



Focus on Local Talent

Piano Teachers in Lake Claire: Teaching a Love of Music at Home

Our neighborhood is chock-full of talent of all kinds, and we found three residents who share their musical talent through lessons in their home studios. Each teacher has a different style and approach, but all share a remarkable love of music and enthusiasm for teaching.

DaMon Goff

DaMon, who lives on Hardendorf and is a longtime resident of Lake Claire, plays piano for theater and musical reviews and serves as a musical director. He also has taught piano since he was in ninth grade—more than a few years ago, he laughs—with the exception of a period of about 10 years when he worked exclusively on his own music. Because many of his students want to play and sing, he also teaches voice lessons.

DaMon says that in the beginning, he tried standard methods of teaching, but he found greater success working with his students to select or write music they want to learn. He uses texts for teaching theory. He says he has found that some new students initially resist “practice” per se, so he focuses on ensuring that they want to play regularly, which is, of course, practice.

Among his students who study voice as well as piano, he has observed that boys often have stronger preferences for classical and jazz

pieces, while more of the girls choose to work on pop pieces.

“The best thing about teaching is that music is my love and I love teaching a love of music,” daMon says.

His students have ranged in age from 3 (now 10!) to 60-something. DaMon tends to keep students for many years, but a few recently graduated high school and headed to college. He currently has some afternoon and Saturday openings.

DaMon also plays a wide variety of music for entertainment, covering a span of approximately 350 years, from classical to Billy Joel and Elton John. He can be reached at DamonGoff@bellsouth.net or (404) 378-3846.

Jan Smith

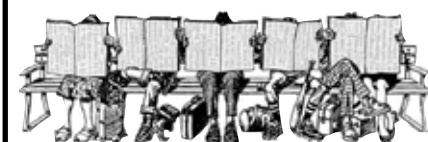
A lifelong music lover, Jan began teaching music lessons to a handful of students in her Clifton Road home when she retired from Delta Airlines about four years ago. She had been trained formally in piano, has an easy way with children, and raised two musical daughters of her own—so teaching was a natural fit.

Jan bases her piano teaching on the Faber and Faber books, which she feels is a good, solid series that introduces a wide variety of interesting pieces and a great plan for learning to play the instrument. She also supplements her lessons with music that suits her students’ interests.

As an adult, Jan taught herself violin by ear and loves to play fiddle. She teaches fiddle lessons, too, which—she is quick to note—are decidedly fiddle lessons, and not violin. She prefers that fiddle students are proficient on violin before starting fiddle lessons.

Jan’s life is rich in music. She plays fiddle with the Rosin Sisters, who recently released a fabulous CD, “Sweet Sunny South.” She also plays old-time music for contra dance and for fun with the Clifton Road String Band, Foot Cape, and the Tune Dogs. Her

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Get Ready for the Lake Claire Neighborhood Yard Sale to Be Held September 26

Do Some Good for Lake Claire—and Your Pocketbooks!

Spend the day with friends, have fun with the kids, clean out your garage or basement, and make some money for yourself and the neighborhood to boot—how can you refuse?

On Saturday, September 26, starting at 8 a.m., we'll hold a neighborhood-wide yard sale and lemonade stand contest; all you have to do is sign up online at www.lakeclaire.org, pay the \$10 entry fee, drag your salable stuff out to your yard, and enjoy selling, browsing, buying, and earning! We're also inviting kids to set up lemonade stands, with the best-decorated stand winning a special prize. The entry fee will go toward supporting Lake Claire-sponsored events, such as the annual Halloween parade, as well as advertising for the sale (in the AJC and around the neighborhood), a map featuring all participating houses, and balloons indicating yard sale houses. We'll also post a brief description of your items for sale on www.craigslist.com and on www.lakeclaire.org, and any other appropriate online venues.

And if you don't sell everything? If you participate with an entry fee and just leave whatever you don't want to keep or sell elsewhere by the curb, we'll arrange to have a charity organization pick it up—no muss, no fuss. To cap off the day, consider a block party barbecue, or just an informal get-together with your neighbors. Come join us for this great neighborhood event! It won't be the same without you!

Questions? Contact us at yardsale@lakeclaire.org or visit the website for details, at www.lakeclaire.org.



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bands are available for concerts, parties, and celebrations.

Jan finds that most of her students are ready to begin piano at age six or seven, depending on the child. She presently has openings for a limited number of additional students. To contact Jan, e-mail her at fiddlesmith@bellsouth.net.

Mary Williams

Mary has been teaching piano for seven years. Before opening her home studio, she taught at the Lovett School, where she provided general music instruction for kindergarten/first grade, independent study and composition for high school, and piano lessons for all ages.

While she does not use a particular teaching method for piano, she is a stickler for technique, reading, and theory. She works with each child to come up with an individualized method of learning, because each child is so different. She also stresses improvisation and composition from the beginning.

Mary says that she loves her work because every student offers something new. She especially enjoys the relationships she is able to develop with her students of all ages, along with their families and friends. She loves seeing the steady progress of students and their excitement in their accomplishments.

When Mary is not teaching, she is composing. She specializes in film scoring and most recently co-wrote the score for *Zion and His Brother*, which screened at Sundance this year.

Mary caps her number of students at 25 and is not taking new students at this time, but she keeps a waiting list and is happy to talk with parents about the process of finding a music teacher for their children. Visit www.marywilliamsplanostudio.com for more information.

Editor's Note: If you are a piano teacher in Lake Claire, and we have

not included you here, please write to us at editor@lakeclaire.org. We will have a follow-up story in the October issue. Stay tuned!

*—Kathy Evans
and Mary Jo Bryan*

Other Area Yard Sale Events on Sept. 26

While we in Lake Claire are holding our neighborhood-wide yard sale on September 26, two similar events will be taking place close by. These sales have the potential to draw people to our neighborhood and make our sale an even greater success. Druid Hills will be holding their annual yard sale on September 26, organized by the Druid Hills Civic Association. Visit www.druidhills.org for more information. Right next door, in Candler Park, will be a fund-raiser yard sale for Granmaw Gordon's greenspace, on DeKalb Ave., and for Epworth United Methodist's "Sacred Places" fund. If you don't want to sell your own items in the neighborhood sale, consider donating them to this fund-raiser. Bring all donations to Epworth, located at 1561 McLendon Ave., on Friday, September 25, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The yard sale will take place on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Epworth. Contact Teri at (404) 370-1003 with questions.

Mark Your Calendar

August 17–October 1: The Fernbank Museum of Natural History presents its first-ever viewers' choice IMAX Film Festival. The public voted, and the six films chosen are *Hurricane on the Bayou* and *Greece: Secrets of the Past* (August 17–30), *Everest* and *Cirque du Soleil™: Journey of Man* (August 31–September 13), and *The Greatest Places* and *The Living Sea* (September 14–October 1). Visit fernbank-museum.org for more information on the picked films and on tickets, including the special Festival Flex Pass.

September 3: Yard waste pickup

September 4–6: Labor Day weekend; Fourth Annual AJC Decatur Book Festival presented by DeKalb Medical (visit <http://www.decatourbookfestival.com/2009/index.php> for more information)

September 10: Recycling pickup

September 12: 2009 Kashi Open House. Featuring the Kashi Atlanta 5K Run/Walk through Candler Park, the Seventh Annual Yogathon, and the Super Silent Auction, with restaurant packages, nights on the town, travel & escapes, art, massage and yoga services, and more. To preregister for the 5K Run/Walk, visit kashiatlanta.org, active.com, or Kashi Atlanta. Register for the Yogathon at kashiatlanta.org or Kashi. Day-of registration starts at 8:00 a.m.; Yogathon begins at 8:30 a.m.; Open House and auction begin at 10:00 a.m.; 5K begins at 11:30 a.m.; auction closes at 1:00 p.m. Kashi Atlanta is located at 1681 McLendon Ave. Visit kashiatlanta.org or Kashi or call (404) 687-3353 for more information.

September 12: Friends of Candler Park Cleanup. Monthly neighborhood cleanup from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Candler Park.

September 12–October 10: *Hair* onstage at 7 Stages. Thursday–Saturday at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday at 5:00 p.m. Lake Claire residents receive \$5.00 off the ticket price by calling (404) 523-7647 (discount also available for birthday parties). Visit 7 Stages at www.7stages.org.

September 14: Meeting of the Lake Claire Garden Club. Location to be determined, 7:00 p.m. Come talk about plants, share plants, drink wine, and eat snacks. E-mail gardenclub@lakeclaire.org.

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Next LCN Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 17

Lake Claire Neighbors meets every third Thursday of the month. Social Time begins at 6:30 p.m.; meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Frazer Center. Meetings are open to all. Past months' newsletters and updates to agenda can be found at www.lakeclaire.org.

Mark Your Calendar

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lakeclaire.org for more details.

September 17: First day of weekly garbage, recycling, and yard waste pickup; LCN meeting, 7:00 p.m. at the Frazer Center

September 21–27: Inman Park Restaurant Week. The following restaurants will offer a three-course meal at a great price: Pure Taqueria, Suced, and The Albert for \$15; Fritti, Parish Foods & Goods, Park's Edge, Rathbun's, Shaun's, Sotto Sotto, Wisteria, and Zaya Mediterranean Cuisine for \$25; and Kevin Rathbun Steak for \$35. Prices exclude alcohol, tax, and gratuity. No tickets are needed, but reservations are suggested. View the menus online and make reservations now at the restaurant of your choice at www.inmanparkrestaurantweek.com.

September 24: Garbage, recycling, and yard waste pickup

September 26: Lake Claire Neighborhood Yard Sale

September 29: Mayoral Forum on Transportation and Historic Resources. All Saints Episcopal, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Park Pride, Atlanta Preservation Center, BeltLine Network, Citizens for Progressive Transit, and PEDS welcome Lisa Borders, Mary Norwood, and Kasim Reed to discuss their vision for Atlanta. Cathy Woolard will moderate. Visit <http://www.parkpride.org/calendar/?tr=y&aid=5194869> for more information.

October 3: Second Annual HOToberFest. Held in Glenwood Park, this nonprofit event features a unique combination of craft beer, live music, food, local artists, kid-friendly activities, and pro-sustainability messaging. The centerpiece is the beer tasting, with more than 110 craft beers from around the country and the world. Attendees are invited to taste and judge the beer, voting for the best brew of the fest. All event proceeds go to Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, Trees Atlanta, and Dialogue, Start One. Prices: \$30 in advance or \$35 at the gate for general admission; \$50 in advance or \$55 at the gate (if still available) for VIP. To purchase tickets or learn more about HOToberFest, visit www.hotoberfest.net.

Lake Claire Officers for 2009

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The *Clarion* is published monthly. The deadline for advertising and editorial consideration is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

From the Editor

We're looking for a few willing "beat" reporters to cover our schools: Mary Lin, Inman, and Grady. If you or someone you know has a child at one of the schools, or if you're just interested in keeping up with local scholastic efforts, and you want to write a monthly/frequent story, contact me at editor@lakeclaire.org. Many thanks in advance for your help!

Lake Claire is home to many remarkable residents who have lived in the neighborhood for decades—and we want to celebrate them. Please nominate your longtime LC neighbors for a feature in the *Clarion*. E-mail us at editor@lakeclaire.org.

Claire's List

Do you have a service or an item that someone else might need or want—something that might add to your income or be a thrifty option for a neighbor? Let's help each other out in these tough times. Claire's List offers home-based services and merchandise for sale, rent, loan, barter, or free locally. It's also a place where you can post items or services you want. Add your posting for free by the 15th of the month prior to publication (e-mail to editor@lakeclaire.org). And stay tuned for an online list, coming soon!

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Need firewood? Will swap logs cut to fireplace size for help pulling backyard kudzu. Call Alice Bliss at (404) 373-8169.

Need help with your resume? Need a second pair of eyes to look over a paper you're writing? Let a seasoned professional writer/proofreader help! Call Susan at (404) 371-1229.

Pet sitting. Over ten years' vet and pet care experience. References available. Call Tina Smith at (404) 247-0914.

Neighborhood call: It's time for some smart recycling!

The Smart Landscape Demonstration Gardens are under way at Epworth UMC and are ready for hardscape, landscape, any-scape donations. The Neighborhood Social Corner, Love and Forgiveness Garden, Children's Natural Playspace, and Wildlife Habitat areas need pavers, bricks, lumber, shrubs, fruit trees, delicate ferns, benches, perennials, bulbs... Clear out those yards and garages, knowing that your "extras" will have a happy new life right down the street! To arrange donation pickups, contact Elise Cormier (demonstration gardens designer and Lake Claire neighbor) at (404) 309-5889 or TendrilsEdge@gmail.com.

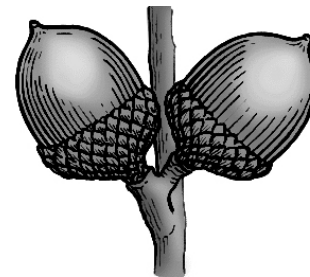
Thanks a million, Lake Claire!

Trees Atlanta Annual Tree Sale

Shop More Than 1,000 Varieties of Native and Exotic Trees and Plants

Add foliage to the neighborhood and save energy in the process by shopping Trees Atlanta's Tenth Annual Tree Sale, on Saturday, October 10, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Featuring more than 1,000 native trees and unusual trees and plants, this year's sale includes more species and varieties of trees, shrubs, and forest-safe vines than ever before. Look for special trees—swamp chestnut oak, walnut, weeping bald cypress, and pawpaw, to name a few—and noninvasive and exotic offerings, like camellia, dawn redwood, ginkgo, and columnar

parrotia. The sale will be held at Trees Atlanta's new headquarters in Reynoldstown, at 225 Chester Ave. Everyone is invited. Visit <http://treesatlanta.org> or call (404) 681-4903 for more information.





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The Tree Next Door

Many may recall that Tom Coffin was Atlanta's senior arborist until he was fired last summer, causing a great deal of controversy. Tom, who has been referred to as a "real-life Lorax," was let go after alerting his superiors to lax enforcement of Atlanta's tree protection ordinance, which requires builders, homeowners, and businesses to meet certain criteria before cutting down trees. He helped write the ordinance and was trying to be vigilant in its enforcement. As supervisor of the arborists in his division, Tom called on the carpet those who allowed too many of Atlanta's healthy trees to get cut down without following the ordinance procedures; he also reported these arborists to his superiors. Tom's "whistle-blower" lawsuit to get his job back is still on the docket of the city law department.

This past June, the Tree Next Door (TTND), a tree-protection group committed to seeing that Atlanta's tree ordinance is enforced, was formed. Its name derives from the fact that "everybody who came before the tree commission got involved because of the tree next door to them," according to Shel Schlegman, who chaired the City of Atlanta Tree Conservation Commission for two and a half years. While it agrees that some trees can and must be removed because they are unhealthy or unsafe, TTND has organized itself so that the city will enforce its tree protection ordinance and builders and homeowners will follow the procedures outlined in it. The group also supports Tom's case.


TTND invites Lake Claire residents to get involved by joining and/or attending upcoming events. One such event is a

fund-raising tree-climbing experience cosponsored by the group and Tree Climbers International (TCI) (former neighbors of the Land Trust on Arizona Ave.). The event will be held in Blackburn Park on Sunday, October 11, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., and is open to all, ages 6 to 96. Come climb a rope, access the tree canopy, and support the Tree Next Door. Part of the entry fee (a suggested minimum donation of \$20) will support Tom's case. For those who are interested in doing more than attending, Patty Jenkins of TCI says, "We need help from volunteers to register climbers, saddle them up, assist at the T-shirt sale table, etc. Consider your time a way to 'give back' to Tom for everything he's done for trees in Atlanta and a step forward in helping others who want to protect Atlanta's canopy." If you can volunteer your time, please call TCI at (404) 377-3150. If you are interested in attending a TTND meeting, e-mail delille@comcast.net.

Tom Coffin hopes to be rehired and to get back to enforcing the tree ordinance. He told me recently, "Atlanta's 2003 tree ordinance was the strongest in the nation. We're trying to avoid losing that law. My job's not so important; the law is very important."

—Beth Damon



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Through the End of October

Looking for some fresh produce, beautiful flowers, baked goods, tea, artisan-made soaps, and more delightful local goods, not far from home? Check out the East Lake Farmer's Market, open Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the corner of 2nd Ave. and Hosea L. Williams Dr., through October 31. Organized by the East Lake Neighborhood Association, the market features foods and goods from a number of local farmers and businesses, including LefTeas, loose organic teas with inspired names; Hardright Bakery; and Taj Ma Hound, makers of gourmet dog treats. Stop by on Saturdays, or go to <http://www.localharvest.org/farmers-markets/M31200> to learn more about the market and its goals.

Lake Claire Safety Report: June-July

Lake Claire remains plagued by auto crimes. Please be sure to remove items from your cars and to inform guests and visitors to do the same! Watch out for your neighbors and report any suspicious activity by calling 911 immediately. Report crime to 911 first and then to lakeclaireneighborhoodwatch@yahoo.com.

AUTO THEFT

7/13 Mon 11:00-11:45 p.m.—300 blk Southerland Ter. NE
1997 Silver Honda ACCORD GA tag ADW3418
Vehicle stolen from front of victim's home.

ENTERING AUTO

7/13-7/14 Mon 8:00 p.m.—Tues 6:30 a.m.—2000 blk Howard Cir. NE

2008 Honda ACCORD

Driver's side window broken.

Taken: iPod. Prints attempted.

7/13-7/14 Mon overnight - 2000 blk McLendon Ave. NE

2003 Acura MDX

Driver's side window broken.

Taken: Nothing. Prints attempted.

7/13-7/14 Mon overnight — 2000 blk Palifox Dr. NE

2001 Nissan PATHFINDER

Passenger's side window broken.

Taken: Change. Prints attempted.

7/17 Fri 11:15-11:40 a.m.—300 blk Clifton Rd. NE

2008 Ford F15

Passenger's side window broken. Taken: Garmin GPS, iPod. Prints attempted.

7/19 Sun a.m.—2000 blk McLendon Ave. NE

2003 Nissan SENTRA

Driver's side window broken.

Taken: GPS, flight bag with charts. Prints attempted.

7/24 Fri 8:00-11:02 p.m.—2000 blk Tuxedo Ave. NE

2006 Ford ESCAPE

Passenger's side window broken.

Taken: Black leather purse.

Prints attempted.

7/24-7/25 Fri overnight—1900 blk McLendon Ave. NE

2003 Toyota ECHO

Front passenger's side window broken. Taken: GPS. Prints attempted.

LARCENY

7/12 Sun 4:50-5:00 —1600 blk Dekalb Ave. NE

Business not listed.

Victim states she caught the suspects in her office holding her checkbook and looking through her filing cabinet. The suspects dropped the checkbook and fled on foot after the victim yelled at them. Suspects: Two B/M in mid-30s to late 40s. Taken: Nothing.

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

7/3-7/4 Fri 4:00 p.m.—Sat 7:00 a.m.—400 blk Harold Ave. NE

Someone gained entry by removing the lock from the victim's basement door. Taken: 1,500 music records, bike. No prints taken because of dirty surfaces.

7/18-7/19 Sat 6:15 p.m.—Sun 2:00 a.m.—400 blk Ridgewood Rd. NE

Someone gained entry by kicking in the back door to the victim's home. A footprint was located on the door. Taken: Laptop, iPod, BlackBerry, sterling silver kitchenware. Prints attempted.

AJC Launches New Crime Search—and Wants Your Feedback

If you are worried about crime in Lake Claire and want to check on incidents in the neighborhood, a new online search tool created by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* may be a helpful resource. At the Atlanta Crime and Georgia Tech Crime Search page of AJC.com (<http://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta-crime-107392.html>), choose Lake Claire from the neighborhood drop-down menu and the type of crime you are searching (auto theft, burglary, larceny, all). Crime data is taken from APD incident reports and may not be accurate or complete. Check out this simple tool and contact the AJC with your comments.

Don't Help Thieves

Be Smart About Recycling Electronics Packaging

A recent post on the neighborhood watch Yahoo group offered a valuable and important reminder: boxes that once held high-priced electronics such as TVs, laptops, and gaming machines are tip-offs to potential burglars of what you have in your home. Instead of recycling these at the curb, consider breaking them down and taking them to an off-site recycling container—at the parking lot of Candler Park Market, the Whole Foods on Ponce, or the DeKalb Farmer's Market, to name a few. (Thanks to Katy Stedina)

Neighborhood Watch Meet-and-Greets

Let's get to know our immediate neighbors and help prevent crime in the process! Coordinate with your crime watch block captain (see the list in last month's Clarion or join the neighborhood watch Yahoo group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lakeclaireneighborhood-watch/>) and set up a regular meeting. Catch up with friends, get to know unfamiliar faces, and help our neighborhood steer clear of crime.



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Reminder:

School is in session—Drive safe! Look out for your neighbors, especially the little ones coming to and from school.

(Thanks to Alicia McGill)

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Recent 4th Annual Block Party for Marlbrook, Ridgewood, Almeta, and Leonardo



Dancing kids Hazel Brady, Mary Glenn Sinkule, Paulina Carrero, Sebastian Carrero, and Sloan Sinkule



The Ferguson family:
Kathy, Mark, and baby Tate



A view of the block party festivities

Welcome to the 'Hood!

Celia and Calvin O'Keefe of Claire Drive announce the birth of their son, Price, born June 13, 2009. Congratulations!



Travel Tales

My Slovenian Vacation

When I moved to Lake Claire in 1987, the neighborhood was a haven for folks who followed the road less traveled. Since I had always vacationed in “places less traveled,” I knew right away that I had moved to the right place.

This summer’s unorthodox vacation destination, for me and my boyfriend, Bill, was Slovenia. I’ll spare you the geographic guessing game that my friends have endured and just tell you that Slovenia is in the northwest part of the former Yugoslavia, bordered on the north by Austria and on the south by Croatia, and has bits of border with Italy and Hungary, as well as a slice of Adriatic coastline. A small country (almost 8,000 square miles),

Slovenia captivated us for 10 days as we enjoyed its diversity, including relics of a World War I front (whose town provided

the setting for Hemingway’s *A Farewell to Arms*); gorgeous vistas in the Julian Alps; “the next Prague,” which is capital



city Ljubljana’s typical descriptor; a castle built into a sheer rock face; an astounding UNESCO World Heritage Site cave; a small Romanesque church where every square inch is covered in 500-year-old frescoes; and a lovely seaside medieval town.

Lest all this sound too romantic, I need to point out that for most of my 50+ years, Slovenia was enveloped in the mystery behind the Iron Curtain. So you’ll appreciate our apprehension as we approached the Italy-Slovenia border . . . and then our curious wonder as we passed through the massive yet unattended border crossing station as easily as if we were driving from the state of Georgia into South Carolina. We didn’t even have to worry with currency exchange, as Slovenia uses the euro (and is a member of the European Union as well). In fact, we felt as if we were in a Western European country during our entire stay: English was spoken with the frequency we’ve found elsewhere (although everyone really appreciated my “dober dan” and “na svidenje”—hello and good-bye), ATMs were a dime a dozen, and people enjoyed whiling away time at outdoor cafes. Admittedly, Slovenia had always been the most economically progressive of the six former Yugoslav states, and it was the first to declare its independence (in 1991), so it shouldn’t have been a surprise to see a country so stable and comfortable. About the only deficiency we identified was a dearth of vowels.

We in Lake Claire pride ourselves on our green spaces, and we certainly enjoyed the green spaces in Slovenia. A highlight was our time at Vrsic Pass—at 1,611 meters, the highest mountain pass in Slovenia. We stayed at a mountain hut that featured simple rooms and food (beats backpacking!) and easy access to the trailhead of a superb day-hike. By the time we reached our destination at Slemenova Spica, we were watching the crows fly at eye level and gazing across two alpine ranges to Austria. When we returned to the pass, we laughed at what we found: wedged into the shadows of the parked cars were sheep, sheep, and more sheep. Evidently, one of the sheep had found a convenient refuge from the midday sun . . . and where one sheep goes, others are sure to follow.

I’ve now exceeded my word count for this article, but of course we have many more stories to share and an old-fashioned scrapbook on top of that . . . So if there are any Slovenia devotees in the neighborhood, just let me know. I’d love to get together to reminisce over a pivo.

—Sue McAvoy, Leonardo Avenue

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Electrical Wiring: To Upgrade or Not to Upgrade?

Older homes exude both charm and character, which is why so many Atlantans are proud to be residents of Lake Claire. The neighborhood is filled with the architecture of a bygone era, giving credence to the adage "They don't make them like they used to." This is not quite the case, however, with regard to electrical wiring. The wiring methods employed when these homes were built were designed for the needs of that particular time period. Over the years, as appliances and other electrical apparatuses have gotten bigger and better, those older electrical systems have remained stuck in the past.

Before you begin addressing your own electrical concerns, it's a good idea to know which type of wiring you have. There are four main types typically found in dwellings: knob and tube, BX, cloth romex, and non-metallic sheathed romex (found in newer homes). Of these four, knob and tube is probably the least safe method that may still exist in your home. The system breaks all the safety rules electricians strive to follow today. Splices were made without junction boxes, circuit conductors were not run together, wires were not double protected by insulation and sheathing, and no grounding conductor is present. Today, knob and tube wiring is often buried in attic insulation, posing potential risk by restricting the insulation's cooling capabilities and placing it closer to combustible materials. If knob and tube wiring is treated properly and not used beyond its original design limits, however, it can last for years to come. Extending any existing knob and tube circuits for new applications is not recommended.

Cloth romex and BX wiring should be less cause for concern. With cloth romex, which is a step up from knob and tube, individually insulated wires are bundled together in a cloth sheath to form a cable. This form of wiring, although more advanced than previous systems, still has the disadvantage of having no grounding conductor (unlike current systems), and the cloth covering doesn't age well in overheated conditions. BX is similar to cloth romex but is protected by coiled steel sheathing rather than cloth. This is a well-built wiring assembly, but like cloth romex, it still has the disadvantage of not having a grounding conductor.

Fuse boxes, as opposed to the more current circuit breaker panels, are another outdated yet common feature in older homes. Like knob and tube wiring, fuse boxes aren't necessarily dangerous if they're not pushed beyond their original intended use. It is not unusual to see a 20 or even 30 amp fuse protecting a 15 amp-rated wire. Replacing a fuse box with circuit breakers does not really improve a wiring system; it simply relieves the inconvenience of having to search for a fuse every time a circuit is overloaded.

So should you upgrade your electrical system? Honestly, each home is different and has its own unique history. If you question the safety of your home's system, the best route is to err on the side of caution and contact your electrician. It could be a simple fix, or it may be more complicated and costly. Either way, your peace of mind and safety and that of your family and neighbors is worth the price.

—David Whitney

Editor's Note: David Whitney is a licensed electrician with more than ten years of experience and extensive education. As owner of Atlanta-based DW Electric, he specializes in older intown homes as well as commercial and industrial wiring.



Weekly Recycling and Yard Waste Pickup Returns!

Beginning the week of September 14, the City of Atlanta will resume a weekly schedule of solid waste collection—household garbage, recycling, and yard trimmings. Place your Herbie, recycling containers, and lawn refuse bags at the curb after 7:00 p.m. on the night before collection and pick them up by 7:00 p.m. on collection day. Contact the Department of Public Works with any questions: (404) 330-6333, publicworks@atlantaga.gov.

Old VHS Tapes Taking up Space in Your House? Don't Throw Them Away. Freecycle Them!

Freecycle is a collection of Yahoo groups arranged by geographical area. There are a few in the Atlanta area, including ITP (inside the perimeter, the one I use), Atlanta metro, and a Decatur one now. I got turned on to Freecycle by a friend in Tucson who uses her local group. It's free to join and use. Free is the theme! Items are posted or requested. This is not a barter site—everything is free, period. You can OFFER an item, ask for something (a WANTED post), or note that an item was TAKEN or RECEIVED. Group monitors try to prevent spam and scams.

As the person offering, you can set your terms—for instance, you can decide to whom you'll give the item, require the person to pick up the item, set pickup times, declare what will happen if you have a no-show, whatever. I try to choose from responses in the first 24 to 48 hours, as I myself can only handle the daily digest e-mail, so I want to be fair to the other full-time workers out there.

I was not sure how this would really work, so to test the waters I first posted a busted lamp. As in broken. After skimming some posts, I set up my offer with brief details on how the lamp did not work. The "OFFER: broken lamp" was snapped up in 24 hours. The lonely lamp disappeared from outside my front door at the agreed-upon time. Now I'm a junkie. Instead of just throwing away things, I wonder what I can freecycle. Yes, it's now a verb in our house. Disturbing. My husband was a skeptic until we offered up our not completely working washer-and-dryer unit: we got multiple begging takers, even with a full description of the not completely working part. The lucky lottery winners arrived on time, with the required truck and friends to pick up the unit, hugged my guy, then talked through their reasonable repair ideas with him.

Since then, empty baby food jars (popular!), dirty old lawn furniture, VHS tapes of old TV shows, and more have headed off to new homes, usually just picked up outside our front door. So far I have only asked

for, and received, ice-cube trays for making baby food. I'm usually too slow to snag kid items, but I did get some worn wooden puzzles that my girl just loves. It has its downsides, like the need for speed in most cases, but I'm willing to work with the system. Less landfill, more reuse!

—Claudia Testa

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Have A Yard Sale September 26!

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Lake Claire Neighborhood Yard Sale



Ten Good Reasons to Participate:

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- 2. Clear the basement*
- 3. Make new friends*
- 4. Party with your neighbors*
- 5. Be outside*
- 6. Have the kids sell lemonade*
- 7. Swap stuff with your friends*
- 8. Roam the neighborhood*
- 9. Give away what you don't sell*
- 10. Make some money!*

Go online to www.lakeclaire.org and send \$10 to Lake Claire Neighbors to participate. We'll include your address on a neighborhood map of participating yards and provide advertising for the event on our website, craigslist.com and the AJC exchange site. Questions? Contact us at yardsale@lakeclaire.org

One Neighbor's Visit to Clifton Sanctuary Ministries

After seeing the Clifton Sanctuary Ministries insert in last month's *Clarion*, I decided to learn more about this neighborhood landmark. Also, I wanted my children to learn about the ministry as an example of great work happening right here in our community.

I contacted the ministry and scheduled a tour for me and my ten- and six-year-old children. Alice James-Jenkins (executive director) and Leslie Prince (board of directors) were very generous with their time, explaining the history and operation of the 30-year-old shelter.

I was struck by the high level of organization, the cleanliness, and the overall positive vibe of the place. My children noticed the well-stocked pantry and kitchen—a sign that donations are making a difference. Our tour guides, Alice and Leslie, explained the variety of volunteer opportunities and donation needs for food, clothing, and other necessities. I walked away grateful for the dedication of volunteers, staff, and participants who make Clifton Sanctuary Ministries a success story.

—Troy Nielsen

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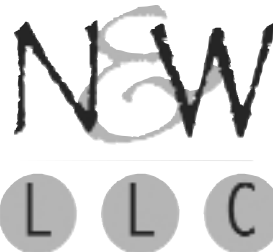
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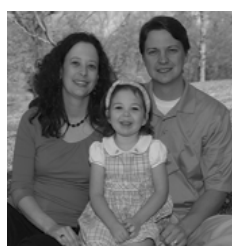
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The Mary Lin Education Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, helps provide our school with instructional, physical and technological opportunities for the enrichment of all students. **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!** Your donations – even if you don't have a child at Mary Lin – helps build a stronger school that gets better every year. **OUR GOAL FOR THIS YEAR'S CAPITAL CAMPAIGN IS \$20,000.** Any amount you donate will make a difference.

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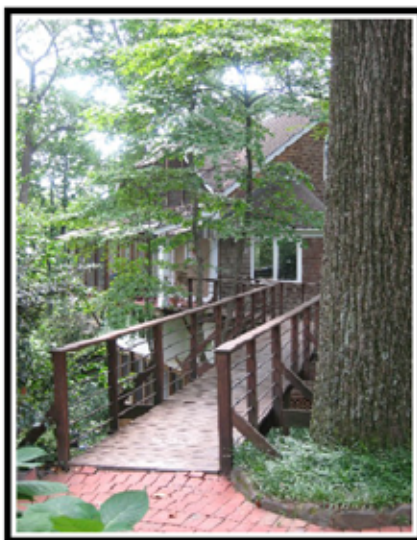
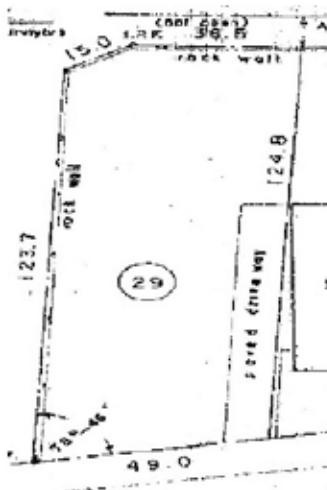
Who knew? When a group of committed and faithful members of Clifton Presbyterian Church drove downtown on November 1, 1979, and picked up those first three men to come and spend the night in their church, who knew they had started something that would touch the lives of thousands of Atlantans? Those who have served and those who have been served are all better for it—all because a few folks went downtown and showed God's love to their community.

On Sunday, October 4, celebrate with members of Clifton Presbyterian Church! Reconnect with friends and make a few new ones at their annual Graduation and Honors Dinner. The evening will be filled with memories offered by longtime volunteers, those who just graduated, and many in between.

The celebration will start at 6:00 p.m. at Peachtree Presbyterian Church in the Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$43 per person or \$350 per table of eight.

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