



Virginia-Highland VOICE

A publication of the Virginia-Highland Civic Association May 2002

VHCA CALENDAR

General Meetings:

June 5, 7:30 pm

July 3, 7:30 pm

August 7, 7:30 pm

Ponce de Leon Branch Library

Board Meetings:

June 3, 7:00 pm

July 1, 7:00 pm

August, 7:00 pm

YWCA

Planning Committee:

June 26, 7:30 pm

July 31, 7:30 pm

August 28, 7:30 pm

Ponce de Leon Branch Library

PEDS Walks:

June 10, 6:30 pm

July 8, 6:30 pm

August 12, 6:30 pm

Highland CVS parking lot

Location of meetings is subject to change.

Become a member
www.vahi.org

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COME JOIN THE FUN AT SUMMERFEST 2002, JUNE 1-2!!!

Barbara Touchette

Join your neighbors for the kick-off of summer in Virginia-Highland! The Virginia-Highland Civic Association (VHCA) sponsors Summerfest 2002, the annual neighborhood celebration of the beginning of summer, arts and music on June 1 and 2. Held in the heart of the Virginia-Highland neighborhood, VHCA's Summerfest is a well-respected arts festival representing nearly 200 artists and craftsmen, live music, a 5K race, neighborhood food vendors and a children's entertainment area. You and your family will truly enjoy the festivities!

Summerfest brings fun, food and culture to the neighborhood. It has been voted the "Best Neighborhood Festival" both by critics and readers in Creative Loafing Magazine's Best of Atlanta issues in previous years, and was given awards by local and regional Web sites. At the festival, you'll find:

Artists' Market

The juried Artists' Market at the Virginia-Highland Summerfest is Atlanta's premiere art show. The legendary charm of Virginia-Highland draws a sophisticated shopper interested in original art in numerous media by a variety of artists and craftspeople. The art included in the festival complements the overall flavor of the neighborhood and the tastes of our visitors. The emphasis is to find talented artists specializing in fine, folk, and hip and funky art.

Sound Stage

The Sound Stage brings live performances by Atlanta's finest traditional rock, mainstream music, jazz and blues artists to Summerfest. Live acts perform during the two-day festival, performing on the Sound Stage in John Howell Park. Musical acts can be heard from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on June 1 and from 12 noon to 6 p.m. on June 2.

5K Race and Tot Trot

Summerfest's 5K Race has grown from a smattering of runners to a race with the capacity for over 850 runners. Winding through the neighborhood streets of Virginia-Highland and ending at John Howell Park on the morning of June 1, the Summerfest 5K Race draws professional runners and novices alike.

Following the 5K Race, children aged 5 and under run, waddle or crawl to the finish line of the Tot Trot. Held in the school athletic field on Virginia Avenue, it is a fun event for all and each child receives a ribbon in recognition of his or her participation.

Kidsfest

Kidsfest, held in John Howell Park, is enjoyed by children of all ages. Callanwolde Fine Arts Center helps present Kidsfest, which features over 20 unique games, booths and attractions for children to enjoy playing, painting, dancing and singing. Kidsfest is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and from 12 noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Taste of Virginia-Highland

Summerfest always features a range of delicious food from neighborhood restaurants, including American, Greek, Mexican and continental fare. Visitors can sample food from any of the vendors throughout the two-day festival.

Summerfest is planned to be enjoyable for the entire neighborhood – and efforts are made to keep it safe and of minimal inconvenience to neighbors. Please obey special parking and traffic signs, and leave your pets at home during Summerfest. Neighbors affected by street closings and other issues will be notified prior to the festival.

Summerfest is the annual fundraiser for the non-profit Virginia-Highland Civic Association (VHCA). Each year, the association donates a large portion of Summerfest profits to community organizations, including grants for neighborhood park improvements, and donations to organizations such as public libraries, neighborhood schools, children's organizations and the Georgia Cancer Foundation. The festival chairman is Pam Trettel who can be reached at pktret@mindspring.com. For more information on the VHCA and Summerfest, visit the VHCA web site at www.vahi.org.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES: NEW URBANISM AS NOSTALGIA

Chip Gallagher

When planners, architects and urban sociologists in Atlanta discuss "new urbanism," Virginia Highland is almost always offered as an example of this "new" type of planning design. What is new urbanism? Do most of the residents of Virginia Highland engage in the daily routines that are thought to be part of the "new urbanist" lifestyle? The general idea behind new urbanism is that 1) neighborhoods are designed so you are always a short walk on well paved sidewalks from the stores that serve your everyday needs, 2) your children can walk to school and your family can walk to your house of worship, 3) the entrances to houses are close to the sidewalk creating the chance for interaction with neighbors as well street surveillance, 4) the streets are narrow and part of a grid which slows cars down and allows for numerous ways to move in, out and through the neighborhood, 5) there is a range of housing prices, 6) retail and residences are at least partially integrated, 7) the neighborhood is intertwined with a regional mass transit system.

Now think about our neighborhood. How much of your life falls under the tenets of new urbanist living? If you are within a fifteen-minute walk from the Winn-Dixie, Publix or Kroger, as about half of us are, do you walk to the supermarket? Do you walk to the dry cleaner, pharmacy, post office or hardware store? Do your children walk to school? Do you walk to the restaurants in our neighborhood? How often do you find yourself chatting with neighbors on your sidewalk? How often are you stopped by other neighbors in front of their house when you stroll the neighborhood? Is your street narrow so that drivers do not speed? Could a couple of modest financial means, say an elementary school teacher and bus driver buy a house that could accommodate a family of four? Can you take Marta to work? And if you can, do you?

Our family gets very low grades on embracing new urbanist living. We could probably get out of our car and on to the sidewalk a whole lot more than we do. When the Publix opened up on Ponce I was very excited because I could I walk there with my older daughter and load up our big red wagon with our weekly groceries. I quickly realized I could not see, steer and pull very well with my daughter up on my shoulders. I'm sure I lost a bag of carrots somewhere on North Highland. I know a board member who drives his car three blocks to the restaurants on Highland. He continues to drive this short distance even though he has

gotten ticketed and towed for blatant disregard of North Highland parking rules. I know many neighbors who work downtown and live within three blocks of a bus route, but out of habit, convenience or attitudes towards Marta drive to their place of employment. People drive so fast down my street that they must be unaware they are no longer on I-75 and I am screaming at them to slow down.

If the average price for a home in Atlanta in 2000 was \$145,000 then our neighborhood has priced out all but upper-middle class households.

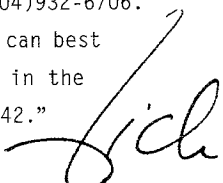
While many of us may not live a truly "new urbanist" lifestyle, our neighborhood is as close as you can get to a self-contained, pedestrian friendly, semi-dense, green, mixed-use community that has a strong sense of neighborhood. Very few neighborhoods in Atlanta have these characteristics. Why then do we hear so much about new urbanism in the press when so few of these communities exist? My theory is that when we hear about a new urbanist project being built in the middle of a cow field or gated apartment/condo complex stranded up on the hill we are being sold nostalgia (and the Brooklyn Bridge). Using the language of new urbanism to describe what is really homes built in clusters with a few high end shops built in a suburban development is marketed to tap what most folks yearn for: the walking, self-contained neighborhoods of our not so distant past. With a few exceptions, what is offered up as a new improved version of traditional urban communities is in name only. It takes generations for neighborhoods to become great communities. Rome wasn't built in a day. Neither was Virginia Highland. Caveat emptor.

Let's talk:

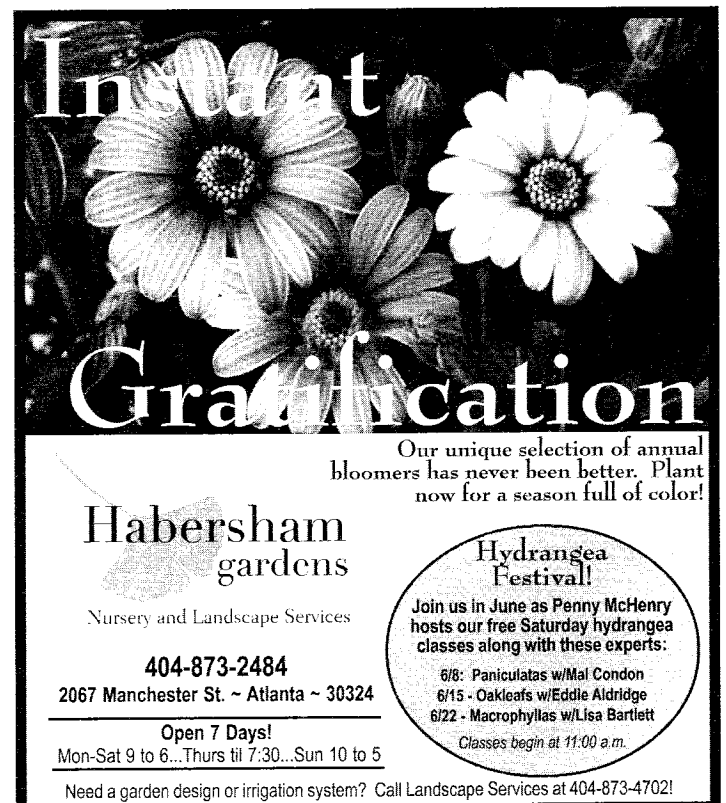
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Hydrangea Festival!
Join us in June as Penny McHenry hosts our free Saturday hydrangea classes along with these experts:

- 6/8: Paniculatas w/Mal Condon
- 6/15 - Oakleafs w/Eddie Aldridge
- 6/22 - Macrophyllas w/Lisa Bartlett

Classes begin at 11:00 a.m.

WE WANT YOU TO VOLUNTEER FOR SUMMERFEST!

Jean Jordan

It's that time of the year again when we begin to move into high gear with our preparations for Summerfest. Part of that preparation is securing volunteers to help staff the event. Many of you have volunteered in the past and we hope that you will be able to help us out again. For those of you who are new to our community, we hope you'll come out and get involved in this fun-filled community event.

Summerfest takes place on June 1st and 2nd along several blocks of Virginia Avenue (west of North Highland Avenue and east of Park Drive/Ponce de Leon Place). It features such attractions as live music, fabulous local food, Kidsfest with plenty of kid-specific activities, artist market, 5K race and Tot Trot. Summerfest is not only a wonderful community event, but it is also the principle fundraiser for the Virginia Highland Civic Association. The money raised from this event allows the Association to sponsor numerous community activities, causes and neighborhood beautification projects. This would all be impossible without YOU!

As a volunteer, we ask that you donate between 3-4 hours of your time on Saturday, Sunday or even both days. In return, you will receive a Summerfest T-shirt for your participation and the opportunity to join friends and family for a wonderful weekend in the Highlands!

You will find a volunteer application on our website (www.vahi.org) which lists the areas and times where your help is needed. If you don't have access to a computer, please contact either of the volunteer co-chairs, Jill Gossett at 404-892-3222 (evening) or Jean Jordan at 404-727-0175 (day) and 404-724-4938 (evening). We will make assignments on a first-come, first-serve basis and will have your assignment out to you by the first of May. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

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ASK OFFICER DAVE

Dear Officer Dave,

I know when I have an emergency I dial 911, but what number do I dial for a non-emergency, like a neighbor's dog barking or an illegally parked car blocking my driveway?

To 911 or Not to 911

Dear 911,

You can always 911! However for non-emergency or lower priority calls consider the following options.

First, you can dial (404) 658-6666. When you call this non-emergency number the operator will still answer "911, what is your emergency." So don't be frightened. Just tell the operator what your problem is and they will place your call on a list to be dispatched.

Secondly, you can call the Zone Six (6) precinct at (404) 371-5002. This is a great option if you have a recurring problem that needs to be addressed in your neighborhood, like a neighbor who continually plays their music too loud or if you need extra patrol on your street. Major Carlos Banda is the Zone 6 Commander. He and his staff are committed to assisting with criminal issues as well as quality of life issues.

Last but not least you have your own neighborhood police security patrol unit. Officer Barry Miller, Officer Nicole Rabel and myself, Sergeant David Ferguson, all of whom are residents of the Highlands, make up the unit. We work several nights a week patrolling the N. Highland area and can assist with an array of issues and questions. We can be reached at askofficerdave@mindspring.com.

In conclusion, if you need the police to respond to a location or a problem you have several options. You can call 911, (404) 658-6666, (404) 371-5002 or write to askofficerdave@mindspring.com.

I look forward to hearing from you and as always "Be Safe!!"

Officer Dave

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Steven Kushner

As spring roars in, summer is just ahead of us. Plans for this year's Summerfest promise to make it another fun and successful event. We have some new sponsors this year, including a new beer sponsor. We hope to see you all there on June 1st and June 2nd. If you want to get more involved and help us stage the event, please contact Jean Jordan or Jill Gossett, our Volunteer Committee Chairpersons. You can also fill out a Volunteer form on the website, www.vahi.org/summerfest/volunteers.html.

In our continuing efforts to give back to the Neighborhood, the Board recently voted on purchasing workout equipment and donating it to Fire Station #19. Generally, the Civic Association has net revenues from Summerfest, membership dues and other donations. Prior to each Annual Meeting, the Board allocates a substantial percentage of these revenues for donations to Neighborhood and other local organizations and charities. In the past, the Board has donated funds to Morningside Elementary School, Inman Middle School, Grady High School, Orme Park, Trees Atlanta, Piedmont Park and John Howell Park. If you know of a worthy organization or cause, please submit information about the group and its request for funds to Wiley Sommerville at treasurer@vahi.org.

As some of you may have heard during March's meeting or from our e-mail distribution list, the Board has established a Commission to review proxy voting. As many of you know, the issue of proxy voting led to much discord at the Civic Association's Annual Meeting and elections last September. The issue came to the attention of last year's Board prior to the Annual Meeting.

Since our By-Laws do not prohibit proxy voting, the Georgia Non-Profit Corporations Code controls, which allows proxy voting. After reviewing the Code, and asking another Board Member at the time, Ben Barkley, (who is also a lawyer) to do the same, we agreed that proxy voting was permitted. We discussed our findings at the next meeting of the Board of Directors. As a result, proxy votes were allowed at the Annual Meeting and the elections for the current Board. Of course, as everyone knows, notwithstanding the fuss over proxy voting, the proxies actually counted had no impact on the election.

Because of the fuss and continuing disagreement over whether proxy voting should continue to be allowed or whether the By-Laws should be amended to prohibit it, the Board has decided to create a Commission of all neighbors interested in the issue to review the current By-Laws, see how the issue is addressed by the neighboring communities and make a recommendation to the Board. If you are interested in being on the Commission, please contact me either by phone (404) 586-2041 or e-mail (president@vahi.org) with your name and contact information.

I look forward to seeing you all in the neighborhood, at the meetings, and especially at Summerfest. Please come out and support the Neighborhood during Summerfest, and throughout the year by being active in the Civic Association and supporting our local shops and restaurants.


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PEDS UPDATE

billie jo

The Virginia Highland members of PEDS (Pedestrians Educating Drivers about Safety) have been busy once again! In early April, Public Safety Committee members walked North Highland Avenue from Ponce de Leon to the fire station to re-designate the 24 crosswalks that should be in this stretch of road. Committee members are working with Zone 6 Council Member, Anne Fauver to secure a date for the international crosswalk painting for these 24 crosswalks.

In addition to monitoring the crosswalk situation, we have been monitoring other safety issues such as the need for additional stop signs or speed bumps on certain roads in our neighborhood. We requested that the City of Atlanta's Traffic and Transportation Department investigate the need for installation of an all-way-stop at Drewry and Barnett streets. After thorough monitoring, the City informed us that the number of vehicles and their speeds did not warrant an all-way-stop. We sincerely appreciate their investigation and cooperation.

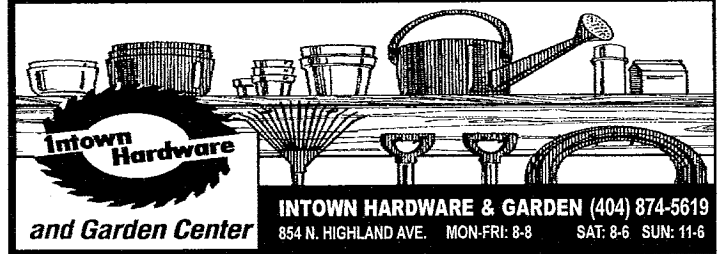
PEDS works in other areas as well. In early April, PEDS held a stinging event to ticket cars illegally parked on sidewalks. Georgia law does not allow motorists to stop, stand or park a vehicle on the sidewalk, in the sidewalk area of driveways or in pedestrian crosswalks. We will be reporting motorists that park on Virginia Highland sidewalks, so obey the law!

On a lighter note, how would you like to win a \$25 gift certificate to the American Roadhouse? All you have to do is come up with a new name for the Virginia Highland monthly PEDS walks. If you've got a great name and are hungry for some delicious Roadhouse food, contact billie jo at 404-892-7070 by May 15th.

If you have any questions about any of the information in this article or if you have any public safety issues, please contact Steve Luben at 404-724-0730 or billie jo at 404-892-7070. Thank you for your continued support!

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OFF-LEASH AREA PLANNED FOR PIEDMONT PARK

Jannie Gerds

How much do you love your dog? Enough to help support an off-leash area where he'll be able to run and play with other canines? We thought so.

Piedmont Park Conservancy, in conjunction with fellow dog lovers, is working to establish an off-leash area in Piedmont Park. Because this project must be funded entirely with private dollars, we need your help. Installing fencing and double gates, a water line for the water fountain and irrigation, grass, paths, and ongoing maintenance will cost tens of thousands of dollars. The group has already raised some seed money but we need to pick up the pace in order to open the park this spring.

The designated area is just over an acre, and is located north of the Park Drive Bridge. The Meadow, where dogs currently play, will be closed this spring for refurbishment as Oak Hill was last year. Closing the current play area means people and pets will be vying for the same space on Oak Hill and in the Active Oval, unless there's a special playground for our four-legged family members.

Please send as generous a contribution as you can to the Piedmont Park Conservancy Off-Leash fund. Make checks payable to: Piedmont Park Conservancy and mail to:

Piedmont Park Conservancy
P.O. Box 7795
Atlanta, GA 30357

Attention: Off Leash Area

If you have any questions, please call (404) 875-7275. And remember, failure to comply with Atlanta's leash law, even in the park, can result in a \$100 fine. Your dog would prefer you put that money toward her new playground.



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SUMMER DAY CAMP 2002 AT PIEDMONT PARK

The Piedmont Park Conservancy and the Metro Atlanta YMCA will offer a summer day camp program for youth ages 6 through 12 this summer in Piedmont Park. Camp sessions will consist of eleven weeklong sessions beginning on May 28 and ending on August 9. Each camp session is \$125 for Conservancy members and \$140 for non-members. Camp hours are segmented into the following:

- Pre-Camp: 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.
- Camp: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Post-Camp: 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

A few activities for summer campers include environmental education and gardening, arts and crafts, team sports and recreational games and swimming. Campers also gain the benefits of the park's resources including biking, roller blading, fishing at Clara Meer, tennis and soccer. For more information or to register children for summer camp please contact the Conservancy at 404-875-PARK.



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Candidate for State Senate District 36

At the home of
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A Leader

- *Mary Lin Trust: Founder of a private foundation for a public elementary school*

- *City of Atlanta Charter Review Commission*
- *Georgia Regional Transportation Authority: Managed private sector team to create GRTA*
- *Breakthrough Alliance: Manager and director of statewide alliance to support education reform*
- *Metropolitan Arts Fund: Launched private sector capital campaign to raise 4 million dollars*
- *Smart Growth Partnership: Founded the partnership between the Metro Chamber, Georgia Tech, the Urban Land Institute & the Georgia Conservancy on smart growth*
- *The Georgia Technology Authority: Founding board, appointed by Governor Barnes*

A Volunteer - Current Boards

- *Atlanta Technical College Foundation*
- *National Black Arts Festival*
- *Atlanta College of Art*
- *Latin American Association*
- *WABE Public Radio & WPBA Public Television*
- *The Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau*
- *The Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund*

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Democratic Primary August 20th!

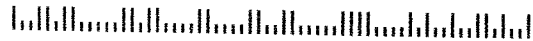
PARENTING AND EDUCATION UPDATE

Parents interested in enrolling in a two-hour child and infant CPR certification class should contact Jean Jordan at jjordan@emory.edu or Louise Glancy at louise@vahi.org for more information. Classes will be scheduled on both weekday evenings and weekends to maximize your opportunity to attend.

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- Louise Glancy, Secretary 404-875-2107
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- Conne Ward-Cameron, Atkins Park Rep. 404-876-0813
- Kevin Cronin, Chair, Planning Committee 404-872-5995
- Kris Reinhard 404-876-1304
- Seth Lynn 404-748-4030
- John Craft, St. Charles/Greenwood Rep. 404-815-0977
- Jean Jordan, 404-724-4938
Co-Chair Membership, Parenting and Education
- David Ferguson, "Ask Officer Dave" 404-702-1734

- VHCA COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS
- P.K. Trettel, Co-Chair, Summerfest 404-875-5889
 - Jean Jordan, Co-Chair, Summerfest Volunteers 404-724-4938
 - Jill Gossett, Co-Chair, Summerfest Volunteers 404-892-3222
 - Rob Glancy, Chair, Parks Committee 404-569-7660
- In addition to those listed above:
- Krista Miller, Business Manager, VHCA VOICE 404-892-9024
 - Jenn Ballentine, Editor, VHCA VOICE 404-875-7558