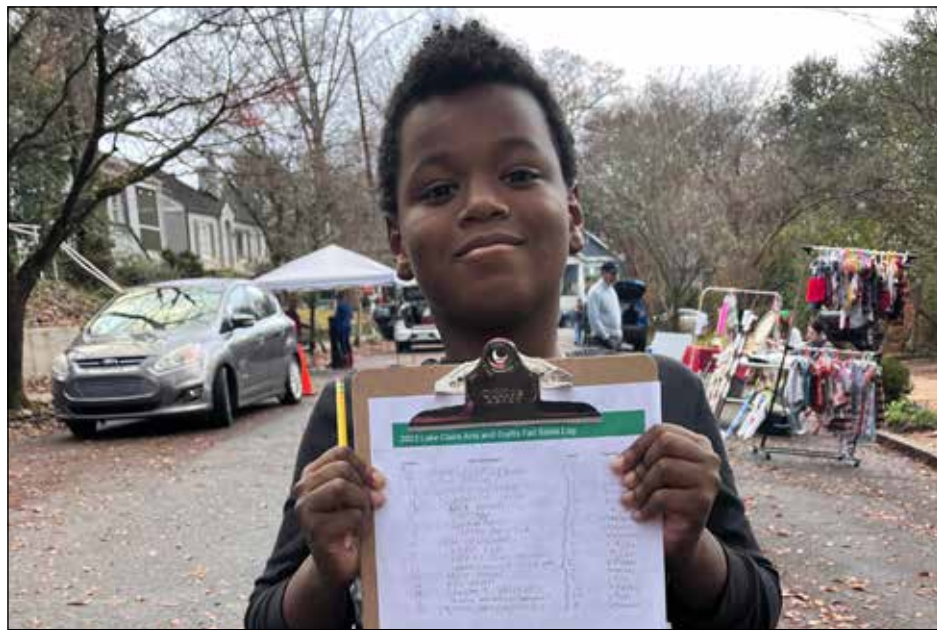




Photo by Debbie Livingston



Desmond, enthusiastic young entrepreneur—Photo by Beth Damon

Lake Claire Fair Fun—albeit not in the Sun

In the spirit of “Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom stays these couriers,” many adventurous arts & crafts vendors, food trucks, and musicians set up for the annual arts fair under grey skies on December 9. Morning posts appeared on Facebook such as “Rain, rain, go away, come again another day--oh heck, grab that umbrella, rain boots, and jacket!” And then, after tricking

us on December 2 and raining the morning of December 9, Mother Nature did something right by around 11:30 a.m. that day; participants and attendees ended up having a great day. The artists/crafters, neighbors, and food vendors created community in the way that has attracted people to our neighborhood for many years. It was invigorating to see so many friends and neighbors enjoying mu-

sic, food, and exhibiting and buying beautiful arts and crafts and baked creations.

Thanks again to our generous sponsors. There are many moving parts to this adventure, and it would not have been a success without them—and all of you who attended and supported the artists and food vendors, rain boots or not. We are so pleased that through vendor sales, Lake Claire

was able to donate to Mary Lin and Hope Hill Elementary Schools’ PTAs, through vendors donating 10% of their profits (and in some cases more than 10%). This donation helps the schools with programming and much needed supplies in classrooms.

Go to pages 6 to 9 for more more photo evidence of the fun.

Redistricting Recap: Much Uncertainty Ahead

by Saira Draper

In early December, the Georgia Legislature met in a special session to redraw Georgia’s House, Senate, and Congressional boundaries. This was required because a federal judge determined the previous maps, drawn in 2021, violated the Federal Voting Rights Act by diluting the voting strength of Black voters.

A healthy Democracy relies on fair maps. The maps directly impact whose views are represented in elected positions of power. Gerrymandering makes minority rule possible, and is the reason that issues that are popular with the majority of Georgians—from common sense gun safety laws to reproductive freedom—barely see the light of day in the Georgia Gen-

eral Assembly.

Although the Democratic Party asked for an open and transparent map-drawing process for the special session, the maps were revealed at the last possible moment and rammed through the legislative process without any changes or opportunity for genuine input from the public or the Democratic party. It is my legal opinion, and the opinion of many in the field, that the maps passed along partisan lines during the special session did not remedy the problems with the 2021 maps and are also unlawful.

The boundaries of House District 90 were significantly altered in the house district map passed during the special legislative session. If the map

2nd Annual Lake Claire Land Trust Coat Drive

The Lake Claire Community Land Trust is collecting not only coats, but socks, gloves, scarves, blankets, sleeping bags, toiletries, and any other items of winter clothing. Drop your donations off any time during the week at 290 Arizona Ave. and 300 Arizona Ave., the 3rd and 5th houses down from the Land Trust (thank you, Elizabeth & Miriam). Donations will be distributed to those in need

by community-funded grassroots nonprofit Blessing Bags of Warmth (Website – blessingbagsofwarmth.com; Facebook – www.facebook.com/BlessingBagsOfWarmth; Instagram – [@blessingbagsofwarmth](https://www.instagram.com/blessingbagsofwarmth); Donations – www.givebutter.com/warmthatl). Venmo, PayPal, Zelle, etc. are also available. (See more info on Land Trust activities on Page 11.)

stands, parts of Cedar Grove and Kirkwood will be removed from the district, and parts of Candler Park, Druid Hills, and McNair will be added to the district. So what happens next? As of this Clarion going to press, a court hearing was scheduled to be held on December 20 in front of Judge Steve C. Jones, the same judge who

determined the 2021 maps were unlawful. If the judge decides any or all of the maps drawn during the special session failed to comply with his instructions to remedy the 2021 maps, he could order the maps be redrawn a third time, likely by an independent

Cont. on p. 2

**** 2024!! The Clarion staff wishes you a Happy New Year!****

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monthly. The deadline for advertising and editorial consideration is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Letters to the editor should be limited to 300 words or fewer. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not those of Lake Claire Neighbors, Officers, or the Clarion Staff.

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.

January Dates

For Land Trust events, see Page 11.

6 Frazer Forest Work Day, 9 a.m.–noon. Help restore and maintain our beloved neighborhood old-growth forest. Pre-registration required. Space is limited. frazercenter.org/about-us/events.

9 Mary Lin PTA Dine-Out—Please support Mary Lin PTA and the generous local restaurants that contribute to these Dine-Outs, and have delicious food while doing so. For info: Aviva Berman, avivaberman@gmail.com.

18 Lake Claire monthly meeting via Zoom, always 3rd Thursdays. lakeclaire.org for Zoom link.

20 Fiddler's Green (every 3rd Saturday at the E Church). See aaffm.org/aaffm-events/

20 Freedom Park Conservancy Limb & Litter Clean-up, 9–11 a.m. Contact sdorn47@compast.net to participate.

31 Dine-out night for Freedom Park Conservancy at Kitty Dare, 1029 Edgewood Avenue. They will donate 10% to Freedom Park Conservancy. Please make a reservation/support Freedom Park.

Redistricting Recap

Continued from page 1.

third party. Those maps would have to be finalized by mid January in order to be usable for the 2024 election cycle. However, it is widely understood that if Judge Jones orders the maps redrawn, the state will appeal.

To be sure, those bearing the brunt of this legal maneuvering and political gamesmanship are the voters, tax payers, and county election offices. And it could have all been avoided if

only the legislature had drawn maps that were fair to Georgia's Black voters in 2021.

Editor's note: Saira Draper is an attorney, voting rights expert, and the State Representative for Georgia House District 90. Our district has been directly impacted.

The Joy of a Buy Nothing Group

by Megan Littke-Smith

On a recent Friday during my lunch hour, I took a very spirited walk over to Candler Park. I had received a gift from a neighbor by way of the "Buy Nothing Kirkwood/Edgewood/Candler Park/Lake Claire/Parkview, Atlanta" Facebook Group. Out of 30 others requesting the item, I had been randomly selected to receive one of two rubber plant cuttings. This particular cutting was a *Ficus elastica* 'Tineke', a sister variety to my own thriving *Ficus elastica* 'Red Ruby'. I had been hunting for a Tineke for quite a while (they are a rare variety), so I was delighted to have been chosen. I felt I had won the lottery.

A Buy Nothing group is a community of people living in close proximity who share goods with each other that might otherwise be thrown in a "Donate To Goodwill" pile. A member posts online an unneeded household item, to see if a neighbor would want it. Neighbors comment, expressing their interest, and then wait for a predetermined amount of time while the post "simmer," giving all neighbors an equal opportunity to make a request. A random number generator might be used, or the gifter may

ask you to tell something you are grateful for, and pick someone whose response resonates.

There was a certain spring in my step, walking back home with two sprigs of a special plant kindly gifted by a neighbor. Inspired, I arrived home and promptly split our monster monstera into 4 mother vines and 7 cuttings. My own post prompted a response of over 40 neighbors, earnestly requesting to be considered. I've gifted purses, bedding, even leftover LaCroix from a dinner party. Rarely has a gift gone unclaimed. The spirit is minimalist and community-focused. I can pass on my household "clutter" to someone with a need/want for it. There is no guilt in clearing away items that no longer spark joy, as it may spark joy in a neighbor... who may eventually pass it on to another neighbor, and the gifting continues. There is joy in both the giving and the receiving. So, the next time you have a pile of items headed for Goodwill or a landfill, consider sharing it with a neighbor by checking out this group.

Editor's note: 1st time contributor Megan has lived on Casson for over a year—Welcome!

THE CLARION IS PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.

Thank you, Lake Claire neighbors!

Thank you for all the ways you helped our guests have a wonderful Christmas. The in-kind and financial donations allowed us to present each guest with a new backpack filled with many neat gifts. These items included new wallets, socks, gloves, hats, toiletry items, sweatshirts, gift cards, etc. Thank you for your part in helping our guys have a really blessed Christmas. They also had three special meals on Christmas Day.

You are the best, and we are so grateful for you!

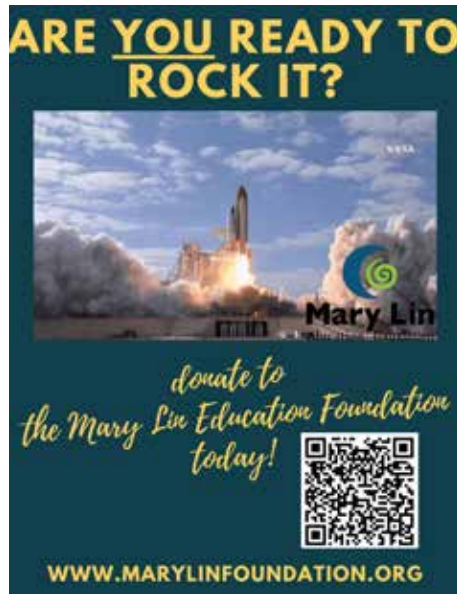
Happy New Year!

With appreciation, Clifton Sanctuary Ministries

Mary Lin School Annual Rocket Fuel Campaign

by Jeannie Becket

Happy New Year! What better way to start the year off right than by donating to our Mary Lin Elementary School! Our big annual Rocket Fuel Fundraising Campaign started on January 3 and will continue throughout the month of January. Please consider giving to our community. You can easily donate by scanning the QR code here. See www.marylin-foundation.org/. We are so proud of our "Little Rockets." Go Rockets!



Midtown High School GoFundMe Campaign

by Tahmida Shamsuddin, G3 Booster President

Midtown High School's robotics team just launched a GoFundMe campaign. Please help these amazing kids in our cluster high school:

gofund.me/b8441784.

We very much appreciate your help of Midtown's G3 Robotics team.

Let's Throw a Lifeline to Homeless Pets

by Dawn Aura

Lifeline Animal Project is an extraordinary but underfunded animal rescue organization that runs both Dekalb and Fulton County Animal Services, except for Animal Control, which is still run by the Counties. Due to overcrowded shelters in both counties, Lifeline must euthanize 200 of their 600 dogs, even though they are healthy and adoptable. Most of them are pit bulls or pit mixes; if they weren't, they'd likely be adopted much more quickly.

As I see it, the problem has two main causes. One is sky-high unaffordable housing, huge pet deposits, and pet rent, accompanied by increasingly expensive veterinary care, forcing some folks to give up their family pets. The second cause is the large number of people breeding pit bulls. This alone creates hundreds, possibly thousands, of unwanted "leftover," unspayed females, and puppies each year. I see these folks at the feed store, and they express interest in my pittie until they find out she has been spayed. I doubt that they know about the suffering of the many animals housed and now euthanized in overcrowded shelters. (Editor's note—**nor care.**)

I don't have a solution; we can't build our way out of this with more and more shelters, although we

should build them. A big financial windfall was announced recently by the State of Georgia, a budget surplus of millions for both 2022 and 2023, so let's ask for some to be used for these overcrowded pets. (Ed's note—*supposedly, SPLOST II (The DeKalb County Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) that we just voted in on November 7, will be doing so, though likely not enough.*)

Some people would take advantage of free, easily accessible spay/neutering if it existed, and this would be cheaper and more humane than building larger shelters and euthanizing healthy cats and dogs. But there are people who will not spay or neuter pets **even for free**. And a mandatory spay/neuter law, like the one recently passed in Floyd County, requiring a license for breeders, would be difficult to enforce. You can't go into homes to see what they are doing. But at least people are thinking about the problem.

It tears my heart out to the core to see these beautiful animals being killed each day as I see the pleas to save them on Facebook Adoptable Pets of Lifeline. I can't imagine what it does to the volunteers and workers on the front lines at Lifeline. So for now, please send a donation to Lifeline at lifelineanimal.org. They are



Emory Math Sponsors Mary Lin Math Program

by Jeannie Becket

Mary Lin Elementary's Math Superstars want to thank Head Professor Jim Nagy, Professor Yuanzhe Xi, and the Emory University Math Department for generously sponsoring Mary Lin's morning math program. The kids loved hearing all about the impact of math in physics and loved playing with their custom "Rubik's Cubes." They are ready for Emory's open enrollment 2031-2035!



Hello – Safe Journey: Skiing in and around Lake Claire

Happy Birthday to:

- 3 – Lisa Morris, Sutherland Place
- 5 – Dave Kaiser, Hardendorf 🎵 🎵
- 6 – Nancy Noland, Leonardo
- 6 – Happy 5th birthday to Chad Smith, this editor's favorite 4-legged child on Connecticut Avenue.
- 8 – Sam Elalouf, McLendon Ave.
- 9 – Reese Kruskamp, Arizona Ave., turning 7!
- 11 – Ezra Billinkoff, Harold Ave.
- 12 – *Happy Sweet Sixteen bday to Elliott Bulloch* – Casson Street
- 12 – Tamar Williams, Harold Avenue, Tiffany Mawhinney, Howard Circle
- 15 – Sophie Oren, Leonardo, turning 8!
- 16 – Theo Emanuel, Marlbrook, also 8!
- 18 – Some famous people's bdays... Pat Del Rey, illustrious Clarion ad man[ager], Leonardo; Cynthia Baer, Gordon Avenue; and Jake Craney, Leonardo. Unbelievably, Pat's 80th!!! As she said, "Holy moly!!" (I slightly changed what she said. "Holy" was in it.)
- 19 – Genise Spenle, Arizona Avenue
- 21 – Amelia Stevens is turning Sweet 16!
- 22 – Happy 13th birthday to Zoe Bulloch – Casson Street
- 28 – Tom McGill, Delaware – Happy birthday, my friend who looks like Larry David – and Gus Fring!

Send us life cycle changes for the next issue—February!—**need YOUR help to make this series inclusive!** (editor@lakeclaire.org) by January 15–18.

much less well known than the Humane Society, and they do so much of the daily rescue and maintenance work for Fulton's and Dekalb's animals. They will use your money well to help yet another dog or cat. You

can also sign up to volunteer and foster/adopt a loving new family member. Also, please email our county commissioners about the different possibilities you see to solve this ongoing overpopulation trend.



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Wild in Lake Claire

by Sara Gottlieb

I have been working far too much (well, more than I want to), and with the short days of winter, have had precious little time to spend outside observing the wild creatures in our midst. The best I've been able to do, for the most part, is take a moment to gaze out the window at the squirrels running madly across fence-tops, chasing one another, seeking out food, and making nests from leaves and dried moss in the crooks of branches high in the trees.

Meredith reported being amazed that so many crickets were still singing on warmer nights in December. They've made it through some very chilly times. The other day she heard a hermit thrush in her yard, then had the pleasure of seeing them. And a few days later, she saw them on a beautyberry she'd planted, eating some berries. It made Meredith so happy to see the animals enjoying the plant she'd planted in large part for them (though she enjoys the purple berries as well).

It's been an exciting deer mating season, with lots of activity. Meredith reports seeing a group of at least ten deer at Lullwater, all eating fallen acorns under some white oaks. Two very young bucks, who may have been born earlier this year and just had nubs for antlers, were play-fighting with each other, pushing their heads together. Then a big buck walked by, and both of the young ones had that "there-goes-the-real-deal, half-intimidated, half-starstruck" look on their faces, and backed up to give him plenty of space. It was adorable.

Miriam H observed there is a beautiful hornet nest in a tree hanging over New York Ave between Arizona and Connecticut Aves. Without the leaves on the trees, it is easy to see. Jennifer H posted on Facebook about a fox [see photo by Mark Banyash] she and her son observed

off Howard Circle—now, that's not something you see every day in Lake Claire!

Frank W saw two bunnies at different times on Arizona Ave, one toward McLendon and the other closer to the Land Trust. He also saw early in the morning, a dark mass on a tree in the backyard. Frank kept looking at this silhouette thinking it might be an owl but wasn't sure. Then it hooted as if on command and flew away. Frank also reports seeing a flock of blackbirds numbering about 100-200 on Indiana Ave and saw a smaller flock the next day. Then a few days later he saw another large flock on the Freedom bike path toward Ponce and wondered if it was the same one.

Wade H happened to be looking out the kitchen window on a rainy dreary day in early December and noticed the clump of oak-leaf hydrangea foliage was bouncing and buffeting... thinking for a second that a gust of wind was funneling through the backyard, he was startled by an explosion of brown-and-white feathers and a hawk soaring up a nearby rooftop, where it perched there, suddenly, in the pouring rain, no prey in its claws.

Wade H offers some wild and worldly examples of naturalized flora that can be bent to your will for holiday decor [see photo by Wade], without relying on any hardware or hard wire! Find one of our many overgrown chain-link fences or garden walls and clip a few long strands of the ubiquitous English ivy (*Hedera helix*, native to western Europe); bend them around in a wide loop, twisting, weaving, and intertwining the pliable vine into a wreath that holds its shape, tucking the ends in between the weavings. It's surprisingly easy. The ivy leaves hanging in and out of the circle will probably be a bit sparse,



Harold Hanukkah Hang

by Aviva Berman

Neighbors from Lake Claire and Candler Park gathered to usher in the sixth night of Chanukah for the annual "Harold Hanukkah Hang." Councilperson Liliana Bakhtiari joined us as well. Rabbi Jordan Braunig led the blessings.

Editor's Note: You say potato, I say 'patato,' you say Hanukkah, I say Chanukah, in that vein. There are more than 20 variations, e.g., Chanukah, Channukah, Chanukkah, Hanukah, Hanukkah, Hannukah, all transliterations of the Hebrew word חנוכה. Chag Sameach.

Neighborhood Dues for Lake Claire

Suggested annual dues are \$20/year per household, but as with NPR, any amount is appreciated. Pay at lakeclaire.org via the link **OR** by check in the mail to Treasurer, Lake Claire, PO Box 5942, Atlanta GA 31107. The following folks paid dues since the November 2023 Clarion:

Janet Royalty
Christine Roth
Pat DelRey
Deborah Green
Ralph Gilbert
Sarah Dangel

Audrey Godiers
Maya Sternberg
Rob and Liz Baker
Peggy Wyvill
Patricia Emerson
Melissa Aberle-Grasse

but it's a nice minimalist look by itself. If you want more lushness, try picking a few of the droopy pendulous branchlets of a Himalayan cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) native to the high mountains of India, China, and Nepal. These "true cedar" trees can be found near the Dekalb Ave ends of Arizona and Connecticut Avenues. The needles are a bit prickly but the hanging branchlets are remarkably limber and can easily be woven right into the ivy wreath to give it a more piney look. Just about any other foliar sprig you like can now be stuck into these intertwined loops... red-berried holly sprigs (*Ilex* spp), blue-berried juniper sprigs (*Juniperus* spp), both of which might be native species, but in our neighborhood will more likely come from cultivars or hybrids of Europe or the Far East. Put a red bow on it, or find some bright red foliage falling off a Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*, native to Japan, Korea, China, Russia) and insert the leaf petioles into your wo-

ven wreath to give it a splash of red at top or bottom or all around. The red leaves won't last very long, but you can keep replacing them as they fall off that tree down the street or in your neighbor's yard. The greenery that makes up the bulk of the wreath, even the ivy leaves, should last for weeks. When it's completely dried out, use it to start a bonfire!

I hope by the next column, I'll have had some more free time to spend outside restoring my sanity and the sense of well-being and centeredness in the world that I only experience when fully immersed in nature. As Florence Williams noted in her book *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative*, "[John] Muir wrote of time not in the wilderness: 'I am degenerating into a machine for making money.'"

If you'd like to report a wildlife sighting for inclusion in a future column, please email sara.gottlieb@gmail.com.



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Lake Claire Arts Fair

Continued from page 1.

Thanks to all the adventurous folks who participated in the fair and who came out to buy gifts, eat, and listen to music, to support the fair—and ultimately, some of our public schools. Pics are on these two pages, plus pp 8-9 (to see the pp 8-9 pics in color, however, check out the neighborhood website lakeclaire.org.)



Ann'sley, Beth, Jill





All photos on pages 6, 7, 9 & 9 by Debbie Livingston, unless noted otherwise. Thanks. Debbie!





Photo by Melanie Shaw

Photo by Nancy Dorsner

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LT Board in our community-created winter meeting space, the Gorilla Grill. L-R: Lisa Vitello (holding tablet), Linda Pace (on tablet screen, via Zoom), Elizabeth Sullivan, Stephen Wing, Miriam Herbers, Brynan Hadaway, Veronique Perrot, Morgan Strickland.

Welcome to 2024 from the Land Trust Community!

by Stephen Wing

When my wife, Dawn, adopted an emu named Big Lou in 1993, he was full-grown. We had no idea he would live for another 29 years. But the commitment we made proved to be its own reward, with unexpected benefits for all of Lake Claire and beyond. When a group of neighbors pooled their savings in the early 1980s to purchase a parcel of real estate overlooking Dekalb Ave., they probably knew more about the longevity of land than Dawn and I knew about emus a decade later. But they plunged in anyway, understanding that the land would be there for the rest of their lives and then some. They simply trusted that future generations of neighbors would recognize the value of saving a slice of Lake Claire from “development,” and at least a few would take an active interest in stewarding a garden oasis in the midst of the city.

Today, as townhouses and condos spring up from every neglected patch of weeds across intown Atlanta, preserving this oddly shaped jigsaw-puzzle-piece of land they called the Land Trust has turned out to be a prescient move. For Dawn and me, it was what lured us to Lake Claire when we outgrew our one-bedroom apartment and started looking for a home.

But the rewards it brought to that original crew of neighbors are difficult to fathom for a later arrival like me, let alone someone just moving in now. To us it may look like a whimsically designed and casually tended miniature park; to them, it brings back memories of work parties, potluck gatherings, and street-dance fundraisers as their children grew and their visions took on substance year by year. Strolling through our tranquil neighborhood greenspace today gives only a hint of an intangible benefit seeded and nourished by

those visions and memories—an all but forgotten form of “sweat equity” known as community.

With the passing of Richard Powers last year, that community lost one of its keenest chroniclers. The final gift of Richard’s lifetime of giving was a timeline of landmarks and milestones along the way, laid out on a 15-foot roll of paper, which we displayed at his memorial gathering in December. But the few remaining founders and early Trustees have not forgotten.

Recently, when we sent out a “help wanted” email looking for paid help to replace a stalwart long-time volunteer, one neighbor who has long since moved away shot back an indignant protest. Why should it be necessary to pay someone for doing what the founding families did for nothing but the reward of a tight-knit community? To her, that deep neighborly bonding was the whole point; if the neighborhood was no longer interested in community, we might as well just sell the land and forget the whole thing. The world has changed, I tried to explain. The volunteers who keep the Land Trust going nowadays, though still mostly neighbors, have to focus their efforts on coming up with the money to pay hourly contractors to keep up with mowing, landscaping, tree maintenance, trash and recycling removal, electrician and plumbing services – everything that can’t be accomplished by a motley assortment of folks who show up for a three-hour work day once a month. Though the bonds of community may have waned, the land is still here, and stewarding it is still a labor of love.

Our ex-neighbor eventually relented and agreed to remain on our email list. But it’s harder to explain to you, my Lake Claire neighbors of

The Land Trust Still Has Daffodil Bulbs for Sale

There are two varieties available: Ice Follies (white) and Carltons (yellow), both from the highly respected family-owned Brent & Becky’s nursery. Please place your order at Linktr.ee/lcclt, using Paypal or Venmo. Be sure to include your email address and

order details. We will provide Lake Claire porch pick-up instructions upon receipt. Each bag contains 10 bulbs: 1 bag: \$12; 2 bags: \$20; 3 bags: \$30.

Thanks for supporting the Land Trust while beautifying Lake Claire!

Upcoming and Ongoing at the Land Trust . . .

Sat., Jan. 6: Land Trust Drum Circle, 8–11 p.m. (and every month on 1st Sat.), \$5 donation requested. No alcohol, please. *Rain date: Sat. Jan. 20.*

Thurs., Jan. 11: LCCLT board meeting, 7–8 p.m. (and every month on the 2nd Thursday) in the Greenfield. All are welcome to sit in and speak up—it takes a community to run a community greenspace! Come in person or contact us at info@LCCLT.org for a Zoom link. *Rain location: Gorilla Grill.*

Wed., Jan. 13: Community Potluck, 6:30 p.m. (and every month on the 13th) in the Greenfield, weather permitting—otherwise in the heated Gorilla Grill. Bring your own re-usable dinnerware, and something to share if you can, labeling ingredients, please!

Sun., Jan. 14: Death Café with Denise Johnson, 3–4:30 p.m. Gorilla Grill (or outdoors if weather permits). Denise Johnson of EOL (End of Life) 101 LLC. hosts an informal conversation about death and dying, with hot drinks & snacks. Free. (See article in December Clarion.)

Sun., Jan. 14–Sat. Jan. 20: 2nd Annual Coat Drive for the Homeless. Please see article on page 1.

Sat., Jan. 20: Community Work Day, 1–4 p.m. (and every month on the 3rd Saturday). Bring drinking water and work gloves. Pizza follows. *Rain date: Sat., Jan. 27.*

Sun., Jan. 21: Community Boom Swap, noon–2 p.m. Bring favorite books/share the joy of reading with your neighbors, old and young! Fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children’s stories, reference books, anthologies, trade it or give it away to someone who will appreciate a turn. Brief or extended conversations are encouraged about why you loved a particular book.

2024, what she was talking about. Few have experienced the paradox of a community that creates a Land Trust while at the same time, year by year, a Land Trust creates a community. Few in our transient age understand how “land” and “community” can somehow merge into one thing, objective earth and subjective feelings woven into a living fabric of relationship. But in fact this is a phenomenon increasingly well-known and studied by scientists in the interdisciplinary field of ecology. Any given place in its natural state is a community of species inseparable from the land – an ecosystem. On this continent, ecologists are discovering, for millennia humans were simply one of those species, shaping the land to their needs while nurturing the complex web of relationship which sustained the other species that shared it.

The eminence where the Land Trust sits is part of the ridge that forms the subcontinental divide, where rainfall flows east toward the Atlantic or south toward the Gulf. But it reached its present elevation only through human intervention, when MARTA contractors dug out the Arizona Ave. underpass and piled a

mound of dirt across the street. Humans have continued to shape it by building retaining walls, enlarging the pond, battling kudzu and other invasives, planting natives (and exotics like banana trees), providing habitat for squirrels and turtles and birds.

All of Lake Claire was once a wild landscape stewarded by the Muscogee Creek tribal nation. The Land Trust is preserving a piece of that original ecosystem and carrying on that tradition of stewardship. The form this takes has changed drastically, but the effect is the same. Under the laws of ecology, land still fosters community among its inhabitants. If the humans that live there make a commitment to participate in the natural order, to live in relationship rather than in Biblical dominion, to belong to the land even though it may legally belong to us, the natural community that spawned humankind still waits to welcome us home.

As the winter days reach their nadir and begin to lengthen again, signaling the dawn of a new year, each sunrise reveals that the land preserved and stewarded by its neigh-

Cont. on p. 12



We hope this series is fun and a way for young Clarion readers, writers, and artists to participate in our 'hood. We often have a featured writ-

er each month, but were short of space this time. To all the Lake Claire children and young adults who read and contribute to the Kids' Page each month,

we appreciate you. Add your creativity to this page! Send contributions to editor@lakeclaire.org, by January 15-18 for the February issue

Contest Winners

The winner this month, who spotted the hidden graphic in last month's issue, is **Vivian Baker**, 8 years old, in 3rd grade at Mary Lin, who lives on Claire Drive. **Nicolas Sanders**, 8 years old, on Southerland Ave, were in 2nd place. Nicolas is at Hess Academy in 2nd grade, and Julian at Freedom Park Preschool. (They also are two of my favorite chalk artists!) Tied for 3rd place are **Ames Yeend**, **Millie Parks**, and **Lena Aprati**. Ames is in 1st grade at Mary Lin, 6 years old, and on Arizona Ave. Millie is excited to win on her first

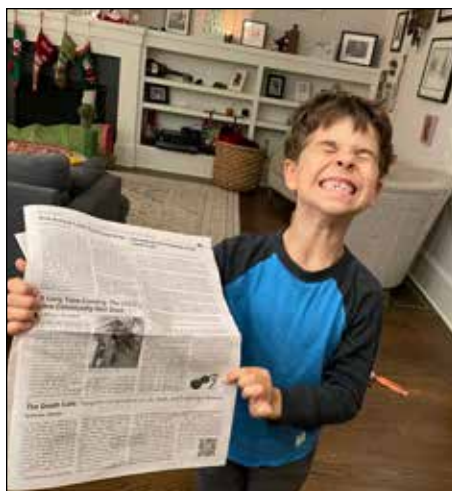


Vivian, 1st place



Lena, in 3-way tie for 3rd place

time trying for the Clarion contest! She is a Kindergartener at Mary Lin, and they live on Harold. Lena Aprati is in 1st grade at Mary Lin, lives on McLendon Ave. She stated her fave thing



Ames, in 3-way tie for 3rd place



Millie, in 3-way tie for 3rd place

New Contest

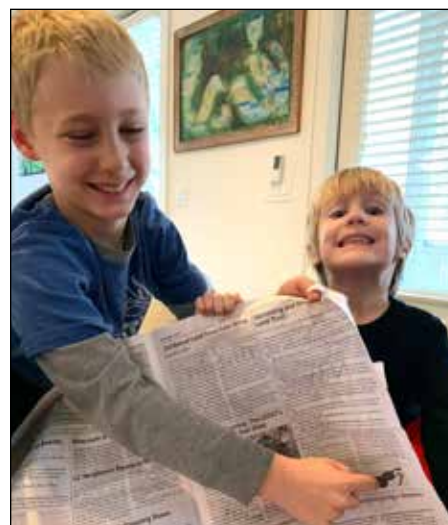
Hello, Kids! Somewhere in this newspaper is a graphic of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "MLK," as we sometimes abbreviate his name, was a great speaker and a famous leader of the civil rights movement. "Civil rights" are rights that should belong to all of the citizens of the country. The civil rights movement in the 1960s focused on equal rights long overdue. Dr. King hoped to make things equal for people regardless of their race/skin color. Find the graphic of this important American leader. The winner/winners will have their pictures in the next Clarion. To win, send e-mail to editor@lakeclaire.org, identifying the page number, and include your name, age, school, street, and grade, along with 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 anything else you know about Dr. King, or something special you will do on MLK Day. 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 JANUARY 15-18. Hurry and look; competition is always stiff for this coveted prize.

Land Trust

Continued from page 11.

bors for over forty years is still here. The nine of us who meet each month to decide how best to carry on that effort are its official "board of directors." But titles matter less than relationships. Our meetings are open to all. Anyone who consistently shows up is eligible to join the board. The Grounds committee, which oversees the maintenance of the land, also meets monthly and hosts a Community Work Day on the 3rd Saturday each month. Anyone who feels connected to this land, or wants to deepen the connection, is invited to take part. And the gates of the Land Trust are open every day during daylight hours. The original neighbors who rescued it from "development" knew exactly what they were doing. They were preserving it for you.



Nicolas and Julian, 2nd place

about December was that it has Christmas and candy canes. For answering the extra-credit question, Lena wins the extra-credit prize! Congrats to you six clever winners! To all Lake Claire kids, do keep reading the Kids' Page and sending in your guesses. See our new contest below.

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