

Neighborhood News



Volume 18 Number 2
Spring 2011

NEWSLETTER OF THE LAVISTA PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 244190 ATLANTA, GA 30324 WWW.LAVISTAPARK.ORG

LaVista Park Civic Association Quarterly Meeting and Membership Kick-Off

Thursday, April 21

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1438 Sheridan Road

**7:00 p.m. social with food
7:30 - 9 p.m. meeting**

Don't forget to bring your 2011-2012 membership check!

**If attending, please RSVP to registrar@lavistapark.org
or call 404.634.3232 and leave a message**



Food provided by Moe's Southwest Grill (Loehmanns Plaza)

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President's Message

Spring is here in LaVista Park and that means many things; the welcome return of warm sunny days, maybe grilling outdoors, or walking around the neighborhood enjoying all the spring flowers. Spring is also the time for our annual LVPCA membership drive.

The membership committee is hard at work canvassing the Friends of LaVista Park both existing and new. We are grateful to the area businesses that support LaVista Park through the "Friends" program and make our lives more enjoyable and convenient through the services they provide. The April 21 quarterly meeting is our official membership campaign kick-off and the membership committee will provide a membership campaign update at the meeting. Show your support by signing-up at the April meeting.

One of our 2011 initiatives is to focus more on our park-LaVista Park. Members of the Citadel Garden Club and other neighbors have formed a park planning committee and have been working on identifying signature park improvement projects that we can all help bring to reality in 2011. The committee is also working on creating regular park work days to clean-up and maintain our park. The park planning committee will be our featured speakers at the April 21 meeting and will share their park improvement project ideas and ways we can all get involved to make our park more beautiful and enjoyable.

There are several opportunities to get involved in the LaVista Park Civic Association. Just a bit of your time can make a big difference!

We are a founding neighborhood member of the Lindbergh LaVista Corridor Coalition (LLCC), a 501c(3) non-profit, comprised of concerned residents and businesses of Lindridge-Martin Manor, Woodland Hills and LaVista Park. LLCC completed a 30-year visionary study and now plans to fund, adapt, and implement certain ideas from the Blueprints for Successful Communities Study. To do this, LLCC is collaborating with the outside expertise of the international urban design firm Perkins+Will to help develop a strategic plan and urban design guidelines for the community. LLCC's goal is to have a positive influence on the changes that face our neighborhoods, now and in the future. LaVista Park has one open position on the LLCC board and if you are interesting in serving as a LaVista Park representative, please contact me for details.

Our communications/technology committee has room for volunteers. This committee is focused on making sure we have effective and streamlined ways to best com-

municate to LaVista Park; including the LVPCA Web site, newsletter, e-mail notifications and social media like Facebook.

We are looking for a volunteer to coordinate and strengthen LaVista Park's continuing participation in the National Neighborhood Watch program. Neighborhood Watch forges bonds among neighbors with assigned block captains and coordinated networking among the neighbors within their block so everyone looks out for each other. Neighborhood Watch is a perfect complement to our neighborhood patrol and if you are interested in serving, please let me know.

I encourage you to get involved in an area of interest and I know you will feel a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment in giving back to this great neighborhood.

I look forward to seeing you at the April 21 quarterly meeting.

Rock Nelson
404-354-9807
president@lavistapark.org

News and Notes from the Patrol

With Spring Break and summer right around the corner, many of our residents will be going on vacation and leaving their homes unoccupied. I wanted to go over a few tips for making your home as secure as possible. Creating the illusion that you are home greatly reduces the chance that a thief will target your house. A thief wants an easy target. If they think that someone is home they are likely to pass by your home.

- If you have an alarm system, be sure to set it before you leave.
- Cancel all mail and newspapers (a sure sign you are gone if left to accumulate).
- Leave a radio playing and lights on a timer.
- Make sure you advise a trusted neighbor(s) of your vacation, but do not advertise it to those you do not know.
- Arrange to have someone check on your home and if possible get a house sitter.
- Turn off the ringer on your home phone or forward your home phone to someone who can answer it.
- Allow a neighbor to park in your driveway as often as possible while you are away.
- Make sure you maintain the outside of your home by having your lawn cut if you are going to be gone for more than a few days.

- Unplug unneeded electrical equipment (reduces the risk of fire or damage to computers, etc.)
- Leave some blinds or drapes open. (Preferably not ones that are near the home's entry points.) If your home appears closed off it looks unoccupied.
- Do not leave valuables out in plain view. (We recently had a resident go on vacation and leave some money lying on a table in clear view of the rear door.)
- If you leave a car at the home, hide the keys or take them with you.
- If you are a member of the patrol, be sure to fill out a house check request
- Note any different persons, vehicles, etc. that may be at your home while you are gone.
- Make sure you have recorded all serial numbers of all items that have one and photograph all jewelry and valuables.

The key to securing your home is to make your home appear occupied while you are gone. Following the above tips before you leave can greatly decrease the chance that your home may be targeted. If anyone has any questions or would like to speak with one of the patrol officers, please contact your block captain or the Neighborhood Watch coordinator.

Sgt. Dan Brignone, DeKalb County Police Department
LaVista Park Patrol Supervisor

Healthy Trees Initiative

Large trees are one of the most enjoyable and characteristic parts of our neighborhood. We have some very big ones, and some very old ones. And, after several years of drought, some very stressed ones. Unfortunately, taking care of or removing these trees can be very expensive.

Many of us have, or know someone who has, a tree that's dead or dying. Most of us have seen the damage that falling trees or even large branches can do, but due to the trouble and expense involved, we often postpone taking care of our trees. So many trees in LaVista Park currently need trimming or removal that the civic association has made a full-fledged project out of it.

We took the first step last summer and fall by soliciting the names of arborists and tree-removal companies that residents used and were happy with. As a result of your input and the Healthy Trees Committee research, we identified a total of 18 tree companies, who responded to a request for services. The committee went through a process that ranked them based on five categories:

1. Professionalism
2. Experience and references
3. Breadth of services offered
4. Price
5. Dependability, resources, bandwidth

In general, it's difficult for the tree companies to give a bulk discount or fixed price on tree removal as circumstances will always be unique depending on the size of a tree, location of the tree, severity of disease, etc. Our goal is for these companies to be able to schedule a consolidated block of work in LaVista Park, more or less camping out here for a couple of weeks and, because of the volume of work, give neighbors a nice discount in exchange.

The top three full-service companies identified are:
Tree Crews – www.treecrews.com 770-479-9611
Boutee Trees – www.bouteetrees.com 404-799-5472
Tree Cowboy – www.treecowboy.com 404-423-8733

The top four mid-service companies identified are:
DeKalb Tree Service - www.dekalbtree.com 770-652-4216
Steve's Tree Service - stevestreeser@bellsouth.net
770-474-5565
911 Tree Service - www.gunnisonstree.com 404-304-5466
Atlanta Tree Arbors – www.atlantatreearbors.com
770-256-4599

If you are in need of tree removal/trimming services during the next 60 days and want us to help, we encourage you to email healthytrees@lavistapark.org on or before April 30, 2011 with a brief summary of the work needed, including your name, address, telephone, and email contacts. We'll compile the list and submit to the tree companies to determine a potential bulk rate discount. If you have an immediate need or an emergency situation, we encourage you to contact any of the above tree companies, or another company of your choice directly for an individual bid.

The Healthy Trees Committee believes there is some "real life" experience and history with these companies. We will be able to identify the top two in each of the full and mid-service categories for on-going work. Your future input and feedback will ensure that the companies are providing the level of services desired and/or reflect a need to re-evaluate and re-rank the companies from time-to-time. Developing these contacts and building relationships with the list of tree companies will be invaluable for emergency situations like we had during the ice storms a few years ago that caused several trees to fall, damage homes and block streets. This project will be a work in progress, which we believe could ultimately benefit all neighbors who participate.

Removal of trees should be done in accordance with DeKalb County code requirements: www.co.dekalb.ga.us/planning/pdf/environmental/treeOrdExmptn.pdf

If you have suggestions for how to improve the Healthy Trees Initiative program, we welcome your ideas. If you want to help work on the project, even better. Please email healthytrees@lavistapark.org.

If you have an established agreement with an existing company and want to keep it, great. If you want to try companies other than the ones listed above for whatever reason, no problem. What the committee hopes to accomplish is that by having a “preferred” service agreement in place and generating enough volume to make the arrangement mutually satisfactory, neighbors can get discounted pricing, the service company gets to know the needs of the neighborhood and how highly we value saving our trees whenever possible and in the advent of a city-wide storm, we would get preferential emergency service.

The committee volunteers who have coordinated this project are Patrick Campbell, Kevin Rowland, Ken Duke, Donna Newman, Steve Patrick, and Dave Lushbaugh.

Thanks for your input and participation!

Donna Newman
LaVista Park Healthy Trees Initiative Chair
404-636-9779
healthytrees@lavistapark.org

LaVista Park Civic Association Inc. makes no representation or warranty of the services offered. All participants should investigate any services to their own satisfaction.

LLCC Community Workshop

If you are on our Lindbergh-LaVista Corridor Coalition (LLCC) email list, you will receive a general announcement soon about our upcoming community workshop. Your participation will help make this event a real success.

We are actively recruiting residents, landowners and businesses in the immediate area of the intersection of Lindbergh-LaVista and Cheshire Bridge Roads to participate in our Spring Planning Workshop on Sat., May 7, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 1893 Piedmont Road. We have already obtained major contributions from Selig Enterprises and Halpern Enterprises, as well as area food vendors and restaurants, in support of this event. Breakfast will be provided, courtesy of Coffee & Bagel Co., and lunch will be

provided, courtesy of Nakato--FREE for all participants. Our four-year old volunteer organization, a 501c(3) with 120 business and household members, conducted similar public workshops three years ago as part of our Blueprints development, the results of which are available for review and download on our website (<http://www.lindberghlavista.org/>). We had as many as 75 participants in each of those workshops conducted by the Georgia Conservancy.

This spring’s workshop will focus in more detail on the above-referenced intersection, reporting the results of an online survey being conducted by LLCC, soliciting creative ideas, and developing a common understanding of the opportunities and constraints involved in short- and long-range physical improvements for our community. We hope to address a range of issues including improving pedestrian access and mitigating traffic congestion.

We look forward to seeing you on May 7. Please let me know if you plan to attend, so we can obtain an accurate headcount for food, etc. If you have any questions about the workshop, feel free to contact me so we can speak further.

Thomas S. Woodward
Vice President
Lindbergh-LaVista Corridor Coalition
404-946-2405 (daytime.)

LaVista Park Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

LaVista Park. It’s who we are, or at least where we live and how we identify our neighborhood. But did you know we actually have our own park—LaVista Park?

The four-acre park is bounded by Wild Creek Trail, Brookforest Lane and Beech Haven Drive. In the 1950s, when the neighborhood was developed, the land was left untouched by the developers, probably because of the challenging terrain. The lower portion of the park acts as a catch basin during heavy rains, reducing the flow of potential floodwaters past our homes.

For many years, the park has been a center of community life. In the 1970s and 80s, the neighborhood marked the end of summer with a cookout hosted at the old pavilion by the Citadel Garden Club. Most afternoons now, children and their mothers can be seen gathered around the playground equipment in the newly-developed upper park

area, along the trail that runs from Brookforest to Beech Haven.

If you haven't visited the park in a number of years, you ought to stop by, especially during our lovely Atlanta spring weather. You'll be surprised by the improvements that have been made, thanks to the combined efforts of dedicated and persistent volunteers from our neighborhood and the DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Department. Take a ten-minute walk along the new, rubberized pathway from one end to another, stopping along the way to admire the many native species of plants.

LaVista Park will be the topic of discussion at the next quarterly meeting of the LVPCA on April 21. Ken Duke, president of the Citadel Garden Club, will talk about the park's history as well as current and long-term plans for park improvements. This year the Garden Club is developing a plan for color beds (annuals and perennials) at the two park entrances and next to the overlook platform on Wild Creek. These flowerbeds should increase the park's "curb appeal" for both drivers and pedestrians and hopefully, encourage them to visit the park.

Ken will also talk about the need for us as a community to help with park maintenance; cutting back English Ivy, pulling up invasive, non-native species, clearing away deadfall and so on. With the county budget being drastically cut back in all areas, if we want to keep our neighborhood park attractive, we'll have to pitch in and do more ourselves. The next opportunity to enjoy fresh air and friendship while improving nature will be Saturday morning, May 7, from 8 to 12.

Over the long term (the next 10 years), by having the park as a great natural resource, we may be able to plan, fund and build enhancements such as a waterfall and pond at the upper end and a bridge over the stream that runs through the center of the lower park. We could have a neighborhood center that can compete in beauty and enjoyment with Ansley Park and John Howell Park in Virginia Highlands.

Special Offer

Refer a new business to the "Friends of LaVista Park" program and receive up to a **\$75 credit** towards your 2011-2012 dues. (details below)

The "**Friends of Lavista Park**" program allows local business to advertise directly to the 650 households within Lavista Park, and the civic association members receive unique incentives and discounts at those local businesses.

Refer and help sign up a platinum, gold, or silver new business and receive a \$75, \$50, or \$25 credit respectively towards your 2011-12 dues.

How to refer a friend:

Refer a business you think may be interested in participating in the program and your personal connection may help secure that business by emailing execvp@lavistapark.org or calling Adam Abramson at 703-867-0614

Notes:

- Only new businesses will be accepted (cannot be an existing Friend of LaVista Park). Please see website for list of existing friends.
- A member of the LaVista Park Civic Association board will accompany you to speak the business owner to inform his/her about the program.
- Referral membership credits will be issued at the sole discretion of the LVPCA board and for "Friends", who complete the sign-up process by June 1.

In Memory of

Geraldine (Geri) Pine

Longtime LaVista Park resident and LVPCA member, Geri Pine passed away in December of last year. Geri faithfully attended civic association meetings and was always interested in the good of the neighborhood. She will be missed by all.

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GOLD	Ackerman Security Systems	Bill Holman 770.798.0663	One month free basic monitoring with newsletter ad and LVPCA membership card.
	Good Electric Corporation	770.452.4663	10% off total cost of service.
	K&M Automotive	2190 Briarcliff Rd 404.633.1677	10% off all products and services.
	Pizzeria Venti	2770 Lenox Rd 404.228.2013	One of our famous Bocce Balls or a small gelato free with a purchase of \$10 or more.
	The Pet Set	2480 Briarcliff Rd. 404.634.7800	\$5 off any size dog or cat food with purchase of grooming or bathing.
	Whole Foods Market	2111 Briarcliff Rd	Reusable grocery bag filled with pantry items. Offer expires 8-31-2010.
SILVER	Jason's Pot & Pan Restaurant	1865 Piedmont Rd 404.874.0340	Free beverage offered with every meal.

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Registrar

Bonnie Jackson 404.634.6332 registrar@lavistapark.org

Treasurer

Steve Richards 404.633.3558 treasurer@lavistapark.org

Vice President Section 1

Wendy Yang 404.254.2994 vp1@lavistapark.org

Vice President Section 2

Joy Blount 404.321.0396 vp2@lavistapark.org

Vice President Section 3

Nicola Printer 404.982.1392 vp3@lavistapark.org

Vice President Section 4

Dan Strother 404.321.1043 vp4@lavistapark.org

Neighborhood Watch & Patrol Coordinator

David Allred 404.321.3059 watch@lavistapark.org

Zoning Coordinators

David Sibley 404.983.3359 & Sue Hartman 404.248.1133
zoning@lavistapark.org

Natural Environment Committee

Ken Duke 404.633.5017 park@lavistapark.org

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Steve Patrick 404.358.2888 technology@lavistapark.org

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This newsletter reaches 650 households. You can advertise your business or services for \$35 per issue, or 4 ads for \$100. All advertising will be limited to business-card size (vertical or horizontal.) Camera-ready art must be submitted in one of the following electronic file formats: TIFF, EPS, PDF, grayscale or monochrome only, no color. No MAC files or scans will be accepted.

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Missing or Damaged LaVista Park Patrol Signs

If you are a current LaVista Park Civic Association member and you do not have a patrol yard sign or your sign is damaged, please e-mail Wendy Yang, vp1@lavistapark.org to have your sign replaced.