

Volume IX Number 2 June 2007

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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Renew your membership for 2007!

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



Bulky Trash pickup: 311

Dates To Remember

June 21, Thursday, 7-9 PM

Merry Oaks Neighborhood Association General Meeting
Merry Oaks School Media Center (enter off Draper)
Watch the web site and Google group for the complete agenda.
http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/charlotte/merryoaks/

Take advantage of the nice weather and evening light to WALK or bicycle to the meeting this month. If you are coming from Merry Oaks Road or Flynnwood, use the NEW path from the 1800 block of Merry Oaks Road as a shortcut.

Meet your neighbors on-line

Click on http://merryview.blogspot.com to see photos of MONA interest. If you have a photo to contribute, send it in .jpg form to nkrewson@earthlink.net. Web site coordinators reserve the right to edit.

JOIN the Merry Oaks Google Group and stay in the neighborhood loop! http://groups.google.com/group/merry-oaks

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/merryoak^{central}A

Neighborhood Infrastructure take longer than expected! It turns out that Department of Transportation, which is in the bridge decided that the control of the second state of the second

Merry Oaks Campus Park

Phase I of the park is complete pending final inspection. Thanks to Mr. Parrish of United Construction and the hardworking crews who have done a quality job on the walking trails now connecting the campus park from the 1800 block of Merry Oaks Road and through the woods behind the school. The concrete trails are wide with mulched 4-6" areas on both sides of the trails. The Draper Avenue gate was relocated so that park users can use the lower parking lot even if the campus is closed. The playing field has been somewhat smoothed with extra soil.

To measure how fast you can walk/run a mile, begin at the marker "Start" set in the concrete near the outdoor classroom and begin by walking the east trail through the woods toward the small creek. Just follow the markers. For example, when reaching the entrance sign (marker 3) you will have walked .16 mile or 825 feet. Three times around the loop and you will have walked or run .93 of a mile. Once around the loop equals 502.9 meters. There are no steep grades, making the trails accessible for all ages, and a water faucet is working near the garden area as you exit the trail from Merry Oaks Road.

The woodland/community garden area even has a bowl for thirsty dogs (on leashes please). Planting of the garden area is left up to the neighborhood and will become whatever we contribute to it. If you have extra shade plants, feel free to put them there. There is some sun on the street-side edge of the garden if you want to plant annuals or perennials such as black-eyed susans, etc. Azaleas, ferns, Lenten roses, evergreens, hollies or other plants, which provide cover or food for animals, are needed. This area is intended both as a teaching tool for students to learn about NC native plants and for community enjoyment. Adopt a section and plant it yourself. The school grounds recently became certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a schoolyard habitat.

Walk it, bike it, skate it or run it; but do give our new Park and Recreation Center a try!

To see photos, go to www.neighborhoodlink.com/ charlotte/merryoaks and click on the photo page under "Community Pages" or you can also get to it by clicking on the "Know Your Neighbors" section.

Contributed by Nancy Krewson

Briar Creek Bridge art

MONA previously reported that the Briar Creek Bridge art, a leafy metal sculpture by Greensboro artist Jim Gallucci would be installed last February or March. Things always

take longer than expected! It turns out that the Charlotte Department of Transportation, which is in charge of the bridge, decided that before installation of the artwork they should do some safety upgrades to the bridge.

The upgrade design is almost finished and bids are going out for this approximately \$100,000 project. The sidewalk will be cantilevered outward over the creek for increased pedestrian safety and to give a more crashworthy barrier for cars. In addition, the artwork will be attached higher up on a hand rail than previously planned, and thus it will be more

CDOT's Mike Davis, who is in charge, said that these improvements will not give CDOT reason to defer eventual redoing of the entire bridge in order to accommodate passunder for the greenway as it extends downstream. Replacing the entire bridge to accommodate the greenway is a longterm goal. No landscaping is planned for the bridge area at this time.

Sculpture installation is now expected for the fall.

Charlotte Country Club Property along Farmington Lane

Several neighbors have expressed concern about the Club's plans for its perimeter along Farmington Lane. The Club plans to replace the fence all around the golf course and replace it with a taller, more secure fence. Yes, this means 8 feet of chain link with barbed wire on Farmington lane. They will also build a perimeter road around the course inside the fence. Neighbors are also concerned about the upkeep of the strip of land between the asphalt of Farmington Lane and the fence.

After being contacted by a MONA Board Nancy Pierce Shaver, John Szklinski, Golf Course Superintendent, said that he is new to the job and has not really been able to view the area. He said he hears our concerns and will check out the Club's responsibility with respect to upkeep of the strip. He also said he will check to see what kind of vegetative buffer they may be able to plant outside the fence to soften the chain link and barbed wire.

MONA Board will work on this. Farmington Lane residents who want to help should contact MONA Board member Ayesha Omer at 704 535 7923.

Briar Creek Greenway Circle

Park and Rec has now cleaned up the circle (where the benches are) on the west side of the creek at the greenway and out in good planting soil. Neighbor Austin Seagrave will donate hardy ferns and possibly some annuals, and she and Nancy Krewson will plant them as soon as the drought lets

If you walk the greenway and Plaza-Midwood connector, continued on pg. 3 continued from pg. 2

watch for people messing with the barrier posts. They should be left alone. Please replace them if you see them laying down

When the Charlotte Country Club builds its gate at the end of Masonic (soon), they will also realign the trail so there is no jog across Masonic.

Plaza Midwood neighbors are finally discovering the connector and greenway, and they love it! Spread the word.

Hands On Merry Oaks "way successful!"

On April 14, neighbors, teachers and students cooperated in a Hands On Merry Oaks project to clean up and plant the area around Merry Oaks school. Emphasis this year was on the formerly bare strip directly at the front door of the school, planting boxes for vegetables so kids can learn where food comes from, and the outdoor classroom area.

We don't have everyone's name, but here is a partial list of community-minded people to whom we owe a special "thank you" for being willing to do the dirty work...and it also was fun!

Norman and Joyce Sellers donated materials and built 6 planting boxes, which are now in the courtyard. Going a step further, Norman and Joyce delivered a load of topsoil for filling the boxes. Norman is an almost-retired builder on Arnold Drive.

Thanks to Banner Nursery and Landscaping of 4400 Monroe Road for some perennial plant donations. Send 'em some business!

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

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

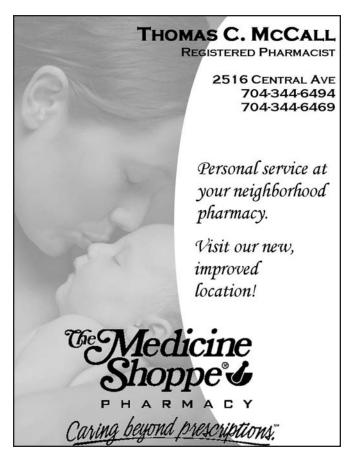
Led by Lolo Pendergrast and Sally Edwards, Merry Oaks teachers contributed both cash and time. Thanks to Mrs. Thompson and Mr. Ellis of the maintenance staff who were tolerant of our mess. Mr. Reid, frequent volunteer at Merry Oaks school, helped with sign up sheets and direction of students. Somewhere between 40-50 enthusiastic students came to help pick up litter and to plant.

Pitching in from the community with donations and time were: Cate Martin, Jim Bookout, Meredith and Tony Olan, Stephen Gage, Dean Coley, Carol Herrington, Lashunda Tillman of Park and Rec, the Krewsons, and many more whose names I didn't get.

Contributed by Nancy Krewson



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!



Hands On Merry Oaks



Merry Oaks teachers begin.





Parent and student volunteers

April 14, 2007 Merry Oaks Elementary School







Planting boxes in courtyard



MONA volunteers



New trail entrance





Merry Oaks parking lot beautification



Cooling off!

Neighbors' Corner

Plants for sale

Our neighbor at 1909 Arnold Drive, gardener and Realtor Austin Seagrave, always has plants for sale. Annuals, perennials, trees, azaleas, gardenias, herbs, and more! Call Austin at 704-840-6562 and she'll be glad to show you what she has.

New member of MSWCD

Neighbor and MONA Board member Marcus Williams (Merry Oaks Road) was recently appointed and sworn it as a Board Supervisor for the Mecklenburg County Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD).

(MSWCD) is a part of the Natural Resource Conservation Service, a division of the United States Department of Agriculture. There are five board members, three elected and two appointed and three staff members.

Marcus said: "I would like to see MSWCD well-known among the residents of Mecklenburg County. We have the opportunity to improve the quality of our neighborhoods and public places in ways that are sustainable, and add value to the city as a whole."

Junk mail opt-out legislation

Neighbor Kim Entrekin (Farmington Lane) suggests: "Support North Carolina legislation to create an "opt out" registry for junk mail. This would be similar to the federal and state "do not call" list, which has been widely successful. The junk mail "opt out" registry would help reduce the amount of wasted paper products, junk CDs and other materials that fill our mailboxes each day and would help save trees! Think of how many ads, circulars, direct mail solicitation, and coupons you recycle each month and what an impact this could make! http://www.newdream.org/junkmail/nc.html.



Neighbor Patty Perkins (Arnold Drive) is a WTVI Board member. She writes: "We have some very influential and fun loving neighbors on Commonwealth Avenue. A big purple elephant named Seemore Goodstuff lives there along with new neighbor Raggs and his band of rock & roll canines. Then of course there's long time resident Big Bird and the gang on Sesame Street, along with a menagerie of lovable characters who educate and entertain the kids. Every week the adult in you can count on PBS's The New Hour, cooking and home improvement shows, local health and informational programs, thought-provoking and conversation-starting documentaries and good ol' Antiques Roadshow.

"There's been a lot in the news lately about County funding for WTVI, and we appreciate the expressions of support from the viewers and members of the station. WTVI's CEO and General Manager Elsie Garner writes in this month's newsletter "Funding for WTVI is derived from various streams including member contributions, but the total funding from the County has declined 25% over the past three years and now comprises 23% of the station's operating budget in addition to the provision of facilities and equipment."

"The Mecklenburg County Commissioners recently voted some additional monetary support in response to a request from the WTVI Board of Directors to help with equipment and expenses so the station can continue to fulfill its mission of building community through quality programs that inform, educate and entertain.

Take a few minutes to learn more about your locally owned, locally supported educational broadcast service at www.wtvi.org."

WTVI



Deirdra V. Spivey Financial Service Manager Eastway Drive Office

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



realty

Austin Seagrave

E-mail: austin@austinseagrave.com

austin Your neighborhood Realtor at : 1909 Arnold Drive 704-840-6562

Park and Recreation Summer News

GET WET!

Just a couple miles from Merry Oaks, The beautiful Cordelia Park Public Pool is open for a \$1 admission fee. Perched atop a hill overlooking the City skyline, it's a well-kept secret. Free swimming lessons will be offered beginning June 11 on Mondays and Wednesday 11-Noon with a paid admission for the rest of the day. Call 704 336 3483. Find the pool by going toward downtown Central, go right on The Plaza, left on Parkwood, and right on Davidson Street. Immediately look for the pool signs on your right.

Cool off on a hot summer day or evening at the Veterans Park "sprayground". It's open seven days a week from 10am-8pm. There is no charge, and it offers water sprays, nozzles and spouts for children (and adults) to run through and frolic under.

Nearby Best-Kept-Secret

Visit the newly renovated Sheffield Park, especially the walking trails, wetland restoration and boardwalk. Going out Central, take a right onto Winterfield Place, stay right, and look for the ponds on your right. Limited street parking or park at Winterfield School.

Merry Oaks Recreation Center

3508 Draper Avenue Central Park District 704-569-1496 Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri 3pm-8pm Saturday 10am-2pm Sunday Closed

- · Full-Size Gymnasium
- · Multi-purpose Room

E-mail Clarence Johnson, clarence.johnson@mecklenburg countync.gov, for more information about events at Merry Oaks or call 704-569-1496.

Fifteen Ten

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Merry Oaks Spanish Classes Hola! Would you like to learn to speak Spanish! We are

Hola! Would you like to learn to speak Spanish! We are now offering fun and interactive Spanish Classes @ Merry Oaks Recreation Center. For more information, please contact Lashunda Tillman @ Merry Oaks Recreation Center 704-569-1496

Merry Oaks "Wild Cat" Walking Club

Walk your way to a healthier lifestyle. Bring a friend and exercise while enjoying the scenic view of the NEW Merry Oaks Walking Trail. Set your own pace and enjoy the beautiful landscape as you walk on a moderately challenging course. Register with the group and track your progress at www.fitcitychallenge.com. For more information, please call Clarence Johnson @ 704-569-1496 or e-mail @ clarence. johnson@mecklenburgcountyNC.gov

Want to kayak? Or improve your compass and GPS skills? The above are just samples of what Park and Recreation has to offer. You'll find a full listing for all locations at http://parkrez.co.mecklenburg.nc.us



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

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

Living in Merry Oaks

Plant Watering Techniques

We all know that water is vital to plants. Trees absorb water and minerals from the soil. A large tree can absorb hundreds of gallons of water in a day. As much as 95% of this water may be transpired into the air. If there is not sufficient soil moisture, a tree cannot take up essential elements, photosynthesis is reduced and the tree will decline. When transpirational water loss exceeds the plant's ability to take up water from the soil, the plant wilts. When there is an extended period of water deficit (drought), plants respond by wilting, dropping leaves, developing modified leaves, or increasing the production of absorbing roots. Severe drought periods can cause extensive root loss and plant death.

Trees and other landscape plants vary by species in their normal patterns of water use and requirements. Most of the species in our area can be categorized as "water spenders"; that is, they use large amounts of water. They tend to develop large, spreading root systems that allow them to make use of soil moisture over a great area. They cannot tolerate long drought periods without water.

The most basic principle of watering is that enough water should be supplied to the soil to replace what the plant uses and what is lost to evaporation and percolation. Frequent, shallow watering encourages surface rooting, which makes the tree more vulnerable to drying out during periods of drought. Infrequent, deep soakings encourage the production of a deeper root system and more drought-tolerant trees. If the soil is allowed to dry between irrigations, natural shrinking and swelling improves soil structure. The most beneficial time to irrigate plants is during the very early morning hours. Evaporation is minimized and the foliage has time to dry thoroughly during daylight hours. This will also minimize the onset of fungal diseases. Water should be distributed evenly to as much of the root system as possible (out to the drip-line). Avoid watering the lower trunk (root collar) as this can lead to increased fungal problems.

Wanda Lombardino Clark's Tree Care 704-542-1130

Charlotte Architects will

study Central Avenue

To Celebrate its 150th Anniversary, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has launched a year-long observance with projects across America. The local chapter received a \$15,000 grant for a project along Central Avenue. The funds are not sufficient for actual infrastructure improvement but combined with pro bono work from various architecture firms, the project might include master planning, design suggestions and development policies specific to the Central corridor. If adopted by the City, the suggestions could substantially improve the Central Avenue corridor long-term.

Initially conceived as "Celebrating Diversity: The Emergence of Charlotte's International Corridor" the idea was to focus on one section of Central Avenue, such as the area between Kilbourne and Rosehaven. Architect Phil Kuttner, who is leading the effort for AIA Charlotte, said that they are looking for a project area that is large enough to include a "series of nodes" and that includes a diverse mix of land uses and physical conditions. Although the exact area has not been selected, it is likely to be between Eastway and Sharon Amity, but perhaps including the Eastcrest area as well. The international focus of the project may or may not apply to each of the nodes in the selected project area.

The local AIA has described the project thus: "Our work will include consideration for improved safety, connectivity, transportation alternatives, walkability, open space, image and economic vitality, and will generate new public appreciation for the authentic cultural diversity that makes this such a special place."

AIA Charlotte members are asking for our input on this project and all suggestions will be considered. They are putting teams together and are reaching out to anyone willing to join the effort. For more information on go to www. aiacharlotte.org. You can also contact Erica Rohrbacher, AIA Charlotte Executive Director at 704 369-2302 or erica@aiacharlotte.org to find out about future meetings.

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Central Care Clinic The Plummer Property



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

Nearby New Residential Development

The Plummer property at the corner of Briar Creek Road and Central .Avenue will be developed as The Vyne, a gated 99-condominium project which will be Charlotte' first residential development to seek Healthy Built Home (HBH) certification. The units will be built for healthy air, lower utility bills, toxin-free paint, and energy–efficient HVAC.

There will be three buildings and a 1/3-acre park on the corner as a buffer against the traffic noise. The buildings will include 36 one-bedroom units, 36 two-bedroom units and 27 two-bedroom units with Hardi-Board and brick exterior. Price point is \$125,000 to \$185,000. A spokesperson for Citiline Resortline Properties, which is developing The Vyne, said June 4 that about 16 out of an initial offering of 66 units have been sold. One or two of the buyers are non-occupant investors. They are capping non-occupant investors at 30% of the total owners..

Included in the price of the condos will be innovative "flexible furnishings" such as a kitchen island which converts to a desk or bar. The developers are marketing toward members of the creative class who want low-maintenance, environmentally-friendly units close to uptown in a vibrant and diverse community.

Construction will begin in the fall pending site plan approval, which is due this summer.

Former Renfrow Property

The Central @ Briar Creek synergy continues with the announcement of Tuscan development's project "Duo at CBC" on the 4.5 acre former Renfrow property. Borders are Central, Flynnwood backyards, Cosby backyards and the Birchcroft Apartments.

The big news is that Tuscan is probably going to purchase and redevelop the 155-unit Birchcroft Apartments as well. Plans for this are incomplete.

Phase one of Duo at CBC will be 58 duplex condominiums (29 buildings) designed to minimize impact on the terrain and trees. The buildings will blend in with and provide views of the naturally wooded space at the back of the property. Parking will be underneath the units in enclosed garages. Square footage will be between 1100 and 1500

square feet for 2-3 bedroom units, and per condo (one side of the duplex) will be \$200,000 to \$240,000.

Phase two will be closer to Central and may feature small units surrounding a pool.

Ray Farris of Tuscan development says that a model unit will be built very soon with construction on the rest of the units beginning in the fall, pending site plan approval.

Briar Creek Road will be extended into the property as a loop road intended for residents' use. CDOT is looking at how to improve the intersection to improve pedestrian and bicycle passage between Duo at CBC and recently-announced The Vyne across Central Avenue on the Plummer property.

Tuscan Development is eager to involve Merry Oaks neighbors in the project and may provide an incentive for neighbors who bring buyers. Sales agent is My Townhome Realty. More info: www.duo@cbc.com

Briar Creek at Independence

The property at the corner of Briar Creek Road and Independence Boulevard will be developed for condos by the same people who, several years ago, built Uxbridge at the corner of Commonwealth and Briar Creek Road.

Pending a June 18 vote by City Council to downzone from commercial to residential, the 1.3-acre site will house 28 units for sale, 1100 to 1300 square feet, in the \$280,000-\$325,000 range.

Design calls for each unit to have a terrace with skyline views as well as a porch and balcony facing Briar Creek Road. Each unit will have an urban-style stoop opening to a sidewalk. The project will not be gated. Exterior will be stucco, hardy plank or block.

At public hearing May 28, Planning Staff, Zoning Committee and the surrounding neighborhood voiced support for the project. Commonwealth Park neighbors had asked for the preservation of a large Oak tree and a change from a bright color scheme to earth tones. The developer agreed to both.

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.

Merry Oaks Elementary School

Students from Merry Oaks Elementary School toured the Merry Oaks neighborhood on May 31, 2007. Teacher Lolo Pendergrast helped organize the tour. They walked parts of Draper Avenue, Merry Oaks Road, Farmington Avenue and Arnold Drive.







Pink flowers bloom on an abelia bush contributed by Jay Lugibihl of Arnold Drive to Merry Oaks Elementary School.

Good Stuff, Good Price, GREAT CAUSE.

SHOP! DONATE! VOLUNTEER!

Merchandise changes daily at our 2 Charlotte area locations, so come early and come often! Donations can be dropped off at either location. Pickup is available for large items – call 704.392.4495 Help Habitat build houses without a hammer. Volunteer help is always needed in the showroom with donation processing.

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www.CharlotteRestore.org

WHERE?

2 Convenient Charlotte Locations:

3326 Wilkinson Blvd. 704.295.4495

1133 N. Wendover Rd. 704.716.7044

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