

LIGHT UP THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH...
MAGICAL LIGHTS - DECEMBER 18, 19 & 20.
See New Mexico Holiday Lights Article on this page

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL OUR NEIGHBORS
FROM THE STAFF OF THE VOICE

VIRGINIA HIGHLAND

November 1992
Vol. 3 No. 4

VOICE



Luminaries lining sidewalks, driveways and rooftops create a magical glow during the holiday season.

Special Photo

New Mexico Holiday Lights

By Tinka Green

It was like a fairyland long before Disneyland. It happened every December and it was MAGIC. The streets of the towns of New Mexico where I grew up were aglow each holiday with the soft lights of hundreds of luminaries. They lined sidewalks, driveways, roof tops and patio walls. There was rarely snow but the nights were cold, clear and clean and luminaries twinkled in the high air. They were such a special tradition that the holiday mood really didn't start until they made their appearance. Whole neighborhoods agreed to be involved, so you could bundle up and walk for blocks with their lights guiding the way. It was so romantic that teenagers made dates to look at them hand-in-hand. When I moved to the biggest city of New Mexico, Albuquerque, the neighborhoods were so spread out that people drove to look at the lights. Parties were planned around making the rounds of

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VHCA Amends its By Laws

By Mary Jo Peed

In an effort that makes good sense, the Virginia-Highland Civic Association has begun work on updating and amending the by-laws. President Nyna Gentry said that, "the current by-laws have been in place for a long time. A lot has happened since the by-laws have been really examined and they need to be updated."

By-laws should be designed to represent the internal rules and regulations chosen by a corporation, whether for profit or not-for-profit, to govern the organization's internal affairs. The by-laws should describe the power in the organization: where it is; who has it; how it is used; and how it is controlled.

At the September general meeting, the Board and members of the Association, which currently includes all residents of

Virginia-Highland over 18 whether or not they pay dues to the Association, began discussing the by-laws. Several Board members had done some preliminary work and the discussion centered around a document that included the current by-laws and the proposed amendments. President Gentry explained that the purpose of the document was to provide the group with a starting point for discussion and that the Board wanted input from the members of the association as to the content of the by-laws. Topics to be considered are: what time of year the annual meeting should be held; whether there should be different benefits accruing to dues paying members of the Association; what kind of voting rights the members of the Association should have; and how should the Board of

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Parking Survey Opinion

This survey is one part of a three-part study to determine the focus of a neighborhood Parking Plan. First-hand input from the people who are affected will focus attention on what really matters — our neighbors. The other two parts of the study concentrate on measuring need 1) according to City of Atlanta zoning laws and 2) by counting overflow parking.

There are three sections to this survey. The first section gauges problems at your address. The second ranks your perception

of problems in the neighborhood as a whole. The last section is for you to tell us what we missed in the other two sections. Each section has its own set of instructions.

We have tried to provide room for additional comments both on the front and back of the form. If you do not have enough room, then send those comments on additional sheets of paper. Return the survey to the address on the back of the form by December 15.

VHCA CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 4 VHCA General Meeting
- 16 NPU-F Meeting
- 17 Parking Meeting
- 17 Summerfest Meeting
- 25 Zoning Meeting

DECEMBER

- 2 VHCA General Meeting
- 15 Summerfest Meeting
- 21 NPU-F Meeting
- 22 Parking Meeting
- 30 Zoning Meeting

JANUARY

- 6 VHCA General Meeting
- 19 NPU-F Meeting
- 19 Summerfest Meeting
- 19 Parking Meeting
- 28 Zoning Meeting

All meetings are open to the public. Anyone who wishes to discuss a topic of interest to the neighborhood should contact the Board to get on the agenda, otherwise your concern may not get the attention which it deserves. Please Call 322-VAHI (8344).

The VHCA General Meetings and Zoning Meetings are held at the Peace de Leon Branch Library at 7:30 P.M. The NPU-F Meetings are held at the Morningside Presbyterian Church at 7:30 P.M. Both the Summerfest and Parking Committee meetings are held at the YWCA on N. Highland at 7:00 P.M.

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

If Fall is here, can SummerFest '93 be far behind? The answer is NO! Believe it or not, planning for SummerFest '93 has begun. A lot of time and effort went into last year's festival and as a result it was one of the best yet. We learned a lot from taking over the responsibilities for SummerFest, and one major fact is that it is too much for one individual to coordinate. Kimberly Krautter did a great job as director for SummerFest '92, but it became overwhelming at times. For that reason we propose to bring together residents of the community to form a SummerFest '93 Board. The Board members will be responsible for the various activities (Kid's Fest, Artist Market, Music, Promotion, T-shirts, 5K Race, to name a few) that make SummerFest one of the best festivals in Atlanta.

We envision a seven (7) member Board that will work together with other volunteers to pull all areas together, build on our successes and improve areas where needed. We are only seven months away from the first weekend in June and there is a lot of planning, work, and fun ahead. With the community working together SummerFest '93 will be an even greater success. Get involved! Join your neighbors and community businesses and help make our next festival one we can all be proud of.

We meet at our neighborhood YWCA, so mark your calendar to attend the meetings planned for the following dates:

Nov. 17

Dec. 15

Jan. 19

Feb. 16

As the first weekend in June approaches we will meet more often.

Have a wonderful holiday season and remember — **YOU GET AS MUCH OUT OF YOUR COMMUNITY AS YOU PUT INTO IT.**

Nyna Gentry, President



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Get "Street Smart" About Safe Bicycling

By Michael Goodman

With more and more of us cycling and driving on our neighborhood streets, it becomes increasingly important that we know how to share the road safely. As the shorter, darker, wetter days of Fall approach, "street smarts" become even more necessary. To that end, we offer some safety fundamentals for cyclists:

1. WEAR A HELMET. By far the most common cause of death in bicycle accidents is head injury. Wearing a helmet is cheap life insurance.

2. MAINTAIN YOUR BICYCLE AND KNOW HOW TO OPERATE IT PROFICIENTLY BEFORE VENTURING INTO TRAFFIC. You need to focus on road and traffic conditions rather than mechanical problems or how to operate your bike. We'll address maintenance and safety equipment in future articles.

3. BE VISIBLE AND BE PREDICTABLE. This is the foremost rule of the road. Being visible means wearing bright colors in the daytime and using lights and reflective gear at night. Remember that twilight is a critical time for accidents. Being predictable means following the same rules of the road as other vehicles (Georgia law classifies bicycles as vehicles). Cyclists should ride on the right side of the road with traffic, obeying all signs and signals. Stay off sidewalks or other places where drivers or pedestrians are not accustomed to looking for other vehicles. Contrary to popular belief, drivers can't see you as well coming toward them, and should you need to take quick action, going against traffic leaves little room to maneuver.

4. BE AWARE OF HAZARDS. The following are particularly dangerous to bicyclists: sewer grates, metal cover plates, railroad tracks, parked cars that might open their doors, loose sand or gravel, potholes, "black ice," and of course, cars — especially those that are turning. Imagine yourself at the "6" on a clock. Most accidents occur in the area

between "10" and "2," so be especially aware of left turns (yours and others).

As a motorist, you'll encounter two main types of cyclists. One tends to ride hi-tech bikes with proper gear and often rides in groups. Competent and experienced, these cyclists can move faster than motorized traffic. The second type includes children, older riders and family groups. Riding at moderate speeds on less maneuverable machines, they can be easily distracted. To all types of cyclists show courtesy and consideration. The most important skill for motorists to learn is how to pass a bicycle. First of all, **DON'T HONK!** Although the intent to let the cyclist know you're there is good, blowing your horn may startle him into swerving or falling. Believe me, cyclists know you're there already. Second, it is not usually necessary to change lanes (and hold up traffic) to pass a bicycle. Simply maintain your speed, stay to the left side of your lane, and avoid watching the cyclist too closely because you tend to steer in the direction you are looking. If you find this passing maneuver difficult, slow down a bit and change lanes or turn behind the cyclist.

Since bicycles pose little threat to cars, motorists will often make turns in front of them that they would never attempt around oncoming cars. Remember to give bicycles at least the same regard you would any other vehicle. In turn, cyclists should respect motorists and obey the same rules of the road. Motorists and cyclists both have road rights and are under the same laws, so treat each other accordingly.

In conclusion, in addition to the four main points above for cyclists, the keys to safely sharing and enjoying our city streets are: obey traffic regulations, lights and signs; exercise courtesy and consideration; and don't second-guess the other guy! With mutual respect, motorists and cyclists can both enjoy the ride. Happy trails...

The Virginia - Highland VOICE is published by the Newsletter Committee of the Virginia - Highland Civic Association. Newsletter Committee offices are located at 805 Adair Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30308, (404) 222-VAHI (8244). Please send information of community interest, including articles, news, upcoming events, and letters to the editors to the above address. Only letters that have been signed will be considered for publication. Deadline dates for articles and advertising are January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15.

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Officially Speaking

Handgun Control

By Mayor Maynard Jackson
City of Atlanta Mayor

Atlantans in Virginia-Highland and other neighborhoods across the City are concerned about the proliferation of guns now found on our streets. Keeping guns out of the hands of convicted felons is a top priority for Atlanta under Mayor Maynard Jackson's administration and for Georgia.

As a result, the City of Atlanta has instituted a 15-day waiting period for the purchase of handguns. This waiting period, which affords a thorough background check, has proven effective in stopping nearly 5% of all handgun sales that would have been made to persons prohibited from owning a handgun. Despite the City's success, this process has been undermined by the ready availability of guns across City limits. When individuals can avoid the waiting period in Atlanta by purchasing a gun in College Park, East Point, Roswell or another jurisdiction, everyone is at risk.

Mayor Jackson advocates national or State support to stem the flow of illegal weapons into the hands of criminals. The Brady Bill, which institutes a national 7 day waiting period, unfortunately was held up by a Senate filibuster in this year's Congress.

At the State level, Senator David Scott exerted exceptional leadership in navigating an instantaneous background check bill through the Georgia Senate and onto the floor of the House of Representatives. This system would link gun shops to a state-wide computer bank to provide an instant check of the customer's criminal history. The National Rifle Association brought a team of lobbyists to the Capitol in a successful attempt to get this bill tabled during the closing hours of the 1992 Georgia session.

Police chiefs and criminal justice experts across the nation advocate a uniform waiting period. A waiting period allows local police departments time to adequately check and investigate criminal histories. For persons with no criminal offenses, the waiting period affords a "cooling down" time to reconsider the need for or purpose of the gun purchase.

Community support is needed to force the Georgia General Assembly to pass a state-wide waiting period. Research indicates that the overwhelming majority of people support handgun waiting periods. The upcoming General Assembly creates a window for change.

Mayor Jackson has appealed to the Fulton/Atlanta League of Women Voters, The Atlanta Bar Association, The Gate City Bar Association, Georgians Against Gun Violence and several local criminal justice experts to establish a coalition in support of a state-wide waiting period.

With public support throughout the state, the City of Atlanta can enhance the efforts of Sen. David Scott and others to help keep our streets safe. The Atlanta City Council has unanimously passed a resolution supporting a state-wide waiting period. The stakes are high and your help is needed. Please contact your friends and associates across the state and ask them to contact their state legislators to support a state-wide waiting period.

RECYCLE

T O D A Y

Save Your "Waste"

By Nan Hunter

One of Webster's definitions of "waste" is "useless or discarded material." Dr. Clark Gregory, our VAHI resident "compost man," would like to make our neighborhood a 0% yard refuse disseminator. Leaves, branches, grass clippings are not waste. They are completely biodegradable and reusable; yet, we Americans dispose of 24 million tons of them each year. That's valuable landfill space used by a renewable source. If mixed with your coffee grounds, paper towels, vegetable and fruit trimmings, they can form a beautiful mixture of mulch for your spring garden.

Call Clark to purchase your "starter kit" — a \$5.00 wire hoop. Be the first on your block with an easy, sensible, hassle-free compost bin. Governor Zell Miller was the first on his block at the governor's mansion, and Georgia now has the nation's first statewide home composting program in place. Take part now. Clark's phone number is 876-2943.

Do you wonder what to do with all the branches that fall whenever it rains? Put them on your curb and the city will pick them up, shred them, and use them in our parks as mulch.

As far as our curbside recycling program is concerned, we will continue for another 6 months, January-June 1993, because the City of Atlanta will not have a program in place until at least that time. If you do not already take part, please send the coupon below to: Nan Hunter, 785 Adair Ave., Atlanta, GA 30306.

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I will send you a postcard with the dates. Thanks! If you have any comments, questions, complaints, or if the truck misses your recycling, call me at 875-1630.

Home Sweet Virginia-Highland Home

By Jeni Evans

During the spring and summer VHCA meetings, there was a great deal of talk by newcomers to the neighborhood about what attracted them to settling in Virginia-Highland. There was also some concern by long-term residents that some of those attractions (including the commercial district) might be what drives other residents away. So I searched out some of our native and "semi-native" residents to ask them "What attracted you to this neighborhood, and why have you stayed?"

Most of the folks who bought houses here prior to 1960 paid less than \$10,000 for their homes. While we "youngsters" may be impressed with the incredible amount of equity these homeowners now have, we need to consider the tremendous increase in property taxes these people on fixed incomes have experienced. Back in the 50's, they paid about \$100 a year. For that, according to one resident, they had garbage pick-up twice a week and didn't have to carry it out to the street.

Grace England is a native Atlantan whose parents bought the home she now lives in in 1937. The home was built in 1920 and was

bought by her uncle in 1924 from the original owners. The 72-year old house has been in Mrs. England's family for 68 years. A graduate of Girl's High, Mrs. England moved away when she married in 1946, but she returned in 1957 when she bought her brothers' share of the home their parents left in their estate. She explains, "Personally, I wanted to come back. This was still home." She and her husband Doyle raised their two sons here, one of whom lives in the house next door with his family. Likewise, neighbor Tom Rivers, a native Atlantan who grew up in Inman Park, bought his house in 1951 and also raised two sons. One of his sons only recently sold his house in Virginia-Highland, and the other still lives in Morningside.

What is it about the intown neighborhood that kept these residents here? Why did they not move out to the suburbs when they had children, especially when houses taken over by the DOT were eyesores ruining their property values? According to Mrs. England, "... the neighborhood ... has changed very little." The Englands and Mr. Rivers can tell

See HOME, Page 11

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the neighborhoods with the best displays then going back to someone's house for hot chocolates and sweets.

According to legend, early Spanish explorers encountered Chinese paper lanterns in the Philippines, and they took some with them as they made their way to the Americas. Here the festive lights were duplicated with the materials at hand and became an important part of the celebration of Christmas. As legends are prone to interpretation and exaggeration, there is another folkloric

tale of less historic significance as to the origins of luminarias, or farolitos, as they are called in some northern New Mexican communities. Both terms are used to describe little lights and bonfires, so maybe something has been lost in the translation. The ranchers of the difficult land were separated by many miles from towns and neighbors. They lighted huge bonfires at the front gate and along the drive to the house to give directions to the traveling families and friends arriving for the holidays. The bonfires eventually evolved into the lights we now know. Some are made of tin cans punched

with designs and saved from year to year, but the most familiar are the brown paper bags. The glow of the candle through the paper makes colored electric lights seem almost garish by comparison.

Luminarias are easy to make using small brown paper lunch bags filled with enough sand or kitty litter to anchor a squat votive candle. Line them up on flat surfaces in the daylight and as evening approaches, make a ritual of family members lighting them with fireplace matches. They will last only a few hours depending on the size of the candle and the blowing winds. Later the youngest members can blow them out with supervision.

While it may sound old-fashioned, the wonderful luminarias of New Mexican culture have gained present day popularity with the widespread interest in Southwestern design. Join your neighbors of Virginia-Highland in lining your sidewalk and drive with these special lights on the weekend nights of December 18, 19, and 20th. It will be an easy way to unite our neighborhood in an annual opportunity to experience the simplicity and beauty of community celebration and family ritual. Mark your calendars and make a date with a special person to go for a walk.


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Children's Menu

John Howell Park Renovation Plans Still Under Review

By Jerry Bright

Since May of this year, the construction plan for the John Howell Park has been undergoing a review and approval process by various neighborhood organizations and City of Atlanta departments. As of August, the design was submitted to the Parks Department for review and, we hope, approval. This lengthy process may seem burdensome; however, as an eternal optimist, I consider it an opportunity to address even the smallest details.

The park's landscape architect, Peter Frawley, has estimated construction costs at approximately \$630,000. This estimate does not include the costs for the planned children's playscape or the AIDS memorial garden sculpture. This amount is considered to be somewhat frugal for a 2.5 acre urban park. To raise the funds, we will be looking toward a limited amount of public funding, and we will concentrate our efforts on the sale of brick sidewalk pavers inscribed with the donor's name. We have received a lot of positive reaction to the pavers and anticipate a kick-off fund raising

event in the beginning of next year.

We especially want to thank the residents of Virginia Circle for their input into the planning process. Recently, we installed an automatic shut-off timer on the volleyball court lights, in response to their request. In addition, their vigilance has helped to prevent abuse of the park. Our neighborhood de-

serves a first class park, and the continued efforts of all our neighbors will insure that the John Howell Park remains one of our community's most admired amenities.

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THE IMMENSE JOURNEY

by LOREN EISELY

Eisely was an anthropologist and naturalist but more importantly, he was a philosopher and poet of rare quality. His eloquence makes this book of science a piece of lyrical literature. The chapter titled "The Bird and the Machine" is one of my favorite love stories and guaranteed to make your heart cry and sing. Please read this for pleasure. You can tell I loved it.

SISTER AGE

by M.F.K. FISHER

M. F. K. Fisher died recently. I'll miss her voice. It was always a delicious mix of sweet reason, romance and oddities. She frequently wrote about food — the cooking of it, the relishing of it, the involvement of it in our lives. Since this is also one of my favorite topics, I've always been drawn to her writing. *Sister Age* is a collection of short stories loosely based on growing older, another topic I should be interested in but can't whip up the same fervor. Ms. Fisher herself grew older very gracefully and graciously. Some of her characters do too but some kick and scream against the indignities, real or imagined, facing us all. These are good stories for lazy summer afternoons and iced tea when you have a little extra time to contemplate the meaning of life. The answer isn't here but pleasure is.

BYLAWS, From Page 1

Trustees should represent the members of the Association.

A different issue concerning the by-laws, the issue of time was raised at the October meeting of the Board of Trustees. The agenda for the October meeting was quite full and further discussion regarding the by-laws was not possible. Faced with this problem, President Gentry recommended to the Board that a subcommittee of Board members and Association members be formed to work on the by-laws and present recommended amendments to the Board for its consideration. Any amendments to the by-laws must be voted on by the members of the Association at the annual meeting or at a special meeting called by the Board specifically for the purpose of considering any amendments to the by-laws.

In order to have adequate representation of the members of the Association on the subcommittee that will work on the amendments to the by-laws, we must have VOLUNTEERS from the neighborhood. All of you are members of the Association, whether or not you have paid dues (which are only \$10.00 and should be paid by at least one member of every household). This is a great opportunity to get involved in your community. Remember the by-laws dictate where and how the power of the organization is directed. TO VOLUNTEER TO SERVE ON THE BY-LAWS SUBCOMMITTEE, CALL 222-VAHI AND LEAVE A MESSAGE ON THE GENERAL INFORMATION LINE.

COLONEL MUSTARD WITH A KNIFE IN THE KITCHEN

FOOD REVIEW

Friday night at Neighbors Pub — not a good choice for a romantic evening for two or for diners wishing to have a serious political discussion, but a fine choice for a relaxed dinner with close friends who only mean to lightly gossip. This place was filled with loud talk, loud music and a loud ballgame on TV. The service was actually pretty good considering communications with our waitress took on a form of pointing, gesturing and some yelling. There was only one goof and it probably came from the kitchen — french fries instead of slaw, but the waitress quickly rectified it by leaving the fries and bringing slaw. Turned out it was a mistake we could easily have lived with since the slaw was lackluster — too much of a tasteless dressing. Water was slow in arriving but that could have been because the waitress was trying to keep her tight maneuvering to our table to a minimum. The tables are close and apparently not divided between smokers and non-smokers — actually any division would be in name only. Fortunately, the next table of puffers didn't get going until after we had finished eating.

This is a full bar place and one of my friends declared her vodka gimlet excellent. I'll take her word for it since my limited expertise led me to order a jello shooter. Yes, orange jello in a small plastic cup spiked with a mystery spirit. I suppose it could be labeled a comfort food. It tasted only of jello and at \$.50 a shot could probably be a cheap high. I only had one but I like jello and am not much of a drinker. They might have something if they could offer fruit cocktail and an umbrella.

To start, we had an order of cheese fries and chips with salsa. The cheese fries were a little soggy but plentiful, and we had left over chips and salsa. One friend had a Reuben — lots of tender meat and good crisp sauerkraut but not very distinctive Russian dressing. Another had the chicken quesadilla — once again lots of tender, juicy meat and a crispy tortilla without being tough. I had a bacon bleu hamburger. This was a hefty two fist treat — the bacon just right and the meat juicy. I was expecting chunky, real bleu cheese spread on a hot patty so it would melt into the crevices, but instead I was served a cup of bland, bottled-tasting salad dressing that was very disappointing. Every-

thing here is good, but the dressings — Russian, bleu cheese, slaw — all need major revamping. I'll go back for a hamburger and jello. The prices are moderate and the helpings generous.

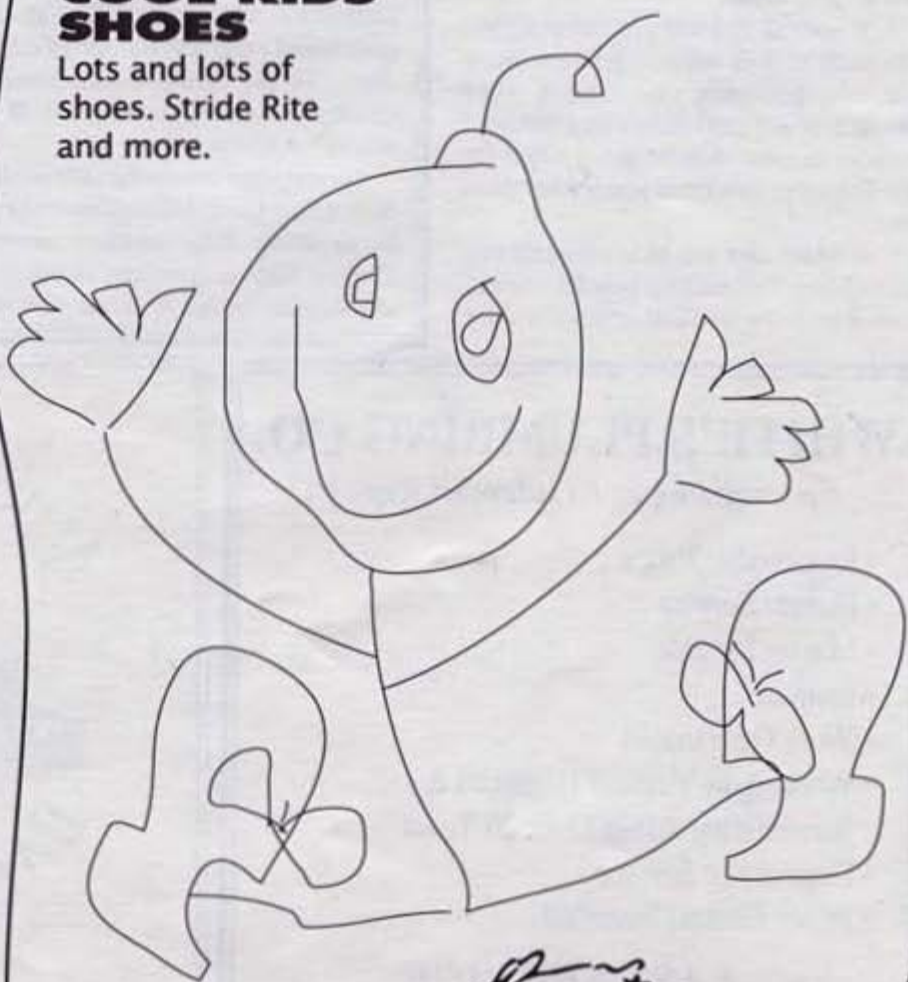
Colonel Mustard gives it 3 hot dogs on a scale of 5. Neighbors Pub, 752 North Highland — hours are different every day so call them at 872-5440.

The Virginia- Highland Voice is looking for you. . .

For more details, call 222-VAHI, ext. 3

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You Can HELP!

By Joyce Gross
Public Safety Chairperson

With a recent flurry of criminal activity, I asked one of our beat officers what we as a community can do to help. Along with "Keep your eyes and ears open," she responded with the following suggestions:

1. Make sure your address is clearly visible from the street. This saves time when every minute counts. The officer can locate your house quicker.
2. Cut your shrubbery well below your windows. This removes unnecessary hiding places and affords the beat officer a better view of your house.
3. If you call 911 and you are equipped with some kind of weapon, let them know your description too, i.e., "I am a white female, 5'5" tall and I have a baseball bat." Put your defense weapon down when the police arrive so they know you are the "good guy."
4. Make sure you have adequate outside lighting. This not only benefits you but, again, it gives the beat officer a better view.

Neighborhood Profile

By Betty Wells and Joan Walters

Inman Middle School is great! We are blessed with returning principal Dr. Barbara Naylor, her excellent staff, very supportive parents and our most valuable asset, talented students.

Inman Middle School, one of the landmarks of Virginia-Highland, gives the neighborhood a small town feeling as well as a sense of diversity in our intown setting. Like many other public schools, Inman is focusing on mobilizing community resources in order to increase opportunities for ALL students and to offer enrichment programs for our gifted students. To aid in this effort, Southern Company Service, Inc., is one of the school's corporate partners.

Several local universities are working with Inman: Clark Atlanta University will be assisting with hands-on science; Georgia State is coordinating efforts of the Atlanta Project to target education

needs of the schools in the Grady High School cluster, including Inman; Georgia Tech students will be tutoring Inman Students; and Morehouse College students will be volunteering as mentors.

If you are interested in helping with the tutoring program at Inman or have other resources to share with the school, please feel free to call PTA Co-Presidents Betty Wells at 237-6833 or Joan Walters at 872-5649.

Dr. Barbara Naylor, Inman's principal, is conducting regular forums on "What's Happening at Inman?" For further information, call the school at 853-4017. One of our major accomplishments that is now "happening at Inman" is our Artist-in-Residency program. Actor Lon Waitman, alias AIR man, is our artist in residence, sponsored by the Georgia Council for the Arts and the Inman PTA.

See INMAN, Page 15

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From HOME, Page 5

many tales about the downhill slide — kudzu taking over houses owned by the DOT, the "Corner" (commercial district) beginning to fail during WW II and "hitting rock bottom" in the 60's and 70's. In spite of the problems, they always felt that this was a good neighborhood. They admit their property values dipped dramatically when the shadow of I-485 loomed, but they decided to wait it out. Their faith in the character of VAHI paid off when the DOT released the properties down the street. Some of those houses have been restored and others replaced. Property values (along with taxes) soared.

While the neighborhood has improved immensely, the long-time residents complain about things they feel could be fixed with more effective spending of their tax dollars. They want the sidewalks repaired and the shacks removed from the old alleys behind their homes. They do not appreciate neighbors who let their yards go unkept and who do not take the time to be good neighbors. They laugh at the suburbanites who come "dressed to the hilt" to shop and eat in Virginia-Highland. They find the neighborhood's "trendy" reputation humorous. It is still a family neighborhood to them — a place to make friends, raise children, and watch their grandchildren grow.



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Neighbors Join to Protect Our Streets

By Yvette Weatherly

I used to wonder why I should have to pay for police coverage when I pay taxes for that purpose. I came to the conclusion that I would pay for additional police coverage for the same reason many people pay for house and car alarms. A house alarm protects things in the house; a car alarm protects the car. Off-duty police protect both those things, but most importantly their high visibility protects me when I'm outside my house and my car so I can walk down the street without fear. Possessions can be replaced; I cannot.

I wanted to know what could be done about the crimes occurring on my street. Through some investigation, I learned that a group of my neighbors had hired off-duty police to patrol their area and were happy with the service. We quickly organized our group of streets and we now have the same service. For other neighborhood areas interested in this service, I have described below the details involved with this service.

Off-duty police coverage can be implemented in degrees ranging from 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to randomly scheduled day and evening shifts of 4 hours or more. The cost of off-duty police is \$20 an hour. Thus, hiring police to patrol 5 days a week for randomly selected 5-hour shifts would cost \$2000 for 4 weeks. This translates to \$20 a month for 100 households or \$10 a month for 200 households. The amount of coverage and cost depend entirely on the number of residents concerned enough to participate.

There are many benefits of off-duty police. When they are working for us, they have full arrest privileges, they use police cars and motorcycles when available, they respond very quickly, and they can check on our homes when we are out of town. You get what you pay for — extra protection.

If you are interested in a neighborhood-wide program such as this, please call 222-VAHI and leave a message for the Safety Committee or fill out the information below and send it to:

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

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Comments: _____

CRIME WATCH

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

	July	August	Sept.	Oct.
Assault	7	17	8	5
Auto Theft	29	19	14	8
Commercial Burglary	8	3	0	0
General Larceny	20	29	23	11
Homicide	0	0	0	0
Rape	1	0	1	0
Residential Burglary	38	32	33	11
Robbery	3	12	7	6
Vehicular Larceny	79	57	27	26

Personal Safety Tips From Pro-Tech Security Systems

By Ken Lavine

City Crime Conditions

Crime occurs all over our city. Statistics show that half of all rapes occur during an illegal entry, often as unplanned opportunistic crimes. Rapes on the street usually occur at night and in the early morning, whereas burglaries occur almost evenly throughout the day and night.

Currently, the Atlanta Police Department is seriously understaffed. More officers than anticipated accepted an offer of early retirement. The department is having difficulty filling the vacant positions. On some beats, including that of Virginia-Highland, one officer has taken the place of three.

Personal Safety Tips

Few of us enjoy reading such facts about crime. We all want to feel safe and to be safe in our homes and throughout our daily routines. Effective alarm systems decrease the chance of break-ins by 75%. To get an even greater edge over criminals, we must be willing to take a few simple steps and develop good habits for personal safety. Just being aware, looking out for ourselves and our neighbors, and learning a few street smarts can help tremendously. Creating an illusion that our house is not empty, that we are not alone, and that we are stronger and more self-confident than we may feel can also help.

At Home

1. If you have an alarm system, use it.
2. Make house numbers visible to aid emergency services' response.
3. Have locks changed when you move into a new home or apartment.
4. Have a home security check, offered free by your local police precinct. The officer can spot weaknesses and suggest ways to correct them. They will also engrave your valuables to facilitate recovery if they are stolen.
5. To enhance the illusion that someone is at home when you're away, keep a radio tuned to a news/talk station.
6. Install lighting over the area where you park your car and along the path to your door. This light as well as interior lights should come on automatically through a photosensitive switch or motion detector so you don't come home to a dark house.
7. Install an eyeviewer and/or intercom on your door.

8. Use your initials rather than your first name in the phone book, on correspondence, and on the mailbox. If you're a single woman, add Sgt. and Mrs. J. Doe to suggest that you live with someone experienced with weapons.

9. Install dead-bolts on entry doors and use metal reinforcement plates around locks on wood doors and around strikes on wood door jams.

10. Secure windows with special removable bolts available at hardware stores. When adjusting for ventilation, allow no more than five inches.

11. Don't give out personal information over the phone. If inquiries are made by a suspicious stranger at your door, do not reveal that you are

alone. Indicate that there is a man with you, such as saying: We don't want to be disturbed. My husband is sleeping. Teach children not to reveal that they are alone or to admit strangers.

12. Don't let a stranger in to use your tele-

See TIPS, Page 14



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From TIPS, Page 13

phone. Offer to make the call yourself.

13. Require delivery men or repairmen to show identification. If you haven't called for a repairman, don't let one inside. Leave him waiting outside and call his business to verify his reason for being in your area.

14. Know who your neighbors are and when they are home—you may need a safe place to go to.

15. If you are inside the house and suspect that someone has entered, get out of the house if at all possible. Activate your alarm system with your portable panic button, or call police from a neighbor's phone. *Don't go through the house looking for the intruder.*

16. When you drive home, if you see someone suspicious around your house, leave immediately and call 911. Carry a loud whistle or your alarm system's portable panic button with you so you can use it if you need to when you return home. Make sure your security system has an outside alarm sounder.

Driving

1. Park close to your destination in a well-lighted area.

2. When you return to your car, have your keys ready before you reach the car. Check inside your car with a flashlight before getting in. Check outside and under the car, too, as you approach. If something looks suspicious, turn back and get someone to walk you to your car.

3. Always lock your doors and roll up your windows as soon as you get in your car.

4. Check your gas gauge before each trip.

5. If you have car trouble, raise the hood and stay in your vehicle. Ask anyone who stops

to call the police for you.

If you suspect someone is following you

1. Try to attract attention.

2. Do not go home.

3. Drive to a fire station, police station, all-night grocery store or service station, somewhere where there are lights and people. Call 911.

When you walk

1. Avoid walking at night, or in the early morning hours.

2. Keep to familiar, well-travelled and well-lighted streets.

3. If possible, walk facing oncoming traffic.

4. If you are harassed by the occupants of a car, simply turn around and walk the other way. The driver will have to turn around to follow you.

5. When you return home, have your key ready so you can enter without delay.

We thank Ken Lavine, president of Pro-Tech Security Systems, Inc. and co-chair of the Virginia Highland Civic Association Public Safety Committee, for this article. For further information, call him at 875-1551. The personal safety tips in this article are reprinted from Pro-Tech's Home Technology Newsletter.

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ENVIRONMENTS



The portable building facing Virginia Avenue is the first sign of the new construction scheduled to begin at Inman this school term. We anxiously await the new classrooms and resource rooms.

Inman's students, staff, and PTA look forward to seeing you at our Holiday Program, December 10, 1992, at 7:00 p.m. and at our Spring 1993 Musical featuring Inman students. Also, mark your calendars for the Inman Festival/Flea Market scheduled for May 22, 1993.

Thank you in advance for your support of our neighborhood school and its programs.

An Invitation to learning about Composting

An invitation to Virginia-Highland residents on composting in your Backyard.

Presented by Clark Gregory, Supervisor, Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation District, in cooperation with the Virginia-Highland Civic Association.

You will learn the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY, WHEN, and HOW of composting at home, school, and workplace.

Come to the Meeting Room of the new Virginia-Highland library, 980 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE (Corner of Frederica Street), Saturday, November 28, 1992 from 2:00 to 3:00 PM — a one and a half hour workshop.

Composting bins, books, and information will be available for purchase. Actually, the information is free. The bins are \$5.00, the book, Backyard Composting, which lists for \$6.95, will be available for \$5.00.

Come on out and get over your invisible barrier that is keeping you from enjoying the simple pleasure of composting at home.

Why Composting?

1. It's cheap — \$5 for a bin, no leaf bags to buy.
2. You don't have to change your habits

See COMPOSTING, Page 16

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Size	Length	Height	Rate
1 inch	2 1/4"	1"	\$20
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3 inches	2 1/4"	3"	\$40
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1/6 page horizontal	5"	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
Business card size	3 1/2"	2"	\$35

Artwork: All artwork must be provided in the form of black and white camera ready copy.
Deadlines: January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15. These dates are one month prior to publication and distribution.

Payment: All payments must accompany advertisements. Checks should be made to Virginia-Highland Civic Association and sent to 805 Adair Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30306. Advertisements and payments may also be dropped off at Babes in Highland, 1030 N. Highland Avenue, Atlanta.

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

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

Classified Advertisements: All classified advertisements cost \$2 per line, and the VOICE reserves the right to edit all advertisements. Please send Classified advertisements to: The VOICE, 805 Adair Avenue NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30306.

For additional advertisement rates or information, call 222-VAHI and punch #3.



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Traffic Islands Get Make-Over

By Kathy Couch

We hope you've noticed that the new beautification program to spruce up traffic islands and other public places throughout Virginia-Highland is underway. By the time you receive this newsletter, we will already have completed winter plantings for the Corner (Virginia and N. Highland) and for at least one other site listed below. Early next spring, we plan to do the other locations and revamp the Corner to remove the pesky bermuda grass and give the area a new look.

The five top sites for planting were chosen through an informal survey taken at the September general civic association meeting and several other recent community gatherings. They were the Corner, the intersection of Lanier Blvd. and N. Highland, Inman School, the entrances to Atkins Park along N. Highland and the sculpture island at Virginia and Lanier. Several residents also want to organize their neighbors to plant trees and adopt islands in other parts of the neighborhood.

These projects are being funded by some of the proceeds from Summerfest, and we

hope to get area businesses involved soon. Through the city's Park Pride program, we're able to purchase plant materials at wholesale prices to stretch our budget as far as possible. A community bulletin board is also in the works to help keep everyone informed about local happenings.

During recent months, we had two weeding parties at the Corner triangle, thanks to Judy Steelman, Robert Nowak, Cary Atwater, Robert Wall, Rich Partridge and friend, Fern Hallman, J.D. Christy, and Schild Grant, our volunteer landscaping expert.

If you'd like to join our list of volunteers, call 222-VAHI and leave a message for Parks (#5). We need volunteers to dig, plant, weed, make phone calls, pick up plant material, etc. Most jobs take only a few hours and no gardening experience is required.

From COMPOSTING, Page 15

much. Put your leaves into a bin instead of into a bag; it is really easier.

3. It helps:

A. The environment — since fewer leaves going to the landfill, landfills last longer, and taxpayers save money in reduced collection and disposal costs.

B. You — because you get rich, dark humus to use in your landscape.

So come and learn the art of composting at the Meeting Room, Virginia-Highland Library, 980 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Saturday, November 28, 1992, 2-3:30 PM.

HAVE YOU LOST CONTROL...?

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Virginia-Highland Parking Opinion Survey
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Additional Comments

Virginia-Highland Parking Opinion Survey

1. Problems at your address Street Name: _____ Building number: _____

Please fill in your street and building number. It is important to know exactly where the problems are but if you do not want to reveal your building number, please round it to the nearest hundred. For the following problems, please rank on a scale of 1 to 10 the severity AT YOUR ADDRESS only. A '1' means that you never experience the problem. A '5' means that it happens but not enough to bother you. A '9' means that it happens frequently enough to get you angry. A '10' is reserved for problems that consume unhealthy amounts of your daily thoughts. Most Important — Indicate the worst times and days of the week that the problem occurs.

<u>Severity (scale from 1 to 10)</u>	<u>Worst Time</u>	<u>Worst Days of Week</u>
_____ Unable to park your car near your home	_____	_____
_____ Parked cars block your car from getting in or out	_____	_____
_____ An emergency vehicle would have difficulty accessing your home	_____	_____
_____ Vehicles damage or stress greenery or sidewalks by not parking on street	_____	_____
_____ (Add your own) _____	_____	_____

2. Problems with Parking in general

In this section, tell us what is the biggest reason neighbors face the problems listed above. Rank the reasons against each other with 1 being the most important and 10 the least important.

Rank (1 - most important reason, 10 - least important reason)

_____ Lack of enforcement of parking laws	_____ Not enough metered parking
_____ Available parking not close enough	_____ Available parking goes unnoticed
_____ Available parking is difficult to get into or out of	
_____ Available parking is poorly lit or otherwise poorly maintained to make it less safe	
_____ Available parking requires new striping to better utilize space	
_____ Traffic Congestion	
_____ Certain streets should be designated one-side parking (streets) _____	
_____ Certain streets should be designated one-way (streets) _____	
_____ (Add your own) _____	
_____ (Add your own) _____	

3. General Comments (additional room on back)

After completion of the study this committee will make specific recommendations to alleviate the problems identified.

Do you think all problems that this committee should address are identified ? If not, what are we missing ?

Some possible recommendations include parking lot and sidewalk improvements, one-side parking, mass-transit, bike paths, maps and brochures showing parking, permit only parking, and newspaper and magazine articles.

What solutions should we consider ? What solutions can you suggest ?
