



winter 2010

ECA

Board 2010-2011

At the October 25 Annual meeting of the ECA, Monte Ritchey was elected President.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following members who are leaving the board after years of service: Matt Nurkin, Maya Packard, Todd Rubenson and Kara Gooding.

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JOIN THE ECA

Tragedy is when
I cut my finger. Comedy
is when you fall into an
open sewer and die.

– Mel Brooks



I have my faults,
but changing my tune
is not one of them.

– Samuel Beckett

Elizabeth Holiday Party

Saturday, December 11
Drop-in from 7-11 pm
2125 Greenway Avenue

At the home of Kim and Harris Lineberger
ECA will provide drinks and ham.
RSVP to: elizabethparty@gmail.com
Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.

A note from the Prez

by Monte Ritchey

As we approach the holiday season, I want to thank members of the Elizabeth Community for entrusting me and the balance of the Board with the stewardship of our great neighborhood. You can find information on all current board members in this newsletter. You'll also see the names of those who have rotated off. Be sure to thank them for their service if you have the opportunity.

The neighborhood is as beset with challenges as it has ever been. I encourage you to engage your Board, join us for monthly meetings and get involved. By "involved", I don't mean you necessarily have to be associated with one our GREAT and MASTERFULLY EXECUTED annual efforts, such as the Road Race, the Home Tour or the Progressive Dinner. Rather, try to stay abreast of our broader issues if at all possible.

Examples include: the Elizabeth Small Area Plan; the 2020 Vision Plan; various transit and greenway Plans; the devolution of Elizabeth Avenue; the growth of institutional neighbors and the loss of our historic fabric (two great buildings in the last 12 months and more than 15 in the last 10 years.)

Rely on your Board to do the heavy lifting on these and other issues, but please be there for

us if you are called upon to stand up for Elizabeth. If you have questions about any of the above matters and how they create risk and responsibility for us as residents or other matters you'd like to discuss, please free to call me at 704-334-6964. Please bear in mind that we can always use additional help. If you have an interest in being more involved, perhaps as part of a committee or a specific task force, we'd love to hear from you. We've lost a few legends to rotation this year and replacing them will be difficult. Please reach out to us with your particular interests and we'll do our best to put you to work in a meaningful and fulfilling way.

What we think of today as "our" Elizabeth, the lifestyle we enjoy, and the stability we've achieved as a neighborhood, is no accident. Nearly 40 years of active engagement by generations of neighbors, many of whom are still in the 'hood, has lead us to where we are today. We owe it to them and to each other to remain vigilant.

In parting, I hope you're enjoying the colorful canopy and the (finally) crisp, cool, fall air. Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and I hope to see you at the annual holiday party on December 11th or at one of the monthly meetings which take place at 6:30 pm on the third Monday of the month at Hawthorne Rec Center.

Once again...

deadline spring 2011:
February 15th

editorial content:

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New ECA e-mail list

by Nancy Albert

The ECA has recently transferred its e-mail list to Google Groups. All addresses from the old e-mail list have been transferred to the new list, but if you were not on the old list, it's now easy to subscribe. Just go to the ECA's website, www.elizabethcommunity.com, and enter your e-mail address in the subscription box on the home page. This mailing list is used for official ECA announcements only.

Saving Deacon Creek

by Elaine Scott

I think there's a creek back there", was someone's comment to my husband and me after we purchased our Kenmore Ave. home. In 2005, it was difficult to know what was under the blanket of kudzu. The city map showed a Deacon Ave. right of way that was never built. A creek was seen from both Dotger and Laurel Avenues so we decided to open it up. It seemed such a daunting task, but we knew we couldn't ignore the vine's encroachment. It took one year to remove the kudzu. The next year we hauled out the trash and debris hidden under the vine. Native plants that laid in rest were now ready to sprout and the creek gradually turned into a natural haven for humans and animals. The once forgotten storm creek now has a name: Deacon Creek.

photo: Nancy Albert

Prior to moving, we never gave much thought to the creeks that move our storm water in the Briar Creek watershed. The drains along the curbs accept everything given to them.

Designed only for rain water, other items, such as trash and yard waste, are accepted and flow into the creeks. However, not everything found in Deacon Creek passed through the drains. Many large items tossed by people from years passed were enveloped by the kudzu as it grew. So every year since the kudzu's removal, many neighbors along Deacon Creek participate in the Great American Cleanup. Kids with their rubber boots and gloves tromp through the water from Mercy Hospital to Dotger Ave., hiking through the culvert under Laurel Ave, and weaving among the shrubs and trees to remove the human trash. I'm encouraged as the amount of waste collected lessens each year.

Now it isn't just a creek, but a treasure. Our kids and their friends enjoy roaming the creek finding hidden gems and building forts among the various shrubs. I'm learning about the native plants and tending the landscape as the seasons change. For my husband, he's still on a search and destroy mission for kudzu vines in the dense brush further up the creek. It's hard to completely remove this invasive vine, so we carry on with our

vision to restore a forgotten storm creek.

Creating backyard havens for wildlife

by Elaine Scott

Deacon Creek and our yard were certified last year as a Natural Wildlife Habitat. The National Wildlife Federation, www.nwf.org, has an easy online questionnaire to determine if one's property creates natural areas for neighborhood wildlife. The size of one's yard doesn't matter, just how you tend to the plants and wildlife is important. The process took less than 20 minutes to complete and only requires a small fee to be certified.

Another successful Home Tour

by Rosalie Spaniel

What do you get when you combine five beautiful homes, four peaceful gardens, and two bonus locations? A very successful 2010 Elizabeth Home & Garden Tour!

The October 2nd and 3rd event raised nearly \$10,000 and more than 400 people visited the neighborhood homes and gardens, got gardening advice from members of Charlotte garden clubs, and relaxed for a few quiet moments at a church.

A portion of the proceeds from this year's tour will benefit Thompson Child & Family Focus and Hospice & Palliative Care of Charlotte.

The tour is one of Community Association's biggest fundraising events. Each year, generous homeowners put their lives on hold and welcome strangers into their homes; neighborhood residents give their time to greet visitors at the homes and gardens; generous area businesses support the event. Our deepest thanks go out to our sponsors, homeowners, and volunteers.

In addition to the Charlotte Council of Garden Clubs house and Hawthorne Lane United Methodist Church, the tour featured the homes of Julie Chavez and Scott Kaysen, Heather and Gus Obleada, Kristan and Ken Magas, Paige McThenia and Jon Adams, and Diana and Reid Watson. Outdoor areas on the tour were at the homes of Elaine Scott and Jerry Tylman, Tammy and Mark Herrmann, Kris and Ric Solow, and Leesa and Jim Clardy.

Carolinas Medical Center –Mercy and Crisp Seventh Street Café were title sponsors. Platinum sponsors were Presbyterian Hospital, Laura Casey Interiors, Woodruff Architecture, T.R. Lawing Realty, Vasseur Home Design, Morgan Landscape Group, and the Essential Gardener. Gold sponsors were Banister Homes, Brix Wood Fired Pizza, Carpe Diem and Lillie Antiques & Collectibles.

The 2010 Elizabeth Home

& Garden Tour committee included Nikki Bartlett, Dianna Desaulniers, Tammy Herrmann, Jane Maguire, Stephanie McKee, Maya Packard, Rosalie Spaniel, and Elizabeth Thomisser.

Gravel Driveways

by Frances L. D'Amato

Remember the grand country houses in the movies where the Bentley pulls up to the mansion after we hear the crush of the stones as the car comes up the long driveway? We may not have the acres

of land surrounding our city homes, but we do have gravel driveways, especially on Clement Street where quite a few gravel driveways grace the front of the homes.

Many of the homes in our Home Tour on Oct. 2-3, 2010 sported gravel driveways. I volunteered as a hostess at the home of Kris and Rick Solow on 5th St. – Kris remarked on how the gravel is her security system because she can hear footsteps or a car in the driveway as the gravel makes a warning noise. I noticed their driveway

also has a brick walkway that helps to keep the gravel on the driveway and not in the gardens surrounding the home.

As I drove down Greenway I spotted children playing outside, enjoying the sounds of the gravel as they kidded with each other. When I drove down 8th street, I noticed almost every driveway was gravel. I asked about runoff and the neighbors said we don't have any, the gravel allows the rain to wash right into the soil. What a wonderful way to be green and help our environment.



Let's ponder these thoughts as we walk through our neighborhood and enjoy the grass that grows in the middle of some gravel driveways, and the white stones that flourish in some driveways on Clement.

We talk about greening Elizabeth but how many of us are willing to make that happen? A gravel driveway isn't difficult to prepare and fill. Heavy rains just drain away with a gravel driveway while concrete and asphalt need drainage considerations built in from the start. They don't have to be boring. They can be made from a variety of different colored stones of red, white, blue and gray that may create patterns on large areas to provide contrast.

It's important that you prepare properly for any gravel driveway you plan to create. As with other surface materials, a rule of thumb guide is the heavier the use of your driveway, the deeper and more robust the gravel should be. In other words, if a car will travel on it, then it needs to be deep enough to cope with the additional wear and tear. Gravel driveways should be prepared by having the drive marked out and dug down to a depth of about six inches. Drive a wooden peg into the dug-out ground. If it is difficult to drive down further, then the base is solid and firm. If not, you may have to dig deeper. You should lay a base before laying the

gravel. Scalping stone is leftover quarry material and makes an excellent inexpensive base. Order it during dry weather, as rain will add considerably to the weight, which determines how much you will be charged. The scalping stone should be compacted by being vibrated in to a depth of at least 75 millimeters. Your driveway is now ready to accept the gravel. There are various sizes of gravel stone you can use. The best gravel size is 20 millimeters.

Gravel driveways are a joy to have, are easy to maintain and will look great for a long time to come.

25th annual Elizabeth 8K online registration now open

by Amanda Loftus

The 2011 Elizabeth 8K presented by Presbyterian Orthopaedic Hospital will hit the streets on Saturday, April 9. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the event.

Registration is now open for the race, and you can sign up at elizabeth8k.com. Choose from online or mail-in registration methods.

In addition to supporting the Elizabeth Community Association and the replenishment of trees in the neighborhood, proceeds from the 2011 race will also benefit Presbyterian Hemby Children's Hospital.

There is still plenty to do to prepare for 2011, and listed below are some ways you can make an impact:

Sponsors and donations:

Is your company (or a company you know) interested in becoming a sponsor or donating products and services? Paid sponsors are a vital part of our success, but in-kind donations and services such as race refreshments, participant t-shirts, and marketing and printing services also help us to maximize our revenue.

Participant recruitment:

We want to break 2010's participant record and see even more people at the starting line on April 9! Help us spread the word to your running/walking group, co-workers, neighbors, and friends, and get a crew together for race day. The course is stroller and dog friendly!

Volunteer: More than 60 people are needed on race day to ensure a well-executed and successful race. Come out and join your neighbors for a fun morning of giving back to your community.

Please contact Amanda Loftus at 704.608.9089 or aemloftus@yahoo.com with questions or to get involved.

Mark your calendars for April 9 and come be a part of our annual tradition!

Independence Park needs your help

by Kristan Magas

Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department's staffing was cut significantly this year due to budget cuts and they are asking for help. They need communities and businesses to adopt parks to assist in maintaining them and have asked the Elizabeth community to adopt Independence Park. The agreement will be for 1 year. Our responsibilities will be to walk through the park weekly for trash pick-up and to assist with one monthly landscaping or maintenance project. At least 16 volunteers may be needed each month.

I'll soon be sending out more information and a way to sign up to volunteer. Please consider contributing some time to our beautiful and unique park to help keep clean and safe.

Preservation resources

by Historic Charlotte

Historic Charlotte has recently launched a new initiative called the Preservation Resources Network – a special membership group for professionals who work, consult or invest in the field of historic preservation. The goal is to connect homeowners and businesses with local professionals in the field of historic preservation. The Preservation Resources

Network was created in response to the large number of inquiries Historic Charlotte receives each month by individuals and firms looking for expertise and experience in all facets of historic preservation.

Historic Charlotte's goal is to quickly connect as many people as possible with local professionals in historic preservation to continue to facilitate great historic preservation work. The Preservation Resources Network is designed to connect people with historic preservation-related needs to experienced suppliers. Listing on the Preservation Resources Network will provide



participants with consistent advertising on the Historic Charlotte website and listing in a variety of Historic Charlotte's print collateral based on participation level.

For more information, please visit our website at www.HistoricCharlotte.org.

Winterizing

by Matthew Petit

Now that the thermostat is dropping and winter is around the corner, your home is potentially at risk for high energy bills and heat loss. Historic homes are especially prone to leaky windowsills and drafty door frames. While there are plenty of home remedies available for those pesky draft-prone areas of your home, think twice before closing off a door or window with plastic wrap and duct tape.

Most home remedies don't solve the problem itself. For a true level of comfort in winter or summer months and a drastic reduction in energy bills, interior storm windows are the best bet. This is especially true for historic homes, where leaded glass and custom-sized windows are very expensive and difficult to duplicate.

Interior storm windows are removable inserts fitted onto the inside of a home's windows and doors. Customized to fit any shape and size, they're virtually undetectable from either the outside or inside

of the home, something that homeowners associations love. To see how your home rates in energy efficiency, contact a local energy audit firm for a comprehensive audit of heat loss and air infiltration, and save that duct tape for another project.

Yard Yak

by Kay Minor

Change is constant. It's what I like most about gardening. Always a work in progress, most gardens are never really "finished". Forces outside our control often make decisions for us; the giant stump sitting in my front yard is a perfect example.

Hearing my tree guy say "it's a hazard", however unsettling, was not a surprise. One full third of the canopy fell onto Eighth Street in mid 2005.

My tree guru showed up with crew and crane, leaving the largest hunk of wood in the road signed by "Juan" with a chain saw.

Many other limbs of various sizes have fallen over the years, and thankfully, no one has ever been hurt. But this year we had two "close calls" and got a home equity line from the bank to remove not just one giant tree – a massive willow oak – but also a very mature tulip poplar that had been hit by lightning in 2006. Michael the chain saw magician respectfully called it a monster.

It is what it is, or more fitting, was what it was. Surveying the expansive flat stump, my younger sister Sherri suggested a pole directly in the middle for "pole dancing". It's a good workout", she said. In an attempt to integrate the stump with the remaining garden, I covered the top with creek sand and small pebbles. The effect is an asymmetrical cupcake with sprinkles.

The pith helmet I wore for protection against acorns will gather dust; no more blowing of endless leaves or raking pollen in the spring. Yes, there will be more weeds and air conditioning bills to soar. Last night, while gazing at our clear view of the moon, I pondered solar shingles for our roof. Our sunset years in Elizabeth, paradoxically, seem destined for sunshine.

Ain't Elizabeth grand?

by Suzanne Durkee

My husband and I moved to the Elizabeth neighborhood seven years ago and were immediately smitten with all things Elizabeth: our neighbors, the huge trees, the quaint homes, the trolley path, the park, and all the shops and restaurants within walking distance.

Very quickly we were invited to participate in the progressive dinner, the home tour, the holiday parties, the road race, tree banding, and more. We've always liked the neighborhoods

we've lived in, but we both agree that Elizabeth is our favorite. It's warm and friendly, and vibrant too. It's always improving, but not in a "bigger is better" kind of way. Rather, it seems to mature gracefully. Maybe it's the amazing tree canopy that evokes much of this feeling I'm trying to describe, but I think it's more than that. For example, the house expansions and renovations are understated and hard to see from the street. You walk by these homes a year later and can't quite remember what was changed. You just know the block looks even more handsome and pleasingly refreshed.

As for the shops and restaurants that have made a home here, most are one-of-a-kind places with their own brand of eclecticism. From our local ice cream shop to the corner pizza parlor, several fine dining restaurants, a couple of watering holes, an upscale cooking store, several spas, and a unique garden shop, among others.

But most recently, it seems that Elizabeth has soared to new heights with the addition of two more engaging destinations on East 7th Street: Sunflour Baking Company (# 2001) and Studio K art gallery (# 2024). The bakery uses organic products from NC farmers, millers, and growers. The pastry chefs are Johnson & Wales trained, and the business is family-owned

and operated. It's a great meeting place for friends and business colleagues alike.

Studio K refers to Kate Vasseur, an Elon University graduate and Elizabeth resident who

other hands-on experiences too. I'm no art critic, but in my humble opinion her pieces both captivate and satisfy.

Now if only the neighborhood, via the ECA, can achieve its



left the Green Rice Gallery in NoDa this past summer to open her own shop diagonally across from Crisp. Her passion is landscape painting, and a few of the pieces from her most recent "Terrain" exhibit are currently on display, among others. She and her husband hope to offer art classes and

traffic-calming, pedestrian-friendly goals for E. 7th Street, these destinations and many more will be walkable adventures for the whole family even during rush hour. Ah yes, ECA involvement and governance are two more ways for a devoted Elizabeth resident to get involved!

photo: Nancy Albert

2010 Advent schedule

by St. John's Baptist Church

Friday, December 3rd

Live WDAV broadcast of seasonal music, 12 noon

Sunday, December 5th

Second Sunday in Advent: hanging of the green service, 10:30 am in the Sanctuary

Sunday, December 12th

Third Sunday in Advent: special presentation by the choirs of St. John's Baptist Church and St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 7 pm in the Sanctuary

Friday, December 24th

Christmas Eve service, 5 pm in the Sanctuary

Sunday, December 26th

Continental breakfast: 9:30 am in Lasater Hall; Worship: 10:30 am in the Sanctuary

St. John's Baptist Church
300 Hawthorne Lane,
Charlotte, NC
704/333-5428

www.stjohnsbaptistchurch.org

Project Elizabeth

by Britta Crandall

Let the ECA buy you a tree – or part of one. We're incredibly excited to be able to continue subsidizing newly planted trees in our neighborhood. There's no better time to fill in that bare spot in your front yard or beautify the planting strip by the sidewalk.

Step 1: Choose from a Sugar Maple, a Bosque Elm, a Willow Oak, or an Aeryn Trident Maple (these are 2-inch trunk diameter trees).

Step 2: Return this order form to the Crandalls at 2338 Greenway. Make check payable to: The Maplewood Company.

Step 3: Professionals from Solow Design Group will help you stake an ideal spot for your trees. They'll contact you by phone or e-mail to arrange a site visit.

Step 4: Rest easy. The Maplewood Company will deliver, plant, and water your trees, then build a collar/water ring around it, top it with pine straw, and leave a detailed care sheet. It couldn't be easier!

For questions and more detailed information on the trees and/or process, please email Britta Crandall (brittacrandall@yahoo.com).

Project Elizabeth order form

Deadline for ordering is December 31, 2010.

_____ name

_____ address

_____ e-mail

_____ phone

Write the number of trees you're ordering to the left and the subtotal for each tree type to the right.

_____ Legacy Sugar Maples x \$275 each

_____ Aeryn Trident Maples x \$265 each

_____ Bosque Elms x \$265 each

_____ Willow Oaks x \$250 each

ECA subsidy: subtract \$100 per tree

_____ TOTAL (amount on check)



_____ check number

Send to: the Crandalls
2338 Greenway
Charlotte, NC 2820?

Thank you.

photo: Nancy Albert





Mystery train

by Nancy Albert

Have you ever noticed the train behind Pecan Point? It is usually hidden by a tall wooden fence, but one day I was walking by and the gate was wide open so I went in to explore. It sits on a bit of track, and a set of metal stairs lead up to the cab, which is mostly empty. Does anyone know how it got there, or what it was used for? If so drop me a line at noalbert@carolina.rr.com. Until then it will remain a mystery, something that makes Elizabeth such a quirky, wonderful neighborhood.



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6 – 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec 14 *Code STEMI* CMC-Mercy Auditorium
E Scott Valeri, MD, FACC, from Sanger Heart & Vascular Institute discusses ST segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), a type of heart attack.

6 – 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 11 *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction*
Mercy Medical Plaza Third Floor Conference Room (at the corner of Vail Avenue and Caswell Road) Lindsay Bridges, MD, discusses effective strategies for facing life's difficulties and creating inner peace.

6 – 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 15 *Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)*
Mercy Medical Plaza Third Floor Conference Room Glen Fandetti, MD, cardiologist with Sanger Heart & Vascular Institute discusses PAD, the warning signs, who should be screened and treatment options.



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8th Street Studio's Winter Open House

Friday, December 11, 4-8pm

Come celebrate the beginning of our 10th year on 8th Street.

Join us for food, fun, and frivolity! Demonstrations in both yoga and pilates will be conducted from 4:30-5pm.

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