

Neighborhood to Choose Hanging Banner at Potluck

As announced over the last several months, Lake Claire needs a new design for our neighborhood hanging banner, and we have received some beautiful designs. Thank you to all who contributed, *both this time and last time* when the call went out in the Clarion, on the website, and at meetings..

Entries are featured on Page 5 (and original-color versions, on

the website). Voting will take place at the potluck party on December 12, until about midway through dinner, when votes will be counted; there is one vote per member household. If there is not a clear winner (10% more votes than any other design), there will be an additional vote on the top three. The executive committee is the tie-breaker. It is permis-

sible to come and vote and not stay, but we hope you will come to enjoy the whole evening (see article below on what to bring). This party is always a fun way to catch up with neighbors we may not have seen enough during the year, whether one celebrates Christmas or not.

The winning design will be used for the hanging banners,

and (with the artists' permission) we will use those designs that are not chosen for future projects, such as for our reusable cloth bags. If you happen to know who designed any of these, *mum's the word, please*; we're hoping to keep the voting for the design, not the person. The Clarion hopes to see you at the potluck!

2014 Officers Elected at November LCN Meeting

At the November meeting of Lake Claire Neighbors, the following officers were elected for 2014.

Re-Elected: Joe Agee (President), Dan White (VP/Zoning), Kathie Ryan (VP/Safety), Carol Holliday (VP/Planning and NPU Representative), Nancy Dorsner (VP/Communication), and Andrew Sherwood (Treasurer and VP/Finance).

Elected: Sara Rockaway (VP, Fun(d)raising; Christiane French (VP, Environment)

Congratulations to all of them, and thank you for your work for the neighborhood to those who stepped down and to those who "re-upped." And thank you to all the volunteers throughout the year for all of our activities and initiatives.

Better Safe than Sorry over the Holiday Season

As Christmas and New Year's eve approach, along with the holiday season's fun and festivities, it is a high time for crimes of opportunity. Baddies will be looking for vacated houses for easy pickings and possibly cars left

behind for days. **TELL YOUR NEIGHBORS IF YOU WILL BE GONE AND HOW LONG YOU WILL BE GONE. Have a safe and happy December, everyone.**

You are Invited!

2013 is almost over! Join your Lake Claire neighbors (little 'n' and big "N") in celebrating the holiday season, the year 2013, and the anticipation of the new year at Lake Claire Neighbors (LCN) Annual Holiday Potluck Dinner, Thursday, December 12, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. As usual, our friends at the Frazer Center have provided the use of the Atrium. LCN will provide vegetarian & meat lasagnas, mac & cheese for kids, lemonade, wine, and desserts. **All attendees: please bring a salad, a side dish, or**

bread, with serving utensils. As noted, we will vote for the new Lake Claire Hanging Banner. Preview the entries here in the newspaper (Page 5) and in color on the website. Please note that December 12 is the second Thursday, not the customary third Thursday of the month. Finally, please note that the Ridge-wood gate will be closed to cars, but open to pedestrians. Cars must enter and exit the Frazer Center on South Ponce de Leon Avenue.

Biscuits and Bellyrubs



by Anna Trodglan



Our (Zone 6 Beat 608) Policemen at last year's holiday party

Highlights of this issue

- 2** Dec. Calendar: check it out!
- 6** Monthly Gardening Column
- 7** School Stuff
- 7** Lake Claire Land Trust
- 8** Kids' Corner

THE CLARION IS PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.

Lake Claire Officers for 2014

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 VP Finance & Treasurer:
 Andrew Sherwood, treasurer@lakeclaire.org
 VP Planning & NPU Rep:
 Carol Holliday, npu@lakeclaire.org
 VP Zoning: Dan White, zoning@lakeclaire.org
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The Clarion is published monthly. The deadline for advertising and editorial consideration is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Letters to the editor should be limited to 300 words or fewer. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not those of Lake Claire Neighbors, Officers, or the Clarion Staff.

DECEMBER – lots of stuff for kids (and adult kids)

1-January 4 Holiday model train show at the Botanical Gardens. <http://atlantabotanicalgarden.org/events-classes/events/holiday-model-train-show>. Also many other attractions connected with “Garden Lights, Holiday Nights,” <http://atlantabotanicalgarden.org/>

1-31 Horizon Theatre’s *The Santaland Diaries*, for the 15th year! www.horizontheatre.com

1-31 All month - ride the **Macy’s Pink Pig** at Lenox Sq. (closed on Xmas Day) http://www.atlanta.net/visitors/calendarofevents_detail.aspx?q=event&e=83630

1-21 Fernbank Holly Jolly Film Fest, dinosaur dance party, and crafts. Winter Wonderland Seek and Find, and lots more <http://www.fernbankmuseum.org/visit-fernbank/events-activities/holly-jolly-film-fest/>

3 Jewish Kids? Group Chanukkah Carnival, 5-6:30 p.m., 1440

Spring Street, information www.jewish-kidsgroup.com/hanukkah2013

5 Last day of Chanukah (clearly, completely separate from Christmas! – *Hag Sameach! –Ed.*)

6-7 Epworth Church, Artists’ Market – Preview and Silent Auction, 12/6, and Market on 12/7. Info <http://www.epworthcandlerpark.org/>

6 Registration deadline

for Frosty 5K (see December 14)

7 Lake Claire Land Trust Holiday Arts & Crafts Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 290 Arizona Avenue (see Page 7 for more details). AND that evening, Land Trust drum circle, dark until midnight. Please walk, bike or carpool. Donation requested.

7 Atlanta Beltline Eastside 10k, 10 a.m., <http://beltline.org/events/atlanta-beltline-eastside-10k-2/>

7-31 Madeline’s Christmas at the Horizon. A delightful treat for the whole family, the delightful musical adaptation of Ludwig Bemelmans’ classic book. 24 local girls performing alongside professional actors in two irresistibly adorable casts. Show times are Saturdays and Sundays at 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., with school matinee and other performances on select weekdays. See www.horizontheatre.com

7 Tinsel & Twine, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Howell Mill Rd., holiday market, crafts, activities, see <http://westsidepd.com/event/tinsel-twine/>

8 Inman Park Cooperative Preschool, 29th Annual Inman Park Auction and Sale, open to the public, fantastic items in the auction including great vacations, food, and entertainment. Call Yeti Aberra at 404 290 9547 or email yaberra@gmail.com.

12 Lake Claire Annual Party, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. No business meeting of LCN in December. Details on Page 1.

12, 13, & 14... Join Clifton Sanctuary Ministries for caroling (corner of McLendon and Clifton) starting at 7:30 p.m. A great tradition—starting with Thursday the 12th. That night, stop by on the way home from the neighborhood holiday party! Hot Chocolate, Hot Apple Cider, and snacks provided.

13-15 & 20-21 Santa Claus will be at Rhodes Hall. Reserve your family’s appointment for holiday treats and photo sessions. http://www.georgiustrust.org/historic_sites/rhodeshall/santa.php

14 This year’s family-friendly **INMAN FROSTY 5K** at 10 a.m. Please see article page 7 for complete details from Boyd Baker. Note-register by December 6.

14 Lake Claire Land Trust Drum Circle – see details under December 7.

19 Epworth United Methodist Church hosts 2013 Women of Faith Christmas Simulcast, 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to come/Hope and Joy for the entire family at the Church Sanctuary, 1561 Mc Lendon Ave NE. For further info, please call the church at 404-525-4746 or www.epworthcandlerpark.org.

20-21 See 13-15.

24 Tonight: Santa Claus is coming to town. We think he’d appreciate your cookies and milk.

26-January 1 Stone Mountain Park: “Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer Merry Little Meet-and-Greet,” 3:15, 4:45, 6:45, 7:45pm, other things connected with “Stone Mountain Christmas” all month – see <http://www.stonemountainpark.com/>

26-January 1 Kwanzaa is celebrated.

31 Underground Atlanta Annual Peach Drop

****Many Christmas events for kids all month!**

See <http://www.atlanta.net/seasonal/christmas.aspx>

Send calendar items for the **JANUARY 2014 Clarion** by **DECEMBER 15, 2013**, to editor@lakeclaire.org



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Sevananda – Our Long Beloved Cooperative

by Stephanie Coffin (Sevananda Concerned Member)

Little Five Points parade watchers and participants greeted an unusual sight at the north end of the parade – picketers. In costume and in front of Sevananda, a group of member-owners calling themselves **Sevananda Concerned Members** hoisted big green florescent signs and greeted the parade with chants: Save Sevananda. Seat the Elected Board of Directors. Bring the Co-op Back to Sevananda. *What is this all about?*

The votes for the BOD annual election at the Sevananda Natural Foods Co-op were never counted in June of 2012. The

Chair of the Board of Directors and also candidate, Calvin Vismale, stole the ballot box. He claimed voting irregularities. Instead of working the issue out with the member-owners, he filed suit against the volunteer Nominating Committee, *using Sevananda funds to pay the lawyers*. Sevananda Concerned Members organized and, in accordance with Sevananda by-laws, elected a new Nominating Committee and a new Board of Directors. As it stands now, the new Board has not been accepted, sales have plummeted, 22 people have been laid off, and Sevananda appears



on the brink of failure.

Will this beloved co-op – a fixture in the community – be able to survive? Facing both organized internal resistance as well as the introduction of organic and

natural groceries and produce in corporate grocery chains, Sevananda faces an uphill struggle. Stay tuned as the battle between the two boards continues.

DeKalb Animal Shelter 142 Days – and Counting

submitted by Kelly Crutcher

That's how long it's been since the five-acre site next to the DeKalb-Peachtree airport was selected with a promise to "break ground this year" on a new animal shelter for DeKalb County. Overhaul of the county's animal services, which euthanizes more animals that it adopts at its dilapidated current shelter on Memorial Drive, is desperately needed.

Interim CEO Lee May promised completion of the new shelter by March 2015, but there is still no progress. At a recent Advisory Board meeting, only one county employee (and that one a non-decision maker) bothered to show up for the meeting. Lee May was not present. Almost every action for DeKalb Animal Services is still "pending." Unfortunately, the fate of many DeKalb animals is no longer pending.

There is no follow-up and no accountability by the County leadership. Amazingly, even after completing detailed research, the County is still clueless as to where to find the \$500K that was approved and allocated by the BOC last year to replace the HVAC at the existing shelter. Half a million dollars of taxpayer money is gone, and no one knows what happened.

We need to increase the pressure on the County to end the suffering at the current facility. Please let them hear from you, TODAY! Lee May: ceoleemay@dekalbcountyga.gov; Zach Williams: zwilliams@dekalbcountyga.gov; Elaine Boyer: eboyer@dekalbcountyga.gov; Jeff Rader: jrader@dekalbcountyga.gov; Larry Johnson: larryjohnson@dekalbcountyga.gov; Sharon Sutton: sbsutton@dekalbcountyga.gov

Sevananda – An Employee's Perspective

Yes, after 39 years in business the Southeast's largest food co-op is in deep financial difficulty and struggling to survive. Among the challenges it faces are competition from Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, rising food prices, a legacy of mismanagement, a Board that refuses to abide by the bylaws, and disgruntled members picketing the store. As a long-time member and current employee, I share the picketers' frustration with the behavior of the Board. But I am mystified by their de-

cision to take their frustrations out on the store. Picketing Sevananda will have no effect on the Board, other than possibly helping them to justify its actions. It can only affect the store's finances for the worse. As long as Sevananda stays in business, there is a chance of restoring the co-op principle of "one member, one vote." Why these loyal members would risk sinking the ship to make a point is beyond me. – Stephen Wing

Corrections from November issue

Regarding The Land Trust Family Project e-mail, tfrazi2@gmail.com is the correct e-mail address for Tyralynn. We apologize for the misprint in the November Clarion. We look forward to hearing more from the group in future issues.

Regarding why we are thankful, we are sorry for misspelling Wayne Darcey's name, and we take this opportunity to thank again Wayne and all the Clarion volunteer carriers. Not many neighborhoods can boast personal delivery to the front porches of 1400+ households.



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Keeping An Eye on the Crime – And the Time

Lake Claire Security Report, September 9 – November 2, 2013 (compiled from APD Reports)

Theft from Auto

1800 block Almeta Ave 10/5/13 parked in driveway

Damage: rear driver side window shattered. Taken: credit cards
600 block Clifton Rd 10/12/13 parked on street, no entry into vehicle. Taken: catalytic converter from under vehicle

200 block Oxford Place 10/24/13 parked on street, no entry into vehicle. Taken: catalytic converter

200 block Mathews Avenue 10/24/13 parked at residence. Damage: none stated; owner unsure if vehicle was locked. Taken: suits, cash

200 block Casson Ave 10/24/13 Parked on street. Taken: cash, personal file information. Owner thought vehicle was locked and unsure how someone else got in.

400 block Clifton Rd 10/27/13. Parked on street. Damage: driver side window smashed out, brief-case taken.

Contact APD by dialing 911 for every incidence of crime.

Dial 404-658-6666 if using a cell phone to avoid delays in our Atlanta-in-DeKalb location.

Tell the operator you're in APD's Zone 6, Beat 608.

Up to date neighborhood security reports: lakeclaireneighborhoodwatch@yahoo.com.



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Entries for the Lake Claire Hanging Banner

(continued from Page 1)

Artists' Statements:

Each artist has made a statement about her design. We didn't have room in this Clarion,

but you may view them on the website, you saw them if you came to the November meeting,

and they will be available at the December meeting for viewing before you vote.



Hello...Safe Journey (it's all Leonardo this month!)

Just Sharing On



Astrid Rose & Anneliese Arvay

Birthdays:

Sue McAvoy, November 7 (sorry we missed it, Sue, happy belated.)

Born:

November 10, to Kat & Brett Cooper, Avery James Cooper.

November 22, to Erik and Sarah Rühling (and sister Anneliese Arvay), Astrid Rose.

To help us continue this feature on neighborhood life cycle events, let us know at editor@lakeclaire.org if you know of any birthdays for the upcoming month, or any births or deaths or important rights of passage. As space allows, we will include in the newspaper. **Let us know your suggestions by DECEMBER 18 for the JANUARY 2014 CLARION.**



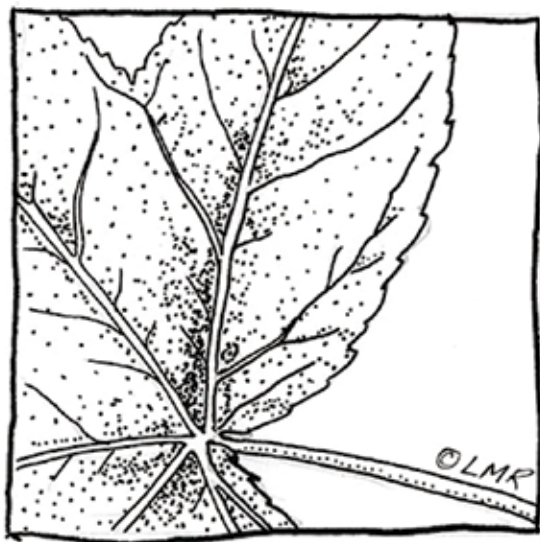
Avery James Cooper

December into January in the Garden

by Elizabeth Knowlton

2013: what a year! Do you realize we have had two first frosts, one on Feb 1, the other the morning of Nov. 13? We had one of the mildest winters I have known here, and then we also had a mild summer. Now, though, we are back to normal with a mid-November frost.

And are you saving your leaves? I still see too many of you letting yard workers cart them off somewhere. Second best is to give them to the city in the proper pa-



Pen and Ink by Lore Ruttan

per sacks. However, you know I don't want you to let them leave your property. As the tree draws nutrients out of the soil and up into the leaves, so do nutrients leave your property if you let go of leaves and most "yard waste." These will not make a perfect compost, but they will improve your soil. Pile the leaves in an out of the way corner of your back yard; fill plastic bags with them; or make a simple wire circle or square into which to pile leaves and other light debris. I

will not even insist you recycle your kitchen waste within the leaves. Just please keep them. Very shortly they will all break down, just as they do in a forest, to rich leaf mold that will mix with soil, mulch it, enrich it. Let nature take its course if you do not want to help.

Although I do not go in for yard art much, I love the idea of tiny beings in my garden, whether bees or elves, and I have toyed with making a fairy house to hide within my copse. Trains being another passion of mine (we still have one, you know, running from New York to New Orleans), I am looking forward to viewing the six tracks of the holiday model train show at the Atlanta Botanical Garden, which runs through Jan. 4. <http://atlantabotanicalgarden.org/events-classes/events/holiday-model-train-show>. If you wish to set one up in your garden, they have lists of plants that go well with trains: parsley and dusty miller, the small-flowered viola, ferns, sedums, and hardy geraniums, plus shaped conifer seedlings, such as junipers.

At this time of year we value our houseplants. I enjoy several pelargiums (tropical geraniums) I started from seed various years, but you need to be careful when you bring them indoors because there is a caterpillar very fond of them. My other indoor plant is a fuchsia 'Gartenmeister Bondtedt' that I keep meaning

to plant outside and have chickened out so far. It would have made it through last winter. In the meantime, it is mingling its coral flowers with the orange geraniums in a south window.

This may be the year to subscribe to our Georgia *Farmer's and Consumer's Market Bulletin*, which you can read online if you do not wish to receive the paper copy. The most recent one had lists of Christmas tree farms and where you could purchase them. Twice a year they publish farmland for sale, arranged by county and section of Georgia. Under the new Commissioner of Agriculture, Gary W. Black, I have read many articles about Georgia grown businesses and their products. Plus they keep you up to date on when to plant your seeds and give other garden tips. <http://agr.georgia.gov/market-bulletin.aspx>

Speaking of seeds, now is the time to inventory what you have and flip through catalogs to see what you might like to order. I always toss my expired seeds out into the garden plots because you never know what might germinate against all odds. My best peas were self-seeded that way this year. Last month I mentioned Park Seed (in SC), John Scheepers Kitchen Garden Seeds, Johnny's Selected Seeds, Harris Seeds, and Vermont Bean Seed Company, but, frankly, I order from many more. If you have a favorite variety, you might want to Google it for sources online. This is especially true if you want specialty varieties such as the eggplant I mentioned in No-

vember. Recommended Asian variety eggplants are Ichiban, Orient Express, and Ping Tung; but do not overlook the small Italian ones either. And it is not too early to be thinking about starting your tomato seedlings. If you had had them out there in wall o'waters or a greenhouse in March (or even February), you would have reaped a big harvest last summer despite the rains.

I just got new Fiskars loppers for my birthday. Are your tools ready for the spring? I confess I am often slow to clean them, but maintaining tools, such as hand pruners, can make all the difference next summer when we are too busy to do this sort of work. Ideally you should clean them after every use, removing sap with soapy water and steel wool if necessary, and then drying the blades. You can oil the space between the blade and hook with light household oil, maybe the spring on your pruners too. The spring on my Felcos disappeared last year, and I was delighted to discover how easy it was to purchase a pack of two new ones online. Apparently you can sharpen your pruners by running a diamond hand file along the beveled side of the blade, following the factory angle; but I must confess I have not tried this myself. It used to be so easy to find local people to sharpen our push mowers and other hand tools. If any of you have advice on this matter, please feel free to email me.

You may write to Elizabeth Knowlton at knowltonew@earthlink.net. -Ed.

Personal and Business Classifieds

CANDLER PARK YARD CREW:

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SCHOOL STUFF

Lessons on Community from a Preschool Classroom

by Heidi Hill

Last week I sat at a children's table, lovingly covered with a handmade tablecloth and laden with bread and homemade butter and soup, and was grateful once again to live in this very special community. I was taking part in the Harvest festival at my son's preschool, when the children prepare a soup from vegetables harvested from their school garden plots and share it with their families and friends. The children—aged two to five—helped take the vegetables they'd grown out of the ground, washed them, chopped them, and put them in the pot for the soup. They made the butter by hand (in a jar with marbles) as well as the decorations and place cards on the table. Their pride and enthusiasm over what they had done, even in my two-year-old's class, speaks volumes about why

it's important to let kids create on their own terms. Their ability to work together and share in the rewards of that work speaks volumes about what it means to be a part of a strong community.

Even though our preschool (Oakhurst Cooperative) is not in Lake Claire, it's an extension of what I find so wonderful about our Lake Claire community. My experience growing up (in the suburbs of Atlanta) was very different from my kids' experience. They learn in school about living sustainably and being good stewards of the earth. They get hands-on experience in growing their own food and preparing it. They talk about and have a chance to practice living in community—helping one another, doing your work, and taking care of your shared space. As they do living in this neighborhood,

they have a chance to learn from people who model good earth citizenship: gardening, recycling, and composting and conserving, walking and biking to school and work.

My son's school is a cooperative, so everyone pitches in—the children help determine what each day will hold, the teachers work together to present our curriculum, and the families are in the classrooms every day as parent-teachers. On Harvest, I was the parent-teacher, and I got to watch my son and his classmates prepare the soup that I would soon enjoy for lunch. I admired the table decorated with painted pumpkins and acorns, watercolor place cards, and a tablecloth printed with vegetable stamps—all designed by little hands. When the other families joined us at noon, we all sat together (for a



The Table Setting at Harvest

bit, at least) to eat, talk, and be thankful. For the food, the effort it took, and the community we all work so hard to create.

Heidi lives on McLendon with her husband (Matt), five-year-old daughter (Claudia), and two-year-old son (Peter), and as many of you know, has long been active in Lake Claire, including being VP of Communications and Clarion editor. – Ed.

Support Inman Middle School

by Boyd Baker

This year's family-friendly **INMAN FROSTY 5k** through the Virginia-Highland neighborhood and the Beltline will take place on Saturday, December 14, 2013 at 10 a.m. Runners, walkers,

and strollers are invited to come have some fun and support the students at staff at **Inman Middle School**.

Entry gets you a t-shirt and some first-class exercise for only

\$25 (register by December 6). Registration and more details can be found at www.Inman-Frosty5k.com and www.Active.com.



Attention Shoppers!

The Annual Land Trust Holiday Craft Fair, Saturday, December 7

by Miriam Herbers

Each year as an organizer of the Land Trust Arts and Craft fair, I get excited that I live among so many creative people. I doubt many other neighborhoods can boast the creativity that Lake Claire can. I get a vicarious rush as I sign up potters, painters, wood workers, lotion makers, creators of jewelry, basket makers, knitters, drawers, metal workers, card makers, book writers, art boxes, ornaments, cat toys,

and more. I make soap each year as my contribution. Since I have never felt "arty," I get to feel a part of the group I admire once a year. At this writing there are 17 confirmed artists, but more usually join closer to the date, and you can too.

Each year the show gets bigger, and the need to find a bigger space to display the art adequately increases. This year we will be at 290 Arizona Ave., which is three houses

north of the Land Trust, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Come shop for creative gifts for yourself or others. This is a good way to stay out of malls and support your local artists and the Land Trust at the same time. Part of the Land Trust mission is to "celebrate nature, community and the arts," so your participation helps us all.

Interested vendors, please contact mvherbers@yahoo.com.



Upcoming at the Land Trust . . .

Saturday, December 7 – Holiday Arts & Crafts Sale, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, 290 Arizona Ave. See article on this page for more information.

Sat. Dec. 7 and 21 – Land Trust

drum circle, dark until midnight. Please walk, bike or carpool. Donation requested.

Note: We have discontinued our traditional potluck on the 13th of the month due to lack of

participation.

We have also discontinued the bi-monthly "Keep the Trust" work days on the day after each Drum Circle. Watch this space or our calendar at www.LCCLT.org.

org for special Community Work Days and potlucks. You can also email us at info@LCCLT.org to receive email notification of these and other Land Trust events.



LAKE CLAIRE KIDS' CORNER



We hope this series is fun and a way for young readers to participate. This month's writer is Sophie Heller, who is nearly ten years old and is a fourth grader at St. Thomas More. Sophie lives on Lakeshore Drive with her parents Rob and Kristy, her brother Howie (8 years old), and her sister Charlotte (5 years old). The Hellers have lived in Lake Claire for over 11 years. Kristy is an Atlanta native - she grew

up in Sandy Springs, and her grandparents were one of the first few inhabitants of Kirkwood back in the 30s. Kristy is a photographer, business consultant, and boot camp instructor. Sophie's dad Rob is originally from Cleveland, Ohio, but has lived in Atlanta on and off since high school. Rob is an entrepreneur and owns a plumbing business. And now, let's hear from Sophie...



Sophie, The Artist, doing face painting at a neighbor's birthday carnival

My name is Sophie Heller, and I live on Lakeshore Drive. I have a mom, a dad, a brother, a sister, and two dogs. I am almost ten years old. I will be ten in March. We've lived in Lake Claire since my parents got married, almost 12 years ago. My hobbies are reading, painting, doodling, playing with my American Girl dolls, biking, and eating, a lot. My dogs are named Bisou and Wrigley. They are both girls and are very old.

My favorite beanie babies are CheeChee and Trooper. They are my first two favorites, and my second two favorites are Honey and Genevieve. They are twins. They don't really look like twins, but they're both from the Ty beanie baby company, and they're both golden retrievers. CheeChee is a Chihuahua, and Trooper is a Doberman.

My two American Girl (AG) dolls are named Chrissa and Kaya. Chrissa was girl of the year in 2009, and Kaya is an Indian. She is the daughter of the chief of the Nez Perce Indian tribe.

Since I like reading so much, I have decided to start a book club for girls in the neighborhood ages 8 to 11. Some of the books that I would recommend reading are *The Frog Princess* and the rest

of the books in that series, *The Emily Windsnap* series, *A Wind in the Door*, and the Harry Potter series. **I'd like to start the book club sometime in January.** If you are interested in joining, please email me at sophia@heller1.com.

During winter, if it starts snowing, which doesn't happen very often, we go either to Lake Claire Park or the Candler Park Golf Course to go sledding. The last time it snowed, I was in first grade, and we went to Candler Park Golf Course. It was freezing, and there was a bonfire. My next-door neighbor Addison Kerwin and I got so cold that we had to sit by the bonfire. We took off our gloves, and there was a stick next to the bonfire, and we hung our mittens on the stick because they were completely frozen from sliding down the hills and falling in the snow.

My favorite holiday is Christmas, mostly because it's one of the only chances that I have all year to get big presents from Santa and my family. Every year, right before Christmas, we go to see Santa at Lenox Mall, and we go see the Pink Pig there too. My grandmother used to ride an older version of the Pink Pig that's on display at the current Pink Pig. She still likes to take me, my sister, and my brother to go see it every year, and sometimes my cousins. We also go to my other grandparents' house to celebrate an early Christmas. We always get lots of presents. They're not very big, but we still get lots of presents, and they're always great. Last year, my biggest present (not in size) was an iPod Touch! This year, the big present that I'm wishing for from Santa is Ivy and Julie's car from the AG doll store.

It's a blue Volkswagen convertible. If I got one, I would give it to my AG dolls and let them and their pets - Meatloaf, Pepper, Licorice, Steps High, and Checkers - ride in it.

I'm also thinking about holding an art show. We still need to figure out where we're going to have it, but we know that it will be lots of fun, and a lot of kids' drawings will be entered to sell. I would maybe like to raise money for PAWS Atlanta because I love animals (but mostly dogs!). I would like to have paintings of things that kids drew of the neighborhood.

I am on the Lake Claire swim team, and my best stroke is breaststroke. I like the swim team because it's just a lot of fun, and I like the feeling of when you first dive into the water, and you feel a coolness washing over you, and you're always trying your hardest to beat the other people that you're racing against. I just like the feeling of people cheering me on, and I also like cheering other people on too.

I go to St. Thomas More for school. My school is Catholic, and I really like it there a lot. I love it. In kindergarten, you get 8th grade buddies. 8th grade buddies are just 8th graders who pick you to be their kindergarten buddies. They show you around the school, because it's your first year, and you just don't really know where you're going. When you go to assemblies, the kindergartners will sit with the 8th graders. My 8th grade buddy was named Devon. She gave me CheeChee, which is why I love Chihuahuas so much, why I love her so much, and why I love CheeChee so much.

At my school, we have grades K-8. Right now I am in 4th



Sophie, Avid Reader

grade and I'm in Miss Summers' class. We just finished our rainforest projects, where we take a shoebox from home, and then we bring animals and fake vines from home, and we assign layers. The layers are the forest floor, the understory layer, the canopy, and the emergent layer. My layer was the forest floor. Since there are five people in my group, and in the rest of the groups there are only four, I did the forest floor with a girl named Abby. Abby also lives in Lake Claire.

I love Lake Claire because it's not touristy. There is usually not cars zooming by my street, and it's always very peaceful. There are SO many trees - they are just huge. I think it's the perfect neighborhood to live in. And also, I think it's awesome because I have a park right down the street that I can walk to or ride my bike to. My parents have been taking me there since I was born, so it's special. I have a huge backyard, and it's very fun to explore behind it because we have a path that leads to the park. Sometimes you find different paths that you don't even know about. My neighbors have a tree house. We also have a broken-down rope swing, but it's still pretty awesome. I love Lake Claire!

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season!
from your Lake Claire Clarion