



Mountainbrook Civic Association

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FALL 2010

Tree Tips - Pruning From The Tips Back

A lot of folks are asking me, "Hey, what's going on with my trees"? Here's the scoop: seven of the last eight years have been drought years. Trees have suffered tissue damage year after year, and are dried & brittle in their internal wood. Pair this with the huge amount of new growth we have had this year, and we have a recipe for broken branches. This fall as temperatures come down a bit, we will see nuts & acorns maturing and a second flush of new growth. This will add more weight out at the tips of the branches.

Unfortunately, trees do not have a good internal mechanism for rehydrating their woody parts - so they remain brittle. Heavy branches, weakened internal wood.....well, what can we do? A jolly good pruning can be the answer to saving our trees. "Crown Reduction Pruning" is the term we use to describe reducing length & weight from the tips back, under the direction of an Arborist. Letting nature take its course, trees will often "self prune", meaning branches will break or rip off because the branch weight has overcome the strength of the branch wood. Usually this results in an ugly wound that often leads to further decay and a shorter life for the tree. Pruning in advance to Reduce the Crown, allows us Arborists to control where the branch comes off the tree. Making good cuts helps eliminate the onset of decay, and most certainly extends the life of the tree.

Oh - and one more thing, a good annual tree fertilization program is the key to tree health. (key word = good). Thanks for reading!

Pete Grisewood

Board Certified Master Arborist
Caretaker of the Queen's Crown
Heartwood Tree Service, LLC
www.heartwoodtree.com
704-525-3066



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ANY WORK
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12/31/2010**

Lawn Maintenance Concerns in Mountainbrook

We are all aware of the issues surrounding our economy and particularly how they relate to the housing market. Unfortunately, we are not immune to these situations in our community. As a result, we have had several situations where homes have been abandoned by their owners for one reason or another. These are unfortunate situations for the families involved. One specific impact from this is that often the yards are no longer maintained. Unattended yards quickly become eyesores, and safety concerns arise.

The board reviewed this matter, and agreed the costs for hiring an outside landscaper to maintain these yards exceed funds available from the Civic Association.

However, the City of Charlotte has ordinances in place about these situations. You are encouraged to call 311 and log a complaint. The city will investigate and take steps to mow the yard — the owner of record will charge and/or fined. Obviously one concern is how quickly city crews will respond. Some of the problem yards in Mountainbrook have been dealt with by neighbors joining together to keep growth trimmed. This is probably the most efficient method, but requires additional time from busy schedules.

We hope the number of homes in this category remain relatively low in Mountainbrook. Homes that are abandoned we anticipate will be re-acquired by a mortgage company and resold as quickly as possible. Two such homes have recently gone under contract. **Brian Miller, VP Mountainbrook Civic Association**

President's Letter

At last the school year has begun! With the passing of the summer heat and now on to cooling temperatures, what better way for our members to celebrate than our annual Civic Association Fall Picnic on Saturday October 2. Last year was a huge success, and we anticipate this year being even better. The Civic Association will provide Price's Fried Chicken, and like last year we ask that members bring potluck-style side dishes. A special thank you to Stephanie Harris for taking the lead on this event. You'll find more details within this newsletter and also at www.MBCivic.com

We achieved 66% participation on this year's Civic Association membership drive, and through the generous donations of many members we're happy to report we met our fiscal goals. With the majority of our civic dues going towards common area landscaping and utilities, Mountainbrook sends a warm thank you to all the civic members for their support. We'll look to 2011 to achieve our goal of 100% participation at any level.

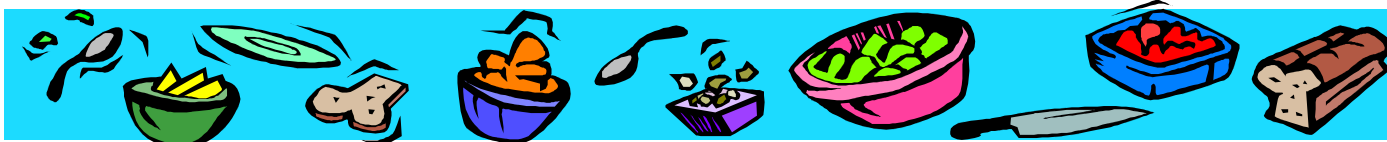
In an effort to reduce printing costs and be more eco-friendly, this year's directory was a supplement to the 2009-2010 edition. We intend to print a full directory next year. As you peruse the directory, please take note of your neighbors who do not have email. Your help in conveying information to those not online is greatly appreciated.

For those who are not aware, Camille Coers, Kim Millican and Ann Niehaus are quietly working behind the scenes to keep Mountainbrook looking great. As you drive through our many entrances and common areas, it's their efforts that you're seeing. Thank you ladies! The board approved an expenditure on irrigation and landscaping for the Carmel Road entrance as part of the master landscaping plan, and we're working on similar proposals for the Sharon View entrance. Additionally, we are exploring options to address the gas street lights that are in disrepair.

Ever wonder who decorates the community entrances each 4th of July with red white and blue? It's our very own Helen Mayhew. To be honest, I didn't know how our entrances were being adorned with patriotic decorations until I stopped and asked. Thank you Helen.

Thank you to the many volunteers that assist with the delivery of directories, newsletters and luminaries. We have several opportunities to serve on the board as special committee chairs. Membership, Directory, Youth, and Social are vacant now; if you're willing to serve our community, you can make an immediate impact.

Mike Anderson
President, Mountainbrook Civic Association
704-759-6743
President@MBCivic.com



Annual Mountainbrook Civic Association Fall Picnic

Saturday, October 2, 2010

Music begins at 5:30 PM

Dinner will start at 6:00 PM

DINNER:

The **Civic Association** will provide Price's fried chicken, plates/cups/utensils. Lemonade and water (but, members may wish to bring other drinks of their choice)

Civic Members are asked to bring a side dish based on the first letter of your last name. (e.g **A**nderson)
Your side dish should feed 12 people and include serving utensil. Bring your side dish at 5:30 PM

- **A - H**, Please bring a COLD SIDE DISH
- **I - P**, Please bring DESSERT
- **R - Z**, Please bring HOT SIDE DISH

HELPFUL TIP: remember to put your name on your serving dish in order to identify during clean-up

ENTERTAINMENT:

1. Music by Mike Bustin <http://mikebustinmusic.blogspot.com/>
2. Baggo (bean bag game)
3. Volleyball and basketball (on our new court!)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED see http://www.MBCivic.com/2010_civic_fall_picnic

1. Setup: 4 people to set up tables
2. Servers: 8 people to staff food and drink tables
3. Clean up: 4 people take down tables, and trash clean-up

RSVP or volunteer via our website at www.MBCivic.com

Please direct any questions to Mike Anderson or Stephanie Harris at Social@MBCivic.com

Please RSVP Not Later Than Saturday, SEPT. 25TH

On the web www.MBCivic.com or call 704-759-6743

Safety Corner

STOP SIGNS: The city will install stop signs on Shaker Dr. A concerned neighbor circulated a petition for stop signs due to the excessive speed on Shaker avg. 33mph in a 25mph zone and because of the high number of cars traveling through the neighborhood (in excess of 800 on Shaker). Thank you Beth Hahn for implementing the initiative!

STREET LIGHTS: Jeff Barnes and kids surveyed the neighborhood and found 22 street lights not working. Jeff has sent the following request to Duke Power. **TIP** You can submit future requests as needed. See the Quick Link our website www.MBCivic.com

- 3500, 3513, 3521, and across from 3701 Highview Road
- 3029, across from 3508, across from 3532, and 3544 Mountainbrook Road
- 3301 Mill Pond Road
- 3513 Haverstick Place
- 3308, 3501, 3517, and 3624 Johnny Cake Lane
- across from 3718 School House Lane
- 3215 Landerwood Drive
- 3127 Shaker Drive
- 2917 Rustic Lane
- corner of Rustic and Cambria
- Big Oak Drive
- two lights in Mountainbrook club parking lot at end of Mill Pond Road

Thank you Jeff for the initiative to make our streets safer!

Elizabeth and Sandy McGregor: 704-552-6023

Go to <http://www.mbcivic.com/> to read the latest Monthly Newsletter from our Community Police Officers

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE YARD OF THE MONTH WINNERS



June	:	Dennis & Donna Savell, 3812 School House Ln.
July	:	Scott & Claudia Hammet, 3518 Highview Rd.
August	:	Thomas Curry, 3504 Mountainbrook Rd.
September	:	Brian & Karen Miller, 3616 Table Rock Rd.



Keep Your Signs to a Minimum

Did you know that all of the restrictive covenants in Mountainbrook state all types of yard signs are prohibited except "For Sale" or "For Rent" signs? By displaying advertising signs or other types of signs, we detract from the beauty of Mountainbrook. Support your painter, roofer, etc., but please respect the spirit of this restriction. Pull the sign down within a few days of completion.

Your Pet is Your Responsibility

Please remember to clean up after your dog at the park. It is no one else's responsibility. Doggie bags are available at the park entrance. Speaking of dogs, please be considerate to all enjoying the park and keep your dog on a leash. Not to mention it's the law. See Chapter 3 Charlotte City Code.



Keep Leaves Out of Storm Drain

From Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services

It's the time of year when the leaves fall and homeowners are outside raking them into piles. But, most homeowners don't realize that what you do with that pile of leaves could be detrimental to the environment.

In the City of Charlotte, it is against the Storm Water Quality Ordinance to dispose of yard waste down storm drains or in creeks. It is also recommended that homeowners do not leave them to decompose on creek banks.

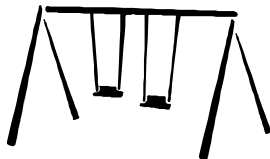
The storm drainage system flows directly to our creeks and lakes without any treatment. That means that when large quantities of leaves are blown into the streets or piled on stream banks, yard waste becomes a storm water pollutant.

Yard waste, when left to decompose in our surface waters, super-fertilizes the water and becomes toxic to the aquatic community. When it is left to decompose on stream banks, yard waste can contribute to stream blockages and smother vegetation stabilizing the banks.

Avoid localized street flooding by keeping storm drains clear of debris and yard waste.

The City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services has suggestions for homeowners looking to dispose of leaves properly. Homeowners can place leaves in untied plastic bags at the curb for pickup. Solid Waste Services will be around during normal routes to pick up yard waste.

Swing Into Action!



Fundraising for Phase II of the playground improvements has begun. This phase will first include toddler swings in a separate mulched and bordered area next to the playground, and then belt swings in a mulched and bordered area between the cabana and basketball goals.

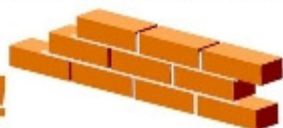
Toddler Swings—\$2,500 Goal

Belt Swings—\$2,500 Goal

Please buy a brick at \$100 each or consider a monetary donation.

**Mountainbrook
Playground
Fundraiser**

**Buy a
Brick!**



**Call Ashley (704) 556-9773
or online at www.MBCivic.com**

If you would like to place an ad in our newsletter or directory, please contact

Janice Major or Mike Anderson
newsletter@MBCivic.com

Did You Know?

It takes approximately **5.5 laps** around the track at the Anne Heinig Park to make **one mile!**

Get out there and get some exercise!



Mountainbrook Civic Association - Commonly Asked Questions

I paid my annual dues of \$500 for the Swim Club but my name is not listed as a member of the Civic Association; is there a mistake?

The Mountainbrook Civic Association and The Mountainbrook Swim and Tennis Club are two separate entities.

Is the Civic Association one of the volunteer clubs within Mountainbrook?

No, the Civic Association was established when Mountainbrook was first developed to facilitate the maintenance of common areas, community functions, and act as an advocate for the neighborhood. The members of the Civic Association Board, elected at the annual meeting, do serve on a volunteer basis.

I see the annual dues are \$100; why do we need to collect membership dues?

Surprising to most people are the significant funds required to cover the basic expenses of the neighborhood along with a modest amount for communications and social events. The budget approved for 2010 is \$20,620.

Wait, more than \$20,000 per year, how is that spent?

We all know that Mountainbrook is a very desirable community in which to live. Even though we are fortunate to have volunteers to oversee the beautification projects, more than 50% of the budget goes towards professionally maintaining our main entrances and other common areas. Many will agree that seeing these beautiful areas as we enter the community either for the first time or after many times is a welcome sight and ultimately benefits all of us as residents and homeowners.

Well, OK, that's half the budget, but what about the rest?

There are several other basic budgeted expenses. One is insurance. Like any organization, it is prudent to carry at least a minimum level of insurance coverage. The annual premiums for our current policies are \$1,414. Another ongoing item is utilities (gas, water, and electricity), estimated at about \$2,300 for this year. Communication tools including mailings, newsletters, directory, and website expenses make up another \$2,400 of the budget – much of which is offset by advertising income. Our long-standing tradition of Mountainbrook holiday luminaries is budgeted at \$1,000 and the expenses associated with various other social activities are another \$1,000. We also need to set aside reserves for capital improvement projects such as landscaping, lighting, etc.

If we have about 350 homes in Mountainbrook, why don't we have \$35,000 to contribute to the budget?

Actually, there are 363 households in our community; so, ideally, yes, we should have more than enough for the budget. However, membership and payment of dues in the civic association is voluntary. We need at least 60% of the households to contribute at the \$100 level to meet our fiscal obligations with an overall goal of 100% participation at any level. Full participation would provide funding for future improvements within the community.

We are already into the fall. Is it too late to join the Civic Association?

Definitely not! Obviously, we need dues early in the year in order to fully plan for the year and fund expenses, but members are welcomed at any time. Now would be a perfect time because the annual Civic Association Member Fall Picnic is just around the corner and it would be a great opportunity to join in!

Mountainbrook Civic Association Financials

	2010 Budget	Jan 1 - Sep 15 2010 Actual
Beginning Operating Funds	(d)	\$ 8,834
Beginning Capital Reserve		5,117
Beginning Cash		13,951
INCOME		
Directory Ads	\$ 1,800 (a)	\$ 220
Newsletter Ads	(b)	375
Interest Income	10	2
Membership Dues	21,983	23,420
Miscellaneous	(c)	770
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 23,793	\$ 24,787
EXPENSES		
Annual Meeting	250	88
Bank Charges		8
Directory	1,300 (a)	230
D&O Insurance	744	744
General Liability Insurance	696	670
Water	80	15
Gas	1,425	1,025
Electric	800	589
Heinig Park Watershed Share	50	
2010 Landscaping Maintenance	11,700	7,596
2009 Landscaping Maintenance	(d)	1,595
Seasonal Flowers	250	133
Luminaries	1,000	
Member Communication	150	
Newsletter - Printing	650 (b)	259
Newsletter - Postage	(b)	319
Post Office Box Rent	75	70
Signs & Lights	75	
Gas Lights	275	
Website	300	225
Social -Halloween	50	
Social - Easter	150	143
Social - Family Picnic	740	400
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 20,760	\$ 14,107
Ending Operating Funds		\$ 12,273
Ending Capital Reserve	(d)	\$ 12,358
Ending Cash		\$ 24,632

Notes:

- (a) Directory Ads/Expense are under budget as a result of publishing a supplement only for 2010.
- (b) Newsletter Ads income offset to Newsletter Printing & Newsletter Postage expense.
- (c) Miscellaneous Income consists of a credit from Piedmont Natural Gas due to overbilling in previous years and collections for speed humps and ads for 2009.
- (d) The balance in Operating Funds from 2009 EOY (less the unpaid 2009 landscaping invoices) has been transferred to the Capital Reserve account.

We will work with you and your tax and legal advisors to help you select the most appropriate product solution to meet your specific needs and circumstances. Some health insurance products offered by MetLife Insurance through Preferred Financial Services Agency, Inc. (PFS), 3000 Park Avenue, Somerset, NJ 08876, MetLife Insurance Life Insurance Company (MILIC), 300 Park Ave, NY, NY 10155 (MetLife Insurance) and MetLife Securities, Inc. (MSI) (Member FINRA/SIPC) (FICA) and MetLife Securities, Inc. (MSI) are not available in all states. For more information, please contact your agent.

- Life Insurance
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- Charitable Giving Strategies
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Offering protection for your business, your family and your lifestyle

For Your Business

- TRS Consolidation/Rollovers
- Mortgage Protection (through Life Insurance & Disability Income Insurance)
- Medicare Supplement Coverage
- Pension Rollover Alternatives
- Pension Transfer/Rollovers
- Tax Sheltered Annuities (TSA) Plans
- Business Succession Planning
- Group Medical, Dental, & Disability Insurance
- Group Long Term Care & Life Insurance
- Executive Bonus & Key Person Plans



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"Mountainbrook resident since 1992"

MetLife

This MOUNTAINBROOK Newsletter sponsored by:

**Mountainbrook Civic Association
 PO Box 472926
 Charlotte, NC 28247**

**FALL PICNIC
 SATURDAY, OCT. 2ND
 5:30 PM
 LIVE MUSIC!
 SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS!**

TO:

**<<DirectoryName>>
 Or Current Resident
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 <<City>>, <<ST>> <<ZipCode>>**