

Merry Oaks

Neighborhood Newsletter

Merry Oaks Neighborhood Association • P.O. Box 18131 • Charlotte, NC • 28218-0131

Volume X Number 1 February 2008

WINTER/SPRING NEWSLETTER

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Renew your membership for 2008!

Membership form on back
\$10 per household, \$5 if on a fixed income.



Bulky Trash pickup: 311

February 28, Thursday, 7-9 PM

Merry Oaks Neighborhood Association General Meeting
Merry Oaks School Media Center (enter off Draper)

Dates to remember

Feb. 4-24: Baseball registration starts at Merry Oaks Recreation Center (at the elementary school) for children 4-6yrs. old. Contact Clarence Johnson, Park and Recreation at 704-569-1496 or e-mail Clarence.Johnson@mecklenburgcountync.gov

TBA: Chili dinner at Cate's! Check the Google group for details.

It's a Small World



A Celebration of
Children &
Their Art

PLAZA CENTRAL ART CRAWL

SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, MARCH 8
6:00-10:00PM

Presented By Neil and Tim Griffin
Sponsored By **MY TOWNhome.COM**

Stay in touch! Join the Merry Oaks Google Group!

<http://groups.google.com/group/merry-oaks>

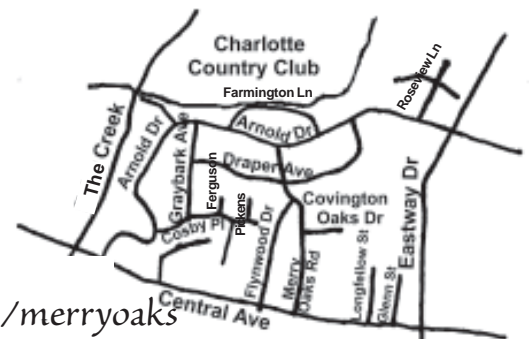
Visit our site at:

Visit <http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/charlotte/merryoaks>



A Central City Neighborhood

The purpose of the Merry Oaks Neighborhood Association is to preserve and improve the quality of life and property values in our residential neighborhood and to enhance the economic vitality of our business corridor.



Visit us at: <http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/charlotte/merryoaks>

Neighborhood News

The Saga of the German Shepherds on the Greenway

About 10 residents of Merry Oaks and nearby Plaza-Midwood gathered early Monday, Jan. 21, to try to catch a tranquilized female German shepherd and find any puppies she had in the woods along the Briar Creek Greenway. An animal control representative also came out to offer assistance and advice.

The dog and one other grown shepherd, also thought to be female, have been hanging out in the greenway and in nearby woods. One Plaza Midwood resident has been feeding the dogs and slowly gaining their trust along the walkway between Masonic Drive and Logie Avenue. A third dog, a puppy about four months old, also has been seen hanging out with the older dogs.

Some residents of Merry Oaks had called Mecklenburg animal control about the dogs previously, and attempts to catch them had been unsuccessful. The dogs know the dense woods well and also use the small creek beds and ravines to move around.

Despite amazing efforts by several neighbors scrambling through dense woods, no dogs were caught. One was seen on the Merry Oaks side of the bridge, crossing into the woods immediately behind houses on Arnold Drive.

Rebecca Jones, a Plaza Midwood neighbor, now has a large kennel loaned by an animal control worker, and she plans to park the kennel near the path between Masonic and Logie. The plan is to continue

feeding the dogs near it and get the dogs used to the kennel, then catch them in the kennel.

She plans to register as a rescue group. Jones says animal control will work with the group to get the animals spayed and vaccinated, then return the dogs to the group to be fostered until a more larger or experienced rescue group can find them permanent homes.

In the mean time, the dogs remain in the woods around the greenway. Generally, they are shy and will retreat to the woods when confronted. If they approach, it's likely they're seeking food, because they've begun to associate people with food.

If you have a large fenced back yard and would be willing to help foster the dogs after they've been spayed and vaccinated, please let Rebecca know. Her number: 704.516.6882.

Andria Krewson



Austin Seagrave
E-mail: austin@austinseagrave.com
Your neighborhood Realtor at :
1909 Arnold Drive
704-840-6562



**SHERIDAN
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CONTRACTING CO.**
www.SheridanMechanical.com

What your neighbors are saying about Sheridan Mechanical:

"...the difference between a just-OK contractor and one you really want to hire is that the latter will do whatever it takes to make it right, period ... These guys fit that trait completely."
Pinecrest Avenue Resident

"The prices are reasonable, they are very reliable and did a great job."
Carolyn Drive Resident

"...I highly recommend them..."
Woodland Drive Resident

**Sheridan Mechanical Contracting -
your one call for quality, reliable service.
Electrical - Heating - Cooling**

Call today for your free estimate.
704-641-4173

MON residents receive a 10% neighborhood discount when you mention this ad.

continued from pg. 2

Loaves and Fishes Needs You

Loaves and Fishes provides food to people who do not qualify for food stamps, but are simply trying to make ends meet due to being out of work or having temporary difficulties. Volunteers help keep administrative costs low and much of the food is distributed the same day it is donated.

Generous Merry Oaks elementary school students and parents were among the top contributors in the school system to this charity in 2007. To donate, bring your contribution of nonperishable food to the side or back of St. Andrews Episcopal Church on Central and knock on the door. Volunteers are there on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. If you have questions or would like to volunteer to help, contact Austin@austinseagrave.com.

The coordinator of this Pantry is Mrs. Phyllis Lackie and the direct number to St. Andrew's Panty is 704.567.2273.

During the annual food drive, Feb. 2-10, nonperishables can also be left at any Harris Teeter.

Typical items needed are: beans, canned or dried, soups, canned vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, dry pasta, spaghetti sauce, cooking oil, dry baking mixes,

almost any nonperishable food item, even fresh fruit (distributed same day). So next time you purchase a "two for one" item, set one aside for Loaves and Fishes.

New Coffee Shop

Café Central is open! After a start-up period, hours will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. six days a week. Look for their ad in this newsletter containing a coupon for a free cup of coffee. Mr. Montero, who is from Spain, is now serving coffee, bagels, and pastries, with soup, salads, sandwiches and other items to be added soon.... probably by the time this newsletter is published.

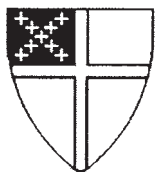
Located at the corner of Central and Arnold Drive, there will be various coffee blends, espressos, as well as tea and hot chocolate. The plans for this great addition to the neighborhood are about fifty percent complete with a future patio and wireless internet within the next two to three months. Stop in and say hello to Esther or Jose.

Charlotte Tailgate Market

This popular vegetable market will no longer be at the Common Market in Plaza Midwood and will now be located at 100 West Park Avenue, on the light rail line. Lynn Caldwell says they will open in late April or early May on Tuesday evenings and half day Saturdays. Check out their progress at: charlottetailgatemarket.com.

Our Community Police Officer

Officer Kevin Weaver is our community police officer and can be reached at: Eastway station: 704-336-8535 or kweaver@cmpd.org



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
3601 Central Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28205
704-537-0370

Sunday Worship:

8:00 AM No music, short encouraging guilt-free sermon and Holy Communion

9:30 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM: Music, another incredibly dynamic guilt-free sermon followed by Holy Communion.

Visitors/Seekers Classes: Help folks on their journey. Not to get you into the Church. We have Membership Classes for folks joining the Church.

Youth Group: Ages 11 and older meets 5-7 PM Sunday

To witness compassion is to see God. To be compassionate is to be a child of God: *The Rev. Will Hinson*

Office Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs., from 9:00-5:00

E-mail: info@standrewscharlottenc.org

Web-site: www.standrewscharlottenc.org

Fifteen Ten

uncommon home antiques

1510 Central Avenue

Charlotte, NC 28205

704.342.9005

Hours: Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat.: 10-6; Sun.: 1-5

website: www.1510-antiques.com

email: info@1510-antiques.com

50% off (almost) everything in February

Code enforcement along Central Avenue

The perception of our neighborhood is greatly affected by how Central Avenue looks. Automobile repair and/or sales from residential or “vacant” properties have become a particular problem recently.

This was nipped in the bud at a house across from the entrance to Merry Oaks Road recently when the owners quickly evicted tenants who continued to store and sell autos on the property after several warnings.

However the second duplex on Central near the Merry Oaks entrance (3507 central) is still a problem after more than a year. Numerous autos and “We Buy Junk Cars” trucks remain despite repeated citations from the City. Vehicles come and go constantly, illegally driving across the city planting strip (which many of you will recall we worked so hard to get installed years ago.) The landscaping is now just tire ruts in the mud. The entire front “yard” has been destroyed, jeopardizing the majestic old streetscape Oak trees which live there.

City Zoning Code enforcement officer for our area, Mark Fowler, has been issuing citations in the neighborhood interior as well as working on illegal signage, litter and general nuisances along Central and Eastway. Where cars are parked for sale on “vacant” private property, he has arranged with owners to immediately call for the cars to be towed. He has begun to aggressively cite littered properties along Eastway.

If you notice an ongoing serious violation, you may send a photograph, address and description of the problem to: Mark Fowler dfowler@ci.charlotte.nc.us or Alex Gregory (Nuisance complaints, housing issues) agregory@ci.charlotte.nc.us.

They will deal with it or forward to the correct officer. Both Mark and Alex intend to attend the MONA general meeting.

Briar Creek Bridge

Michael Davis of CDOT stated January 11 that the Central Avenue Bridge at Briar Creek has gone to City Council for contract approval and the contract includes several other bridges and does not specify when Central Avenue work will occur, however it is hoped that the Central Avenue Bridge will be first. Patsy Kinsey has requested that our bridge be a

priority. There will be a preconstruction meeting with the contractor and the inspectors. In general, the work is expected to be completed in June and includes new sidewalks and railings. Once it is complete the artist, Jim Gallucci, can install the railing art.

See <http://merryview.blogspot.com/> for a photo of the bridge art.

Commonwealth Park News

Charlotte City Council recently listened to about 60 residents of the Commonwealth Neighborhood and approved tough measures to restrict crime in Independence Boulevard hotels and motels. The new rules strengthen police authority to charge both property owners and motel clerks with misdemeanors if they permit crime at their establishment. Nancy Prescott of the Charlotte Inn said they would be happy to cooperate. Councilman Edwin Peacock has helped the Commonwealth Park Neighborhood Association with this effort.

The Commonwealth Park neighborhood is off Independence Boulevard and across Central Avenue from Merry Oaks, and has seen a surge of new homeowners, many who are remodeling their homes. CPNA continues to be very active, keeping an eye on future development near the Pinecrest/Commonwealth commercial areas and considering a possible park near the creek.

The CPNA is the former Briar Creek/Woodland association and discussions of their efforts can be found at their Google group <http://groups.google.com/group/CPNA>.

When you are finished with your newsletter, please place it at restaurants, dentists offices and so on to help spread the word about Merry Oaks!

Central Care Clinic



Nang Thomas Ta, MD
Internal Medicine - Minor Surgery
3007 Central Avenue
704-567-8218

Appointment or Walk in M - F - Sat. 9 am - 2 pm
 T - W - Th 9am - 6 pm

Neighbors' Corner

Pet Sitting

I'm not a service, (I have a teaching job in the mornings) but I am available to provide pet sitting on occasion in our neighborhood and those in our general area (pass along to your friends!) For \$10.00 per 30 minute visit I will feed, walk or play outside with your dog, love on your cats, bring in your mail, water plants, etc... I'm available in the mornings before I go to work (m-f) and after 1:00, and anytime on the weekends.

I can provide references; I am mom to three big dogs and am a serious animal lover! E-mail me for more information at luvmygoldie@hotmail.com

Cyndi Harper

Report It!

Graffiti: e-mail graffiti@ci.charlotte.nc.us. Report the location as soon as you see graffiti anywhere. Fast removal sends a message to the "artists" that they are wasting their paint in this area. You can also report graffiti by calling 311.

Drunk Drivers: on state highways, press *HP on your cell phone to alert highway patrol. In Charlotte, call 911.

Just a reminder: as we get nearer spring, more dog walkers and children are out in our neighborhood. Please remember to observe the 25 mph speed limit.

Community Flower Garden

As you walk through the community garden at Merry Oaks school, play pick up sticks or come



practice your javelin throwing skills by heaving small limbs and sticks into the woods. If you have something to plant, feel free. So far, there are several areas where planting has begun. Perennials are near both benches, at the beginning and end of the Merry Oaks trail as well as areas set aside for an evergreen island, a fern area and a bird/butterfly food area. There may even be some spring bulbs coming up. Come walk the two trails and clean up debris as you go. Some of you already do this, and to you, we say a heartfelt "thank you." Thanks also to Scott, who donated and planted an awesome number of plants both at school and at the greenway.

If anyone has time to either build or help put up simple birdhouses, please contact Nancy K. at 704-451-1540 or nkrewson@earthlink.net.

Café Central

Coffee, Soft Drinks, Desserts
Corner of Central and Arnold Drive

Clip this Coupon and bring it to Café
Central for a free cup of coffee on us.

This coupon redeemable for 1 free
cup of coffee and expires 4/1/08.

An advertisement for Medicine Center Pharmacy. It features a yellow background with a spilled pill bottle. The text reads: "Medicine Center PHARMACY", "New Name.", "Same Friendly Staff and Personalized Service.", "PHONE: 704-344-6494", "FAX: 704-344-6469", "2516 Central Avenue Charlotte, NC 28205", and "Tom McCall, R.PH.".

Medicine Center
PHARMACY

New Name.
Same Friendly Staff and Personalized Service.
PHONE: 704-344-6494
FAX: 704-344-6469
2516 Central Avenue Charlotte, NC 28205
Tom McCall, R.PH.

Hillcrest Apartments

This was sent to Merry Oaks neighbors after Charlotte's first homicide of 2008 occurred at the Hillcrest Apartments on Arnold Drive:

Dear Merry Oaks Neighbors,

Our new year has unfortunately stepped off with the tragic event that unfolded in the early hours of new years Day morning. As a representative of the 48 families that reside at Hillcrest Apartments, I, as well as my staff on-site, am just as concerned about the criminal activity that has literally been brought to the front pages over the past months.

As an introduction, as the Regional Property Manager for Westminster Company, I represent the owners of Hillcrest Apartments as part of a nationally accredited property management organization. I oversee the management of seven properties in the Charlotte area. Westminster Company specializes in the management of affordable or subsidized housing. Due to the nature of our mission, security is a major priority for me and my staff. Every resident that enters into a lease with our property has passed a criminal and credit screening, as well as landlord references. We are serious about our stance against drugs and crime and use our contracts that we sign with our residents as our only form of enforcement. Let me emphasize that these steps apply to our lease-signing residents. The violent crimes that have occurred at Hillcrest Apartments in the past months have been at the hands of individuals who do not live in our community. They do, however, visit within the community and have ties to Hillcrest Apartments. It is these "visitors" that are the source of our pain and I have little to no means of screening these individuals or even identifying them.

Our most important ally in our war against crime is the police department. We have an excellent relationship with CMPD and its officers. We have always made proactive strides to improve our security to prevent crime instead of reacting to crime. We have openly expressed our need to ban any non-residents who commit crimes in or around our property. Recent legislation changes have made this process impractical and almost impossible. As the landlord, we must be present with CMPD and the

individual to be banned, in order to legally ban them from the property. As we all know, the activity that would lead to these bans almost always occurs outside of business hours when the manager is not on site. In the past, we could enter an agreement with CMPD authorizing any officer to execute a trespass order without our presence. As far as our residents at Hillcrest, everyone who has been arrested for criminal activity, or had direct involvement in such activity has been given a lease termination. However, enforcement of that termination ultimately is in the hands of our magistrates.

Making a long story short, many of our limitations in limiting crime within our community stem from decisions and legislation that are made by municipalities and organizations that like to look at the big picture without zooming in on reality. That reality is that our police force needs the freedom to identify and remove individuals who are known cancers to our community. I have asked representatives of Eastway Division CMPD for a list of apartment managers in the area so we can share information to prevent recycling any poor residents and their guests.

As law abiding citizens and residents, I enlist your help to pressure the powers that be to authorize the necessary power to enable CMPD and landlords to eliminate problems, and potential problems, from our community. Also, understand that we at Hillcrest Apartments have an important yet challenging role to provide affordable housing to families in need as an opportunity to better their lives and positively impact society.

Submitted by Bert Wray,
Regional Property Manager, Westminster Company



Scouting Contacts

Girl Scouts: 704-731-6500 or Ms. Susan Avery at averysusan2@aol.com

Boy Scouts: 704-333-5471 or Greg Fussell, gffussell@carolina.rr.com. Meet at Memorial United Methodist, 4012 Central Ave.

Voter Registration

Where can I get Voter Registration Forms?

Pick up a form at any Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library, any of the town halls, at the Board of Elections office (741 Kenilworth Ave., Ste 202) or on the BOE website at <http://www.meckboe.org/pages/Voter/RegistrationForm.html>. Complete and sign the form and mail it to the address above. They will send a new voter card to you!

How do I change my address?

The Board must have one of two documents signed by the voter (an e-mail won't do.) Either send in your voter card with the change of address indicated on the

back or complete a voter registration application form, showing your new address, and send it to BOE. Make sure you sign the card/form! They do the data entry and send a new voter card to you.

How do I change my party affiliation?

The Board must have one of two documents signed by the voter (an e-mail won't do.) Either send them your voter card with the change marked on the back or complete a voter registration application form, showing the new party affiliation, and send it in. Make sure you sign the card/form! BOE will send a new voter card to you



People in the Neighborhood

One of the many talented and interesting people in Merry Oaks is Jason Hausman, who is a falconer. Raptors have been used for hunting for over four thousand years. One of the more famous, the Peregrine falcon, was almost exterminated from North America by DDT poisoning in 1950-70. Through the combined efforts of falconers and groups like The Peregrine

Fund, they were removed from the endangered species list in 1999.

Jason became interested in falconry after meeting a falconer when he was ten. Years later, he attended a workshop by the NC Falconer's Guild. Soon after he became a falconer. It is not easy, requiring large amounts of time, a written exam, a two-year apprenticeship, and both state and federal licenses just for starters. Becoming a master falconer requires seven years in the sport. The North American Falconers Association is the hub of American falconry and helps US Fish and Wildlife set regulations for the sport. There are very stringent laws pertaining to falconry with falconers subject to inspection at any time.

Different falconry birds have different characteristics, with some being very social, like the Harris' hawk, which sees the falconer as "part of the pack" while others can be more difficult to work with.

No falconer considers these birds to be pets; Jason says he has the scars to prove it.

General and Master class falconers can purchase captive bred birds or trap first year birds, while apprentices are required by law to trap first year birds from the wild. In most cases they do not take adults from the wild as they typically mate for life. Many falconers are also conservationists and often help to save birds that might not make it in the wild. Jason is active with the Carolina Raptor Center and often speaks to local schools and scouting troops about falconry and raptor conservation.

He mentioned that we have a number of raptors in our neighborhood. Coopers hawks, red tailed and red-shouldered hawks, barred owls, and even a great horned owl have been seen.

What's the attraction to the sport? Jason says it is like having "a front row seat to a National Geographic special. To see a falcon dive at 200 mph after a duck from 1000 ft. up, then hop up on your fist is quite an experience." But he also states, "Falconry is more than a hobby, it is a lifestyle."

Information courtesy of Jason Hausman. If you would like to learn more about this sport, try: www.ncfalconersguild.org, www.n-a-f-a.org, www.ncwildlife.org, www.hawk-conservancy.org

See <http://merryview.blogspot.com/> for falcon photos.

Real Estate - Central Briar Creek Update

Former Plummer Property

At the southwestern corner of the intersection, the historic Plummer house and three brick ranch houses were demolished and removed in mid-January and the 4-5 acre site has been prepared for construction.

Citiline Resortline properties, the developers, plan to begin construction on Phase One condo units in mid-March, along with the pool, park and amenity area. Phase Two and Phase Three condo buildings will proceed three and six months later. One- and two-bedroom units are selling well, for \$120,000 to

\$180,000. The development will have security fencing on the perimeter and privacy fencing for the pool area. Photos at: <http://underoak.blogspot.com>.

Plummer Construction Site



Plummer House



Former Renfrow Property

Tuscan Development is working to resolve the City's requirement that Briar Creek Road be extended to the back of the property for possible eventual connectivity to Cosby. Tuscan's Rip Farris said that they have great hopes for the location and will develop the property, but until the road issue is resolved, they are putting the site plan on hold. He said they should know something concrete by early spring. The initial site plan called for duplexes among the existing trees on a private loop road.



**James
Young**
CPA, PLLC

2600-F
Central Avenue
(at the corner of
Morningside)

704.370.2780
(office)

704.370.0531
(fax)

jamesyoungcpa@
msn.com

If you're dreading spending your weekends doing taxes or you need some professional tax advice, come see us — we're in the neighborhood. We'll prepare your individual or business taxes and help you with future tax planning.

Since we're neighbors, we'll even give you **\$20.00 off** when you mention this ad!

**Stop by and see what we can
do for your bottom line!**



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NEIGHBORHOOD CAFE / TAKE-AWAY & CATERING

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WHAT'S THERE?

Furniture, Building Materials, Functioning Appliances, Flooring, Doors, Windows, Cabinets, Sinks, Lighting, Home Furnishings, Just for starters!



www.CharlotteRestore.org

WHERE?

2 Convenient Charlotte Locations:

3326 Wilkinson Blvd.
704.295.4495

1133 N. Wendover Rd.
704.716.7044

Merry Oaks



Lexie Longstreet

Broker, Realtor

704.560.4604

LexieLongstreet.com

Platinum Sales Award 2006

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I know Merry Oaks neighborhood
inside out!

Call me!



HipHoods.com
CHARLOTTE, NC

Charlotte's Best Neighborhood Guide

1920 E. 7th Street Charlotte, NC 28204 Phone 704-330-8326 

MONA Board & Volunteers

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Eastway Drive Office

3050 Eastway Drive
Charlotte, NC 28205
704/338-4370
Fax 704/568-3950
deirdra.spivey@firstcitizens.com



Financial Statement will be available at the meeting.



Tennis anyone? Both Veterans Park, 2136 Central Avenue, and Shamrock Park, 2545 Jeff Street have tennis courts. Parks and Recreation, Central District II manager is Patricia Poteat
patricia.Poteat@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov or 704-336-3367

Set up your own web page from our web site. Click on "Meet Your Neighbors" from our MONA web site to set up your own page which can include a photo of your home, pets, or interests. You can also link to a page you already have. It's free, it's easy and can be deleted when/if you wish.

To see what other neighborhoods in this area are doing: go to www.plazamidwood.org, <http://groups.google.com/group/CPNA>, <http://eliza-blog.blogspot.com/>

Charlotte Mecklenburg Police most wanted list, to see it, go to <http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/CMPD/Most+Wanted/>

Join the Merry Oaks Neighborhood Association

Name(s):

Address:

Phone: E-mail address:.....

Area of interest/concern:



Dues are \$10 per household per year. Make checks payable to MONA.

MAIL WITH YOUR CHECK TO:

Donna Howard-Peters
P.O. Box 18131
Charlotte, NC 28218-0131

Please send in your dues! We need \$\$\$ to continue our work on your behalf.