

Monte Sano Civic Association
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Monte Sano Civic Association

Newsletter



Vol. 54 No.3

Improving Huntsville's Unique Mountain Community Since 1954

October 2008

Note that mailing labels show the status of member dues. Please contact a Board Member regarding any errors in your paid status or membership status.

Pool History Sought

By John Allen

A small pick-up truck-load of moldy pool records has been salvaged from underneath the Monte Sano pool deck. Much of what was not stuck together from years of moisture was shredded by squirrels (some of the boxes were strewn with chewed-up hickory nuts). I'm slowly going through it all to see what is salvageable.

While serving on the pool board, it became clear that the board needs retrievable records from time-to-time to properly discharge its responsibilities. For instance, when there is a discussion by the board about remarbliting the pool, it needs to know how long it's been since it was previously done – and if warranties are still in effect. The available records are very spotty. For instance, there are no Monte Sano Club records for the years from 1961 to 1978 – and many of the members from that time have died or moved away. Also, there are no board minutes or newsletters available for the for the year of 1983. If you have any records or photographs from these missing periods – or any periods during the last 46 years, please consider sharing them with us. We can make copies and return your originals. Contact me at 539-5287, or email me at jha@knology.net

Jean Farr and children visit the pool while under construction in



Spotty cell-phone Service

By John Ehinger

Members of the Monte Sano Civic Association's board of directors share the frustration of other mountain residents about the spotty nature of cell phone service on Monte Sano. We may have a good signal on one side of a street but nothing on the other. The problem, which afflicts the service of all cell-phone providers to some degree, seems to be worse in the summer when the trees are in leaf.

The board believes the problem would be alleviated if the cell-phone companies could use some the existing communications towers they are not using now on or near the mountain. This could eliminate the need for the construction of more towers. If you are associated with a cell-phone company or have other insights, please talk with the board, either this year or next.



Leela Devere, recycles a glass bottle at the Little Green Store.

The Little Green Store

By Ana Byrne

It's true! We really do have a little store on the mountain, again. The Little Green Store has opened its doors. We are all about preserving the environment and creating community. Everything in the store strives to be: Organic, Re-useable, Biodegradable, made from sustainable materials, recycled, energy-efficient, fair trade or local. The store carries everything from housewares to jewelry, cleaning products to greeting cards, books, baby items, rugs, local art and much more. One of the most popular items has been the organic cotton Monte Sano t-shirt, in both adult and child sizes. We want to carry what Monte Sano needs!

In addition to carrying products that meet these criteria, The Little Green Store also offers a drop-off point for recycling glass, batteries, light bulbs, ink cartridges and cell phones. The community support has been outstanding! The Petroff and Sammon families, for example, took the lead on the glass recycling project and purchased the recycling bins located outside the Little Green Store. Another local resident, Albert Ordway, has volunteered to take the glass to the recycling center every week. Fred Evans has volunteered his labor to build a community bulletin board outside The Little Green Store, which will be coming soon. In addition, many neighbors have offered their assistance in various ways, including referring the staff to great sources and making recommendations that benefit the community.

With more and better eco-friendly products to choose from, we hope to continue to expand our inventory with the goal of making green-living easier. The store is owned by local mountain resident, Ana Byrne, who is a big believer in "staying local." Anytime someone from Monte Sano can shop without a long drive, our carbon footprint is being reduced. To further enable less driving, The Little Green Store will soon carry some of the items that we often need at the last minute, such as milk, eggs, bread, juice and maybe even some healthy snacks. Ana, Leela, and Mackie, also Monte Sano residents, always welcome discussion, questions and suggestions. Come by and see us. Thanks, in advance, for thinking about us first when doing your holiday shopping!!

Fall General Meeting with Holiday Party

Monday, December 15, 6:30 p.m.

Monte Sano State Park Lodge

This year our Fall meeting will precede the potluck dinner and Holiday Party for the Monte Sano Civic Association on Monday, December 15. The event will include live music, decorations, and holiday cheer. More about this party will be announced soon. Save the Date to have an enjoyable evening with your neighbors.



New Trail to Fearn & O'Shaughnessy Home Sites

A new trail has been added to Monte Sano State Park leading from the gravel road past the cabins. The Fearn Trail leads hikers through the woods connecting with the Circular Carriage Drive at the Robert Fearn 1835 Home Site. The Carriage Drive continues around to the original hiking trail accessed from the Hikers Parking Lot. The Circular Drive continues around to the James O'Shaughnessy 1890 Home Site. On the original trail you can see the kiosk with photos of the Fearn and O'Shaughnessy family and



homes. There are also historical markers near each home site giving more detail information. Students can now access, by way of the gravel road, the Interpretive Outdoor Classroom At The Lake which had a Grand Opening in April, the Fearn and O'Shaughnessy Home Sites and the Joe B. Shirley Fire Tower thereby covering Science and History from dinosaur time to space age. Coordinated between Monte Sano State Park and the Monte Sano Historical Association. This is Community Cooperation at its best!

Residents Nominated for Civic Association Board

The following residents have offered their services as an MSCA board member for 2009-2010. Please read what they have written to get to know them and become an informed voter. Please vote for five candidates using the ballot on the bottom of page 3. One ballot per family. Please mail it to the Monte Sano Civic Association, P. O. Box 2435, Huntsville, AL 35804. All ballots must be received by November 15, 2008.

Gina Bain 539-4778

We are so pleased with our decision to build our home up here on Monte Sano. Jay and I have loved living up here for the past two years, and know it was the best possible decision for us. We immediately joined the Monte Sano Civic Association, the pool and the supper club in order to get to know our neighbors. Because we do love living on the mountain, I decided to say yes when asked to run for a board seat on the Monte Sano Civic Association. I spent most of my professional career negotiating contracts with the government and other defense contractors. I learned how to reach compromise positions that were effective for all parties concerned. I've used this experience in various volunteer positions in the community, and think that it would serve our Civic Association well.

Kurt Bothwell 783-5750

Why do I want to serve on the MSCA Board? The short answer...my friend asked me to and I thought, "I have the time to do that, sure!" The long answer... I moved myself and our business here with my family, Katy Patrick, Alex-8, Emma-5, and Owen-2 in 2004 to escape the Atlanta suburbs and to return to where my wife grew up and give our kids a safe environment to grow up freely with nature all around them in a community that feels like home. Although I grew up in Colorado, the mountain has felt like home to me ever since I first visited Monte Sano in 1993. We are glad to be living back on the mountain! I hope to bring my perspective and talents to the board and give something back to the mountain by serving in a vacant position. I am interested in knowing what issues the Board wants to examine. I would like to explore what could be done to improve light pollution issues for the mountain and return the State Park back to the gold star status we had a decade ago. I look forward to working with you.

Steve Fair 535-2994

Steve has been a Monte Sano resident for over 20 years, having been introduced to the mountain by his wife Sara Beth. Steve and Sara Beth have been lucky to raise their three children, Bryant (14) Sara Kate (12), and Patrick (9), in the mountain's unique environment. Although Monte Sano provides easy access to all of Huntsville and the surrounding areas, we enjoy a certain isolation that melds a diverse group of people and backgrounds into a close knit group of friends and family. The Monte Sano Civic Association should help preserve this community and history as we go through the inevitable changes the future holds. In addition to being a longtime resident, Steve has served two terms as president of the Monte Sano Club and has participated on a number of boards in Huntsville.

Ariana Blevins 508-5085

Hello, my name is Ariana Blevins. Having lived in Huntsville all my life, when it was time for me to make my home, Monte Sano was one of my only choices. In college I lived in the Five Points area and driving up Bankhead Parkway was a daily activity to not only enjoy the spectacular view, but to also clear my mind. It is wonderful how the mountain does that, and even though I made this mountain my home little over a year ago, that feeling never seems to get old. Growing up, south Huntsville was my home, where I graduated from Grissom High School in 2000 and then the University of Alabama Huntsville in 2004 with a degree in Graphic Design and a minor in Art History.

In 2005 I married my husband Mark after meeting him in college. His is an illustrator by trade and is very active within the local arts community, having shown at the Museum of Art, 801 Franklin, and other local venues. Currently I am employed at Adtran as a graphic designer, as well as a graphics and layout designer with Huntsville's very own Valley Planet. I am also an avid knitter and crafter, making necklaces buttons and bags in my free time.

Joe Dombrowski 518-9794

I am a happily married father of four children and grandfather of two. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, I completed 2 years of college at Columbia University and I'm currently pursuing a degree at Athens State University. In 1978 I moved to Huntsville, AL and was fortunate enough to find a career in the Electronics Distribution industry. My work experience includes 30 years of sales and management including the start up of three companies new to the Huntsville area. Other activities include coaching kids baseball and basketball, Cub Master and Pack 304 on Monte Sano, sixth grade Sunday School teacher and youth ministry volunteer at First United Methodist Church.

Susan Gulyas 534-0554

Susan lives at 3611 Fearn St. and is married to Richard Gulyas. They have 2 daughters, Rachel and Leah.

I am a Registered Nurse, employed as the Clinical manager for Surgical/Orthopedics/Short Stay Unites at Crestwood Medical Center. I have worked at CMC for 8 years.

I grew up in Huntsville after moving here with my family when I was 6. We lived in Jones Valley, looking up at Monte Sano. ...it seemed so high! During my years at Huntsville High School I had many friends who lived on the mountain including the Gaithers: Joanne, Jamie, and my BFF, Bonnie. Theirs is the house we live in now. My friends and I spent a lot of our spare time (and time that we were supposed to be in school) hiking in the state park and riding bikes in the neighborhood. After 9 years away from Huntsville, I moved to New Market with my family in 1988. When the opportunity came to buy a house on the mountain, we jumped on it...Richard and I had long agreed that the only place we'd live in Huntsville was on Monte Sano. We have been here 12 years and we love it. The place, the people, and the sense of community are all very important to the quality of life on Monte Sano, my home.

David McMillion 489-3239

David McMillion, son of Jim and Pat McMillion, was proudly born and raised on Monte Sano. He attended Monte Sano Elementary, and enjoyed a 7 year summer career at Monte Sano Pool as a lifeguard and manager. He left Huntsville briefly for medical school at UAB and moved back to Monte Sano about 3 years ago with his beautiful wife Mandy whom he met while living at the apartments on Belcrest during his years at UAH. They have a son Caleb who will proudly become a 2nd generation Monte Sano student in about 2-3 years. David recently completed residency where he served as Chief Resident and is practicing Family Medicine here in Huntsville. He hopes to keep the mountain a unique and special community for future generations to raise their families in.

Peg Heeschen 539-3073

Peg has been a Monte Sano resident for 30 years. She and her husband Buzz have 3 sons and 3 grandchildren. She is a retired teacher and a retired antique shop owner. She and Buzz own an antique business—The Southpaw Postcards and Photographs. Over the years she has been involved in various Monte Sano organizations—cub scouts, PTA, Community Watch, Monte Sano Woman's Club, Monte Sano Elementary School SPACE Class teacher for 3 years, Treasurer of the Monte Sano Pool for 2 years, and volunteer at Burritt Museum for over 25 years. She is currently chairman of the Burritt Trail Committee working on eliminating non-native invasive plants on the trails and finished her term as the President of the Burritt Museum Guild. She also serves on the Huntsville Beautification Board. Hobbies include gardening, computers, collecting pigs and old postcards and playing with her grandchildren. If elected, she will try to be responsive to the needs of the Monte Sano residents and represent the mountain in the larger Huntsville community.

Mary-Lynn Perry 533-4260

Mary-Lynn has enjoyed living on Monte Sano since 1981 and is raising 4th generation mountain children with her husband who also grew up on the mountain. She is interested in keeping the mountain community a safe and nurturing environment for all ages.

Ballot for Civic Association Board of Directors to serve 2009-2010. Vote for five persons. Mail to Monte Sano Civic Association P. O. Box 2435 Huntsville, AL 35804 All ballots must be received by November 15, 2008.

- ___ **Gina Bain**
- ___ **Ariana Blevins**
- ___ **Kurt Bothwell**
- ___ **Joseph Dombrowski**
- ___ **Steve Fair**
- ___ **Susan Gulyas**
- ___ **Peg Heeschen**
- ___ **David McMillion**
- ___ **Mary-Lynn Perry**

Signature of MS Civic Association

Member _____

Member's Name

Christmas Tree Sale at Monte Sano United Methodist
The Youth and Children are taking Pre-orders for freshly cut 6-8 ft. Fraser Firs grown in North Carolina. Pick Up dates will be Saturdays Nov. 29, Dec. 6, & 13. Donation of \$50 suggested to support the church's building program. Call 533-6083