

# Clarion’s Occasional Focus on our Elected Officials

This month: Natalyn Mosby Archibong



Natalyn OUR City Councilwoman

Natalyn Archibong is truly OUR District 5 City Council member. She has continuously worked for and honored Lake Claire. For example, she fought for the establishment of our Harold Avenue Green Space, for which she had to take a great deal of criticism from then Mayor Shirley Franklin. In 2013, she honored our neighborhood association along with several other community-oriented service organizations “for working tirelessly to serve and protect the needs of the community.” This award included donating to Lake Claire and the other organizations. Councilmember Archibong passed legislation in 2013 that allowed donations to be made to each organization from the Council District Five budget. The organizations honored include the neighborhood associations from East Lake, Lake Claire, Edgewood, Kirkwood, Reynoldstown, Cabbagetown, East Atlanta, North Ormewood Park, Fourth Ward, and SAND.

“We have such committed leadership in every neighborhood that I represent. It is what I think really makes District Five stand out among the other areas

of the city,” said Councilmember Natalyn Archibong at the time, “I am really excited to hold this event in their honor.”

Lake Claire was able to couple the \$1,500 donation we received from Councilwoman Archibong’s office with a *Love Your Block* grant, which has given us a nice purse for improvements in LC Park and elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Councilwoman Archibong, or her direct representative, Valencia Hudson, attends every one of our monthly neighborhood meetings as well as our Halloween Parade and Christmas dinner. Ms. Archibong was also part of the effort to develop the best possible outcome for the Edgewood Shopping Center. She is very involved with the other areas of the district, that include Kirkwood, Edgewood, and East Atlanta, assisting them as she did us in gaining more green spaces and improving police protection (such as better 911 response systems). And last but not least, Councilwoman Archibong was instrumental in developing the final SLUP agreement between the Frazer Center and the neighborhood. She has more recently assisted with traffic issues, such as problems with the left turn lanes on DeKalb Ave. and safety for children crossing Clifton Road. In that regard (as covered by the Clarion last year), she worked with the City’s Office of Planning and Transportation on our behalf to obtain the traffic paddles we got on Clifton Road this past October.

In sum, Natalyn Mosley Archibong is a low-key Councilmember, one who is very effective in representing her constituents. She is not trying to run for anything else nor does she have an underlying agenda. During her four terms, this has become abundantly clear, and that is why so many in the neighborhood support her. Thanks, Natalyn Archibong, for your continued support of Lake Claire and all its activities.

# Community to Developer: Begin with Rules, Not Exceptions

by Sue Strauss

More than a year has passed since initial discussions began over the proposed development of two lots located at 1715 and 1723 S. Ponce de Leon Avenue. The properties are located within a Historic Landmark Preservation District; a national designation identifies boundaries of the historic area, while a local designation actively protects it through zoning laws and regulations.

These properties are significant not only because they fall within this designated area. What happens with these lots may have significant ramifications for what happens farther down S. Ponce de Leon Avenue in terms of lot consolidation, clear cutting of trees, and topographical impact for the neighborhood.

# Mary Lin Rocket Run 5K and 1-Mile Blast

Come out **Sunday, April 26**, and run a beautiful course on a beautiful spring morning in Inman Park to help Mary Lin build an incredible playground for its students and community. This year, all funds raised for the Rocket Run will go directly to build the new playground. Start gathering pledges now and you could win a NEW BIKE – earn a raffle ticket for every \$25 you raise! See <http://racerooster.com/events/2015/4558/rocket-run-5k-and-1-mile-blast>. There is also a 1-mile Rocket Blast for the little rockets. And be sure to stick around for the Inman Park Festival!



## Ambiguity, Amnesty or Both?

Phillip Clark – the proposed purchaser, developer, and builder of the S. Ponce de Leon lots – initially created a plan for the development, which was to include a total of 17 new units; the two existing mansions were to be subdivided into two units each. Subsequent renderings have been reduced to 11, and most recently to 6 new units. The current plan leaves the two original structures as single-family homes, for a total of 8 dwellings. Clark’s proposal has been called into question by adjacent property owners on S. Ponce de Leon and **Hardendorf Avenues**, and Clifton Road, for lack of specificity on topographic data, engineering design, and questions regarding conformance to existing Historic Landmark District Preservation regulations.

Clark has been asked on several occasions to respond to concerns

*Cont. on p. 5*

Highlights of this issue	
2	Monthly calendar
4	Security/Crime Stats
7	Birthdays & Other Life Events
9	Monthly Gardening
11	Lake Claire Land Trust
12	Lake Claire Kids’ Corner
THE <b>CLARION</b> IS PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.	



## Lake Claire Officers for 2014

President: Joe Agee, [president@lakeclaire.org](mailto:president@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Finance & Treasurer:  
 Andrew Sherwood, [treasurer@lakeclaire.org](mailto:treasurer@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Planning & NPU Rep:  
 Carol Holliday, [npu@lakeclaire.org](mailto:npu@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Zoning: Robin Singer, [zoning@lakeclaire.org](mailto:zoning@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Environment: Christiane French,  
[environment@lakeclaire.org](mailto:environment@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Safety: Kathie Ryan, [safety@lakeclaire.org](mailto:safety@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Communications: Nancy Dorsner, [comm@lakeclaire.org](mailto:comm@lakeclaire.org)  
 VP Fun(d)raising: Sara Rockaway, [fun@lakeclaire.org](mailto:fun@lakeclaire.org)  
 Education Liaison: Annsley Klehr, [education@lakeclaire.org](mailto:education@lakeclaire.org)

## Clarion Newsletter Staff

Editor: Beth Damon, [editor@lakeclaire.org](mailto:editor@lakeclaire.org)  
 Advertising: Pat Del Rey,  
[advertising@lakeclaire.org](mailto:advertising@lakeclaire.org)  
 Distribution: Alicia McGill,  
[distribution@lakeclaire.org](mailto:distribution@lakeclaire.org)  
 Layout: Erik Rühling, [layout@lakeclaire.org](mailto:layout@lakeclaire.org)  
 Webmaster: Will Burke,  
[webmaster@lakeclaire.org](mailto:webmaster@lakeclaire.org)  
 Contact Lake Claire Neighbors at PO Box 5942,  
 Atlanta, GA 31107, 404-236-9526 or  
[www.lakeclaire.org](http://www.lakeclaire.org)

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.

Cover banner photo by Sarah Coburn

The newspaper's current and past issues are available online at <http://lakeclaire.org/clarion/>

## Lots of Great Stuff in APRIL:

**1-26** Playing at the Horizon Theatre, Grand Concourse, the off-Broadway hit by Heidi Schreck, Waffle Palace playing too, I think, see <http://www.horizontheatre.com/> for more information.

**1-May 3** *The Power of POISON* – Fernbank. See website. Many other great events include Humpback Whales in the IMAX? Theatre, Mysteries of the Unseen World in the IMAX, Martinis & IMAX?, Fridays from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., Dangerously Delicious Tasting Event, etc.

**3** Dekalb History Center, Civil War Walking Tour, also 4/4, 10, 11, 17, 22, 24, 25 [http://dekalbhistory.org/dekalb\\_history\\_center\\_education\\_tours.htm](http://dekalbhistory.org/dekalb_history_center_education_tours.htm)

**3** Erev Pesach – *Chag samaech*. (Passover begins sundown, April 3, lasting through 4/11). Also, Good Friday, and April 5 Easter

**4** “Life is Too Short to Watch Lousy Movies” home movie group, first Saturday evening of every month, tonight it's Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman in Alfred Hitchcock's romantic thriller Notorious (1946). To reserve a spot contact Steve Whiteman at [classicfilmappreciation@gmail.com](mailto:classicfilmappreciation@gmail.com)

**4 & 18** - Land Trust Drum Circle, sunset to 11:00 pm. Please walk, bike, or carpool. Bring friends

**5** Land Trust Easter Egg Hunt and Potluck: 9:00 hide, 10:00 hunt, 11:00 potluck brunch at the gazebo at the Lake Claire Land Trust

**11** Grandmothers for Peace dinner party and fundraiser, 6-9 p.m., 555 Hardendorf (RSVP BY April 5 to [hughes.annef@gmail.com](mailto:hughes.annef@gmail.com) or call Bobbie Paul 404-589-9827), \$10 suggested donation. Reservation is required! Space is limited! Group singing! Instrumentalists welcome!

**14** Sierra Club monthly meeting – 2nd Tuesday of each month, Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave @ East Lake Drive, 7pm. See <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/atlanta/>

**18** Opportunity for students and parents to visit **Grady High** and learn more – Contact [gradynextstep@gmail.com](mailto:gradynextstep@gmail.com) for information or to RSVP for one of the scheduled open houses, 4/18 (10-11:30 a.m.), 4/21 5-6:30 p.m. and MAY 2, 10-11:30 a.m.

**21** Grady High tour – see April 18.

**22** Memorial service for Rebecca Price Holyfield, daughter of the late Priscilla Dixey, long-time Lake Claire resident, 7-9 pm at the Sycamore Place Gallery of Sylvia Cross, 120 Sycamore Place, Decatur. Rebecca, age 36, who grew up on Hardendorf Avenue and went to Mary Lin, passed away in February. The memorial service will a potluck--please bring a dish to share. People who remember Rebecca please bring a memory about her--perhaps from childhood, 2 written copies--one to be put with others in a memory book and one to be used

in a ceremony.

**22** On April 22, millions of people celebrate Earth Day. Do something for the environment!

**23 and every 3rd Thursday 7:15 pm Lake Claire Neighbors Meeting, The Rose Room at The Frazer Center, 7 p.m. socialize, pizza (THANKS, SAVAGE)**

**25** Frazer Center's Goodness in the Gardens, <http://goodnessinthegardens.org/>

**25** Dekalb History Center, Swanton House & Pioneer Log Cabin Tours. See April 3 for website.

**26** Mary Lin's Annual Rocket Run. See <http://raceroster.com/events/2015/4558/rocket-run-5k-and-1-mile-blast>

**COMING UP THIS SUMMER:** Mark your calendars now for The Lake Claire Centennial BBQ – June 14. Morning: neighborhood team scavenger hunt; from 2 to 5 p.m. – Real barbeque cooked on-site, kids' activities, including old-fashioned relay races. Other activities being planned – **STAY TUNED!**

**Calendar deadline for MAY CLARION: APRIL 15 to editor@lakeclaire.org.**

The Clarion is your newspaper; please contribute.

## Ready for Spring – and Festivals!

Anna Kilinski shares her bi-annual list of festivals for your enjoyment! – Here are the ones from April and early May: They all have websites. **April 4** Blue Moon Beltline Boil; **April 10-11** Dogwood Festival; **April 11-12** Festival on Ponce; **April 17-19** Sweetwater 420 Festival and 5K, **April 24-26** Inman Park Festival; **May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30** – Decatur Concerts on the Square; **May 8-10** Shaky Knees Music Festival

## Atlanta Grandmothers for Peace invites you

to a dinner party and fund-raiser. Enjoy a delicious meal prepared and served by the Atlanta Grandmothers for Peace! Enjoy conversations with friends old and new, and support our upcoming actions! See calendar above for details and how to reserve a space.

If you cannot attend and want to help fund this year's Peace Essay Contest, your donation will be greatly appreciated. Make checks out to Atlanta Grandmothers for Peace. Send to P.O. Box 922222, Norcross, GA 30010.

*Atlanta Grandmothers for Peace began in 2008 with civil disobedience arrests for opposition to the U.S. occupation of Iraq. Since then, the group has carried out its own projects, including the Peace Essay Contest for high school students, and has provided active support on many social justice and international peace issues.*



# S • C • H • O • O • L S • T • U • F • F

by Annsley Klehr

## Mary Lin Principal Process

At the end of February, Associate Superintendent David White provided an update on the principal selection process to the Local School Council at Mary Lin and had previously held one with the teachers. There are 4 tiers in this process:

**Tier 1:** Initial screening, in which 144 applicants passed, which is roughly three times the average amount of applicants.

**Tier 2:** Started on March 9, where the district begins narrow down the pool by watching (parts) of footage of applicants answering questions. These candidates will also be asked at some point to watch a classroom teacher and provide "coaching notes" in response to the lesson.

**Tier 3:** On April 16 an interview panel in Assistant Superintendent David White's office will interview 6 candidates to identify the top 3 finalists.

**Tier 4:** On April 17, APS Superintendent Meria Carstarphen will interview the final 3 applicants and make a recommendation.

The school board will vote on this recommendation at the May school board meeting, and the new principal will be under contract by July 1.

## Expansion Meeting with Superintendent Meria Carstarphen

On February 19, Meria Carstarphen, along with Board of Education members Leslie

Grant, Matt Westmoreland, and several others, met with the Inman Middle School community about concerns around Inman's expansion. Using a PowerPoint presentation of statistics and data, Carstarphen demonstrated her ability to listen with reason and respond honestly, reiterating that the intended expansion cannot hold the projected enrollment population for Inman in the near future. She then proposed three future scenarios, and she then opened the floor up for comments, questions, and other proposed scenarios.

*The three scenarios that were given:*

**S1:** adding 14 classrooms to Inman – a \$15 million project;

**S2:** creating a 6th grade academy by renovating the former Howard High School site in the Old Fourth Ward – a \$33 million project;

**S3:** creating a 6th/7th grade academy by renovating Howard (making Inman an 8th/9th grade junior high), or vice versa, leaving Grady as a 10th-12th grade high school – a \$33 million project.

Westmoreland astutely pointed out that each of these scenarios will make a different group of people upset, while he continued to assuage fears and encourage the audience to voice their thoughts. Carstarphen indicated that in the long run, **S1** would not actually meet the future needs of enrollment at Inman. She also

indicated that without knowing the results of the possible Druid Hills annexation, with legislation voting on April 3, she is not quick to make any decisions. If the annexation passes the legislative vote, then the neighborhood of Druid Hills will vote on it during the November election.

Among the many questions, scenarios, and comments that ensued, there was concern that Inman's \$13 million budgeted for its construction should be spent immediately or it would go away. Carstarphen explained that the money will not be able to be used by APS in any way other than for Inman, and it will wait as long as it needs to. She stated that the community should "do something that solves the right problem in the right way" and does the most good for the most students.

Among many other questions there was the question about re-districting by possibly re-zoning Mary Lin to Cone and Jackson (even though there is no Cone

anymore). Without hesitation, Westmoreland put his foot down and said, "that's not how you build strong schools, strong clusters, strong communities." He went on to explain that we do not want to see division between the neighborhoods again, as it did months of harm and nothing ever came of it. (*Yay Matt!*)

Meanwhile, if you want to add your voice to this community of conversations, feel free to email [inmancommunity@atlanta.k12.ga.us](mailto:inmancommunity@atlanta.k12.ga.us).

## The Tentative Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) General Fund Budget

Superintendent Meria Carstarphen presented the FY16 budget to the Atlanta Board of

*Cont. on p. 7*



Grady High School 10th Reunion Class of 1969



Inman in 1961 Mrs. Keith 4th Grade

## Looking for GHOSTS!!

Ok, so maybe not ghosts but **history**, old photos, cool memories of our LC/CP neighborhoods. Know someone who went to one of our schools years ago? Somebody who has lived here his or her whole life? I want to collect as many photos and stories as I can to share with future 30307 generations. Contact/email Boyd Baker at 404.895.9276 / [boyd@sumowriter.com](mailto:boyd@sumowriter.com).

And we'll continue to share some of the photos in the Clarion, of course. See the pictures from 1950s Mary Lin in last month's newspaper (online at: <http://www.lakeclaire.org/clarionarchives/2015/2015-03.pdf>) –Also, please note that back then, Inman was an **elementary school**; we didn't have middle school in those dark ages of my youth. –Ed.



Grady teachers 1968-69





## Keep An Eye on the Crime and the Time:

Lake Claire Security Report, February 2 – March 7, 2015

*Compiled from Atlanta Police Department (APD) Report (their notices are regularly a little behind, plus the Clarion comes out once a month)*



### Burglary

600 block Clifton Road	2/26/15	Shed and basement doors were left unlocked* Taken from residence: tools, musical instruments, amplifiers, No prints lifted
------------------------	---------	---

### Theft from Auto

1800 block McLendon Ave.	2/26/15	Taken: laptop and personal bag Damage: back driver side window broken, No prints lifted
400 block Harold Ave.	2/28/15	Taken: tablet Damage: driver side window broken, No mention of prints
600 block Clifton Road	3/7/15	From street, No prints taken Taken: laptop, backpack, US passport Damage: back passenger side window broken

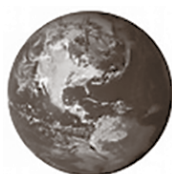
**\*PLEASE MAKE  
SURE YOUR DOORS  
AND WINDOWS  
ARE LOCKED AT ALL  
TIMES!!!**

#### Notes Regarding Crime and Security

The property manager at the Edgewood Retail District would like all patrons to program their 24-hour security number into their phones in the event of a threatening situation or to report anything amiss: 678-618-2308.

Contact APD by dialing 911 from your home or cell phone for any/every incidence of crime or suspicious behavior. Program 404-658-6666 into your cell phone for a prompter response. Tell the operator you're in APD's Zone 6, Beat 608 if your location does not automatically come up on the operator's screen. It's also a good idea to give a call back number.

For up-to-date security reports join [lakeclaireneighborhood-watch@yahoogroups.com](mailto:lakeclaireneighborhood-watch@yahoogroups.com) and Nextdoor.com (Lake Claire). The latter has become the best way to receive up to date security reports, as the Atlanta Police Department posts to that site. To join: [www.nextdoor.com/join](http://www.nextdoor.com/join). This is also a great place to report missing pets in the Lost & Found category. *You will only receive the notifications you request when you choose your settings, so your inbox will not be slammed with information in which you are not interested.*



**Change your channel.  
Atlanta's new home town brokerage.**



**[lewisandredwine.com](http://lewisandredwine.com) • 1417B Dutch Valley Place NE Atlanta, GA 30324 • 404.897.1595**

Bill Biddle, Owner of Bill's Yard & Odd Job Service, has been caring for yards in Druid Hills since 1977.

#### We service:

- Druid Hills, Lake Claire,
- Virginia Highland,
- Inman Park, Candler Park,
- Ansley Park, & Midtown

#### Our services include, but are not limited to:

- Annual Lawn Maintenance
- Lawn Mowing
- Cleaning Gutters
- Hauling Debris
- General/Party Clean Up
- Mulch Application
- Pressure Washing
- Tree Work



**<http://billsyardservice.com>**

**LICENSED AND INSURED**

Please see our website  
for more details, lawn advice,  
areas serviced by zip, and more.

**No job is  
too odd!**

EMAIL: [INFO@BILLSYARDSERVICE.COM](mailto:INFO@BILLSYARDSERVICE.COM)

PHONE NUMBER: 404-378-6477

**FREE  
ESTIMATES!**

#### Personal and Business Classifieds

Peter and Paul Landscape Cleanup and Maintenance, Call or email Lake Claire resident Pat Del Rey, 404 933 3053 or [pdelrey@uga.edu](mailto:pdelrey@uga.edu)

Francine's Cleaning Service - impeccable - for references in Lake Claire call Pat Del Rey 404-933-3053 For cleaning call 678-886-4188 or email @ [fancy-pineapples@yahoo.com](mailto:fancy-pineapples@yahoo.com)

# Community to Developer

*continued from page 1*

regarding elevation, water retention and sewer management, ingress/egress, curbs, driveways, and other issues critical to development of the property. Further, he has been advised by the Landmark District Preservation Committee (LDPC) that no official action can be taken without a formal application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) issued by the City of Atlanta's Urban Design Commission (UDC). But rather than address specific matters, he has responded to repeated requests for plan clarification with modified versions of previous concepts, none of which address the underlying matters.

The latest conceptual plan would still require a variance from the LDPC to allow for a setback on Clifton Road. Such a variance seems unnecessary to accomplish Clark's objective for the development, now that there are fewer units being built on the property. He is asking for a 30-ft. setback; current homes are at a 44-ft. setback. Granting this variance would disrupt the aesthetic appeal the LDPC is charged to uphold.

Another feature remaining in the latest rendering is an access road that has been questioned as an attempt to join the two properties, effectively allowing amnesty from the regulations governing two separate lots. Adjacent neighbors are legitimately concerned the developer is using the current owner's past attempts to combine the two lots to gain these advantages.

No one argues that these properties have developable characteristics within historic district regulations. But these cannot appropriately be considered when the developer has not submit-

ted a formal plan. He continues to remit conceptual drawings, asking the LDPC and adjacent neighbors to speculate about what might be possible, rather than looking at what is allowable under current regulations.

## What's Next?

Last May, the LDPC stated that it was unable to make a formal comment on the project, due to the many unanswered questions regarding the details of the development. The Committee also said these issues were the basis for the unanimous opposition of adjacent and nearby neighbors. Yet, despite Clark's ambiguous development plans, he continued to press the LDPC for its support, submitting his latest plan in January. *That plan was unanimously opposed by neighbors immediately adjacent to the properties.*

In a recent e-mail communication to members of the LDPC, Clark stated he is at a crossroads as to moving forward with the project. He went on to say his latest revision to the site plan and density was an effort to "make it as pleasing as possible, not only to the Committee but to the adjacent neighbors as well." He noted he would be willing to meet with those opposed to the project as a way to overcome their opposition.

Clark has also repeatedly stated that he does not wish to proceed with the plan unless he has

community support. It is clear he does not have that support. Both the LDPC and the affected neighbors have been very clear about what is needed in order for the project to be given full consideration.

As of the writing of this article, Clark communicated via e-mail that he would "...make my decision shortly" regarding his intention to proceed with the project. He cited that he has spent considerable time and money to make the development acceptable to

the community. That may be the case; we will never know. What we do know is that without a formal plan, the LDPC cannot offer official comment, and the public has no opportunity to voice its views

— positive or negative — about the proposed development.

Whether Phillip Clark stays or goes is — in some ways — just one part of this discussion. This development is about more than two parcels of land at the corner of Clifton Road and S. Ponce de Leon Avenue. These properties are a cornerstone in preserving the legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted and the community so many people have fought to protect. Every day, so much of what makes our neighborhood a desirable respite from the urban grind is being replaced by a deluge of development, seemingly without a thought about what is happening to our way of life.

*It's everywhere.* Take a walk

down Clifton Terrace. Remember when the street was lined with trees?

They are gone; two single-family parcels replaced by what will eventually be four homes. A neighbor, who has lived in our community for more than 40 years, said she can't stand to walk down that block any longer. "I am heartbroken over the loss of the trees," she said.

The Clifton Ridge project is another example of attempted development with increased density. At issue here is creation of a subdivision of seven houses from three, single-family residential lots. The project has been stalled for the past several years due to litigation. Unfortunately, the damage was done when the ridge was clear-cut of all trees. Whether or not any houses are built, that ecosystem has been forever changed.

## Sense and Sensibility

Frederick Law Olmsted once said that the possession of arbitrary influence tends to 'destroy humane sensibility, magnanimity, and truth.' In other words, the cause becomes greater than the rules. Those of us adjacent to the proposed project on S. Ponce de Leon Avenue and Clifton Road do not oppose development; rather, we feel responsible to safeguard against intrusions upon regulations established to protect properties earmarked as 'historic.' We feel responsible to safeguard our sense of community, and to preserve Olmsted's oasis in the city. Without a formal plan — and the vetting process that goes with it — we cannot possibly know what we are agreeing to and, therefore, we cannot keep our promise to be good stewards of the Olmsted vision.

*Those of us adjacent to the proposed project on S. Ponce de Leon Avenue and Clifton Road do not oppose development; rather, we feel responsible to safeguard against intrusions upon regulations established to protect properties earmarked as 'historic.'*

# Staying Fit and Healthy in Lake Claire

by Miriam Herbers

Six Lake Clarions and one Candler Park neighbor are among a group that meets three times a week at the Decatur Recreation center for dance aerobics with Bobbie Elzey. We dance routines that raise our heart rate, limber our joints, stretch our muscles, improve our balance, and lift our spirits, all in a safe and friendly environment.

All of this is under the super, inspiring direction of Bobbie Elzey. Every move we make has a

functional reason, but we don't care. We just dance for the fun of it. Many have been dancing with Bobbie since she started teaching classes in the 1970s, but I just started when I retired four years ago. Jane Merkle (Connecticut) told me about it, and now I really miss if I have to skip a day. Sheila Schurer's (Connecticut) husband Karl walks the track while we dance. Scott Russell (Almeta) leads a Monday and Wednesday evening class there. His wife Susan Davis is also a contra dancer (along with Jane and Scott)

Occasionally we hold potluck lunches, which is such a nice way to strengthen the sense of the dance community. My dad is 93, and my Mom lived to be 89, so I think it behooves me to try to live a healthy life for my own good. Sue May (Page) says health is not the reason she enjoys our group, but participating in the good spirits in our dance space. Her husband, Dan, is also a Trees Atlanta volunteer, and I enjoy making that connection.

"Not only does Bobbie perform fun choreography with music that I love, but she herself is an inspiration to me," says Jane Merkle. "I love dancing to the wide variety of music (rock, swing, Latin, coun-



*Exercise Action!*

try, R&B, etc.), and learning new dances each session keeps it from ever getting old" says Scott Russell. Ann Mauney (Hardendorf) says, "Bobbie is a talented choreographer and a positive, giving human being who connects with every person in her classes. What a gift to all of us!" I could not agree more.



# Little Free Libraries

## The Danger of Being Neighborly Without a Permit

We mentioned last month that Lake Claire's Little Free Libraries (LFL) have more than doubled in a couple of years. In fact, all over America, people have enthusiastically built the small "give one, take one" book exchanges in front of their homes. But now in some cities, they are being told to tear them down.

A 76-year-old in Sherman Oaks, California, felt that his little library, roughly the size of a dollhouse, "turned strangers into friends and a sometimes-impersonal neighborhood into a community," an Atlantic Magazine reporter observed. The man knew he was onto something "when a 9-year-old boy knocked on his door one morning to say how much he liked the little library." He went on to explain, "I met more neighbors in the first three weeks than in the previous 30 years." He subsequently received a notice to remove it from his yard.

Last summer in Kansas, the Leawood City Council dubbed a LFL an "illegal detached structure" and told the family they would face a fine if they did not

remove it from their yard. Scattered stories like this have appeared in various local news outlets. The L.A. Times noted last



February, "Crime, homelessness, and crumbling infrastructure are still a problem in almost every part of America, but two cities have recently cracked down on one of the country's biggest problems: small-community libraries where residents can share books." Michael Schaub wrote,

"Officials in Los Angeles and Shreveport, Louisiana, have told the owners of homemade lending libraries that they're in violation of city codes, and asked them to remove or relocate their small book collections. Having written previously about crack-downs on parkway vegetable gardens, I knew the city's argument is that you can't do anything that might block emergency vehicle access, obstruct motorists' views, impede pedestrians, or make it hard to open car doors. But one LFL in question, at the intersection of a four-way stop, does none of those things. And I can't help but point out that a city tree in front of Mr. Cook's house, on the parkway strip, has untamed roots that have lifted the sidewalk a few inches, posing a clear and obvious obstruction and tripping hazard." Cook says, "Neighbors whom I have seen and rec-



ognized over the years but never had any real conversation with now stop by to donate, chat, and trade news. The city pays out millions of dollars in trip-and-fall settlements every year, and last time I checked, tree-trimming was on a 45-year cycle—no joke. But put up a lending library, and the city is at your door in a jiffy."

*Luckily, there are no such problems in Atlanta. See last month's issue for a map of our Lake Claire Neighborhood's LFLs. And, as noted, we'd love to talk with the builders of our Little Free Libraries to hear what inspired their creations and designs. Please email us at editor@lakeclaire.org if you would like your LFL to be featured in a future article for The Clarion. —Ed.*



## Ready to put down or pick up roots? I can help.












I've helped people put down (and pick up) roots in and around 30307 for years. I'm a Mary Lin and Grady High mom and personally rooted in Lake Claire. As an Intown homeowner and Realtor® with deep roots in our community, I know how to help you find the right home and market your home to sell.

**Ready to buy?** I'll leverage my intown network to find the right property – and negotiate the best deal for you.

**Ready to sell?** My experience with professional staging, compelling photography, and creative marketing helps sell your home faster and for the highest price.

Contact me, your intown Realtor® and neighbor, when you're ready to put down (or pick up) roots.



-  Lake Claire
-  Candler Park
-  Inman Park
-  Decatur
-  Druid Hills
-  Virginia Highland
-  Morningside
-  Poncey Highland
-  Old Fourth Ward



# School Stuff

*continued from page 3*

Education on March 2. The goal is to look futuristically and improve the quality of education while increasing efficiency and maximizing the use of the money spent.

As it stands, the FY16 APS budget has \$682.8 million with about \$25 million in projected new resources: \$11 million coming from local and state and \$14 million from other sources. \$31

million will be used in mandatory expenditures for special education, Charter School, pension plans, and teacher retirements. Due to this mandatory spending, all other areas will see a \$6 mil-

lion reduction. APS has not finalized what all these reductions will look like yet. **Stay tuned.**

*Annsley Klehr is Lake Claire's Education Chair. – Ed.*

## Hello...Safe Journey – Skiing in and around Lake Claire



*Welcome to the world, Elliot Micah Philip Masarek!*

### This Month's Birthdays:

Happy birthday on April 2, Tyler Bliss, Leonardo, turns 7  
 Happy birthday on April 9, Benton Carper, Leonardo  
 Happy birthday on April 10, Kelly Crutcher, Hardendorf  
 Happy birthday on April 15, Jim Wilson (& Leonardo di Vinci), Delaware  
 Happy birthday on April 16, Aliza Howard Fleming, Harold  
 Happy birthday on April 17, Joe Agee, Harold, our esteemed LCN President  
 Happy birthday on April 18, Deacon Baker, Leonardo, turns 14  
 Happy birthday on April 21, Jamie McGill, Delaware, turns 12  
 Happy birthday on April 21, Jennifer Meyer-Carper, Leonardo  
 Happy birthday on April 28, Sara McGill, Delaware, turns 10 (the big one-oh)

*Please help us make this feature inclusive. Take a minute right now, and send life cycle events / important rights of passage, etc., for the month of May – and beyond – send to [editor@lakeclaire.org](mailto:editor@lakeclaire.org). **Deadline APRIL 15** for the **MAY** newspaper.*

Happy birthday on April 30, Beth van Arkel, Southerland  
*Belated Birth Day: Congrats to Eva & Adam Masarek, Delaware Avenue, on the birth of Elliot Micah Philip Masarek on February 13 (see pics above)*

*Congrats!! To Sarah Coburn and Erik Rühling, Leonardo, expecting a third daughter in July (Erik to be completely outnumbered, following in the steps of the Veazeys)*

*Get well soon!! – To Margaret Gossett – recuperating from a broken hip (Harold)*

*Tragic News: Rebecca Price Holyfield, 36, daughter of the late Priscilla Dixey, long-time Lake Claire resident, passed away in February. Please see details of the memorial service in this month's calendar.*



*Our monthly cartoons are from the Biscuits and Bellyrubs series by Anna Trodglén. See the article on Anna in the March issue on Page 3.*

### DUE(S) YOUR PART FOR 2015

How? Mail a check for \$20 to Lake Claire Neighbors,  
 Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 5942,  
 Atlanta, GA 31107,  
 or go to

[www.lakeclaire.org/lcn/members.htm](http://www.lakeclaire.org/lcn/members.htm).

Why? Help our neighborhood association clean up greenspaces,  
 install signs, support initiatives, have great parties,  
 and support deserving causes.

Thanks to Lake Claire neighbors who have  
 already paid 2015 dues.

### Editor's Note:

Happy Earth Day—Week—Month!  
 Happy Spring, Buddha's Birthday, Passover, Easter.

Send articles and suggestions for the Clarion to [editor@lakeclaire.org](mailto:editor@lakeclaire.org) by May 15 -- and the 15th of each month. We always welcome your contributions, including unsolicited material. I especially hope that children will contribute to the column, Lake Claire Kids' Corner, which you'll find on the back, page 12.

Please support Savage Pizza, who gives us free pizza for our neighborhood meet-

ings every month, as well as our other advertisers! If you need a new service or product, please consider using them.

Finally, if you live in Lake Claire and do not receive your Clarion delivered to your porch about the first week of the month, please e-mail Alicia at [distribution@lakeclaire.org](mailto:distribution@lakeclaire.org) or me at [editor@lakeclaire.org](mailto:editor@lakeclaire.org). We aim for the first week of the month, but sometimes life interferes. If there are ever any problems, please let us know.

Warm regards, Beth



# Make Your Dog Green for Earth Day:

## Use Biodegradable Dog Waste Bags

There is a very important reason to use biodegradable dog waste bags. Using a regular plastic bag to pick up your dog's waste will end up in the soil for a thousand years. While they may cost a little bit more, the biodegradable bags are better for the environment, and you will be

handling your doggie poop in a way that is good for people and the planet.

You also do not want to leave the waste in the ground (of course, this is a reason to keep your dog on a leash). By bagging it, you will be helping support cleaner drinking water; accord-

ing to recent studies, there are an estimated 400 million dogs on the planet, and their waste is being introduced into the water supply. In addition to preventing the spread of disease and helping to keep drinking water clean, the bags are compostable. So, should you have your own compost pile,

you can throw your own dog's used dog poop bags into the compost and just let nature take over from there. Over time you are able to turn that waste into fertilizer for your garden. Most biodegradable bags are also flushable, so you are able to dispose of them in this way as well.

Using biodegradable bags is a significant way that you –and your dog– can contribute to making the earth greener. Happy Earth Day from the Clarion.

## Being Neighborly in Lake Claire

We all enjoy our unique neighborhood with its individuality, but as city residents there are some laws we need to follow:

- **Pets.** Keep doggies on leash and "scoop the poop." There is a great dog park in Oakhurst and one in Decatur near the post office, where dogs may enjoy running free. Lake Claire park is a not the place for that. Not only

because of the law, but because of neighbors appropriately walking their dogs on leashes, please respect this necessity.

- **Sidewalks** are a public safety amenity that we are fortunate to have on most of our streets. Up-keep of sidewalks in the City of Atlanta is the home owner's responsibility. Please keep sidewalks clear of projecting branch-

es and other obstructions.

- **Speed Limits, Streets, & Lights.** Most streets have a 25-MPH speed limit, on McLendon 30 MPH, on DeKalb Ave. 35 MPH. Please obey the speed limit, particularly on McLendon to slow down out-of-neighborhood speeders. If you have a traffic sign in front of your house, please clean it occasionally.

- For street repair call 404-330-6245. Street light repair call 1-888-660-5890.

- **Parking.** Street parking is free. Tickets have been issued for parking in the wrong direction and parking too close to an intersection. Please do not park so as to block the sidewalk, nor mailboxes. Cars on city streets must have current tags and registration stickers.

### FIRST RATE ROOFING EXPERTS

Hail damage or aging problems?  
Call for a free inspection.



Lake Claire references

Mention **CLARION** for a discount.

404-876-1213

Owner: David Damon [fristratesiding@comcast.net](mailto:fristratesiding@comcast.net)

The Justice Center of Atlanta offers free mediation services to Atlanta residents. They do require that all involved agree to participate and that all call the Center to verify this. The Center is located in Inman Park, 976 Edgewood Avenue, NE, GA 30307-2580. Call 404.523.8236, ext. 200 to find out more information.

### Tickets Available Now!



## This is Goodness.

**Goodness in the Gardens** is an elegant night in our gardens enjoying friends, delicious food, fine wine, craft beer, live music, a lively auction, and photo booth memories. It is the Frazer Center's premier fundraiser to support its mission for an inclusive community where people of all levels of ability and disability gather, learn, and flourish together.

**It is Saturday, April 25 from 6-10 p.m.**

Cator Woolford Gardens at Frazer Center  
1815 S. Ponce de Leon Ave. NE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30307  
More information and tickets at  
[GoodnessInTheGardens.org](http://GoodnessInTheGardens.org)



goodness in the gardens

frazer center  
gather. learn. flourish.



FIDELITY BANK



Neal & Wright LLC

Your Family...Your Business...

Your Firm!



Visit our website at  
[www.nealandwright.com](http://www.nealandwright.com)

### \* Adoption

### \* Commercial Real Estate

### \* Wills & Estate Planning

### \* Corporate & LLC Formation

### \* Other Business Legal Services

Sherry Neal, J.D.

[Sherry@nealandwright.com](mailto:Sherry@nealandwright.com)

(678) 596-3207

Dan Wright, J.D.

[Dan@nealandwright.com](mailto:Dan@nealandwright.com)

(678) 613-7850

P.O. Box 5207

Atlanta, GA 31107



*It was an interesting coincidence that both the monthly gardening feature and the "Wild" article noted the "squirrel absence." We will see what happens as spring continues and changes to summer.*

## Wild in Lake Claire

by Carol Vanderschaaf

Squirrels are in the air. As I was considering making this (pardon the expression) rodent the subject of the April column, someone posted her concern on *nextdoor Lake Claire* that our grey squirrel population is declining. Hmm... looking out my window at the chubby grey squirrel enjoying a meal at my hanging birdfeeder, one of four that frequent my yard, I had my doubts. But maybe the "net" knows more than I do.

It seems the grey tree squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis*, as it's uncommonly known, sometimes has reasons to appear to be in decline. One is that when temperatures are extreme it is often difficult for the baby squirrels to find food—especially in the summer. Because of this, the mother often chases out of the neighborhood the young from the previous litter. Another reason may be 'eruption,' a burst in reproduction which causes nearly all the squirrels to emigrate from the area for greener pastures. Climate change could be a reason for squirrel decline. According to the website, Nooga.com, studies have shown that some fauna are moving to higher ground to seek relief from the unusually high temperatures. Could the squirrels be starting to head north?

The native grey squirrel is the most common species of wildlife in Georgia. It has two breeding times, one in late winter and one in late summer. The ability to have 2 broods depends on adequate food resources. Pregnancy is for 44 days. 2-6 babies are born to each litter though only 2 or 3 survive to adulthood. Babies become active outside the nest at 8 weeks. The females, known as sows, raise the young. The male, a.k.a. boar, courts the sow by slapping on tree bark and chattering. Sound familiar? After conception he is done, unlike the men of Lake Claire, who are so often seen alone with their young in the streets of our neighborhood.

The squirrel's diet is dependent on the seasons. In the winter it eats mostly tree bark and fungi. In September nuts and acorns are on the menu. In spring and summer it eats buds of trees and bushes. And a hungry grey squirrel will eat anything it can get its hands on, including birds eggs, seed from bird feeders, and plants they dig up. Its favorite food is mast, eaten from September to March. Mast is fruit from trees or shrubs, and squirrels need about 1 ½ pounds of it a day.

The lifespan of a squirrel is 6 to 10 years. They are threatened on many sides—predation, diseases, habitat decline, food decline due to weather, etc. They have a territorial range of 1.5 to 8 acres.

Squirrels do have their good points. Native peoples and early settlers used their furs and also included them in their diet. In fact some folks still eat squirrel. If your mouth is watering this reci-

**Cont. on p. 10**

## April into May in the Garden

by Elizabeth Knowlton

As of March 15, I have not seen a single squirrel in my garden or in the neighbor's oak tree for almost three months. Across the street, yes; in our backyard, no. I don't think it is our ongoing construction because

squirrels are usually deterred by nothing, certainly not on weekends. Could it be the hawk often spotted at the top of our holly tree or in the magnolia next door? I have seen it pulling feathers from a dead dove at the end of the yard. Since squirrels are the #1 destroyers of my tomatoes, I have renewed hope (the downfall of gardeners) for this summer.

As I always say, April is the busiest month for gardeners. As soon as the full moon has passed, it is almost always safe to plant anything. We have a rather small window of opportunity

between too cold and too hot in Atlanta. If you have seedlings of frost sensitive plants, give them a few days in a sheltered place outdoors, and then get them into your prepared beds. They must make

strong growth in April and May to prepare them for a fruitful season by June when real heat hits and all the delicate spring crops like lettuce, radishes, and peas are gone. So get your tomato, eggplant, and pepper plants into the ground, and sow your corn, beans (bush and pole), pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, okra, field peas, and melons. The last three a little later, perhaps in May when you put in sweet potato slips.

One of the sweetest things for gardeners in spring is the unexpected surprise of what has survived. Up comes a perennial poppy I planted in the fall and still have hopes for—perennial poppies being hard in the South. And those old lettuce seeds I threw out in a vegetable bed in January -- why they have sprouted all over the place and can be eaten before I plant beans there! Oh, and the Dianthus 'Sweetness,' a cottage pink that I sowed last year, not only did it survive all summer, continuously blooming, but some of it has come back this spring, my first real success with pinks.

You all are still leaving bags of leaves out on the curb. When I look into yards, I see bare places, like swept rooms. But nature is not a room. For millions of years, plants took care of themselves without our intervention. They could not drive to the store to buy fertilizers. Each fall their foliage fell around them, mulching the ground and eventually becoming soil. Mysteriously, they thrived. So rake leaves off your manicured grass, but leave a circle of leaves to decay under your trees at least. And add the rest to that compost pile together with shredded paper, vegetable peelings, used potting soil, the dead stems and leaves of healthy annuals and perennials. Then add the finished compost to every planting you make.

The southern plantsman and writer, Jenks Farmer, who has said we cannot live or garden if we do not care for our soil, once wrote about what had made him happy in his small South Carolina garden. An important

**Cont. on p. 10**





# Wild in Lake Claire

*continued from page 9*

pe is included: "White Trash Broiled Squirrel": Clean and skin your squirrel. Rub with salt and pepper. Brush with fat and place on a hot broiling rack. Broil 40 minutes, turning often. Baste with drippings every ten minutes. Serve with gravy from drippings and season with 1-2 tbsps of lemon juice. And call me.

Also, squirrels are responsible for the spread of many of our native trees by their habit of storing nuts just beneath the soil surface for use in hard times. New trees sprout up from nuts left behind, Squirrels are important in maintaining and regenerating second-growth oak forests and may even have been

responsible for spreading the vast stands of oak throughout North America.

Squirrels are also important the food chain and the interdependence of nature. The gray squirrel is an important prey species for a whole host of predators in our area, including hawks and owls, as well as racoons-and humans.

**Attention! Sandhill Crane clarification.** Any confusion in the direction of Sandhill Crane migration direction, as reported by one of our readers, is entirely my fault. Mea Culpa. Here are the accurate details. Sandhill Cranes come through Atlanta on their migration trip south anytime between February 5 and March 24. They return

north through our town anytime between October 18 and December 14. Keep your eyes and ears peeled during those times.

**More for the birds:** We've had three rare visitors at the Candler Park Golf Course Pond, a Fox Sparrow, a Virginia Rail, and a Wilson's Snipe. All three birds winter in the south and may have been on their way north to breed. The latter two are hard to find even for experienced birders, due to their secretive habits (not the birders, but the birds).. Also Meta Larsson, my Candler Park reporter, tells me that Bluebirds are nesting in the bird box at the Freedom Park Bird and Butterfly garden, and she has

seen many all over the neighborhoods.

And a little more on coyotes: Andrew Farnsworth personally noted the number of sightings that have occurred in town on the east side in just the 4 years he's lived here and takes it as a sign that this area definitely has a viable population of coyotes. He states, "I saw one myself a year ago on Adair St. going to DeKalb Medical at 1 am taking my wife to deliver our daughter; I take it as a good omen." Me too!

Please keep those sightings coming to me at [cvanderschaaf@bellsouth.net](mailto:cvanderschaaf@bellsouth.net) Thanks.

# April into May in the Garden

*continued from page 9*

move was immediately to plant more shrubs. We have plenty of trees in our neighborhood, but often we lack the smaller woody plants. He had planted a row of *Camellia sasanqua* in his front yard that never overwhelmed the property but gave evergreen privacy plus fall blossoms when flowers are rarer. I will try to remind you again in the fall, an ideal time to put in woody plants. And, yes, I know the police warn us against anything that obscures their view of our houses. Add some motion detectors, and make sure your security system is sound, whether the newest or old-fashioned burglar bars. Then follow the rest of their guidelines.

One of the pleasures of a garden is finding just the right combination of plants for both place and aesthetics. There is a period in May between spring bulbs and when summer flowers "take off," after the German irises and peonies bloom, that may be a little bare in your garden. Right now you are potting up your annuals to give a good summer show, but you may want to buy some plants in April to cover the gap. To avoid a garish or spotty look, try to match your purchases to the flowers you know will be blooming soon. One way to do this is to plant related hues, to place your pale and dark pinks together, for instance, an early

blooming perennial with an apricot iris. If you have a sunny spot near evergreens, plant some warm oranges or yellows in front of them, like red-hot poker (*Kniphofia*). If you don't want to block a view, consider some short or airy plants like paperbush (*Edgeworthia*), flowering almond, or small azaleas.

Meanwhile, enjoy your spring vegetable garden, continuing to thin lettuces, carrots, and radishes and then eating the tiny thinnings in salads. There is nothing like a little oil and vinegar—light, light—over the most delicate greens and reds of spring lettuce. If your peas have survived the early cold wet and it does not get hot too

soon, you should be happily shelling them all April. You or your children with their sharp eyes and tiny fingers need to check them every day as pea pods grow dry and tough very quickly. And perhaps you still have some brassicas from last fall, collards or kale or broccoli (which I am still harvesting from side shoots). Enjoy it now before they begin to flower and are finished for eating.

After this cold and dreary winter without even snow to charm us, remember to enjoy your property. Our construction workers know to arrange some chairs in the garden and eat their home-packed lunches out there. So should we.



4 - 12 years | M-F 7:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Every week includes two pool days, two field trips, & guest speaker, included in tuition. Children are exposed to farm animals, e.g., pigs, goats, chicks.

Weekly themes | first theme May 25-29: "Farming Entrepreneurs—The Real Dirt"

June 1-5: Bee Sweet!-Urban Beekeeping

June 8-12: The Animal Farm—Raising Sheep, Goats, Chickens, & More

June 15-19: The Medicine Wheel (create medicines to take home, foods, herbs)


June 22-26: Food Shopping, Growing, & eating... And many other themes. Check out the website! Makeyoursoulshine.com




[makeyoursoulshine.com](http://makeyoursoulshine.com) 404-377-3560

2050 Hosea Williams Drive Atl 30307

An exceptional and inspiring environment with school and camp programs for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years old.


Ebel Family Law


*This is a law practice in which kindness, mutual respect between lawyer & client, and a goal of creating a superior work product (a hearing, a trial, a brief, or a successful appeal) prevails.*


Conveniently located office at Colony Square. Well respected by peers, clients, the courts. National and local accolades.

**Deborah Ebel**

**Need a Family Lawyer?** 404-228-4441

<http://www.ebelfamilylaw.com/contact.php>







# What the Land Trust Means to Me

by Eva Stong

Greetings! I'm newish to Atlanta and have recently found a home at the Lake Claire Land Trust drum circle every 1st and 3rd Saturday. I live an hour south of town, and I happily make the 2-hour round trip commute to participate and dance along to the fantastic drumming the community provides. (I've met people there who drive farther than that!) I spend the off-weeks anxiously awaiting the next opportunity to drum and dance.

These gatherings are so crucial for me and my healthy development as a human being. I consider drumming and fire to be standard requirements of an actualized existence. Drums remind us of our own heartbeat, which moves us through all phases of life. Fire provides warmth and safety...and gives images far more entertaining than any television screen. I know of no other place in town that hosts

such inclusive events regularly.

Any stress I've been carrying from personal life gets dissolved during the three hours we drum and dance, and I leave feeling completely empowered, joyful, and at ease. Since December, when I began attending the circles religiously, I've lost weight, my overall health has improved, and my mental clarity has become stronger. I'm much more confident and am so very grateful to the Land Trust for hosting these events.

All kinds of people attend the drum circles...I see newborns and their parents, as well as elders. I see people who come for healing, both emotionally and physically. I see children thriving in a safe environment. This continued interaction in our community is so desperately needed.

Thank you!



*In honor of Earth Day and National Poetry Month - the one T.S. Eliot called "the cruelest month" - here is a tribute to our neighborhood greenspace by the Land Trust's resident poet. - Ed.*

## In Land We Trust

(for the Lake Claire Community Land Trust)

by Stephen Wing

*"I don't want to go to school,  
I want to stay here!"*

When you come to the gate with no fence,  
relax. You're safe here.  
We've all come looking for the same thing.  
Not shelter, exactly,  
because it's the same sky everywhere, but  
sanctuary. "Peace and love"  
laid out in wood-chipped paths among the trees,  
gardeners kneeling  
beside their beds, children on the sandpile  
and the swing,  
Big Lou the Emu gulping grape after grape  
through his fence . . .

*One day someone wondered aloud  
what lay hidden  
under the blanket of kudzu and trash on that  
hill  
of Georgia clay  
overlooking the commuter traffic and the railroad tracks.  
A generation later  
we're still excavating, still wondering, still in search  
of a definite answer.*

Sunset deepens over the downtown skyline  
from the tall chairs  
on the deck, the hidden tank beneath us slowly  
filling with water  
to irrigate the gardens as the sun gives  
the day's last kiss  
to the south-facing panels that power the pump  
down in the dark well . . .

Colored lights tint the corrugated tin overhang  
above the stage  
where raucous picking and fiddling and singing  
entertain an empty

amphitheater of old granite curbstones while  
invisible voices rise  
in ceremonial laughter from the dark sweat . . .

Flames burst skyward as the firetender heaves  
a dried-out Christmas tree  
across the roaring coals, and the circle  
of dancers and drummers  
whoops the ritual response to that dark infinity  
between the lights  
of skyscrapers and jet planes and galaxies . . .



*Isla Howard with Big Lou the Emu who "gulps grape after grape"— photo by Laura Maddox*

*It's the exact center  
of the known universe— a humbling honor  
when you consider  
how much of the universe remains unknown,  
and how much beyond that  
must be orbiting completely unsuspected  
around  
this insignificant little  
asylum for the sane and all-ages play-  
ground.*

The stubborn red clay  
underneath these trees and gardens and  
pathways

must have soaked up  
so much joy and delight and loving attention  
over the decades—  
so many running footsteps of children who grew up  
playing here—  
so many boots and sneakers and bare feet,  
trowels and rakes,  
wheelbarrows of wood-chips or drums and guitars—  
so much that by now  
the land just can't help radiating it all back out again  
in continual waves  
which even the smallest visitor instantly tunes in  
like a compass needle  
seeking the exact center of the human heart . . .

*"You don't have much  
in the way of playground equipment here,  
but after we go home,  
my kids are happy for hours!"*

## Upcoming at the Land Trust . . .

**Sat. April 4 & 18** –Drum Circle, sunset to 11:00 pm. Please walk, bike, carpool. Bring a friend!

**Sun. April 5** – Easter Egg Hunt and Potluck: 9:00 hide, 10:00 hunt, 11:00 potluck brunch at the gazebo





# LAKE CLAIRE KIDS' CORNER



We hope this series is fun and a way for young Clarion readers/writers/artists to participate. This month's featured writer—and artist—is Michael McGill, seven years old and in 2nd grade at ANCS (Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School). He'll be eight years old in July, and he lives on Delaware Avenue with his mom and dad and three older siblings (two sisters, Sara and Jamie, and brother Joseph). When I was visiting the McGills recently, Michael (a.k.a. Mike) showed me his Venus fly trap (*Dionaea muscipula*). He patiently explained to me that it catches its prey with a trapping structure formed by the terminal portion of each of the plant's leaves, triggered by tiny hairs

on their inner surfaces. He demonstrated this with one of the leaves, noting, "my sister put a ladybug in the pot yesterday, and it is already being digested." (See close up of "bug caught in trap," below.) In his article, Michael gives the details for other kids who might like to check out Venus fly traps.

Hey there, let's hear from more Lake Claire kids – we want *your* creativity on this page. Submit articles, poetry, drawings, your original puzzles, etc., to [editor@lakeclaire.org](mailto:editor@lakeclaire.org). Be creative...we'd love to hear from you.



Michael with his Venus Fly Trap

## My Venus Fly Trap



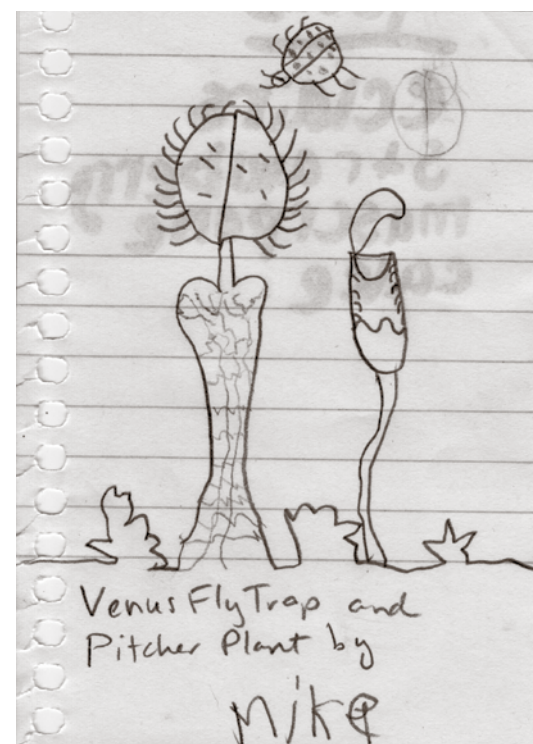
Bug Caught in V.F.T.

by Mike McGill

My Venus Fly Trap eats stink bugs, ladybugs, and even bees, wasps, and even hornets!!!

There are three trigger hairs on each side of the plant. Once the fly touches two of the hairs in less than 20 seconds or one hair in less than 10 seconds, the trap will close in less than 1 second!!

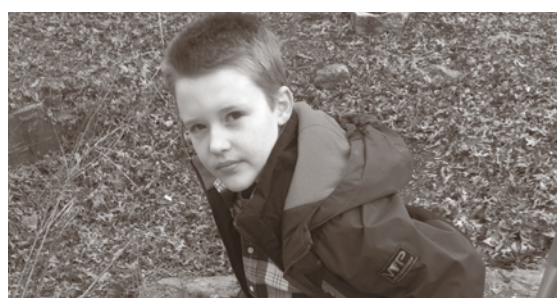
You can get a carnivorous plant at Lowes. Little ones cost \$5. Big ones cost \$10.



Venus Fly Trap and Pitcher Plant, by Mike McGill

## \*\*CONGRATULATIONS!\*\*

to William Sanders, who stayed up late to find the Leprechaun hidden in the March issue! William, 9, lives on Harold Avenue with his mom, dad, and dog Lucky. He's in the fourth grade at Mary Lin. William likes drawing, swimming, history, reading,



William Sanders, who found the Leprechaun

playing with his friends in the neighborhood, and going to the zoo (his favorite zoo resident is the alpha orangutan, Chantek). Good job, William, keep staying up late!

## KIDS—MARK YOUR AND YOUR PARENTS' CALENDARS:

The Lake Claire Centennial BBQ – June 14  
Morning: neighborhood team scavenger hunt  
From 2 to 5 p.m. – Real barbeque cooked on-site, kids' activities, including old-fashioned relay races  
Other activities being planned – **STAY TUNED!**

## NEW CONTEST:

HELLO, KIDS: April 22 is EARTH DAY. Events are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. It was first celebrated in 1970, and it is now celebrated in more than 192 countries each year, from Rome to Rio, London to New Orleans, Beijing to Melbourne, all communities who come together to call for a sustainable

future. If YOU find the earth in this issue, you will be the contest winner, and you will have your name and picture noted in the May Clarion. To win, send e-mail (or have your parent(s) send one) to [editor@lakeclaire.org](mailto:editor@lakeclaire.org) with the answer, and if you want to, tell us something you've done recently that will help the environment. Any Lake Claire kid is eligible, except that you can't win two months in a row. **Hurry and look;** competition is always stiff for this coveted prize.