



BROOKNOTES

The Newsletter of the Brookwood Hills Community

March 1993, Vol. VII, No. 3

Tax Assessment Notices Are Here!

All Brookwood Hills homeowners should have received by now their tax assessment notices, which were mailed March 5th. The information used to arrive at the value of each house was the same as that used in 1991. Remember that the 1991 valuation resulted in over 30,000 appeals. The danger in these reassessments is that any increase in the valuation of your property sets the basis for future tax increases. The millage may go down a bit as has been promised, but it can and will go up again eventually. If your property value is assessed at a higher rate, that will be the basis for future millage and value increases. If your new property assessment is not successfully challenged now, it **cannot** be decreased later. Please take the time to review your notice very carefully, and make the effort to appeal if you find the new rate inequitable. **Your right to appeal expires April 5th, whether you have received the re-assessment or not,** so call 730-6440 **immediately** if you have not received your notice.

Method of Appeal:

- a. Should you decide to appeal the new assessed value of your home, write a letter to the Joint City-County Board of Assessors, Suite 98, 141 Pryor Street, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia, 30303-3445. Explain why you disagree with the assessment. Use specific reasons; claiming that it is "just too high" will not work. Enclose copies of pertinent supporting documents, such as pictures, recent appraisals, neighborhood comparables and disparities, and/or recent real estate sales data.
- b. The Tax Assessment Office will separate documented appeals from undocumented ones, and appraisers will review the documented information. If the appraisers agree with the homeowner's reasoning, they will contact the homeowner and try to work out a new value for the home. If they do not agree with the homeowner's argument, the appeal will be passed on to the Board of Equalization. If the Board does not agree with the homeowner, the appeal is then decided in Court. The Board of Equalization will contact the homeowner in order to set a hearing date. **This Court hearing is at no cost to the homeowner.**

Included in this Brooknotes, if you are a member of the Brookwood Hills Civic Association, is an insert including the new assessment data for the entire neighborhood. This data, which was compiled by Elisabeth St. John, can be used to cite disparities between comparable properties within Brookwood Hills. Elisabeth is due an enormous "thank you" from all of us for the tremendous amount of time and effort which it took to amass this invaluable data.

If your copy of Brooknotes does not include the assessment data insert and you think you are a member of the Association, contact Brooknotes editor Alison Caughman (355-7662), who has an updated list of members and can get a copy to you if appropriate. If you are not an Association member, this service is another great reason to join. Call Kathy Bernhardt (874-5067) and become a member today.

Membership Renewal Time

All renewal letters for membership in the Brookwood Hills Civic Association and Community Club have been mailed. If you have not received one, that means that either the US Mail has misplaced it, you are new to the neighborhood, or you were not a member last year. In any case, please call Kathy Bernhardt, Membership Chair, 874-5067 or 874-5069, so that we can remedy the situation.

Membership for Brookwood Hills residents is in two categories. There is an "A" membership, which entitles members to use of the pool in the summer, and the tennis courts and park year-round. There is also a "B" membership category, which entitles members to use of the park. Both categories help defray the costs of the security service, tree maintenance, and taxes on the common areas owned by the Association (the park area plus extensive buffer zones behind the perimeter houses on Huntington and Camden). In the first year of "A" membership there is a \$600 initiation fee. The yearly fees for 1993 have been set by the Board at \$455 for "A" members and \$160 for "B" members.

All residents who join the Association or renew their membership will receive the new decals displaying the Brookwood Hills logo for each of their automobiles.

In 1992, membership participation by street was as follows: 100% for Palisades, 91% for Woodcrest, 88% for Brighton and Wakefield, 87% for Camden, 72% for Northwood, and 67% for Huntington and Montclair. The Association would like to reach 100% participation this year. Help to make it a reality by contacting Kathy Bernhardt at the above numbers, or by dropping a note in the mailbox at 77 Wakefield Drive.

You Are Invited To . . .

.... an evening with **Robert Forrestal**, President, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. As part of the Atlanta Jewish Community Center's "Focus on the Issues" series, Mr. Forrestal will discuss "The Economic Outlook for the Southeast" at 1745 Peachtree Road on Tuesday, March 30th, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available by mail or at the center. For advance tickets the cost is \$5 for members, \$7.50 for guests. At the door the cost will be \$7.50 for members, \$10 for guests. For further information, contact Brenda at 875-7881.

A Letter to the Community

The following is excerpted from a letter sent recently to the Civic Association by a neighbor.

Dear Brookwood Hills Association,

The other day after completing a difficult and energy-draining task, I decided to lie down and take a nap. After getting comfortable in my bed I started to relax and was looking forward to some much deserved rest. All of a sudden, I heard a neighbor's yard man pull the starter of one of those gas powered blowers and crank it up to an incredibly deafening level. I then realized that sleep was out of the question. These machines are so loud, that it's practically impossible to carry on a normal conversation in one's own yard, or even watch television inside one's home. It is also apparent the noise they generate is too much for its user, for he usually wears protective ear muffs.

Granted, noise pollution is part of our modern lives. But living in a neighborhood like Brookwood Hills where houses are relatively close together necessitates the consideration of a ban on the kind of noise pollution that is produced by gas powered blowers. These machines violate the privacy of anyone within earshot and benefit no one but the people who use them. Believe it or not, raking leaves takes no more time than blowing them. And because these blowers are among the worst offenders in producing air pollution, we would all be better off without them.

Let's crack down on the use of these machines in Brookwood Hills. Let's ask those residents who employ yard services to ban the use of gas blowers and encourage the use of good old fashioned rakes. Let's bring peace and quiet back to our lives!

Editor's Note: A side issue about these yard services is that a number of them routinely blow yard debris out of one yard, either into the street or onto the neighbor's property. Aren't they supposed to bag the debris and haul it off?

Brooknotes Deadline

The deadline for the April edition of Brooknotes is Friday, April 9th. Drop copy (pictures too!) through Alison Caughman's mail slot at 200 Camden Road. If you are having problems with delivery of your Brooknotes, call Laura Inman at 352-5072.

Love Your Park

Beautiful Spring weather brings heavy park usage. Here are a few rules, which should be adhered to by all of us who use the park:

1. Please remember that the park is open only for those who are **official, dues paying members of the Brookwood Hills Civic Association and their guests.**
2. Reservations for use of the park for team practices, parties, or other gatherings should be made through Sarah Ellen Love (874-4036).
3. Dogs are required to be on leashes and supervised by their owners while in the park. Dog owners are requested to clean up after their dogs who relieve themselves in the heavily traveled areas of the park, such as the areas where play equipment and the playing field are located.
4. Children must not climb on the hill between the playground and the fence on Wakefield. A serious and potentially dangerous erosion problem exists in this area, and children climbing and sliding down the hill are only making the situation worse.
5. Children need to be reminded they must never climb over the fence onto the swimming pool property, or on the roof of the storage shed.

Your assistance in seeing that everyone follows these important rules will help make the park a safer, enjoyable environment for all to use.

Questions About Rivers?

If you have young children and are looking at elementary schools, don't forget E. Rivers Elementary -- our neighborhood public school. E. Rivers has nearly 500 students in grades K through 5, and has been serving the community for 75 years. There will be an open house in May for new students registered to attend in the Fall. If you have questions about E. Rivers or would like to arrange a tour of the school, call Brookwood Hills resident and this year's PTA Co-President, Lee Wilder, at 876-0716.

Classifieds

For information on World Book Encyclopedia, Childcraft, New Computer Software Information Finder, and Early World, please contact Mary Heisel, 235 Huntington, 872-6145.

Spring Sale. Patty & Christa Renfroe of J. Beck & Co. invite you & your friends to select from a unique collection of decorative accessories for home & garden. Thursday, April 1, 355 Camden, 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m..



Linda Harris, party organizer, and Katrina Newton, BWH TWIGS Chair, break into smiles at the success of their annual fundraising bash.

TWIGS Gala a Success

The evening of January 29th was a marvelous night of delicious food, good music, and beautiful flowers, thanks to Andrea and Bunky Helfrich, who opened their gorgeous home for the annual neighborhood party to benefit Emory's Egleston Hospital for Children. This yearly event, which is organized by Brookwood Hills TWIGS, raised well over \$2,000 for the hospital, and was a great way for neighbors to get together for a fun evening. Many thanks to all of the neighborhood volunteers who provided the marvelous food and beverages that we sampled throughout the evening. Special notes of thanks go to: Linda Harris, who organized the party; Lisa Rowell and her committee, responsible for the invitations and reservations; Carey Peard, who coordinated the Bar Committee, and all of those eager husbands/bartenders who assisted her. Particular thanks also go to Kay Ottley and Sally Newton for the fabulous flower arrangements throughout the house, Habersham Wines, and Sarah Hagood and Patti Junger for their financial contributions.

Calling All Kids

The BWH Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be in the Brookwood Hills Park on Sunday, April 4th, at 3:00 p.m. sharp. (Rain date: Saturday, April 10th.) Patti Junger of Buckhead Brokers has generously offered to sponsor this popular event. All neighborhood children are welcome. Please come and remember to bring your own baskets! A separate hunting ground will be reserved for the smallest hunters. Everyone will have a chance to search for the special golden egg. Emily Jenkins has offered to photograph the event. Questions? call Sarah Ellen Love (874-4036) or Triff Phillips (875-2162).

Park Committee Projects

Your 1993 Parks Committee's first project has been completed. Notice when you drive through the Palisades entrance that the abelia hedge has been cut back to three feet, new abelia plants fill the gaps, and fresh pine straw has been added. Also the two newly planted trees and our existing trees in the islands have been stylized, and the liriope pruned and mulched with pine straw. We are all indebted to Rick Vetch, Hi Tech Lawn Service (435-5395), who cuts our grass and keeps our entrances pruned and cleaned. Rick offered his services free to prune the abelia hedge, clean up the trash and put down pine straw, if the Community Club paid for the pine straw. Parks Committee Member Jimmy Henderson took Rick up on his offer and worked with him to complete the pruning.

Our second project is sidewalks, driveway aprons, curb stones, and handicap walkways at every intersection. Recently a resident of Brookwood Hills fell on Brighton and had to have extensive medical attention. Her family paid the medical bills. Additionally, an employed domestic worker fell on Huntington and broke her glasses. Her employer paid for a new pair. You should be aware that you are responsible for the condition of the sidewalks, driveway entrances, and curbing fronting your property. If someone suffers property or bodily injury damage due to your sidewalks being unsafe, you can be sued. If an unsafe condition exists, and if a homeowner fails to have it repaired, the City can condemn the unsafe area. In this case, the City would do the repair work and the homeowner would be billed for the work performed. The Parks Committee is securing an estimate for repairing all sidewalks adjoining our entrances to Brookwood Hills and around our park. We have made the repair of these sidewalks a priority and plan, if funds are available, to have them fixed as soon as repairs can be scheduled.

Sidewalk repairs, while paid for by the property owner, are done by the city of Atlanta. Your Parks Committee met with a City Official, Mr. Dwight Dabney, Inspector, Public Service Division, on March 4th, and we covered all of Brookwood Hills. Mr. Dabney explained that there is no cost for labor, but the cost for materials runs as follows: Sidewalks - \$1.50 per square foot; Driveway Aprons - \$3.00 per square foot; Granite Curbing - \$7.00 per linear foot, with the curbing coming in a minimum of five foot lengths. As an example, if you had a five foot by five foot square of sidewalk replaced, it would cost \$37.50 (5 x 5 x \$1.50). Granite curbing would cost \$35 for each five foot granite curb. Mr. Dabney assured us that they would make every effort to protect our tree roots during any installation.

The cost charged by the city for this work is extremely reasonable. We are hoping that by making these figures available to you, you will be encouraged to have the sidewalks, curbing and driveway aprons in front of your homes repaired, if they are in need of repair.

At present the City will install driveway aprons and curbing for any individual homeowner. Those streets of Brookwood Hills which currently do not have sidewalks can have sidewalks installed if there is sufficient interest. If fifty-one percent of the homeowners on the street affected wish to have sidewalks installed and so notify the City, the City will then install sidewalks on that street and bill all the individual homeowners for the work performed fronting their homes.

Everyone in the neighborhood benefits from having our sidewalks and curbing in good condition. They add to the safety and enjoyment of our street activities, and are an enhancement to our property values. The BWH Parks Committee will gladly discuss sidewalks issues with you. Call Parks Chair Sarah Ellen Love (874-4036) or Committee Member Jimmy Henderson (351-5155). If you want the City to repair an existing sidewalk, call Mr. Dwight Dabney (330-6087), and he will give you an estimate free of charge.

The logo for Specialty Homes Inc. features the word "Specialty" in a large, elegant, cursive script. Below it, the word "Homes" is written in a similar but slightly smaller cursive font. At the bottom, "Inc." is written in a smaller, simpler font, also in cursive. The entire logo is positioned on the left side of the page, below a horizontal line.

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Sponsored by your neighbor

Sarah Hagood

Owner / Broker

231-5678
