



# Virginia-Highland VOICE

Volume 2, No. 4

A publication of the Virginia-Highland Civic Association

November, 1998

## TRAFFIC & PUBLIC SAFETY

The collective effort to upgrade signage relating to neighborhood parking problems has paid off, although it isn't complete. Ten intersections now have the Towaway symbols attached to "No Parking Anytime" signs and some new "Towaway" signs have been installed. "City of Atlanta Traffic Engineering crews ran out of the small "Towaway" symbol signs, and more are on order and will be installed as they are received", according to Marsha Brinkley of the Mayor's office. Now the beat officers can legally have cars towed, where previously the "No Parking" signs were all but ignored by visitors to our neighborhood. If you know of potential hazardous conditions caused by street parking, please notify me, Arnold Gross, at 404-222-8244 ext. 4.

You've heard a lot about the high crime statistics for this neighborhood relating to vehicle break-ins. Major Carlos Banda, our Zone 6 Commander, has stated that if we could get people to stop leaving cell phones, laptop computers, and other valuable articles in plain sight in our vehicles, our crime statistics would crash to an all time low. There are also things that can be done to curb residential crimes such as burglary and petty theft. I strongly suggest you get a copy of the September issue of CONSUMER REPORTS for the page 54 story "To Foil a Thief".

The September 1998 issue of CONSUMER REPORTS states "that an electronic home-security system is the single most effective way to deter an intruder. A wireless security system costs less and is easier to install. But a wired system is more reliable and, experts say, less prone to false alarms. You can buy a wireless system at electronic stores and home centers: wired systems usually require professional installation. A good door outfitted with a good lock and reinforcing hardware makes an excellent backup to an alarm system - and a worthwhile line of defense if you don't use an alarm." The article goes on to state "only high security locks proved to have tamper-resistant cylinders".

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### CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

When: 1st Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m.  
Where: Inman Middle School Media Center  
(Nov. & perhaps Dec.)

### 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.

## PARKS NEWS

### Ivy and Other Vines on Trees

At the last Civic Association meeting, board member Charles Nalbene asked me about ivy growing on his trees. Does it harm the tree? Should I take it down? This question is often asked, and here is what the tree experts say.

There are several negative impacts on trees from ivy and other vines. The vines compete with the tree for water and nutrients. They may wrap themselves tightly around the trunk of young trees, even girdling them. If they grow tall enough to overtop the tree they will shade the crown and reduce the photosynthesis process. Smaller branches may break or become deformed from the weight and curling of heavy vines. Bees, insects and small rodents make use of the vines for homesites.

Perhaps the most serious impact of extensive vine growth to the homeowner, however, is that the vines may obscure the base of the trunk and hide signs of root decay or other problems. The message seems to be that you should don your gloves and remove the vines. Be careful! Check that the vines are not poison ivy before you begin. Any contact with poison ivy is usually unpleasant, and it can result in serious infection.

### Fall and Winter Mulching

A heavy mulching of most of the crepe myrtles along Highland and the oaks on Ponce has been accomplished, thanks to a few volunteers and Mark Collins and his crew from Appleseed Tree Service. The mulching is to insulate and protect the trees. As the chips and leaves decay they will also provide nutrients. We plan to mulch most of the trees along the busiest streets before winter. There are several mulch piles available around the neighborhood, including one at Inman school. Do your trees a favor by putting a thick layer of mulch around them. Remember to pull the mulch back six inches or so from the base of the tree to prevent rot.

### Replacement of Bradford Pears on St. Charles at Highland

The Civic Association in conjunction with Trees Atlanta and the Atlanta City Arborist will replace the six bradford pears in the sidewalk cutouts on St. Charles Ave. and North Highland. As with most of the bradford pears on the city streets in our neighborhood, these trees are sickly and must be replaced. The replacement trees have not yet been selected, but they will not be bradford pears. The corner will definitely have a new look.

*Stephanie Coffin*  
Chair, Parks Committee

### ON-LINE ACCESS IS HERE!

The Va-Highland Civic Association and Summerfest are on-line!  
To access, simply go to:  
<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/groups/vahi>  
<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/groups/summerfest>

## SUMMERFEST

We, on the SUMMERFEST committee are at work. The Artists Market committee, chaired by Kathy Barkley, has already developed a slick (literally) brochure with an overview of the festival. A copy has been sent to some 800 artists for the 1999 Artists Market, along with applications for 200 available spaces. A big pat on the back, a big hug, and a big "attaperson" goes out to Kathy and her very capable helpers, Debbie Donahue, Regina Gulick, Chris Hamer, Susan Kraham, Judy Landey, Erica Lancaster, Jennifer Newman, Randie Siegel, Sparky Spearman, and Barb Wills. All of these talented people are concentrating on getting the word out about SUMMERFEST in general, and specifically the Artists Market.

The quest for new sponsors continues. I am pleased to announce that Red Hook Beer, Coca-Cola and Z-93 will return as sponsors for 1999. Others will follow. If you know of any prospective sponsors please call me through the VHCA hot line at 404-222-8244 ext. 9. The more money we raise, the more we can distribute to worthy causes.

A new addition to Summerfest is Jill Gossett, who is the new Volunteers chairperson. Her energy and personality will guarantee that we'll have plenty of able helpers during the festival. With the departure, to Seattle, of Nina Peltin and her family, a very important vacancy exists for the chair of KidsFest. Amy Waterman, who previously chaired KidsFest and assisted Nina, is actively seeking a person or a couple to fill this void. Please contact Amy or me at the SUMMERFEST extension of the VHCA hotline and help the children who come to KidsFest enjoy the activities there. I am also seeking someone to coordinate the 5K Road Race and Tot Trot. I hope to have these positions filled by year's end.

Traffic and parking are always a concern during the festival. To alleviate some of the parking and accessibility problems for our festival neighbors, I will request additional street closings to include Los Angeles Ave. between North Highland and Maryland Avenues. The barricades and police officers at North Highland Ave. and Maryland Ave. intersections will effectively seal off the streets in between and assure local residents of ingress and egress during the festival. Illegal parkers will be blocked as well. Police will tow any vehicle inside this area that does not have a parking pass on the windshield, and parking passes will be distributed to all residents.

I welcome any input regarding SUMMERFEST, so please feel free to call and leave messages at the VHCA hotline. You can also visit our website via [www.accessatlanta.com](http://www.accessatlanta.com) and submit suggestions by the email address shown there. There will be more good news to report in the next issue of THE VOICE.

*Arnold Gross, Chair*

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## DESIGN CONTESTS

The Virginia-Highland Civic Association is inviting artists to submit a neighborhood logo design to be used on street signs and possibly for the sale of clothing featuring that logo.

In addition, the Virginia-Highland SUMMERFEST 1999 T-Shirt design contest is under way. This design will be used for T-shirts, and (possibly) tank tops. Designs must be submitted by December 4, 1998. They can be in any medium having no more than 4 colors. A prize of \$300 will be paid for the winning design, which will become the property of the VHCA. Send designs to: Andrea Casson, 767 Drewry St., Atlanta, GA 30306.

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

This is the beginning of another year for the VHCA. A new Board of Directors was elected at the Annual Meeting in September, and most of this year's Board members have served previously. At large members and officers are as follows: Ruthie Penn-David, President, 404-875-2942; Charlie Nalbene, Vice-president; Bob Jaric, Treasurer; Randie Siegel, Secretary; JD Christy; Winnie Currie, Planning Committee Co-chair; Arnold Gross, Public Safety Committee Chair; Amy Waterman, Planning Committee, Membership Committee, delegate to Freedom Park Conservancy and most recent past President; and Barbara Touchette Wills. Barbara is new to the Board and lives on Virginia Circle. Welcome, Barbara! Appointed Board members from the Atkin's Park and St. Charles/Greenwood neighborhoods have not yet been named.

Recent years have been successful in many different areas. Membership is up, our finances are strong enough to have contributed back to the community, our green spaces continue to flourish, and our voice has been heard on a range of civic issues. We have benefitted from the active participation of a core of about twenty-five volunteers. To preserve the character that makes our neighborhood a unique and pleasant place to live we always need more volunteers and activists. You do not have to be a Board member to head or contribute to a committee. Call the VHCA line at 404-222-8244 and attend monthly General Meetings to become informed and be involved. Whether you have an idea for a new neighborhood project or want to help out an existing committee, your time and energy are appreciated. Monthly General Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm.

They are normally held at the Ponce de Leon Ave. Branch Library, but due to construction at the library, the November and possibly December meetings will be held at Inman Middle School in the Media Center. There are no Monthly General Meetings in January and July.

As always, there is a lot going on this year. The Summerfest Committee has begun to work on Summerfest '99, the Planning Committee is busy with ongoing and new zoning issues, the Parks Committee has already submitted a budget and plans to plant zillions of trees & seasonal flowers, and the Public Safety Committee has gotten the City to install more Tow Away signs to improve our parking situation. There are also several planning issues in the works. As a neighborhood we have given our input on the development and use of Piedmont Park. A new group called SHAPE is forming to discuss and plan the environment for Ponce de Leon Avenue. Winnie Currie and Barbara Touchette Wills have agreed to be our appointees to SHAPE. The North Highland Task Force, headed by the City's Planning Dept. and made up of residents of Virginia-Highland & Morningside as well as V-H Business Association representatives, has met for a few months to discuss and plan sidewalk construction, street furniture, traffic and parking. There will be a series of workshops for community input in the near future.

Thank you for your support, and with your help our neighborhood will continue to thrive.

*Ruthie Penn-David*  
President

## PIEDMONT PARK UPDATE

### Special Events Committee

This committee was charged with creating new guidelines for events in the park. Its work was completed early this past summer and a report was turned over to Mayor Campbell. Guidelines were proposed regarding the rotation of areas used, the length of events, turf protection, a fund to refurbish areas used, and reduction of impact on neighbors. Early trials by Michael Moore and the Dogwood Festival were a positive step in the right direction. As of this writing, however, the City has not adopted the proposed guidelines.

### Oak Hill - (along 10<sup>th</sup> Street)

It seems that citizen outcry about the Conservancy/City plan for the renovation of Oak Hill has had some impact. Word is that the original 11-foot wide path system that was to cut diagonally across the green space to the top is out.

To insure public input, the Master Plan calls for an Advisory Committee. Unfortunately, this committee was not in place at the time the Conservancy plan for Oak Hill was developed. As a result, serious differences arose. There seems to be a fundamental disagreement as to the priorities in implementing the Master Plan. Some citizens feel that too much building and paving is going on at the expense of refurbishing and renewing the green spaces. This is why

the citizens group, "Friends of Piedmont Park" has again become active. It is hoped that no new plans will be developed without input from the City, the Conservancy and the Citizens Advisory Committee. Piedmont Park is under considerable pressure for heavy use, and it needs a thoughtful implementation of the Master Plan.

By J.D. Christy

### ACTIVITIES AT PONCE DE LEON LIBRARY

**Time for Twos:** Stories, feltboards, films, activities  
Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m., Nov. 17, Dec. 1. Age 2 with adult  
**Sleepytime Stories:** Stories, fingerplays, films, feltboards  
Mondays, 7:00 p.m., Nov. 2 to Dec. 7. Ages 3-5  
**Storytime:** Stories, fingerplays, feltboards, crafts  
Wednesdays, 10 a.m., Nov. 4, 18, 25, Dec. 2 & 9. Ages 3-5  
**Public Internet Workshop:** Familiarize patrons with Internet  
Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m., Nov. 18, Dec. 9. Ages 10 and up  
**Gobbler Gifts:** Thanksgiving crafts  
Saturday, 2:00 p.m., Nov. 7 for ages 3-5, Nov. 21 for ages 6-12  
**Ponce Book Explorers: Historical Fiction "A Fair and Shining Land"** - the New World from Pre-Columbian empires to the American Revolution. Monday, 7:30 p.m., Nov. 9. Adults only  
For more information or sign up, call 404-885-7820.

### I WANT A TREE IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Send to Stephanie Coffin, 1021 Highland View NE, Atlanta 30306 or call (404) 874-0523.

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