Park. Because the Park Drive entrance is unlocked at night and rather secluded, there is a continuing problem with prostitution and drug dealing.

Millard Woods, a resident and member of the Conservancy, agreed to write a letter to City Council representative Mary Davis, proposing the following solutions:

1. A police officer should be stationed at the booth at the Park Drive entrance.
2. The gate at Park Drive should be locked each night.
3. Speed bumps should be placed on Orme Circle, Park and Elmwood.
4. The intersection of Park and Elmwood should be a four-way stop.
5. The Atlanta Arts Festival should be used as a model for how major events at the Park should be handled.

These proposals would require formal study before an ordinance could be passed. In addition, 70% of the area's residents must sign a petition agreeing to proposals before they can be implemented.

A restrictive parking proposal along Orme Circle, Elmwood, and Park has already been studied and passed, awaiting only the approval of residents. It restricts parking on these streets to two hours for any vehicle without a parking sticker. Each household will receive two stickers for residents' cars.

Piedmont Park's Combined Sewer Overflow Controversy - The Anatomy of Setback

I. E. Saporta, Architect, A.I.A.

Editor's Note: The Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) facility was approved by City Council to be built in the Park on 10th Street where it intersects Clear Creek. This structure is planned to be more than 40 feet above Tenth Street and hundreds of feet long. Neighborhoods have only been informed of these plans more than eight years after an engineering study recommended a site further north out of visual harm's way. The City faces significant fines if the facility is not built by the December 1993 deadline and cannot afford to change its plans now.

In the mid-70's, the City of Atlanta was asked by the State and Federal governments to comply with water quality standards. In 1976, Stanley Consultants, Inc. was employed by the City to evaluate the location of A Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO). The final document was submitted July 31, 1981. Volume 3 of the document is concerned with the City's CSO facilities. This examines two alternative locations along Clear Creek, both of which are within Piedmont Park. The number one location is just north of the Park Drive Bridge. Number two was on Tenth Street on the park's southern border.

Many aspects of each location were carefully evaluated: soil, engineering, historical, archeological, environmental and economic impact. The report strongly recommended Site 1 based on these

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evaluations. This report also recommended further historical and archeological studies as well as consultations with those communities that were most affected.

Based upon the Stanley Report recommendations, the Bureau of Pollution Control (as it was then called) started planning on Site 1. Objections to this site were received by the City's Parks Department (too many trees would have to be removed) and the Pollution Control Bureau then started planning on Site 2.

This was done without further environmental impact investigation and without any community notification until nearly nine years later, when the plans for the CSO were so far advanced that the citizens could not effectively have any impact.

There are two extreme kinds of planning:

1. You prepare plans and then try to convince people or manipulate people to fit into your plans.
2. You plan with people all the way from initial concepts through final plans with careful cost-benefits analysis and all-important environmental impact consideration.

The kind of planning for the CSO was closer to the first than to the second kind. At this late date, when the City says it faces heavy fines for tardy compliance with State and Federal regulation, both citizens and their respective council persons are asked to make decisions "under the gun" based on expediency rather than on sound judgement.

We have as an example of better planning the preparation of a Master Plan for Piedmont Park in 1982 and 1983. During his first term, Mayor Maynard Jackson appointed a Piedmont Park Task Force representing the affected neighborhoods and professionals from all parts of the City. The Task Force met for many months to analyze needs and resources of the Park and to determine goals and priorities. Subsequently, a landscape architect was employed to formalize these goals and prepare a Master Plan for the Park. This plan was adopted by City Council and approved by Mayor Jackson in February 1983.

One of the stipulations of this Master Plan was that any major variance of the Master Plan requires notification of the public. As far as we can judge, the CSO decision is a major variance and the citizens have not been informed of this major variance from the Master Plan.

On July 15, 1991, the City Council saw fit to approve the catastrophic plans proposed by the City's Water and Pollution Control Committee. These plans would cause permanent and irreparable environmental damage to the park and adversely affect the neighborhoods.

In spite of all engineering and environmental recommendations, economic considerations, and the objections of the affected neighborhoods and professional societies, the Water and Pollution Control Department has insisted on pursuing a site that was strongly and clearly not recommended by the Stanley Consultants report.

This department has been aware of the CSO requirements for fifteen years -- the engineering and environmental report dates from July 1981. Why were the neighborhoods not brought into this decision making process earlier? Instead, only when the plans were 90% finished and no neighborhood response could have any meaningful effect, were the plans presented to the community.

Under the threat of hefty fines by the Georgia EPA, the Atlanta City Council voted for the CSO project as presented by the Water and Pollution Control Department. Yet this project, if built, would be an aesthetic disaster. It would stand as a monument to departmental indifference, to a lack of sensitivity to beauty, and to a lack of responsiveness to citizen's demands.

We should regard the City Council vote of July 15 as a temporary setback and not as a defeat, especially since important information was not in the hands of the members of our City Council when they voted. I am confident that if all friends of the Park, together with our responsible and responsive members of City Council, we can prevail upon the State authorities to grant the City a delay long enough to rework the plans.



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Letter to the Editor

The Virginia-Highland Civic Association (VHCA) received many letters, telephone calls, and comments concerning Summerfest. This one letter to the President of the VHCA best sums up the responses received:

Dear Mr. Sears:

As interested residents of Virginia-Highland, we are writing in cautious support of the Virginia-Highland Summerfest.

We have experienced vandalism each festival year...broken fence pickets...beer bottles in our yard...people urinating against the side of our house. Despite this, we feel that Summerfest is a valuable contribution to the neighborhood and strongly feel that the festival should continue. Last year was notable for a well organized art show and very extensive arrangements for police and sanitation coverage (although a Sunday morning clean-up of the fullest trash cans would have helped).

We see some specific improvements to recommend: We believe that ending street liquor sales around 6:00 PM on Saturday would be beneficial. Given the problems cited by residents along Virginia (which we sympathize with) we believe that if all persons along Virginia do not bless the closing of their street then the art show should be moved to John Howell Park and Inman Middle school and the neighborhood association should bear the cost of cleanup and restoration.

With these caveats, we hope that Summerfest continues to occur. We believe that it is a vibrant expression of our neighborhood. And, although we enjoy neither the feeling of siege during that weekend nor the cleanup and repair that follow, we think that it is an important part of maintaining the continued attractiveness of our neighborhood. We have seen objections that Summerfest only enriches V-H merchants at the cost of citizens. We, however, feel that the merchants are an important part of the neighborhood's attraction and welcome events that improve their chances of survival.

We don't enjoy "Drunkfest." However, if we did not want any visitors to our neighborhood, we would have moved to Dunwoody or some other community for the mentally and socially dead. Instead, we live in a vibrant, multi-faceted, neighborhood that is, and should always be, open to a rich multi-cultural influence and that offers itself to Atlanta as an example of quality in-town living.

We urge you to support the continued but somewhat controlled existence of the Summerfest.

Ruthie Penn-David

Tom Penn-David

(North Highland Address)

Virginia-Highland Civic Association - Calendar of Events

September

3	Recycling Pickup
4	VHCA General Meeting
7	Adopt A Highway Clean Up
16	NPU-F Meeting
25	Zoning Meeting

October

2	VHCA General Meeting
14	Recycling Pickup
15	Voice Deadline-Articles/Ads
21	NPU-F Meeting
30	Zoning Meeting

November

6	VHCA General Meeting
11	Recycling Pickup
18	NPU-F Meeting
27	Zoning Meeting

All meetings are open to the public. Anyone who wishes to discuss a topic of interest to the neighborhood with the Board should call ahead to get on the agenda. Otherwise, your concern may not get all the attention it deserves. Call 876-8970.

Note: The VHCA General Meetings and Zoning Meetings are held at the Ponce de Leon Branch Library at 7:30 PM. The NPU-F Meetings are held at the Morningside Presbyterian Church at 7:30 PM.

A Day in the Life of Orme Park

By Vicky Favorite and Yvette Weatherly

The seven acres that comprise Orme Park, bordered on all sides by Brookridge Drive, were purchased in April 1924. Because the creek and ravine rendered the land unsuitable for housing development, the parcel was given to the city for use as a park.



Katherine Bernhart, 5, swings in Orme Park

some residents start their days by jogging around the perimeter while others stroll through the park sipping coffee. And, of course, dogs are being walked.

Midday, the mail carrier, office workers, moms, pre-schoolers, and local day-care groups stop by for lunch. Children work off their excess energy on rustic wooden playground equipment while adults conserve theirs on benches nearby.

In late afternoon, the park sits empty after workers return to their jobs and children leave for their naps. In the evening, the park comes to life again with moms, dads, and children playing. Runners work off the day, as do members of the Virginia-Highland Track Club every Wednesday. And, of course, dogs are being walked.

Orme Park is a neighborhood retreat with a little something for everyone. Children love the playground, dogs love the creek, and adults love the shade. Everyone can enjoy the nature trail which serves as a living laboratory for budding young students as well as a quiet place for harried couples to share a romantic stroll. It's also a great place to meet neighbors, make friends, and get the local gossip. See you at the park.

The City Parks Department indicates that the 1924 valuation of the land was a mere \$5,000.

Since then, Orme Park has served Virginia-Highland residents in a variety of ways. It is a different park at different times of the day. Early in the morning,

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Andrew Wicker, 14 mos. old, resident of
Highland View, enjoying Orme Park

Summerfest Opinion - Residents and Businesses Speak Out

"We gained nothing from this experience and will not support such events again."

- A Virginia Avenue resident

"It was enchanting to wake up Saturday morning and see tents going up in front of my house."

- Another Virginia Avenue resident

"On a normal weekend, I do \$1,000 in walk-in business. During Summerfest I didn't make \$50."

- A North Highland retail business owner

"Summerfest was Christmas in June. We really needed this boost during the slow time of the year."

- Another North Highland retail business owner

This is a sample from the many letters, phone calls, and comments heard by the Virginia-Highland Civic Association (VHCA). Some residents enjoyed this commercially sponsored and organized event, while others feel it serves the businesses only. Likewise, there were businesses that got no benefit from Summerfest but only headaches. There is support and opposition from both businesses and residents.


This marks the first time in many years that the VHCA has sponsored activities during Summerfest. The VHCA organized



Curious shoppers stroll along tent-lined Virginia Avenue at Summerfest '91

the Fun Run and children's activities in John Howell Park. While most of the comments that the VHCA has heard have been positive, this does not mean that Summerfest was without problems.

About 20 residents and business owners came to speak their minds at the July general meeting of the VHCA. Most of the residents lived on Virginia and were there to complain about promises made and not kept. The Artists' Market closed Virginia between Barnett and North Highland for the entire weekend. Not all residents received notice. Many that did



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were notified late. Residents were promised reserved parking on the side streets but this did not happen. Many of them suggested that the Artists' Market, if there is one next year, should be moved away from homes.

Other problems mentioned included litter, loud music, and lack of parking. All these complaints raised a common question: Is the current format of Summerfest appropriate given its objective of promoting Virginia-Highland? Do loud music, piles of stinking garbage, and cars parked on Lanier Boulevard's islands make people want to shop and live here?

Almost everyone the VHCA discussed this with has agreed that the neighborhood needs some kind of festival. The disagreement arises over whether it should be just for the Virginia-Highland community or promoted to the whole metro area. It is interesting to note that both supporters and non-supporters use the same argument--that Summerfest makes people want/not want to come back. Certainly the truth lies in between.



Checking out the scenery at Summerfest '91. Qué pasa, baby?

Adopted Highway "Ponce" Needs Your Help

Ponce de Leon Avenue has been adopted by four intown groups as part of the National Adopt-a-Highway Campaign. Under the agreement, the two-mile stretch of Ponce from West Peachtree Street to the Decatur city limit at Clifton Road will receive a periodic sprucing up by concerned neighbors armed with garbage bags.

The participating civic associations will take turns at coordinating the two-mile sweeps, representing Poncey-Highland on July 27, Virginia-Highland on September 7, Druid Hills on November 9, and Midtown in January.

The State Department of Transportation (DOT) will provide garbage bags, orange safety vests, and trash disposal. "It's a small role for the state," says Poncey-Highland's president E.L. Taylor, "but with all the past conflicts between DOT and the civic associations, this is a rare opportunity to join together in a positive effort."

A good turn-out of neighbors for these sweeps will improve the civic associations' credibility and influence in future matters concerning DOT. So why not volunteer for September 7th? To add your name to the list or get more information, call Jett Marks at 874-7114.



Adopt-A-Highway sign on Ponce de Leon Street, showing Ponce Task Force support.

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Moving Right Along with Park Plans

By Jerry Bright

At Summerfest we earned approximately \$1,800 for the John Howell Park development fund. Very special thanks go to Warren Bruno for providing us with this money-making vehicle. Additional thanks go to Rick Porter, Stan Petoski, John Harwell, John Skelton, Hatcher Johnson, Ron Wilcox, Bill Surratt, Maurice Helms, Jimmy Sacco, Judy Goldstein, and Steve and Lisa Barnham.

Construction drawings for the park should be completed by October. All material selection and design decisions will be made by then, so please attend the upcoming civic association meetings to give your input. Fund raising is the next step. The Living Aids Memorial Park (LAMP) organization has some creative fund raising ideas. As details become available, they will be presented at the monthly civic association meetings.

Three Board seats are now available if you would like to play a role in the development of John Howell Park. In particular, we need individuals with backgrounds in accounting/finance, construction, or marketing. This is a real opportunity to participate in the largest public project in the history of our neighborhood. Be part of the process that gives Virginia-Highland "the Best Living Intown."

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Schools Update

Morningside Elementary

It was a busy spring for Morningside Elementary. It had a very successful auction, raising over \$4,000. The Book-a-Thon brought in pledges of over \$5,000 to provide World Books and other classroom reference materials. Many students went out of town for field trips. The Young Astronauts Club visited the Museum of Aviation in Warner Robins. The 4th and 5th grade challenge students studied oceanography at Jekyll Island and the 5th graders spent two days in Chattanooga.

All students participated in the Student Showcase where Science Fair projects, art, original books, and other classroom projects were on display. Super Kid's Day showed off everyone's physical education skills during two days of great fun. While the building is quiet for the summer, plans are underway for next year. Thanks to all our community volunteers for their continuing support.

Inman Middle School

Inman wishes to express sincere gratitude to the community for its support. New officers for the 1991-92 school year are: President, Barbara Washington; VP (parent workshops), Zee Bradford-Eaton; VP (fund raising), Gloria Lockhart; Secretary, Ginger Fridlin; and Co-Treasurers, Bo and Cathy Bradshaw.

The Southern Company has joined the Midtown Business Association in adopting Inman School. The school's major fund raising event, Spring Fling, was a success as was the last PTA meeting, the "Who am I" student showcase.

Grady High School

Grady staff and students have had an exciting and quite eventful year. As a result of the reorganization implemented by the Atlanta School Board, Grady's principal, Dr. Thomas Adger, was promoted to Divisional Administrator. The new principal is Dr. Vincent Murray.

Students at Grady continued to garner many awards. One of the most prestigious honors is that of being chosen for the Georgia Governor's Honors Program. Seventeen juniors and seniors received Certificates of Merit for their photographic essays in the Atlanta Public Schools' Media Festival. Following regional competition, eleven students'

works were chosen for the Georgia Media Festival. Nine students received Certificates of Merit.

In the annual Dartmouth/Andover Math Competition, Grady's Junior Team won first place in the Atlanta Public Schools. Grady's newspaper, The Southerner, has again won first place for general excellence at the Georgia Press Association Awards. The Unmasking, Grady's literary magazine, placed second in the state. The Orator, the school's yearbook, won the Achievement Award.

Special congratulations go to the 1990-91 graduating class. Many of these students won acceptances to outstanding colleges and universities.

The Grady PTSA has elected officers for the 1991-92 school year. They are: Co-Presidents, Faye Johnson and Bruce Gaunt; Vice-President, Bert Skellie; Secretary, Richard Pfleger; and Treasurer, Joe Vivona. In addition, there are many committee members and committee chairs.

To find out more about Grady, please call the school office at 853-4000.



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What A Weekend! Summerfest '91

Virginia-Highland was blessed with a perfectly gorgeous summer day on Saturday, June 8. That was partially responsible for a large turnout at Summerfest '91.

Summerfest was originally the brainchild of Warren Bruno, owner of Atkins Park Bar and Grill. He has been its main sponsor since the festival's beginning seven years ago. It has since grown to include the Fun Run, an arts festival benefiting Easter Seals, children's activities at John Howell Park, and a growing appreciation of our popular intown neighborhood.

None of this would be possible if not for the Virginia-Highland Civic Association and participating shop and restaurant owners. In the past, Summerfest was promoted as an avenue for increased visibility, but nowadays that's hardly necessary. Thus, the children's activities were added to broaden the festival to include families. And boy, were they fun, varied and a great success!

Thanks to the organizing committee for the children's activities: Sherry Conger, chairperson, Burn Sears, Katherine Ballou, Betsy Carson, Mary Chesin, Swan McKnight, Linda Guthrie, Darlene Moulder and Rob & Jeni Evans. Instrumental in our success were the many volunteers at John Howell Park and corporate sponsors that donated goods and services: Highland Hardware, Briarcliff Paints, the Pre-School at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church, Intown Hardware, Babes in Highland, Kroger, Georgia Baptist Hospital, Crawford Long Hospital and NORESCO Costume Company.

Thanks also to the race sponsors...Crystal Springs Water, Superior Foods, Discount Travel of Midtown, the YWCA, Burn and Betsy Sears for the classy race signage, Ed Neal for his truck and, of course, the race volunteers themselves.

The race results for 176 adult and 17 child participants were:

Overall Male	Felix Martinez 16:15
Master Male	Lee Fidler n/a
Adult Female	Meg Grantham 18:55
Master Female	Susan Muntzing 26:15
Girls	Sarah Domy 26:08
Boys	Nicolas Rohrer 26:31

Let's do it again next year. We received over \$2100 for the Virginia-Highland Civic Association from the John Howell Park activities, Fun Run Race and T-shirt sales!!



*Burn Sears
and Sherry
Conger*

*Warren Bruno
with balloonists*



*Look Ma,
fake blood!*

*Pony rides at
the children's
area*

Doing Your Share: Recycling Is So Easy in Virginia-Highland

By Nan Hunter



Over in Morningside, they're just getting what we've had for more than a year in our neighborhood—curbside recycling. Unfortunately, too few of us are taking advantage of this convenient, earth-saving service. Although we have more than 3,000 homes in Virginia-Highland, only about 100 families are participating in the recycling program.

FACT: Americans use enough aluminum to rebuild the entire U.S. commercial air fleet every 3 months. The energy saved by recycling one can will burn a 100-watt light bulb for 3 1/2 hours.

Atlanta's landfills will be full in several years. It's our responsibility to stop regarding recyclables as "garbage." Glass, aluminum cans, and newspapers are completely recyclable. You can avoid plastic as much as possible and recycle what you do use. Look on the bottom of plastic containers. Those marked #1 or 2 can be recycled at Piedmont Park by placing them in bins in the Park Drive entrance parking lot. They will be reprocessed into park benches.

FACT: Glass never disintegrates, but it can be recycled at a 35% energy savings over making new glass.

Here are a few recycling tips to augment our curbside pick-up:

1. Sandy Springs Recycling Center will take your used motor oil.
2. Redi-Print on Cheshire Bridge Road stocks recycled paper for use in stationery, newsletters, etc.
3. U.S. Recovery will pick up computer paper, ledgers and other business paper, as well as glass and aluminum. Call 627-6930 to find out the particulars for starting a recycling program in your office.

Finally, join us in our curbside pick-up program. It costs only \$4 for four months. (Send to Nan Hunter, 785 Adair Avenue). Why not try it and see how easy it is? The next pick-up dates are September 3, October 14, November 11 and December 9. Thank you to all of you who are doing your share for our Earth.



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Carefree Vacations

By Maggie Barton

How would you like to take a vacation and NOT be nicked and dined to death? The ultimate way to relax is an all-inclusive vacation in which everything is prepaid before you leave--all meals, drinks, taxes, tips, activities, and excursions. There are no hassles, no tipping, not a care in the world. Your biggest decision to make is what color drink to have or choosing between waterskiing and windsurfing.

The biggest myth concerning all-inclusive resorts is that they tend to be "campy." However, there are resorts to fit all kinds of budgets and situations -- singles, couples and families -- spread out all over the Caribbean. Some cater to those who want gourmet dining while others focus on sporting activities. Family resorts include a full time nanny for even the smallest children, video games, circus workshops, pizza parties, scavenger hunts.

The granddaddy of the all-inclusive vacation is 40-year old Club Med. It makes even Bora Bora affordable! Another great new concept introduced by Superclubs Resorts in Jamaica is having your wedding at a resort. All costs are covered, even a video to take home. With the escalating cost of weddings today, many couples are considering this as a romantic alternative to the hassles and expense of a large wedding.

one murder suspect lives in Virginia-Highlands . . . anyone you know?

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**September Program Schedule
Ponce de Leon Branch
Atlanta-Fulton
Public Library**



Program	Age Group	Dates/Time
TUESDAYS		
Time for Two's	2-year olds with adult	Sept. 17 at 10 am
WEDNESDAYS		
Storytime	Ages 3-Kindergarten	Sept. 11, 18, and 25; 10 am and 3:30 pm
Sleepytime	Ages 3-Kindergarten	Sept 11, 18, and 25 at 7 pm

PLEASE NOTE: Reservations are required for groups for all activities.

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Library Forced to Reduce Hours, Services

By Kathy Couch

Budget shortfalls are occurring everywhere you look. And unfortunately the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library is part of this trend.

The most obvious change is the cut-back in hours throughout the system (see box). This is not directly due to the current budget reduction, but is part of a longer term problem. For example, when the Ponce de Leon branch opened its doors 18 months ago, it was already understaffed. Since then, as employees left or were transferred, their positions were abolished. Circulation has increased by more than 50% while staffing has drastically fallen. Our shorthanded librarians do the best they can, but they cannot staff the library as many hours as before.

Another system-wide change is the elimination of postal reserve books. You can no longer fill out a postcard to reserve a popular book. However, from any branch you can still request a book which will be sent if it is on the shelf.

Budgets for new book acquisitions have also been cut. Because our branch is considered a "popular reading library," it will still receive some additional new books this year. However, the number of new titles will not be as extensive as in the past.

The budget cutback was mandated by the Fulton County Commission, forcing the library board to make the hard decisions mentioned above. If you are unhappy with the result, write to our county commissioners. Your letter should address the budget reduction itself, rather than the specific measures taken to implement it.

New Hours at Ponce de Leon Branch

Sunday	Closed
Monday	10 am to 8 pm
Tuesday	10 am to 6 pm
Wednesday	10 am to 8 pm
Thursday	10 am to 6 pm
Friday	10 am to 6 pm
Saturday	Noon to 4 pm

The New YWCA Offers Relief, Renewal

By Vicky Favorite

Feeling haggard? Stressed? In need of an intown oasis to help you cope?

Look no further than the YWCA at 957 N. Highland Avenue. The Northeast Intown YWCA has now been reopened after extensive renovation and you'll find plenty of relief within its bright, shiny new walls. You can put on your dance shoes and try out the new professional quality dance studio. Or energize to one of the many aerobic classes (high and low impact) on a new state-of-the-art suspended maple floor designed to go easy on your trick knee.

Also new is a fully equipped weight room with complete circuit training machines, free weights, bio-cycles, a Precor stair-climber and a cross-country ski machine. Trained personnel can get you started. Showers and locker rooms are nearby.

The new YWCA has more classrooms where you can learn about such varied subjects as how to start a small business, enrich your family life, or learn self-defense techniques. You can dream up your own class if you choose. Barbara Wiltse, the YWCA's director of programming, says "Serving the neighborhood's needs is important. If you and a couple of your friends have an idea for a class, let us know about it."

An expanded day care center now serves 65 children ranging in age from 6 weeks to 5 years. Although it has drop-in capabilities, parents are asked to call first at 892-3476. After-school programs for older children begin in the fall and are now open for registration.

All of these changes are part of Phase One of the YWCA's site improvements, primarily to the former church building. Previously located in Midtown, our branch is one of the oldest in Atlanta. It moved into the N. Highland building in 1988 and cohabited there with the Spanish Baptist Church for a year. Construction started on the former sanctuary building in early 1990, with completion and opening on June 3 of this year.

Barbara Black, the architect in charge from the firm of Surber and Barber, says that the new floorplan (nesting the second and third floors) allows each floor full exposure to the three-story arched windows. The windows, now paned in clear glass, create a light, airy feeling inside.

You can't miss the new entrance at the south side of the building. Just look for the bright green, yellow and purple entry off of the parking lot. The YWCA is open Monday through Friday, with some Saturday hours. Weekend hours will be expanded according to demand. The annual membership fee is \$35.



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by Iris



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Report to Taxpayers on Financial Issues Affecting the Atlanta Public Schools

By Joseph G. Martin, Jr., President

The Atlanta Board of Education is attempting to balance two very important but competing objectives. It has heard the concerns expressed by taxpayers across the city and is striving to be responsible in reducing costs wherever possible. At the same time, the Board must protect and strengthen the public schools for the well-being of the entire community.

Since property taxes account for approximately 58% of its general revenues, the school system benefits from growth in the tax digest, but it is also vulnerable to slowdowns in the rate of growth. Property taxes for school operations increased by 11% in FY88 and 10% in FY89, but only 4% in FY 90 and 2% in FY91.

A major factor in the stagnation of revenues from property taxes has been the steady decline in the collection rate from 93% in 1986 to 89% in 1990. Moreover, the increase in the homestead exemption for senior citizens will reduce the revenues from property taxes by \$1.3 million in the upcoming fiscal year.

Another factor affecting revenues for the Atlanta Public Schools is the sharp decline in funds from the State of Georgia next year, after several years of only slight increases. Although the cost of a Quality Basic Education (QBE) as calculated by the State has remained essentially the same in the upcoming fiscal year, the State has mandated a substantial increase in the Local Fair Share paid by Atlanta. As a result, the State's share of the cost for QBE will actually decrease by \$4.6 million or approximately 4%.

To cope with the slowdown in revenues, the Atlanta Board of Education has adopted a tentative budget for next year, which is actually \$5.5 million or 2% less than the budget for the current year. Cuts have been recommended in a number of programs, with no pay raises other than annual increments for eligible employees. If the mass reappraisal is rejected, the millage rate will have to be adjusted to the level that would produce the same amount of revenues when using the previous tax digest.



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Morningside PTA Fund Raiser Has Something For Everyone

By Ginny Connelly

With the beginning of school comes the Morningside Elementary School PTA's annual fund raiser, the Gift Wrap Sale. This year some exciting new products will be offered: stationery and gift wrap made from recycled paper as well as quality snack foods. This expanded selection offers something for everyone, including the chance to buy gifts as well as the wrapping.

It's not too soon to think about the holiday season, so here's a chance to get some shopping done and support your neighborhood school by ordering these quality products. All profits go toward instructional supplies, educational materials, and cultural enrichment for the students at Morningside; the sale ends on September 12. Last year more than \$24,000 was raised. For more information, call 876-7470.

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Home Alone: Security for Children with Working Parents

By Ken Lavine, co-chair of the VHCA Public Safety Committee and president of Pro-Tech Security Systems



Many children all over the city come home after school to an empty house, fending for themselves until parents return home from work. With proper planning for their safety, these children have a unique opportunity to develop self-reliance and a sense of confidence in themselves.

Planning for Security

Your children's safety is, of course, your primary concern. Teach children safety rules and emergency procedures carefully, but avoid frightening them. Make them feel like partners in planning for their own safety.

Here are some ways to do this:

1. Make a list of potential problem situations, such as missing the school bus. Talk about solutions with your children and decide what they should do in each situation. Post a list of these problems and solutions on the fridge.
2. In a potential emergency, decide when your children should call parents, a neighbor, or 911.
3. Role play with your children to show them how to handle emergency situations. In an emergency, it's important for them to respond quickly. Role playing helps them remember what to do even when they are very frightened or upset. Outline the steps they should take in each basic situation, including fire and burglary as well as strangers at the door and annoying phone calls. Practice with your children until everyone feels confident about how to respond.
4. If you have a monitored alarm system, your alarm company may be able to alert you or a neighbor if your children don't return home from school by a certain time. Your children must enter a special PIN number on the keypad to avoid triggering the report.

Sometimes children become frightened in a situation that isn't really an emergency. Make provisions for them to get in touch with a trusted adult whenever they feel afraid. You might organize a

block parent program on your street, where one person agrees to be available in the afternoons.

Planning for Development

Being responsible for themselves can contribute a great deal to children's sense of competence. Rules and limits should be spelled out clearly. What are the children's first responsibilities after arriving home? Must homework be finished in the afternoon? How about chores? Where and with whom may your children play? Is television watching to be limited?

Equally important to establishing rules is enforcing them and praising children when they comply. Show pride in your children when they regularly accomplish their afternoon tasks. Tell them how much you appreciate their cooperation.

Weekly planning is good idea. Sit down together and talk about upcoming events and schedules, allowing children input into family plans. If they understand they must tell you in advance about an upcoming school trip, for example, they won't call your office the morning of the trip to ask you to bring their permission slip and money to school.

Don't forget to help your children feel at home, even if they haven't been particularly cooperative or independent. A loving note, a new book or video, or a special treat left for them to find when they get home will help them feel less lonely and remind them that you care, even if you can't be there.

Community Responsibility

Our children are everyone's responsibility. If you don't have children, offer to be the backup person that a friend's children can call when parents are unavailable. If you work at home, volunteer to be a block parent. If you have a neighborhood business, let parents and children know you are available to children in the afternoon if they need help.

For more information or to get involved in local crime prevention efforts, call:

- * The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library (730-1700)
- * The Crime Prevention Unit of the

Atlanta Police Department, Block Watch Information (658-6778)

- * Your block watch captain
- * Your civic association public safety committee

(Additional copies of all the articles in this series on personal safety and property protection are available. Ken welcomes constructive questions and comments. Call him at 875-1551 if you have a special safety-related concern and he will try to respond in future articles.)

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Better Bicycling

Here are two great ways to help make Atlanta a better place for bicycling:

1) Join the Atlanta Bicycle Campaign, an advocacy group for cyclists. ABC is involved in bicycle transportation planning, safe cycling program development, and lobbying for legislative changes to accommodate bicycling. For more information, call Dennis Hoffarth at 659-2036 or Steve Aalto at 681-4305.

2) Help identify and create bike routes in your neighborhood. A city-wide effort is underway to develop a network of bicycle/pedestrian paths and to improve street accommodation of bicycles. For more information, contact Mike Goodman at Intown Bicycles, 872-1736, or Steve Aalto.



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It's a Party (and You're Invited) Second Anniversary for Staff

Last November, everyone who worked with The VOICE the previous year got together for shish kebabs. It was our way of celebrating the first year with the 70 or 80 neighbors who brought The VOICE from the idea stage to your doorstep.

We are shish kebabbing again this year and opening it up for any neighbors who would like a casual way to introduce themselves to The VOICE. Eat, drink, and be merry along with others who love this neighborhood--and find out how you can help make sure our newsletter keeps pleasing. If you would like to help with The VOICE, but are unsure how you could contribute, this is the perfect time to get involved.



Fill out the form below and we'll get in touch with you soon!

Virginia-Highland Civic Association P.O. Box 8401 Station F, Atlanta, GA 30306 Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the VHCA for this year.
Individual or Family \$10 annually

*Make Checks payable to Virginia-Highland Civic Association
and return with this form to the above address*

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

I would like to become involved in:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | | |

August 1991

Annual Meeting Election Update

At the recent Annual Meeting of the Virginia-Highland Civic Association, the following new Board of Trustees was elected:

Burn Sears	President
Nyna Gentry	Vice President
Beth Marks	Treasurer
Steve Jagger	Planning
Jerry Bright	Parks
Kent Ahrenhold	Preservation
Joyce Gross	Public Safety
Jett Marks	Newsletter
Charles Surasky	At Large
Ed Neal	St. Charles Rep
Tinka Green	Atkins Park Rep

Kent Ahrenhold, Tinka Green, Jett Marks and Charles Surasky are newcomers to the Board. We welcome them.

Three Awards were also presented at the meeting. The Neighborhood Volunteer Awards went to Nan Hunter and Nyna Gentry. The Civil Servant Award went to Kay Paradise, Precinct Secretary of Zone 6, City of Atlanta Police.



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1/6 Page-Horizontal	4 3/4"	2 1/2"	\$50
1/4 Page	3 3/4"	5"	\$75
1/3 Page-Vertical	2 1/2"	10"	\$100
1/3 Page-Horizontal	7 1/2"	3 1/2"	\$100
1/2 Page	7 1/2"	5"	\$150
Full Page	7 1/2"	10"	\$300
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Deadline dates: January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15. This is one month prior to publication and distribution.

Payments: Payment must accompany ad. Checks are to be made payable to Virginia-Highland Civic Association and sent to 1109 N. Highland Ave, Atlanta, GA, 30306. Or you can drop the ad and payment off to Babes in Highland, 1030 N. Highland Avenue, Atlanta.

Discounts: A discount is given for four consecutive appearances of an ad. The discount is the equivalent of half of the fee for the fourth ad. In order to receive the discount, a contract must be signed. The discount does not apply to the back page.

Distribution: The Virginia-Highland VOICE is distributed to over 4,000 households and businesses.

Need further information? Call Terry Tuley at 872-9082 or Beth Marks at 874-7114.



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Crime Watch

Below is a listing of the crimes reported to police in April, May, and June for the Virginia-Highland neighborhood (Beat 610):

	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>
Robbery	5	10	2
Rape	0	1	0
Assault	5	11	8
Commercial Burglary	3	4	5
Residential Burglary	16	16	19
Auto Theft	31	35	22
Vehicular Larceny	19	19	17
General Larceny	18	20	19
Homicide	0	0	0

Classified Ads

The VOICE accepts and publishes classifieds at \$2 per line. The VOICE reserves the right to edit any ad. Please send classifieds to: The VOICE, 1109 N. Highland Avenue, Atlanta, GA, 30306.

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