

Huntcliff

DECEMBER
NEWSLETTER

Huntcliff Resident Homeowners' Association

Huntcliff's Christmas Village House



Christmas is a season that is steeped in custom and traditions. There's something comforting and satisfying about the familiarity of certain things that make an appearance this time of year, whether it's the family stockings that are hung on the mantle, or the fragrance of apples and cinnamon. Maybe it's that goofy little reindeer decoration that's been around since you were a kid.

We in Huntcliff are fortunate to have our very own tradition, thanks to some very generous neighbors, and it's one that you don't get to see just anywhere: a miniature Christmas village. This beautiful holiday presentation is proudly given to us each year by Ronda and Rob Zimmerman, who live on Pointers Way.

The custom started years ago with Ronda's mother, who had made a Christmas village of

her own, and had actually formed a lot of its ceramic pieces by hand. The idea of collecting and displaying Christmas villages now carries on with Ronda, as well as with her two out-of-state sisters.

Over the years, Ronda's indoor display grew larger and larger, with pieces often given to her by husband Rob as gifts. "Eventually I had people who had seen it inside my house urging me to put it out for everyone to see," said Ronda. And thus was born another Christmas tradition.

For over a dozen years, the Zimmermans have been displaying their miniature Christmas village from inside their garage for all to see. In November, the garage doors go up and are replaced by sheets of plexiglass. A curtain is

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TRASH TALKIN'

Gwinnett's new solid waste plan impacts every Huntcliff home

Beginning January 2, the new Gwinnett County trash plan takes effect. Called "A Greener Tomorrow Begins Today", this plan requires all residents in unincorporated parts of the county to have trash service, and to have it provided to them by one of two hauling companies. The company that won the bid to service the area including Huntcliff is Advanced Disposal Services, Atlanta (ADSA).

During the initial phase-in period from January 2 to June 30, residents will be individually billed by ADSA, at a rate of \$20.45 a month. Also during this period, households will receive two 95-gallon wheeled carts – one for garbage and one for recyclables.

Then, beginning July 1, residents will stop receiving bills from Advanced Disposal, and will begin paying their bill with their annual property tax bill, at a rate of \$17.86 per month. Over the course of a 12-month period, this amounts to an annual fee of \$214.32. This fixed amount will remain constant through December 31, 2010. After that, any possible fee increases would be subject to the scrutiny and approval of the Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful Services Board.

Also, beginning on July 1, the total number of items that can be accepted in the curbside recycling program increases from 7 to 35.

Yard waste pickup will continue to be an elective service, and offered at an additional rate of \$10.00 per month.

When contacted with initial questions about this new plan, a representative from ADSA advised that letters would be sent out to residents, with details of the new plan, including information such as scheduled pick-up days and how to obtain carts.

Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful has developed a new website to help dispense information about the new program (www.gwinnettcbservices.org). Some of the reasons this plan is being implemented, as stated on the site, are:

- **Cleaner air and cleaner neighborhoods:** Gwinnett currently recycles 10 percent of its waste. Under the new system, this will more than double, to 23 percent. Increased recycling will reduce greenhouse gas emissions – the equivalent of taking 36,533 cars off the road annually. Additionally, there are currently



20,000 homes that don't have waste collection services.

- **Energy saving:** Increasing the County's recycling of its waste stream to 23 percent is equal to saving the energy used by 14,610 households per year. Fuel savings will increase by having fewer waste collection trucks on neighborhood streets.
- **Less noise and air pollution:** With only one waste hauler providing service in a neighborhood, there will be less traffic, air and noise pollution. Neighborhoods will look more attractive with uniform carts on the curb only one day a week.
- **More efficient and cost-effective:** One hauler per neighborhood is more efficient, cost effective and better for the roads than having multiple trucks crisscrossing the area on any given day. All residents will pay a standard service fee for waste collection.
- **Better service:** Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful Services will monitor and enforce strict service standards. Any provider not meeting the standards can be fined or have their contracts terminated. There will also be a GCB Services Call Center and website to ensure residents' questions and concerns are addressed.

HUNTCLIFF'S CHRISTMAS VILLAGE HOUSE

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draped from above as a backdrop, and each piece of the village is carefully removed from its original box, which are kept in numerous storage armoires in the garage. They are then artfully placed on a tiered base. The whole process takes Ronda and Rob about 150 hours to complete.

There's houses, twinkling lights, pieces in motion, businesses and even an airport. People and vehicles of all sorts are to be found also. Look closely near the back and you'll even see a tiny fireworks display. Anyone who has ever taken a child to see the village has seen the magical effect it has. All the things that memories are made of.

"All my pieces are from a company called Department 56, said Ronda. I don't have all the pieces, but my display is from their 'Original Snow Village' Collection. I have close to 300 of the buildings in my collection, and the accessories that go with them. I also have all 50 structures of their Halloween collection, which we display in

October." She says that she is still adding new pieces, and rotates them into the displays every year.

When asked the inevitable question of how such a display might affect the family's monthly power bill, Ronda says, "Not much at all. It's all on one power chord and turned on and off with one switch."

She says that they have had people from as far away as New York and Illinois come see their display. "There's never been an article written about our villages, it's all just word of mouth. And every year, we get a few anonymous Christmas cards from people who just want to thank us for putting up the display. I truly enjoy doing it... it may look like an obsession to some people, but it's just my passion."

Even if you've seen it before, go see it again, and be sure to take the kids. Take a moment to appreciate this unique part of Huntcliff's personality, and if you get the chance, tell Ronda and Rob thanks for the memories.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

You will soon receive a mailing that contains the Board's proposed budget for 2009, as well as other information and items pertaining to the operation of the H.R.H.A. Board of Directors for the upcoming year. Please study these items carefully, and be sure to vote in the areas you are asked to do so. Please return these proxies by mail, or give them to any board member by December 17th. You should also be able to vote online at our website www.huntcliff.org, or bring them to the Board's Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 7:00 p.m., at the Kroger Community Meeting Room.

Bo Ford Has stepped down from his position on the Board as Facilities Director.

The Board would like to express their appreciation for Bo's contributions during the year that he served.

The Board did not receive any nominations for the two At-Large positions that it had voted to make available, or for the vacated Facilities Director position. However, long-time Huntcliff resident Gary Yetter did volunteer his time and ener-

gies to fill one of the AL positions. Thanks, Gary, for stepping up to the plate. His tenure on the Board is contingent upon the required resident vote, found in the annual budget mailing.

The At-Large positions are an excellent way for anyone to become involved with the Board and to learn the business of operating their neighborhood. While there are no direct responsibilities, At-Large members often are jack-of-all-trades, often assisting directors with their duties or becoming involved with assigned committees. The intent of adding these AL positions is to create continuity and something of an overlap in manning the Board.

If you wish to be considered for either the remaining AL position or the Facilities Director position, please contact Board President Rob LeMaster at rlemaster@charter.net.

Various Board committees will be established for 2009. For the foreseeable future, we are considering a Website committee, an Activities committee and a Yard Sale committee. If you wish to be involved with any of these committees, please contact Rob LeMaster at rlemaster@charter.net or Tara Guise at tguise@aol.com

Huntcliff tennis teams record a memorable Fall season

What an outstanding Fall ALTA season we had here in Huntcliff! After very successful seasons, 3 of the 4 adult teams made it to the playoffs.

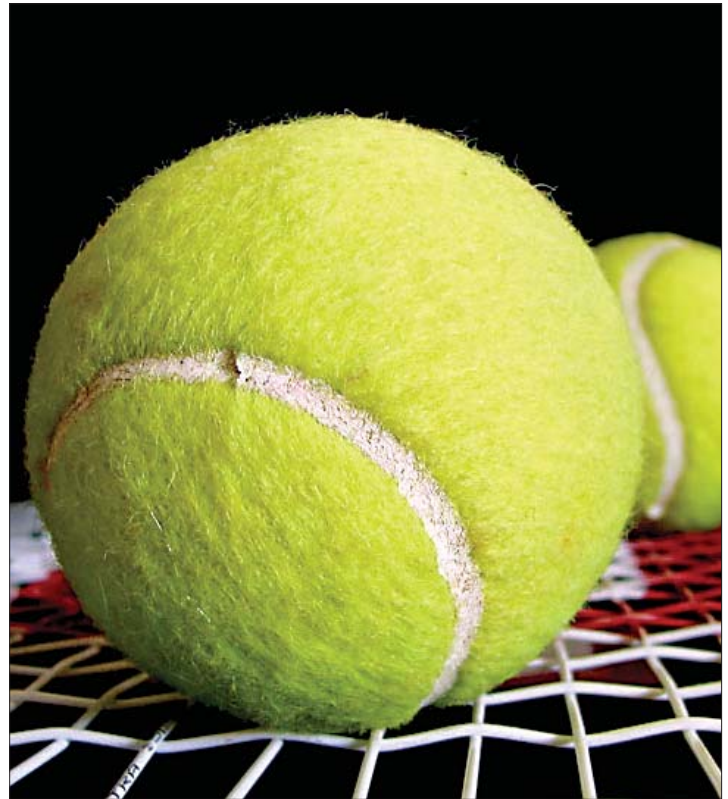
At the end of the regular season play, Steven Reece's C-Level Men's team, Jane LeMaster's B-Level Women's team, and Jeff Coulter's B-Level Men's team all placed high in their division's final standings, and qualified for the playoffs. Only the Men's B team advanced to the second round, by winning both their matches during the first week-end of play. We were fortunate enough to host the Sunday round here at the Huntcliff courts. If you were lucky enough to be among the spectators of that match, you were witness to some of the best play ever to grace our humble tennis complex. After losing very close and lengthy matches at both lines 1 and 2, it was do or die time, and it came down to line 5 to seal the victory! What drama... both the players and the fans left the courts that day in either a state of physical or mental exhaustion. Quite a match, and one to remember.

The following weekend, the guys then travelled to the Atlanta Athletic Club for the next round, where they went down in defeat, ending their season just short of the City Championship!

Congratulations to all the Huntcliff teams for some really excellent seasons!

The rosters for the Winter ALTA Mixed Doubles teams are pretty much complete, but if you are interested in playing on either a B or C level team, you can still contact either Craig Davis (B-level) or Billy Guise (C-level). Teams are allowed to add a certain number of players after the rosters have been submitted to ALTA. Match play for these teams begins in January.

If you'd rather wait for warmer temperatures, sign up sheets for the Spring season teams will be posted at the courts soon. Presumably there will once again be 5 teams. Men's B and C level, Women's B and C level and a 12-and-under Junior Girl's Team. As of this writing, the captains for these teams may not have been decided yet, but that information will be made available as



2009 ALTA SPRING ROSTER DEADLINES

Jan 15th: Spring roster deadline - Junior leagues

March 14th: Juniors - Spring play begins

Jan 22nd: Spring roster deadline - Men

March 14th: Mens - Spring play begins

Jan 26th: Spring roster deadline - Sunday Women

March 15th: - Sunday Women - Spring play begins

soon as possible. See the accompanying list above for the roster deadline dates.

Work was recently completed completed on a project that had been in the planning stages for some months: The tennis pavilion now has an electrical outlet! Many Huntcliff tennis players had expressed an interest in having this feature added, and the project was funded almost entirely by money raised over the course of the year from outside player fees and round robin tournament fees. In the spring or early summer, we will look into adding 2-3 ceiling fans in the pavilion as a second phase of this project, using similar funding.

Huntcliff? On TV?

*Network executive contacts us
about being on reality show*



It all happened very quickly... the week before Thanksgiving, we were contacted by Lauren Spiegel, a casting producer for CBS television network, about the possibility of Huntcliff appearing on a reality competition show to be called "*Block Party*" (it seems they found us using an internet search). They were looking for a neighborhood in the Atlanta area, in which 8 families would compete against each other for cash and prizes, with the grand prize of a "life changing" amount of money going to the ultimate winner.

Our first reaction was "Where do we sign up?", but then were told that we were merely being asked to *APPLY* to be a part of the show, but that our early response and enthusiasm would definitely be to our advantage.

An e-mail was then sent out to the neighborhood, asking if anyone was interested in being a part of the application process, and supplying what few details we had at the time. There were about 20 quick responses from residents looking to find out more.

The following Monday evening, about a dozen residents gathered for a telephone meeting with Lauren, calling from Los Angeles.

During the course of this phone conversation, we found out that CBS was searching for a neighborhood not only in Atlanta, but in markets all over the country as well. The 8 qualifying families would compete in both physical and intellectual challenges, we were told, and that the families not only had to be in the same neighbor-

hood, but had to live in very close proximity to one another. Seems they needed set up their production equipment in one or two areas, rather than all over the neighborhood. Also, the competing families would have to devote themselves entirely to the taping for 3 weeks during the summer, and be available 24 hours a day. And while the winning family would win a huge amount of money, the only guarantee for competing families was a \$5,000 stipend. Plus, applicants had to submit an 'audition' video by December 5th.

At this point in the conversation, our early enthusiasm seemed to diminish a little. While we certainly had enough people looking to participate, we were somewhat spread out in several areas of the neighborhood. But even to them, the prospect of devoting their entire family for 3 weeks seemed a little unlikely to some.

As of this writing, Huntcliff is by no means out of the running, but again, our prospects look a little slim, at least for this year. There were a couple of folks who felt like they could meet all the requirements, and possibly get their neighbors to step up, so we'll see what comes of this... maybe they'll get something going, and Huntcliff will appear on national TV! So stay tuned... the show is scheduled to air in the Fall of 2009.

If you think you could meet the network's requirements, and had 2 or 3 neighbors close by that felt the same, Lauren said to contact her by e-mail at laurenspiegel@blockpartycasting.com. Good luck!

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Well, here we are at the end of the year, and at mid-term for the H.R.H.A. Board of Directors. All in all, I feel we have experienced a good year here in Huntcliff, and more importantly, I hope you share in the same positive feeling.

While we didn't set any records for facilities memberships, we did manage to avoid any decline in numbers, which is somewhat promising. I hope to mount an aggressive membership campaign for '09, but in the face of the current economic climate, may be in for a bit of a challenge. Here's something for you to think about when it comes time to make your decision about joining the facilities next year: In comparison, Huntcliff probably has one of the lower facilities dues rates around, and for the money, it really is a bargain, when you stop to consider drive times, the price of gas and entrance fees to other avenues of area entertainment. We hope to have every member rejoin us in '09 and hopefully add some new members as well. We will not raise the cost of membership fees in 2009, despite seeing some increases from many of our service providers. Instead, the Board has decided to do what a lot of America is doing: a little belt-tightening, and perhaps a little creative fundraising.

I was pleased with the repairs, upgrades and improvements that were accomplished at our facilities over the course of the year. Our tennis courts were resurfaced, and new wood and stain, as well as electricity, was added to the viewing pavilion. Our tennis community is thriving, and I feel that it plays a vital role in the health of our recreation area.

A Tennis Committee was formed in the summer to address some of the problems that are inherent to the growing number of teams and leagues that are currently playing out of Huntcliff. Their recommendations for certain changes in the tennis operating rules were approved by the Board and will be implemented in the coming year. This committee was chaired by Tara Guise, who worked with members Jeff Coulter, Jody Sills, and Ken Cepeda. A round of thanks go to these folks for their time, research and results.

In the Spring, what started as some necessary repairs to some drywall in the women's restroom evolved into something of an extreme makeover in both restrooms. And the entire recreation area was given some needed attention and care as well, thanks to many resident volunteers, who gave selflessly of themselves in the weeks leading up to the pool opening (and beyond). A huge debt of gratitude is due to them for their efforts.

The Board hopes to offer more in the way of social activities next year. We had a reasonably good year in that area, but we're always seeking ways to make some improvements. The 2 Round Robin Tennis Tournaments were largely successful, as well as fun, and we hope to add a third in '09. These tournaments usually are piggy-backed with other events at the rec area, and make for a active, exciting day.

The annual Huntcliff Golf Tournament was revived this



year, and despite the weather, a great time was had by a field of 28 players. We will definitely have this tournament again in the Fall, and are considering have one in the Spring as well.

We hope to form an Activities Committee soon, to get some fresh ideas, and some assistance in carrying them out. I would truly like to see more faces at the pool this summer, and offer plenty of activities for adults as well as the kids.

I would like to extend my thanks to all of the people who volunteered in various projects this year. There are too many people to list by name, but a heartfelt thanks to all of you. I do, however, wish to recognize a few individuals that stepped up in ways that were above and beyond the normal expectations of volunteerism. A standing ovation for Mark Willms, who was pivotal in assisting a relatively inexperienced Board get its footing with his counsel during its transition, and as always, for his participation in a number of neighborhood duties, activities and committees. You have been a blessing, Mark, and a genuine asset to your community. Good luck with your move to Colorado. You and your family will be deeply missed here in Huntcliff.

Another big round of applause goes to Bobbie Ann Henderson, who, in her role as outgoing Board President, was extremely helpful with her professional, personal and legal advice. Many thanks, Bobbie Ann, for fielding what must have seemed to you like an endless train of e-mails and phone calls.

Thanks also to Joe Shepard, and to PGA Tour Superstores, for supplying many of the prizes given at our tennis and golf tournaments. These were greatly appreciated, and contributed greatly to the success of these events.

And thanks to Stephanie Snow, for the use of her artistic talent in the revamping of our pool restrooms (among other things she did to help). Out of everything that we did to upgrade the facilities, we've probably gotten the most comments and compliments about our bathrooms.

These are the kind of people that make me so absolutely proud to be a part of a community like Huntcliff. - Rob LeMaster, Board President