

The  
Lake  
Claire

# Clarion



December 2021

The Lake Claire Neighborhood Newspaper • www.LakeClaire.org  
Lake Claire embraces inclusivity and diversity of all kinds.

V.29, #12



## Traffic Safety in and around Lake Claire

by Miriam Herbers

The DeKalb Avenue Safety Improvements Pre-Construction Information Meeting took place as a webinar on November 4. The first phase, scheduled to start on December 1, will affect Lake Claire right away because it will start at Ridgecrest and move westward to Jackson Street.

The reversible lanes, signage, and overhanging poles will be removed, and the middle lane will temporarily be painted as left-turn lanes. Depending on the weather, this part may take a week. I will try to keep up with the dates for upcoming phases and let you know in the Clarion what to expect each month.

Adrian Carver is the communica-

tions manager for the project and can be reached at [ATLDOT@AtlantaGA.gov](mailto:ATLDOT@AtlantaGA.gov), in case you want to follow along yourself. Maps, notes from the meetings, and lots of other information can be found there. To receive e-mail updates, put DeKalb Ave Safety project in the subject line. If you went to the public meeting held a few years back and signed up with your e-mail, you are already signed up for the updates.

This project is expected to take at least a year to make the changes from the dangerous road we worry and complain about to a safer roadway. It is important that we remain alert, remain patient, and pay atten-

*Cont. on p. 5*

## Further on Dekalb's Long-Overdue Improvements

Potholes and the “suicide lane” are being eradicated with the DeKalb Avenue Safety Improvement Project, and as noted in Miriam Herbers’ article on this page, beginning this month with work that will span from Jackson Street in Sweet Auburn to Ridgecrest Road in Lake Claire. DeKalb Avenue’s choppy asphalt will finally be resurfaced. The reversible lane, a source of numerous accidents, will be swapped out

for left-turn lanes at key places such as Krog Street and Arizona Avenue. Traffic-calming, pedestrian-assisting concrete medians will be installed at Ridgecrest Road, Degress Avenue, and Waddell Street near the Krog Street Tunnel. Needed sidewalk repairs will finally take place (but not, as Miriam notes, widened).

The Atlanta City Council unani-

*Cont. on p. 5*

## Neighborhood Halloween Celebration Great Success

The last week of October, many Lake Clarions enjoyed one of Lake Claire’s signature parties of the year, welcoming it back after the Covid hiatus—the Annual Lake Claire Halloween Parade and Party. This year there was a new twist: movies in Lake Claire Park. We started with The Great Pumpkin Peanuts movie and followed up with Tim Burton’s Nightmare before Christmas. An \*unfortunate\* twist was rainy weather; but kids (of all ages, including many adult kids-at-heart) gathered and paraded in the mostly light rain, ending up in the park for movie time. In the Centerfold, you can see some of our own pirates, princesses, super heroes, monsters, witches, and dragons.

Thanks to the Halloween Committee, Stephanie Cho, Thuyen Nguyen Barton, Steve Raimonde, Meg Hanna, Erin Crymes, Joshua Barton, Daniel Cho, and Nancy Dorsner; we thank everyone else who volunteered, and a special thanks to our sponsors: Brave & Kind Bookshop, Sean’s Candler Pak, Candler Park Market, Poco Loco, Mandy Mahoney for Atlanta City Council, Cynthia Baer Real Estate, John Morgan-Park Realty, Steve Raimonde Real Estate, and Elect Samuel Bacote/City Council.

A real example of its “taking a village,” this was once again a great event.

Please go to Page 9 and check out the photos!

## Hygiene Kits for Newly Arrived Afghani Refugees

by Layla Klehr

My name is Layla Klehr, and I am 12 years old and a 7th grader at David T. Howard Middle School. For my bat mitzvah, I have chosen a mitzvah (community service) project that I am passionate about. I am putting together Hygiene Bags for New American Pathways ([\[icanpathways.org\]\(http://icanpathways.org\)\), an organization which is an Atlanta-based nonprofit, whose mission is to help Refugees and Georgia Thrive. Their vision is for new Americans in metro Atlanta to become successful, contributing,](http://newamer-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

*Cont. on p. 11*

**Lake Claire Crafts Fair/Walking Tour, December 4, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., throughout Lake Claire** (details in the November Clarion and in NextDoor)





Dear Lake Claire,

You're simply the best. I don't remember the rest of the lyrics to that song from years ago, but it sums up what we know to be true: our Lake Claire Neighbors are simply the best.

Just when we think you could do no more to support the great work done at Clifton and the men who are our guests, you step up and do so much more. This year, one great example is our garden. We've had a long-standing dream to be able to use our grounds to provide nourishing food for our guests, and some of you helped make that dream a reality. Our men enjoyed watermelon, green beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, herbs, and much more—and it was all healthy and grown in our own front yard!

The meals you have provided during the last year have been phenomenal, even when we asked you just to drop them at the front door so we could minimize our exposure to "the rona." Recently, we let you know that volunteers were welcome inside again, and many of you were the first to sign up. As much as loving the food, the guys love having your company and conversation!

Many of you have asked already how you can help over the holidays. We do give each guest a large Christmas bag full of goodies—and each guest gets a new outfit chosen especially for him. If you would like to contribute to that, please email Lori White, our Director of Community Relations, at [lori@cliftonsanctuary.com](mailto:lori@cliftonsanctuary.com). Your financial support is also very welcome and ensures that our work continues.

IF you are new to Lake Claire, let me fill you in on the Clifton story. On November 1, 1979, members of Clifton Presbyterian Church, most of whom lived in Lake Claire (and still do!), drove downtown in their church van and convinced three men who were homeless to come back to the church and enjoy a hot meal, a hot shower, and a comfortable place to sleep. Those three men were the start of a tradition that has now served many thousands of men, enabling the majority of them to transition to living independently.

So, once again, we say a very large THANK YOU to Lake Claire! For your love, your contributions, and your encouragement, we are over-the-moon grateful. The work of Clifton certainly couldn't be done without you. We hope you have a wonderful holiday season and that 2022 is a fantastic year for you and for our neighborhood.

With appreciation for great neighbors,

**Leslie Prince**  
Leslie Prince, Chair  
CSM Board of Directors



# Leos Launch More Conviviality

## Sons of Leo Second Gathering

by Lucas Gosdin



Thirteen married men encircle a fire on the night following the Hunter's moon. This ritual is not some spooky season incantation of spirits but a monthly gathering in the spirit of friendship and neighborly togetherness.

Leonardo Avenue has its traditions, some dating back decades, and lovely neighbors, some having lived here just as long. But there is a new neighborhood tradition, established to bring neighbors together. Organized by our unofficial mayor, Boyd Baker, the Sons of Leo is our newly formed group for male-aligned residents of Leonardo and our adopted brethren of Marlbrook and McLendon Avenues. The concept is simple: every month, one neighbor invites the rest to his backyard, patio, or porch to hang out for a couple of hours. Everyone brings himself, a drink, and a topic of conversation.

For October, Jesse Sammons invited us to his lovely back patio where the Braves were playing for the National League title, and the fire was burning just right to knock out the autumn chill. As the sounds of laughter filled the air, the conversations bounced from home improvement and neighborhood history to Halloween costumes and Gilmore Girls. There was even a hot debate about what constitutes chili, which led some people to express the unpopular opinion that gumbo should not be allowed at a chili cook-off. In general, there was lots of fun sharing recent experiences and updating one another on our lives.

Some may question the need for a gender-segregated group in 2021. After all, haven't we come to the realization that gender is much more than a binary? Allow me to flip the question. Isn't there so much we can learn from those with whom we share this identity? Masculinity and

what it means to be a man, a father, a partner, a friend, and a neighbor manifests itself in a multitude of ways, even on our little street. There is so much to learn just by kicking it around with your neighbors.

In the days that follow the Sons of Leo gatherings, emails are exchanged following up on the status of home improvements and lobbing jokes at one another. Perhaps these emails even gave a few of our regretfully declining invitees a strong case of FOMO. Not to worry, there is always the next one!

Next month's gathering will no doubt feature toasts to the winners of Chilinardo (see Page 8) and speculation about the conversations at the Ladies of Leonardo gathering. The autumn air will eventually give way to the chill of winter, but the Sons of Leo will stoke the fire a bit higher and take a break from work and caregiving to enjoy another evening of conversation and laughter. We hope it inspires you to do the same.

## Inaugural Ladies of Leonardo Happy Hour

by Sue McAvoy

Inspired by the Sons of Leo gatherings, Ashley Moore hosted nineteen women of Leonardo Avenue (and neighboring Marlbrook and McLendon Avenues) for the inaugural Ladies of Leonardo gathering on her deck last month. Each of us came with our beverage of choice, and Nikki Harkey surprised us with treats from Farm to Ladle, the Ponce City Market spot where she works. After delighted ooohing and aaahing over Ashley and Jeff's baby Miles, we turned to the matters at hand and began sharing stories. One of the most fun was shared by Tracy Craney, who related that she had been a groupie of Alyssa Olson when she performed with the Yacht Rock Revue at 10 High, a club in Virginia-Highland, ten years ago. Tracy was one delighted person when she and Jake moved to Leonardo and learned that Alyssa (and Peter and kids) lived just five houses away.

The remainder of the conversation flowed from new baby Leos to electric bicycles to Halloween costume debriefing to home renovations

to the likelihood of the Braves winning the World Series. Eye-rolling ensued over mislabeled school photographs, and anticipation filled the night air as we spoke excitedly of the upcoming Lake Claire Holiday Fair-Walking Tour and the fact that Leonardo will host several artists, food vendors, and bands (including the aforementioned Alyssa Olson). We also noted the plethora of folks who had retained our maiden names following our marriages, and some shared their surprise at being labeled as "geriatric pregnancy" patients as they approached childbirth.

It truly was a joy to get to know each other in this new and different way, especially given the fact that we range in age from mid-thirties to 78. The enthusiasm of the younger set was palpable, and it was a treat to hear tales of times gone by from our elders...some of whom lived here in the company of original owner neighbors. Generations may have come and gone before us, but our Ladies of Leonardo spirit remains as joyous as ever.



## Why do I/We Practice Yoga?

by Frani Green

Over the years that I have been a yoga student and teacher, I've come to realize that we come to our mats for various reasons. I ask my students before class, "what do you want to work on today?"

It's amazing the differing reasons and desires that the students share with me.

- I want to relax;
- I need to release frustration;
- My hamstrings are tight;
- I feel stuck in...my hips; my thought process; my relationship; job; body image; grief... or,

- I feel really good and want to feel better! The list goes on and on.

We Humans hold so much inside our precious bodies. Movement, breath work, and paying attention to our minds create a road to freedom. Freedom comes from letting go of the things, feelings, and thoughts that no longer serve us. Yoga is a way to release from our bodies so that we can physically, emotionally, and spiritually move forward in our daily lives. Whatever the reason is, KNOWING that this practice can address ALL and more of these issues,

why wouldn't you come to your mat?

If you are interested in learning more about yoga, or would like to take one of my Zoom classes, feel free to email me at [franigreen@bellsouth.net](mailto:franigreen@bellsouth.net).

Namaste, Frani

*Editor's note: Don't be scared to start—I started last month as a barebones-beginner at 65+ years old and already feel some aches and pains dissipating. It's never too late to begin a yoga practice, IMHO.*



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 Cover banner photo by Sarah Coburn

*The Clarion Newspaper (and its predecessor Neighbors Monthly Newsletter and its predecessor Lake Claire Neighbors Flyer) has been written, edited, and distributed by volunteers since 1989.*

## December Calendar

**1-12** Santa Claus will be at Rhodes Hall. Make appointment for your child; Rhodes Hall will be transformed to a winter wonderland. Safety measures in place. [www.georgiatruster.org/tours-events/santa/](http://www.georgiatruster.org/tours-events/santa/) 1516 Peachtree Street, a 20-year tradition.

**1-18** 378 Art Gallery's holiday show, *The Wintry Mix*, runs Thursdays and Fridays 1-6, Saturdays and Sundays 11-6. For list of artists and events, please see [gallery378.com/](http://gallery378.com/).

**1-19** Theatrical Outfit – Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*. See [www.theatricaloutfit.org/](http://www.theatricaloutfit.org/).

**1-24** The Alliance Theatre, *The Christmas Carrol*. [alliancetheatre.org/production/2021-22/a-christmas-carol](http://alliancetheatre.org/production/2021-22/a-christmas-carol). Can also be streamed. IN ADDITION: on the Hertz Stage, December 8-24, *Club Hertz Live*, and in the Selig Black Box Theatre, *Knock, Knock*, December 2-23. See full details at [alliancetheatre.org](http://alliancetheatre.org).

**4** Lake Claire Arts & Crafts Sale/Walking Tour—11 a.m. to 4 p.m., map and list to be found at every location, throughout the neighborhood, great arts and crafts, interspersed with some scrumptious food and music. Rain date December 5. Any update will be at [lakeclaire.org](http://lakeclaire.org)

**4** Frazer Forest Volunteer Workday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. You could go and leave in time for the Arts/Crafts sale/Walking Tour! Help maintain our beloved neighborhood old-growth forest, with Trees Atlanta. Pre-registration required/Space is limited: [frazercenter.org/about-us/events](http://frazercenter.org/about-us/events). **There will be no January volunteer workday.**

**4** Land Trust Drum Circle, 8-11 p.m. Donation suggested. Please bike, walk, or park at CSM, respecting neighboring streets.

**4-29** *The Nutcracker*. Atlanta Ballet will make its long-anticipated return to the theatre stage to present Yuri Possokhov's *The Nutcracker*. See [atlantaballet.com](http://atlantaballet.com).

**5** At the Land Trust, Vinyasa Yoga with Ashley Brooks, 10-11 a.m., \$10/person

**10-19** Actors Express presents *Libby's at the Express: Ho, Ho Home for the Holidays and a Connie Sue Day Christmas*. See info at [actors-express.com](http://actors-express.com). The regular season starts again January 5, with the play *Intimate Apparel*.

**14** Dekalb History Center's "Hops at the History Center Author Event." Author Neely Young will be talking about his book, *Georgia Made: The Most Important Figures Who Shaped the State in the Twentieth Century*, which highlights the lives of Georgia's most influential people of the twentieth century. [www.dekalbhistory.org/](http://www.dekalbhistory.org/).

**16** **There is likely no December meeting of Lake Claire Neighbors.** If there is an urgent zoning matter, this could change. Please check the website for confirmation and other e-mails about Lake Claire, at [lakeclaire.org/](http://lakeclaire.org/)

[resources/newscast-sign-up/](http://resources/newscast-sign-up/). Whether or not we have a meeting in December, monthly meetings resume in January with the usual schedule of every 3rd Thursday; hopefully at some point we will resume in-person meetings, Covid cooperating.

**18** Land Trust Community Work Day, 1-4 p.m. Pizza follows. Please bike, walk, or park at CSM, respecting neighboring streets.

**19** *The Nutcracker: Clara's Winter Dream*, performance by students of The Dance Foundry at Decatur High School. Two shows, 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Parking is available in the Decatur High School lots off Howard Avenue, and in the DeKalb County Courthouse Parking Deck on West Trinity Place at Commerce Drive. Masks required. Tix at: [dancefoundry.brown-papertickets.com/](http://dancefoundry.brown-papertickets.com/) The students are very happy to be back in the theatre!

**19** At the Land Trust, Vinyasa Yoga with Ashley Brooks, 10-11 a.m., \$10/person

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## Wild In Lake Claire

by Sara Gottlieb

Fall is beloved by many people for its cooler weather, magnificent leaf displays, and promise of food-filled holidays. But here's a confession: fall is not my favorite time of year, in part because it feels like nature is coming to an end—or at least ending all its glorious work for a while. I dread the cold days and long, dark nights of winter that are ahead of us. But it does give me a rest from garden chores and time to tend to indoor tasks that I have little energy for during warmer months, including writing. Therefore, it seems fitting that my first guest column of *Wild in Lake Claire* should appear on the cusp of fall's transition to winter.

As I write this, the world's leaders are putting the finishing touches on agreements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions so we can avoid the worst climate change predictions if average global temperatures rise more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. This year, there are multiple fully formed bunches of bananas on the trees in the Land Trust, which no longer need to be dug up and stored in warm basements for the winter to survive. Climate change is with us; the only question is how far we will take it and how much the world will change as a result.

I thought I might not have an exciting wildlife encounter to report

in my first column, but then I was digging up sweet potatoes from my plots in the Land Trust when I spied a one-eyed green tree frog (that's not just the full common name—the frog had only one eye!) clinging to the trellis my pole beans had climbed all summer. It was still a bit chilly when I first saw the little guy, but as the day warmed, I noticed the frog slowly climbing higher on the trellis to where the leaves of some sweet potato vines had twined. It turns out the green tree frog is the state amphibian of Georgia! (Please see photo on Page 10.)

Meredith Walters saw a beautiful whitetail deer at Emory's Lullwater Preserve, pictured here, a buck with impressive antlers. It came quite close to her. He wandered towards another, younger, buck and a doe. Meredith also came across a very relaxed snapping turtle sprawled out on a tree in the middle of South Peachtree Creek (photo Page 10). Later, a smaller turtle joined him. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has just proposed listing as threatened the alligator snapping turtle, a close cousin of the common snapping turtle. Alligator snappers are easily distinguished by their spiky shells and hooked beaks.

The most impressive thing Mere-



dith saw in October at Lullwater Preserve was of the feathered variety. Most days there are one or at most two egrets at opposite ends of Candler Lake. On October 13, she saw three large white egrets a few stories up in the branches. The next day, when she turned the corner on the lake, there were dozens of egrets on the far shore. Meredith counted over 75 birds. She says it was one of the most beautiful and powerful things she's ever seen. People were buzzing with excitement, and one man told her he has walked those woods every day for the last 10 years and has never seen the like. Meredith's mother brought her ailing father to see the spectacle. He loved seeing the birds and kept telling everybody he saw to keep an eye out for "the sixty white

birds over there." It was a huge gift.

The egrets only stayed that one day and were gone the following morning. Meredith and her father have demonstrated the epitome of Mary Oliver's *Instructions for Living a Life*: "Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it."

Ilene S. saw a Cooper's hawk, heard a barred owl, saw many cardinals and a number of warblers, none of which could she definitively identify. This is not surprising, since as many as 30 species of warblers migrate through Georgia on their way from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada and back each year.

Frank W. heard owls on multiple nights, including several nights

*Cont. on p. 10*

## Traffic Safety in Lake Claire

*Continued from Page 1*

tion, for the safety of the contractors, pedestrians, bike cyclists, and automobile drivers. Speed will be reduced during this period, you can be sure; lanes may be closed but detours into neighborhood streets are not planned unless it seems necessary once the project gets going. The timing of traffic lights will be adjusted toward the end of the project, once traffic flow is better analyzed. Protected bike lanes will be included in some locales, and pedestrian islands with flashing

lights will be installed in a couple of places—among other improvements. One will be at Ridgecrest. Personally, I am disappointed that the sidewalks will not be widened because I do not like walking with fast traffic inches away, but they will be repaired where needed and poles removed except for utility poles.

Try to be patient and careful, and please remember that **the goal is safety and to keep traffic moving, not speed.**

## Glass – NOT!

As you've heard in the Clarion, NextDoor, and in other publications, the City now recycles glass. However, we at the Clarion implore you NOT to put your glass in the city recycling (blue) bins. After every Wednesday, shards of glass fill our streets. We are not sure how this happens, but fellow dog owners know that it is happening. Please save your glass to take to the Dekalb Farmer's Market or to The Center for Hard to Recycle Ma-

terials, CHaRM. As Stephen Wing reminded us recently, "If you shop at the Dekalb Farmer's Market in Decatur or drop off recyclables at the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials in Chosewood Park, or any other recycling center that requires sorting glass by color, it's worth bringing your empty (and rinsed) bottles and jars along. You'll be helping to feed the market for recyclables."

## "Suicide Lane"

Be Careful on the Dekalb Ave reversible lane. It has not been following a regular schedule. See Page 1 for info on city plans for improvements starting soon.

## Dekalb Ave Improvements

*Continued from Page 1*

mously approved the legislation to spend \$5.4 million on the improvement project, which is designed to increase safety along the busy corridor. The four-mile stretch is dotted with six MARTA stations—key destinations for people walking or riding bikes and e-scooters. But the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition (ABC, an advocacy group that has been lobbying for DeKalb Avenue upgrades for many years) pointed out that the upgrades will fall short of the more expansive "complete streets" vision they had hoped for. They sponsored a *change.org* petition, noting the need to add bike facilities, turn lanes, safer crossings, and to solve the traf-

fic back-ups at key intersections due to the potholes, lack of turn lanes, and the dangerous reversible middle lane. Rebecca Serna, executive director of ABC, stated, "We believe our city street designs should reflect our city's values, accessible to all Atlantans, those who use wheelchairs, and those who bike, walk, and ride scooters." She said that ABC was still committed to working with the city to create a multi-use trail along DeKalb Avenue in the future.

Urbanize Atlanta said, "A snowball has survived the fires of hell, and god-awful DeKalb Avenue is getting remade...to an extent."





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# Lake Claire Arts Fest December 4

In the January issue, we will certainly have a report on this fun fest for 2021 with pictures galore. For now, let us thank these generous sponsors, many of whom constantly support neighborhood efforts. Thank you to all of you, and readers, please support them when you are able.

# Lake Claire HOLIDAY FAIR 2021 WALKING TOUR

**SATURDAY, DEC. 4**  
(RAIN DATE: SUN, DEC. 5)

**11AM TO 4PM**

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!





# Chilinaro 2021

by Boyd Baker

Chilinaro 2021, the annual Leonardo Avenue neighbor chili cook-off, was held on Saturday, November 6. This year the weather was crisp and spectacular. We added a couple of new categories to get the kids involved: Youth and Teen Dessert categories. There were about 10 chilis,

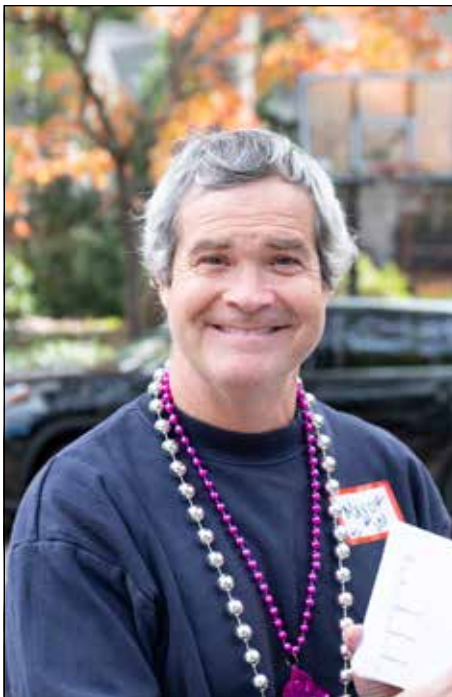
many side dishes, desserts, and creative presentations, to be tasted and seen. We can't wait to see what next year brings. Maybe other LC streets would like to compete? Or we have prelim streets pick their best chili, and then we have a festival where all come and bring their best? If in-

terested or you have ideas, reach out to [boyd@sumowriter.com](mailto:boyd@sumowriter.com).

The winners were Best Chili—Rachel A T Sammons, Best Side—Kris Ross, Best Youth Dessert—Synove, Peter Olson's daughter, Best Teen Dessert—Tyler, Melanie Peterson Bliss' son, and Best Presentation

—Melanie Peterson Bliss family & Cara Stevens family. Congrats to all.

*Sounds yummy! What about an honorary invite, or at least some leftovers, for the person who has published the Chilinaro event for these many years? LOL, Editor.*



Photos by Debbie Livingston



# Lake Claire Annual Halloween Parade and Party in the Park



Photos by B. Damon

See more pictures on Page 16.



## December into January in the Lake Claire Garden

by Elizabeth Knowlton, [knowltonew@earthlink.net](mailto:knowltonew@earthlink.net)



Drawing by Sage Bader-Gottlieb

Farewell, Lake Claire. This is my last column before we drive away to senior housing near a niece in North Carolina. So many years have passed since Beth first asked me to write for the Clarion, and I truly hope it has been of some use to at least some readers some of the time. Here follow my last

### Wild

Continued from Page 5

when he heard screech owls which can be recognized immediately by their idiosyncratic call (check it out here: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern\\_Screech-Owl/sounds](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Screech-Owl/sounds)). He also saw a blue jay in the backyard after hearing it calling and going outside to confirm that's what it was. He spied a small woodpecker with speckled wings and bright red stripes on either side of its head; I might note that, based on the description, I'd guess northern flicker. Frank does not have as many wildlife sightings as usual this month because the neighbors were operating their leaf blowers way too frequently and at full tilt, frightening the wildlife away.

On the topic of leaf blowers (everyone's LEAST favorite topic this time of year) and bringing this column full circle: many folks may not real-



ten precepts for all soil owners.

1. If you have just moved, observe your outdoor property for four seasons before destroying what is there. Record sun and shade. See where street lights shine. Note sun- and moonrises. Are there views to open up, others to block? That ungainly tree might have amazing blossoms for three weeks. Some perennials are late to poke leaves from the soil. Others don't bloom until October.

2. Greg Levine of Trees Atlanta wrote in Atlanta Intown, Nov 2021, "...leave your leaves to save the trees. ...Leaves insulate, protect, and rejuvenate the soil...reverse compaction from feet or cars...retain moisture, prevent erosion, and reduce weeds. You'll save money by buying less mulch, soil, and fertilizers, and you'll reduce waste in landfills."

ize how many insects, reptiles, and even small mammals bed down for the winter in leaf litter. Nature waking up in the spring depends in part on letting her go to bed in the way she has evolved to do, over millennia. If there are areas you must keep free of leaves, try moving the leaves you clear from those places to other areas in your yard that would benefit from some mulch, such as flower beds and the areas under shrubs and trees. Besides, as you may have noticed, the City of Atlanta won't be coming around to pick up your yard waste bags anytime soon!

*If you have any wildlife sightings or garden happenings you'd like to share, please contact Sara at [sara.gottlieb@gmail.com](mailto:sara.gottlieb@gmail.com). - Ed.*



3. Preserve and plant shrubs and small trees for nesting birds. You can often watch the activity from a window, as the nestlings are fed and then encouraged to fly. In 40 years, I have never seen a bird nest more than 10-15 ft. off the ground in my garden. Privet, climbing roses, viburnum, chaste trees, autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), and even pomegranate bushes make great nesting sites. Those huge nests of leaves high in trees are made by squirrels.

4. Speaking of squirrels (and rats, chipmunks, and possums), they will eat or destroy most vegetable or fruit crops, including the berries of autumn olive. The long-term solution to this imbalance of nature is a tall cage made of wire fencing and covered with same. Squirrels will chew through wood, plastic, and all fabrics. However, I have not yet known them to eat okra. Repels-all can be sprayed on bean seedlings and corn stalks before flowers or silks form. But, experiment. Why has nothing ever eaten

my lettuce except slugs back in the 80s? [Tip: I took them from hundreds to zero with a saltshaker.]

5. Plan a spring garden with little kids before hormones distract them. Ask what they want to pick and eat, and buy those seeds or plants. Bean and marigold seeds are big enough for little fingers. Children will often eat what they have planted themselves, like sugar snap peas, lettuce, and carrots, and they guzzle cherry tomatoes off the plant. Read seed packets for spacing. Choose single rather than double flowers to attract insects, and show children how interesting they are rather than enemies to be slapped and killed. Hummingbirds and bees will visit your flowers from May to October, and some tiny pollinating flies will even be out there in your crocus flowers on warm days in February.

6. Wait to prune spring-flowering shrubs until after they bloom—right after. Otherwise, you will be cutting

Cont. on p. 13

## Adolphus Avenue Halloween Costume Contest

Congratulations to this year's winners of the Adolphus Avenue Halloween costume contest! The winners, pictured clockwise from top left, are: Tess Horn, John Mickelson, and Zella Horn-Mickelson as a family of spiders; Stella Hull as a mushroom; Ian

Cambas-Stocking as Indiana Jones; Raphael Siebenmann, and Lily and Evan Cornell as the Wild Kratts.

Yay for Adolphus Avenue keeping up the tradition, and what creativity by these winners!!!





# Recycling Tip of the Month: Don't Put Your Head in a Plastic Bag!

by Stephen Wing

Perhaps the biggest headache for the global recycling industry is the humble but ubiquitous plastic bag. Approximately 100 millions of them are used in the U.S. each year. Worldwide, it's about two million per minute, according to the most conservative estimate. Somewhere between one and five trillion are produced annually, yet the useful life of the average bag is less than one hour. Plastic bags are among the top five items found in beach and river cleanups.

Can a plastic bag be recycled? The answer is yes—though in the U.S., the E.P.A. reports that only about 10% of them are. Almost every big grocery store now provides a bin near the front door, installed by its plastic bag supplier, where returning customers can recycle their bags. Five states and the District of Columbia require it by law.

But the answer is also no. Curbside recycling programs like Atlanta's do not accept them. Sheet plastic

of any kind is considered "contamination" in the single-stream recycling industry. The bags inevitably get tangled in the semi-automated sorting systems at the Materials Recovery Facility and bring its conveyors to a halt. A contaminated curbside bin can divert a whole truckload of recyclables to the landfill. So, if you carry your recyclables out to the curb in a plastic bag, please empty them into your blue bin with a firm grip on the tail end of the bag.

Whether the big corporate grocery chains actually do recycle your bags is hard to say; like any other recyclable material, it all depends on market conditions. A less convenient but more trustworthy option is the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials in Chosewood Park ([livethrive.org](http://livethrive.org)). CHaRM accepts only certain types of "sheet plastic," which is a sure sign that they know their market.

To meet CHaRM's criteria, your plastic must be stretchy. That's right:



grip a piece of it between your thumbs and pull. If it stretches, they will recycle it. It must also be clean, dry, and free of tape . . . because, of course, tape doesn't stretch. This rules out the crinkly type of bag that chips come in, along with candy wrappers, "flexible pouches," and the pseudo-cellophane that breaks if you try to stretch it. But it does include stretch wrap, most shrink wrap, and all bubble wrap. (Pop the bubbles if possible before recycling.) Bags with glued-on paper labels are acceptable, as are bubble wrap shipping envelopes—but only the all-plastic kind without a glued-on outer layer of paper.

As always, re-using is better than recycling, especially where the petrochemical toxins contained in plastics are concerned. If you find yourself regularly throwing away plastic shopping bags— or recycling them— consider carrying a re-usable substitute. Alternatives of cloth, canvas, or heavier plastics are readily available, but a "disposable," "single-use," pre-used plastic grocery sack works just as well. Rolled up tightly and secured with a rubber band, it

is almost weightless and takes up no room at all in a backpack, glovebox, or pocket. If shopping in the bulk section, an empty bread bag or used Ziploc works just as well as a fresh bag off the roll. Produce bags can be saved and re-used.

Re-using your plastic bags is probably a good habit to get into. The United Nations counts 127 nations that now tax them or have banned them completely. Surprisingly, it was the poor nations of the developing world that led the way. In the U.S., the Break Free from Plastic Act would only establish a tax on plastic bags, not a ban, though on the whole its provisions are comprehensive and sweeping. But on the state level, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New York, Oregon, Hawaii, and Vermont have all outlawed single-use plastic bags. Plastic bags are strong, lightweight, waterproof, airtight, and mighty useful. Until "disposable" *anything* is a quaint footnote to history, let's make sure we get the maximum use we can out of each and every one.



L-R: Layla's mom, Annsley; Layla's grandma, Michal Hillman; and Layla, packing hygiene kits for National Council

## Newly Arrived Afghani Refugees

Continued from Page 1

and welcomed members of Georgia's communities. These bags will be delivered to newly arrived refugees, specifically from Afghanistan.

A bat-mitzvah marks the Jewish tradition of becoming a Jewish adult. I will read from the Torah (which is the first five books of the Hebrew bible, which Christianity calls "the Law." These are the books traditionally revealed to Moses.) Afterwards, I agree to take on the responsibility of living according to Jewish law. I will continue to be kind, loving, and fair, among other things.

My Torah portion is called Mishpatim, which means "laws." It is

about treating people kindly with respect and following Jewish laws. In biblical times, just like today, if you broke a law, there were consequences. For instance: If a thief is caught with stolen goods, the thief shall pay double the value of what is stolen. Another law reminds us how to be empathetic: You shall not oppress nor do any wrong to strangers, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. "We, as Jews, were strangers in the land of Egypt, and knew what it was like to be foreign." I personally moved from a different state to Atlanta, Georgia, and I know what it feels like to be a stranger to others.

Some of my family fled their country of origin, seeking a more just and better life. They came not speaking the language, just like many of these Afghan families. These refugee families probably feel scared about not speaking the language and having their needs met, worrying about being sent back to their home country, or how they will get food on the table.

I want to help these refugee families feel welcomed here and more comfortable. I feel strongly about helping refugees, who had to flee injustices, without their possessions. I am so lucky to have my basic needs met (and more so); I want to help

these refugee children to grow up more like I'm able to.

I am asking you to help me with collections for these hygiene bags. I have created an Amazon Wish List [www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3QJU770Z6BMJO?ref\\_=wl\\_share](http://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3QJU770Z6BMJO?ref_=wl_share), where you can go order an item or two for the hygiene kit, and they will be delivered to my house. I will get my friends to help me assemble these bags and deliver them to New American Pathways to welcome these refugees.

Please help by making a contribution today! Thank you.



## Lake Claire Neighbors Monthly Meeting for November

Our Lake Claire meeting took place on Zoom the 3rd Thursday in November. Reps of the City Council, the APD, and LCN officers gave reports.

**Vote for LCN officers:** Officers from this year were all re-elected (see Page 4 masthead). Continued appointed positions stayed the same for LCN Education Chair,; LCN Representative to Candler Park Conservancy; LCN Representative to Clifton Sanctuary Ministries; LCN Representative to the City of Atlanta Department of Films; LCN Repre-

sentative, Freedom Park Conservancy. Again, see masthead for names. We approved LCN donations for 2021 to Frazer Center \$1,000; Mary Lin \$1,000; Candler Park Conservancy \$800; Clifton Sanctuary Ministries \$500; Land Trust \$500; CP/LC Security Patrol: \$500; Zone 6 Police Precinct \$400; Atlanta Firefighters Sta. 12 \$400; Friends of Lake Claire Park \$300; Freedom Park Conservancy \$300; Ponce de Leon Public

*Cont. on p. 13*

## Frazer Center's Courtney Kiser named Early Interventionist of the Year

by Dina Shadwell

Courtney Kiser, Inclusion Coordinator at the Frazer Center, has been given the Early Interventionist Award by the Georgia Association for the Education of Young Children (GAEYC). The award is given annually to "an outstanding individual whose work supports young children with special needs. The recipient of this award may work directly with children with special needs, provide support and education for their families, or work with early childhood teachers to include children with special needs." (gaeyc.org). As Frazer's Inclusion Coordinator, Courtney works closely with the teaching staff to support students with disabilities. She coordinates with each child's support team—parents, therapists, administrators, and teachers—to ensure that all are on the same page about the child's appropriate interventions.

Susie Riddick, Director of Frazer's Child Development Program, nominated Courtney for the award, saying, "Courtney works diligently to

advocate for young children of differing abilities. She regularly visits classrooms to collaborate with the teachers, and she's proactive about identifying children who may need additional support to ensure their successes in the classroom." As part of the criteria for the award, the recipient must be "well-versed and up to date on laws, research, and best practices of inclusion, and apply that knowledge to working with and advocating for children with special needs and their families." She also must "relate well to a variety of people, and demonstrate sensitivity to cultural differences and individual needs of children and families." (gaeyc.org)

When asked what this award means to her, Courtney said: "Achieving the Early Interventionist of the Year award is one of my proudest moments! As someone who has been in early care for over fifteen years and has attended several GAEYC confer-

*Cont. on p. 13*



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## Frazer Center

*Continued from Page 12*

ences, this award is very special to me. I've learned so much attending their seminars and trainings, and to be recognized by such a wonderful program is incredible! Being able to do what I do at the Frazer Center is something I do not take for granted. It is so rewarding supporting our staff and families and leading them down the road to success!"

Frazer does not take Courtney for granted, either. CEO Paige McKay Kubik says, "We are so grateful for everything Courtney has done since joining the Frazer team. The breadth and depth of our inclusion services have expanded, and Courtney has become a trusted resource for families and staff. We are thrilled for



Courtney's achievement and proud that she is part of the Frazer family." To learn more about Frazer's Inclusion Program, visit [frazercenter.org/child-development-program/inclusion-services](http://frazercenter.org/child-development-program/inclusion-services).

## LCN Meeting

*Continued from Page 12*

Library \$300; Olmstead Linear Park Alliance \$300.

**Variances and zoning:** V-21-281: 2089 Howard Circle, NE. Applicant sought a variance from the zoning regulation to reduce side and rear setbacks, to exceed maximum

lot coverage from 50 % to 50.9 %; and to increase the maximum total floor area of an accessory structure from 30% of the main structure to 40.2% of the main structure for new detached garage.

**The next LCN meeting** will be

## December into January in the Lake Claire Garden

*Continued from Page 10*

off all the next buds and get no flowers next year. If you don't know what something is, wait and see! Or ask another gardener.

7. Read gardening books and magazines on paper or electronically. The Atlanta Public Library will deliver whatever you put on hold either to your device or to the local branch of your choice (Kirkwood and the Joyce Garner Library on Ponce are the closest).

8. Look at your garden every day, right after you check children and pets. Plants need some water year-round and some food while they are actively growing in warm weather. If you have an automatic watering system, make sure it is not running on No Watering days or while it is raining. Otherwise, plants usually do pretty well on their own. A scab on

your child or a spot on a leaf will not kill anything. But keep watching. Aphids can be squished or sprayed off with a hose. Many safe solutions exist.

9. There is no garden that needs no care except a plastic one. You are better off staying indoors and letting your garden go wild if you don't like being out there. Pull up the Astroturf, and read *Untamed* by Will Harlan.

My childhood friend Merrily (whom I have finally traced to a Florida nursing home after her disappearance) had three rules for life, which I called "the Tao According to Merrily": A person is basically alone; everything changes; and rinse dishes well since detergent is poisonous. My own Tao is slightly different: We may be alone, but we are also part of the great web of nature, not separate or more important; aside from hurricanes, we make the changes that happen on this planet; and add no poisons to the earth, since it is the only fishbowl we have.

*Safe travel, and good luck, Elizabeth & Jo! ~ Clarion*

Thurs., Jan. 20, 2022. There will be no December meeting unless there is an urgent zoning issue (check [lake-claire.org](http://lake-claire.org)). To receive occasional e-mails about Lake Claire, & reminders of upcoming meetings, sign up at above website.



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# Special Deduction on Taxes

by Linda Pace

Good news and taxes rarely go together in a sentence. But between now and December 31, 2021, there is a special deduction that you can take even if you take the standard deduction and don't itemize. Individuals can take up to \$300 and "Married, filing jointly" entitles a couple to up to \$600 as a line item deduction for cash, check, card contributions to a charitable organization( 501(c)(3) registered with the IRS. The Lake Claire Community Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization, among others in our community.

This deduction is part of CARES Legislation as extended through 2021 by The Taxpayer Certainty and

Disaster Tax Relief Act, and we don't expect it to be renewed. Covid-19 and its restrictions have been very hard on nonprofits like the Land Trust. Congress wanted to ease the pain of loss of revenues to charities that followed the changes in the tax code and the pandemic. Please help the Lake Claire Community Land Trust AND your bottom-line tax liability. If you have signed up for monthly donations to us, please remember to ask for a receipt for the amount of contributions you made in 2021. You will need proof of this special contribution for your tax records since it is a separate line item.



The Nelms corner orchard-to-be at Clarion press time. Left to right: José, Porter, and Lauren. See article Page 15.



Jaye Crawford

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# Hello – Safe Journey – Skiing in and around Lake Claire

### December Birthdays:

- Dec. 4 Drew Pittman, happy 6th birthday!! (Marlbrook)
- Dec. 7 Jeff Debell, Harold Avenue
- Dec. 10 Happy b'day, Tim Kline, Leonardo Avenue
- Dec. 12 Henry Allen—Happy 9!!!! Harold Avenue
- Dec. 13 Happy b'day to Laura Tanguturi, Harold Avenue
- Dec. 17 Happy b'day to Dawn Aura, Arizona Avenue
- Dec. 19 Happy b'day to Elliott Williams, Howard Circle
- Dec. 26 Happy 9th birthday to Cabot Williams, Howard Circle
- Dec. 31 Cara Haycak Tobin, Hardendorf
- Dec. 31 Robert Frank, Hardendorf, and again, welcome, new 'Dorfers Rachel & Robert!

Take a minute, and send life cycle events for the next issue, JANUARY 2022, by December 15.

## Neighborhood Dues for Lake Claire

Suggested annual dues are \$20/year per household. Pay at lakeclaire.org via the link OR with the old-fashioned check in the mail, to Eileen O'Neill, Treasurer, PO Box 5942, Atlanta GA 31107. Since the last Clarion, the following folks paid dues:

- |                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Kathy Christensen       | Rachel Weinthal   |
| Michelle Verges         | Rachel Patton     |
| Tom Benton              | Landis Block      |
| Andrew and Pen Sherwood | Sherry S. McHenry |
| Anna Karwata            |                   |

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Quinn Couliette-Salmond



Violet Pope



Jose Cambas

## Virtual Jack-o-Lantern Fest 2021

Thanks to our neighbors who took us up on our offer of free pumpkins in exchange for photos of the Jack-o-Lanterns they carved! These are photos we received. (If you haven't sent us your photos yet, you still can, and they will appear on our website.)

## “Pick-Your-Own” Orchard Coming to a Land Trust Near You!

by Stephen Wing

Travelers across the farther reaches of the Land Trust may wonder what is happening down at the corner where Nelms Avenue meets Dekalb. This approximately 1/8-acre patch of land under the Sunset Overlook is our largest level open space available for cultivation. Its southern exposure gives it a spectacular amount of sunlight. Formerly the domain of Robert Pue, whose “Dads & Uncles” project taught fatherless kids to garden, it has lain fallow for several years.

But somewhere underground, buried seeds have been preparing to germinate and sprout. Not in the actual soil, but in the fertile minds of Lauren Ladov, our part-time groundskeeper, and Porter Mitchell, our newest board member. They collaborated on an application for the Food Well Alliance’s Garden Improvement Grant, and the Land Trust received \$1,500 to create a “Pick-Your-Own Orchard, Flower and Herb Garden for the community.”

Food Well Alliance was also the source of a previous grant to build a three-bin compost system just up the path from the new project. The Nelms corner project aligns perfectly with its vision of “an equitable, local

food ecosystem, in which everyone can participate and benefit.” Besides the Land Trust, the Alliance supports over 120 community gardens and 35 urban farms in Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Gwinnett, and Clayton counties. “This grant will create an extensive shared space and a friendly introduction into agriculture and gardening for the LCCLT’s broad community,” Lauren and Porter wrote. “Picking blackberries, blueberries, and flowers is an approachable and fun way to begin learning about plants and gardening for folks of all ages. ...The Nelms entrance, currently more of a de-facto commuter path than an entrance, becomes a focal point and welcoming entryway to the LCCLT.” The path from Nelms was already lined with serviceberry and Chickasaw plum trees, planted by Trees Atlanta a few years back. On its other side, passersby will soon be tempted by a fence loaded with strawberries and blackberries. Beyond the fence, the plan includes blueberries, paw paws, pineapple guavas, a fig tree, and beds of herbs and flowers. The grant also covers pruning saws and loppers for maintenance, plus “pick-your-own” tools for visitors. The proj-

ect began with two work days in the spring for what Lauren calls “major site clean-up and rehabilitation.” The next phase is to install new fencing, build a trellis, expand the strawberry patch, and add signage and seating. We need ongoing volunteer support with weeding, etc.; please contact [info@LCCLT.org](mailto:info@LCCLT.org). At the rear of the orchard, Nelms Avenue neighbor José Cambas and his friend Felipe have almost finished converting the old tool shed into a state-of-the-art chicken pen and coop, using salvaged materials. When it is finished, José plans to donate 12 hens that have just started laying. “The reason I want to do this project is that I have really enjoyed having chickens at my own house,” he says, “and I would like other families and people in the neighborhood to have the same experience. I love the Land Trust and the time I spend there—it is like an extension of my home.” The chicken pen will provide an educational and entertaining feature, especially for children. José’s three children have helped to feed and water the hens so far, but once the hens move into their palatial home, he hopes to get others involved. “My idea is that who-



Land Trust calendar within Page 4 general calendar. Note that for the Dec. 4 Lake Claire Crafts Fair/Walking Tour, you can get your tie-dye Land Trust T-shirt and plants and bulbs at 290 Arizona Avenue (corner of New York).

ever is responsible for taking care of the chickens for the day can keep the eggs from that day,” he says. Interested families, contact him at [cambas@247moving.net](mailto:cambas@247moving.net). José’s idea dovetails seamlessly with Lauren and Porter’s plans, a hopeful sign of a new generation plugging in at the Land Trust. The grant application vividly echoes a vision now 40 years young: “Because the future Pick Your Own Fruit, Flower, and Herb Orchard runs alongside a busy pathway for MARTA, bicycle, and on-foot commuters, we hope to engage folks who have little to no food and garden experience in a beautiful, friendly, and welcoming way. And as the pandemic and its effects drag on and wear on us mentally and emotionally, a beautiful bouquet and a basket of fresh strawberries can truly make the difference in someone’s day.”

Please see picture on Page 14.



LAKE CLAIRE KIDS' CORNER

We hope this series is fun and a way for young Clarion readers/writers/artists to participate. This month Layla Klehr wrote about her bat mitzvah project. Please see

that article on Page 1. Thank you Layla, and congratulations; it is a wonderful project. Mazel Tov to you on the occasion of your bat mitzvah! To all the Lake Claire children who

read and contribute to the Kids' Page each month, we appreciate you. Add your creativity to this page! Submit your work or your suggestions—or articles about your life passages—to

editor@lakeclaire.org, by DECEMBER 18 for the next issue of the newspaper, which will be JANUARY 2022, the first for the year 2022!

More Pictures from Halloween

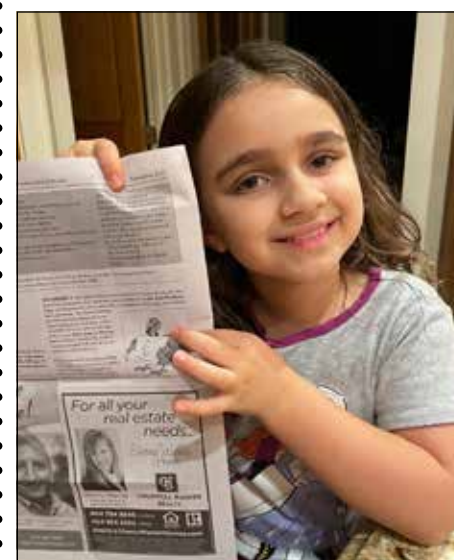
Continued from Page 9



Contest Winner!

Our winner of last month's contest is Shanthi Acharya! She found the turkey in the November issue.

Shanthi is in third grade at Mary Lin. She is nine and lives on Claire Drive. Congrats, Shanthi: you won the contest over a VAST number of Lake Claire kids who participated. Your prize is your picture in the Clarion. Attention other Lake Claire kids—Add your name to the list of winners. To all of those kids who didn't win, many of you came close this time. Please do keep reading this page, and keep playing. See our new contest below.



Shanthi

New Contest

Hi, kids! December is full of holidays, both religious and secular. And speaking of secular, the plant mistletoe is relevant to several cultures, including Norse mythology and the Romans, who associated mistletoe with peace, love, and understanding and hung it over doorways to protect the household. Only in the Christian era did mistletoe in the Western world become associated with Christmas as a fun decoration under which people kiss. Find the picture of the mistletoe in this issue. Then send your guess in an e-mail to editor@lakeclaire.org, identifying its page number and in-

cluding your name, age, school, street, and grade, and a photo of yourself. (Please tell your parents to send large picture files, 1mb+.) Any child from Lake Claire is eligible, except that you cannot win two months in a row. For extra credit, tell us any extra fact that you know about mistletoe or any song you know that has mistletoe in it. The extra-credit prize is that you'll be a featured writer/artist in a future Lake Claire Clarion with your original work. The deadline is DECEMBER 18. Hurry and look; competition is always stiff for this coveted prize.

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Just visit us at [LCCLT.org](http://LCCLT.org), click the "Donate" button at the bottom of any page, and make your donation a recurring one. Many thanks!

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND HAPPY SECULAR NEW YEAR FROM THE CLARION! STAY SAFE, AND WE'LL SEE YOU IN 2022!!!!**