



Dilworth Community Association
 PO Box 36023
 Charlotte, NC 28236-6023



Dilworth Quarterly

June 2021

Don't Miss

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Photo by Gavin West.

The Giraffes of Dilworth

By Mark I. West

Anyone recently travelling along East Boulevard has no doubt seen the pair of giraffe sculptures now taking residence on the corner of East Boulevard and Lyndhurst Avenue.

These giraffe sculptures initially came to my attention shortly after they were installed in February 2021.

I was taking our dog for a rambling walk through our neighborhood when I encountered the giraffes for the first time. Their sudden appearance aroused my curiosity, so I set out to learn more about the arrival of my new giraffe neighbors.

About six months ago, a towering tree stood on the corner where the giraffes now reside, but the tree split in half during a bad storm and had to be removed. The owner of the property, famed Charlotte architect David Furman, felt that something was needed to fill the space vacated by the fallen tree.

Furman contacted Ben Parrish, the owner of Steel Design Studios, and asked him if he would be interested in creating a metal sculpture to be installed in this space. Parrish had recently created some sheep sculptures for another client and had enjoyed the experience

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Deadline for Next Issue:

Ads: July 15

If you are interested in advertising in the Quarterly, email Mary Beth Sensabaugh at msensabaugh@carolina.rr.com. Rates and sizes can be found on dilworthonline.org.

Articles: July 20

Articles and ads received after the deadline may be held for a later issue.

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Getting Back to "Normal" in Dilworth

The COVID-19 Pandemic forced massive changes in all our daily lives, DCA included. Our meetings went virtual, events were cancelled, and we had to get creative on how to "bring people together" and impact the community in positive ways.

I am extremely proud of how our board and this community have responded over the past 16 months.

With two-thirds of North Carolina's population vaccinated, things are about to get a little easier. Life is not back to "normal" quite yet. We will have not Home Tour this year and our meetings are still virtual at least through June.

However, People are slowly feeling more comfortable meeting outside and we will have Jubilee this Fall (official date TBA).

My wife and I moved to Dilworth for the same reasons many of you did. We fell in love with the tree-lined streets as well as the character and diversity of housing throughout this historic neighborhood.

We specifically loved our little bungalow and the stories it and other homes had to tell (even though we had to sometimes remind ourselves of them while removing a hundred years of paint from our old doors and window trim).

Those stories (old and new) were what the existing residents and young folks moving to Dilworth celebrated in the 1970's when they created the Dilworth Home Tour.

The Home Tour was not about showing off grand residences and fine furnishings. The tour was a look at how everyone in this (then over 90-year-old) neighborhood lived.

The tour was also a moment of pride for some homeowners showing off years of work on the restoration of old homes (of all types), and a way to encourage more people to restore these homes and move into the neighborhood.



Franklin Keathley
DCA President

In the same way Home Tour celebrates the diversity, character, and beauty of the places where people live and gather in our neighborhood, the Dilworth Jubilee celebrates the people who live, work, and play in those homes and businesses.

As a young person in my 30's first moving into an established "urban" neighborhood, I didn't really expect to meet almost every neighbor on the block.

I didn't expect to have a dozen of those neighbors at our wedding and I certainly didn't think I'd grow to care enough about the neighborhood to volunteer and become an active member of our Community Association.

Every walk, "Front Porch Friday" or back patio cookout I would meet someone new and interesting. I never imagined finding something in common with so many people that were so... different. A casual conversation could turn into an hour listening to a neighbor like Wlodek describe building an AI to beat Ken Jennings in Jeopardy. I loved it!

I imagine meeting people has not been so easy for folks that have moved here in the past year. We also know the past 16 months certainly haven't been easy for folks that have lived here for 40 years either. As restrictions ease and people feel more comfortable interacting, I hope we will all make those efforts to establish connections with neighbors old and new.

The buildings in our neighborhood have a lot of stories to tell, but the people do too.

Our neighborhood has a great history of community and coming together and the DCA board will try to do its part along the way. Dilworth Cares is working on an exciting new project, we'll post events, meetings and park clean-ups in the Dilworth Express and hopefully we can all celebrate each other this fall at Dilworth Jubilee. If you have any ideas for this year's event or want to help, please reach out.

The unique charm and character of the houses on the tree-lined streets of Dilworth may have brought us here, but it is the people who live in them that make us stay.

– Franklin Keathley

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Home Tour Committee

Mathew Demetriades and Dana Jodice
2021 Home Tour Co-Chairpersons

DCA Board Meetings

Stay tuned via Dilworth Express

Due to COVID-19, open DCA Board meetings have been suspended. Check the Dilworth Express for updates at dilworthonline.org.

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Six Years of Hard Work Improve Latta Park - Thanks to the Dilworth Community

By Tom Ferber

Tending to your own landscape takes time, energy, patience, and passion.

You have to remove unwanted growth in the form of weeds and invasive plants. You have to care for the soil and create an environment for wanted plantings to thrive. You need to add plants to fit the landscape. It needs care, feeding, and love to create and maintain a landscape that looks natural and balanced to its environment.

Now imagine your landscape space is Latta Park. Whoa!

Nancy Nicholson and Ruth Ann Grissom embraced the challenge and ever since a presentation in the fall of 2015 that kicked off their efforts, they have worked to change and enhance the environment we all enjoy when we use Latta Park. Their journey over the last six years has been focused on working with partners, removing invasive plants, adding more native plants, and educating others.

After presenting plans to the DCA and meeting with various stakeholders and volunteers in late 2015, their journey began in the winter of 2016. "Volunteers have been a key part of our success and we are grateful to everyone who has helped" said Nancy. She mentioned a volunteer workday in early 2016 to clear out invasive Ligustrum. Ruth Ann added that "We've worked with the Mecklenburg Park & Recreation department every step of the way," as she described the early efforts to clear out ivy that was growing up many of the trees in the park. Larry Mellichamp and Ed Davis of UNCC Botanical Gardens offered design guidance at the beginning of the project too and the journey had begun.

The balance of 2016 laid the foundation for future improvements. Volunteers continued to help remove invasive plants and add mulch; 30 native shrubs were purchased and planted; Park & Rec added a water line for irrigation; Heartwood Tree Service was contracted to ensure the plants stayed watered. It was time to kick the effort into high gear (which means higher costs) and Nancy and Ruth Ann applied for grants from the NC Native Plant Society, Charlotte Garden Club, and the Women's Impact Fund during the summer of 2016.

In the fall of 2016, the grant application was approved by the NC Native Plant society which enabled the purchase of more native plant material. TreesCharlotte and private citizens donated 36 native trees and the DCA approved funding to go towards the efforts. Volunteers planted the donated trees.

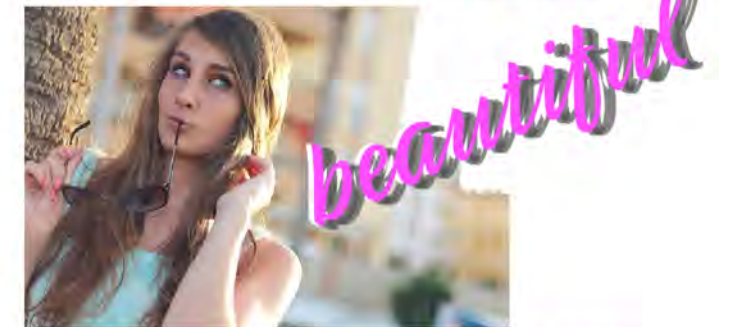
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Thanks to the efforts of Nancy Nicholson, Ruth Ann Grissom, and a slew of volunteers, Latta Park keeps looking better and better. See more photos on page 27.

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Dilworth Showed Us A Spirit

The Dilworth Jubilee was, in the words of one of its organizers, "a roaring success." People from all over town came to Latta Park, looked at the neighborhood, sampled the festive mood and felt the sense of community that people in Dilworth have achieved.

What the Jubilee marked was more than the physical rebirth of a neighborhood. Interesting and eye-pleasing things are being done to old houses and shops in Dilworth, but what is important is

what is being done to the people. They seem to have found a sense of pride and identity that transcends the physical restoration of their part of the city.

Charlotte could use some more Dilworths. Perhaps some of the visitors Saturday felt the Dilworth spirit and went home to find ways of fostering it in their neighborhoods. If so, then the Dilworth Jubilee might have been a community success, too.

As Franklin Keathley mentioned in his President's Message (see Page 2), the Dilworth Jubilee is on for 2021! Can you believe it's been 47 years since the first one? The ten homes and businesses on the 1973 tour included not only "showcases", but also bungalows, businesses, duplexes, apartments, and the new Strawn efficiencies owned by Charlotte Housing Authority. It certainly was a something totally new for Charlotte - and inspirational, as this Observer article noted on August 21, 1973.



A matter of Safety

Neighborhood Traffic

By Officer J.R. Gilliland



Officer J.R. Gilliland
CMPD - Providence Division

For most of the past year, we've seen a decreased amount of traffic on the roads. This has been a blessing and a curse. With that came faster speeds and more accidents.

According to the National Safety Council there was an 8% increase in traffic deaths nationwide, even though we are driving fewer miles. That's the largest motor vehicle death tally in 13 years.

As life returns to normal and everyone is on the move again, please remember to slow down!

CMPD has made over 200 traffic stops in and around Dilworth since the beginning of the 2021.

While home addresses of those stopped are not tracked, my own experience shows about half of those drivers live in Dilworth.

Street closures due to construction have certainly adjusted our normal traffic routes, please be mindful and slowdown. The extra couple minutes caused by taking a detour can't be made-up by rolling through stop signs or speeding.

CMPD recently announced there have been over forty documented incidents of "Road Rage" throughout the city this year. Twenty of those cases resulted in guns being drawn.

If you are involved in a road rage incident, call 911 immediately. Give us the opportunity to respond and manage the situation.

Slow down and be safe. ■



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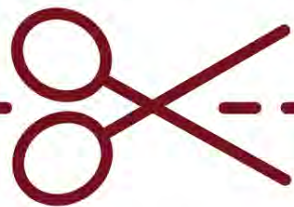


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Dilworth Comes Together: A Tale of Trees

By Liz Lewis

Your Dilworth Community Association's *Tree Canopy Committee* is part of what makes this neighborhood so special and unique.

You've been hearing a lot about the state of Charlotte's tree canopy, with studies showing that the community at large is losing the equivalent of three football fields of trees every day, and has lost an estimated 250,000 trees over a recent six year period.

Here in Dilworth, we see the impacts of tree loss from storms, development, disease, and age all around us.

So a group of neighbors came together to do something about it.

Tree Canopy Committee volunteers worked to raise money to plant more street trees in Dilworth. Neighbors contributed to the *Share the Shade* campaign to plant more trees and help another nearby neighborhood with limited resources with their trees.

As a result of the campaign, an additional 32 street trees were planted this winter throughout our neighborhood. A portion of the Share the Shade funding went toward helping the Revolution Park neighborhood improve their tree canopy by partnering with local nonprofit TreesCharlotte.

Many Dilworth neighbors volunteered to help with the tree planting in Revolution Park this Spring. In addition to funding the planting of trees, proceeds are helping with tree care in the neighborhood.

A single street tree costs approximately \$600, including sourcing, transporting, planting, and watering the tree for the crucial first year.

This expanded tree action came about because of early findings from a pilot program involving TreesCharlotte, UNCC and the NC Forestry Service studying inner city neighborhood tree needs. ■



Revolution Park homeowner and Dilworth volunteers plant trees as part of DCA's Share the Shade campaign.



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Neighborhood Environment

Save our Sidewalks

By Cindy Zakary

A few months ago, a post on Nextdoor went viral. Why are so many people walking and running in the street instead of on the sidewalk?

Is this a COVID thing, or something else? The widespread answer might not come as a surprise: you'd be risking your life to run on the sidewalks in Dilworth. The age and condition of them have become dangerous. Variations in height and trip hazards abound. Some cracks and conditions (like the photo of Iverson Way) have created a sort of treacherous obstacle course, dragging down children on bikes and scooters.



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That's where the *Neighborhood Environment Committee* (NEC) comes in. We have heard the complaint. We have contacted the City of Charlotte. Currently, a survey of the Dilworth neighborhood is underway to identify missing and dangerous sidewalks. Once the major areas of concern have been identified, the City will partner with its contractors to cut and grind the areas level. The hope is by the end of 2021 we have eradicated most of these dangers.

We need your help! Have you noticed a sidewalk area near you that needs attention? Please email the specific address along with a photograph to neighborhood@dilworthonline.org.

The NEC was reestablished this year to address a wide array of neighborhood concerns. We are asking neighbors to sign up to be block captains representing a single street. The only requirement is that you listen to your neighbors and report any issue that impacts the neighborhood as a whole versus an individual concern (don't like it when your neighbors blast their music? Sorry, but that doesn't qualify).

The sole responsibility of a block captain is to convey to the NEC what your neighbors are saying to each other about quality-of-life concerns.

You can view the list at dilworthonline.org/block-captains or email neighborhood@dilworthonline.org to sign up. ■

Light 'em Up at The Vintage Whiskey and Cigar Bar

By Jaime Emmanuelli

For years, Dilworth has enjoyed a rich presence of restaurants and bars within walking distance to many residents. Outside of food, coffee, and drinks, there has been little variety to note until the recent opening of The Vintage Whiskey and Cigar Bar.

Occupying the space formerly held by Iron Tribe studio on Worthington Avenue, right next to Dunkin' Donuts, there hasn't been a cigar bar/club that has been this accessible to the Dilworth area since the old Sunset Club on South Boulevard, which closed years ago.

Although there are other cigar venues in town, this one is more of an upscale experience. The Vintage is a membership club targeting a more exclusive customer base. A day pass can be purchased for \$25 at the door, or you can opt for one of their annual membership packages.

The motif is cigars and cocktails, but manager Ben Torres says they are partnering with other local businesses to offer a variety of diverse experiences to their customers. For instance, you can pick fresh pastry selections from Sunflour Bakery right at the bar to pair with your in-house prepared coffee.

The Vintage management has also been busy offering special events such as cigar and whiskey tastings and developing plans to include ongoing partnerships and events with nearby businesses. The Vintage has only been open for a couple of months, but improvements are already being made to the site. During our last visit, we noticed new textured wallpaper, a larger patio footprint, and massive sunblocking umbrellas ready for summertime.

The front patio is the star feature of The Vintage. While the back section is more sophisticated looking, and mostly reserved for the higher tier memberships, but the front patio screams, "Hey, it's nice out! Come have a cigar and a drink here!"

The selection of cigars here cannot be overlooked, with a large selection of specialty items not necessarily found anywhere else, including a Vintage branded cigar made just for them.



Though The Vintage is a membership club, you can still purchase cigars without having to become a member. The bar itself also has its bragging rights as it stocks rare bottles of the finest whiskeys to be found. The bartending team is also exceptional, highlighted by their friendly attitude towards serving customers. A variety of exceptional and complex crafted cocktails are available, with syrups made in-house.

As for beer, Ben and his team aim to provide more authentic microbrew selections that are harder to find in Charlotte. The Vintage is owned by The Menagerie Hospitality Group (presided by Dan Weiss), which is the same team that operates The Wine Loft on South Boulevard.

Overall, I am happy to see a diverse offering of entertainment in the neighborhood, and I expect The Vintage will cement its place in the area as a must visit spot for cigar and/or craft drink lovers.

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For more information, including membership and special offerings, visit their website at TheVintageCLT.com. ■



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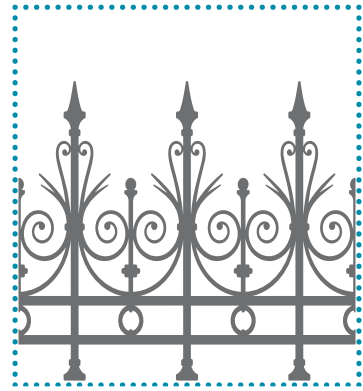
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Historic District Commission

Adaptive Reuse: Old Buildings, New Uses

By Cindy Kochanek

Have you ever thought about how the historic buildings in and around older downtowns have been able to remain relevant over the years?

Adaptive reuse is a big part of it and it's all around us. Adaptive reuse is the use of a building for something other than its original intended purpose typically while maintaining most or all of its exterior appearance. It can be found in something as small as the conversion of a garage to an office during the pandemic.

It can also be found in larger projects like former train stations, factories, churches, schools and post offices being converted to

office, restaurant, retail, and residential spaces. Even buildings for which it might seem difficult to find new uses for like gas and fire stations have become museums, salons, coffee shops, or restaurants.

In Charlotte, adaptive reuse is found in the former residences lining Dilworth's East Boulevard which are now in use as commercial and office space, and in projects such as Optimist Hall and Camp North End where a mix of uses are brought together in one location.

What is it that draws us to these projects? Adaptively reused spaces often become gathering places and even tourist destinations. Is it the distinctive character that is retained with the reuse of a historic building or a fascination with the building's story over time that draws us in?

Perhaps the answer is in the variety of potential uses and affordability. The open spaces in former industrial uses can accommodate one larger tenant or be split up to accommodate many tenants. Adaptively reused buildings attract startup companies and small business owners who may otherwise not be able to afford office or retail space.

Frequently, a mix of uses are found in both small and large adaptive reuse projects - reducing the need for multiple trips to various locations. There are many benefits of adaptive reuse. These projects reactivate vacant or abandoned buildings or areas often in prime locations with existing infrastructure.

The adaptive reuse of a building means the entire building does not end up in a landfill, thus creating less waste.

The rehabilitation of an existing building typically creates jobs whether it's the need for skilled trades in the work to adapt the building to a new use or the office or retail workers that will staff the venue once the rehabilitation is complete.

Often arguments against the reuse of a historic building include concerns with energy efficiency and cost effectiveness, however,

there are counterpoints to those arguments. Historic buildings can be retrofitted to become more energy efficient, accessible, and resilient with minimal alteration to the envelope of the historic building.

Significant cost savings can be realized with tax credits if the property is listed as part of a larger National Register Historic District or on its own in the National Register of Historic Places. In North Carolina, commercial and income producing (residential rental) properties, can take advantage of both state and national rehab tax credits often making larger adaptive reuse projects possible.

The next time you're out and about look around and see if you notice any adaptive reuse projects or potential adaptive reuse opportunities around you.

Have a favorite adaptive reuse project? Let someone know about it or go for a visit, if it's open to the public, and see what's new.

Feel free to contact HDC staff if you have any questions on specifics relating to adaptive reuse or any other questions or concerns regarding the Dilworth Local Historic District.

You can reach the Historic District Commission via email at charlottehdc@charlottenc.gov.

Check out the HDC's social media posts on Facebook and Instagram @cltplanning. ■



There's no better example of "Adaptive Reuse" than the Dilworth restaurant, Bonterra. Originally built in the late 1800s as Atherton Methodist Church, it was the first permanent prayer structure in the area for resident use. The building went through several renovations as well as religious denominations, before becoming one of the Southeast's top restaurants in 1999.

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Our Kids

An Update from Your Neighborhood Middle School

By Sheena Miracle

What a wonderful year that has emerged from the pandemic!

Sedgefield Spartans have worked hard, shown growth, and developed trusting relationships.

Students and staff have developed innovative ways to connect through a virtual learning environment to build positive relationships that will carry them throughout the final months of the year with the in-person model.

It is with these positive relationships that we will continue to grow our school and empower our students to create change within our community.



A new mural in the building painted by DeNeer Davis, Sedgefield Alumni, Local Artist and Reflections judge.

The Sedgefield learning community has grown throughout the pandemic. We have been fortunate to not only maintain our school enrollment but the total school population has increased over the past two months.

Our students are attending in-person learning at an approximate 80% capacity. We were excited to welcome all students for in-person learning on Monday, April 12, while continuing to serve those students in the Full Remote Academy.

During this time, our students will continue to learn new content plus review content in preparation for the end of the grade exam.

We are confident that our Spartans will show academic growth despite the challenges they have experienced.

Sedgefield Spartan teachers have been dedicated throughout this year to their students.

They have learned new models to support hybrid and digital learning, and worked to maintain trusting relationships with students to ensure students feel safe to take academic risks.

The Spartans have had great success during the 2020-2021 academic year. We cannot be more proud of the success of our students and staff.

continued on page 31



Summer Connections

The following young entrepreneurs are ready to go to work for you this summer:

Hi, my name is **Abby Garafola**! I am 16 years old and am very good with children. I have lived on Charlotte Drive since I was two and I am reliable and worthy of your trust. I love to play games, do crafts, and outside time, like walks, adventures, and bike rides. I am also able to do simple housework such as walking the dog, cleaning, and cooking. I promise to look out for your kids and give my undivided attention while caring for them. References available upon request.

Charge: \$10-\$15 per hour • **Phone:** 704-619-4917

Hi, my name is **Alexa Jain**, I am 15 years old with experience in babysitting kids of all ages. I am Red Cross Babysitting certified and American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR/AED certified. I also enjoy walking pets and house sitting! I love to be outdoors and am well-rounded, responsible, and organized. References available upon request.

Phone: 704-305-8235 • **Email:** alexajain@icloud.com

Hi, my name is **Eleanor Todd**. I am 14 years old and am eager to spend the summer helping neighbors. I really enjoy young children, have babysitting experience plus Red Cross training & certification. I enjoy biking around Dilworth, playing tennis and I'd love to do that with your kids! I am available for dog sitting, as well as house sitting if you have travel plans this summer

Phone: 704.998.9481

Hi, we are two 10 year-old BFF's who are E. Kingston Dilworth natives and experienced petsitters (dogs, cats, rabbits, hamsters, fish, chickens) and expert dog walkers. We will take good care of your furry, feathered, and scaled family members!

Phone: 704-900-8533 • **Email:** petsitters@gmail.com

Hi, my name is **Grant Santos**. I'm available for babysitting (ages 3 and up), yard work, home projects like painting or weeding, and petsitting. I'm punctual, hard working, and dependable.

Phone: 980-328-7014

Hi, my name is **Claire Allison**! Before heading off to college, I am hoping to make some money as a babysitter or part-time nanny. I have my full driver's license and will be around most weeks from June to early August. References available upon request.

Phone: 704-995-2902

Hi, my name is **Ella Dorsch** and I am 14 years old. I babysit, can be a Mother's Helper, pet sit and pick up mail. I have experience sitting for babies through elementary school and I also have taken babysitting classes at the Red Cross. I will be around most of the summer.

Phone: 704-612-3699

Hi, my name is **Lily Russell-Pinson**. I have been babysitting for six years, and am First Aid and CPR certified. I have a lot of availability, and am happy to work with your schedule however needed. I also pet sit within the home, and am available to water plants. I have received my second Covid vaccine, and will wear an N-95 to insure the safety of your family.

Phone: 704-449-1196 • **Email:** silversunrise27@gmail.com

Hi, my name is **Logan Garner**, an 11 year-old who loves to babysit. My mom is a preschool teacher and I always look forward to helping her students. Something that is special about my business is that I offer Kid Kits. I will customize the kit depending on what your kids like, such as toys, books, crafts, and other items.

Charge: \$5-7 per hour • **Phone:** 704-607-1331

Email: logangarner500@gmail.com

Hi, we are **Quinn Petty** and **Walker Lore**, two 15 year-old boys providing lawn service. We can set up a lawn maintenance schedule and pricing to meet your needs. We provide our own equipment and have flexible schedules. We can treat your yard with the following: Mowing, weed-wacking, blowing, bagging leaves, picking weeds, and picking up sticks. We also offer projects around the house. We are excited to offer our services.

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Home & Garden

Summer Tree and Shrub Care

By Liz Lewis

Here are a few tips on how to care for your trees and shrubs in the heat this summer.

Trees

Water deeply and slowly - Water slowly so the water soaks into the ground rather than running off. Do not give small amounts of water. Even if you lightly water often, it does more harm than good because it encourages shallow roots that dry quickly.

The best time to water - water mature trees late in the evening, at night, or very early in the morning. Trees replace the water they have lost during the day at night. Watering at night also reduces the amount of water lost to evaporation.

Fertilizing tips - Do not use fertilizers around trees during drought and be very cautious about the use of pesticides.

Priorities - During drought and water restrictions, give trees priority over lawns. It takes many more years to grow a tree than a lawn. A lawn can become dormant and can be replaced in a season. It can take a lifetime to replace a large tree.

Shrubs

Heat stress - Be sure you are watering your shrubs appropriately and don't overwater. Many ornamental trees and shrubs are susceptible to root rot. Overwatering your shrubs in an attempt to compensate for heat stress can damage their root system.

A good rule of thumb is to water your shrubs at the same time you are watering your lawn.

Insect or disease problems - Unfortunately, it's best to wait until the dormant season to address these issues. Mites, scale, aphids, lace bugs, and white flies are all common pests that can cause problems for shrubbery. Plan to take action during the winter/early spring and use a horticultural oil application as spraying shrubs now can burn the leaves.

Another option is to use a systemic insecticide (note that applying insecticides in hot temperatures may put your plants' health at risk, and it may be harmful to non-target plants and insects as well). You may also want to contact a lawn/tree care specialist. ■

... and what about the fruits & veggies?

If your home garden is more about what you can eat than what you can look at, the NC Cooperative Extension, a joint venture of NC State and NC A&T, has recommendations on what you might want to plant this summer.

Here's a short list of when and what you should be putting in the dirt over the next few months. Yes, there's still time for tomatoes! (Wait until August though.)

Our area is blessed with a climate allowing food to be grown year-round. With the right kind of planning, you can enjoy the bounty of your home garden - no matter what the season. And it's family friendly!

For more information, including planting tips, check out the NC Cooperative website at www.ces.ncsu.edu. ■

Crop	Planting Date	Days To Harvest
Celery	Jun 15-Aug 15	80-100
Carrots	Jun 15-Sept 15	85-95
Cantaloupe	Jul 1-Jul 15	85-100
Cucumbers	Jul 1-Aug 15	50-65
Summer Squash	Jul 1-Aug 15	50-60
Brussels Sprouts	Jul 1-Aug 31	90-100
Tomatoes	Aug 1-Aug 15	75-85
Snap Beans	Aug 1-Sept 1	50-55
Beets	Aug 1-Sept 15	55-60
Radishes	Aug 1-Sept 15	25-30

of fabricating animals from steel, so he suggested creating a pair of giraffe sculptures.

Furman liked the idea and commissioned Parrish to design, fabricate and install the giraffe sculptures.

I recently talked with Parrish about his approach to creating these giraffes. "I wanted to give them a sense of movement, and sense of fluidity," he said. He certainly succeeded in accomplishing this goal. One of the giraffes appears to be stretching its long neck, looking outward. The other is stooped low, giving the appearance of grazing. Parrish also wanted the sculptures to be playful. "That's why I gave one of the giraffes large hoop earrings," he said.

Parrish fabricated the giraffe sculptures on and off for about two months. "I worked in a free-form style," he said. "I like to let the metal speak to me. I applied some colors, but I also incorporated rust. Although I did not have a set plan, I wanted them to look like they belong in the space."

In an effort to make the giraffes look more at home, long grass will be planted at the base of the sculptures so that they appear to be standing in the middle of an African savannah.

Although the giraffes have only been in place for a short time, they have already been embraced by the residents of the

neighborhood. Parrish told me he's amazed at the enthusiastic response he has received since the giraffes went up. "I thought I would hear from one or two people, but lots of people have contacted me, and it's all been positive. It's gratifying."

The children in the neighborhood have been especially enthusiastic in their response to the giraffes. I recently ran into a mother with her young daughter on their way to see the sculptures. The mother and I started talking about the giraffes, but the daughter became impatient. She tugged at her mother's hand and kept saying, "Giraffes, giraffes."

Neighborhood children not only enjoy looking at the giraffes, but they sometimes respond by making up stories about the giraffes.

Eight-year-old Todd Trivette, a third-grade student at Dilworth Elementary School, came up with a wild story that is partially inspired by Rio, one of his favorite movies. Todd lives two blocks from the sculptures with his mother, Karen Trivette, and step-father, A.J. Chavis.

According to Todd, the two giraffes were being flown to a new zoo, when one of them had the idea to break out of the plane. They used tarps as parachutes and landed in Dilworth, where they decided to stay.

Parrish's giraffes, like Niki de Saint Phalle's Firebird sculpture that stands at the entrance to the Betchler Museum of Modern Art, are examples of public art that engage spectators in a playful and accessible way. The giraffes invite spectators to view them from multiple angles, to take photographs beside them, to tell stories about them.

I predict that Parrish's giraffes will join the Firebird as artistic landmarks. They are already well on their way to becoming beloved members of the Dilworth community.

About the author: Mark I. West is a Professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he teaches courses on children's and young adult literature.

He also holds the title of Bonnie E. Cone Professor in Civic Engagement.

He has written or edited sixteen books, the most recent of which is *Shapers of American Childhood: Essays on Visionaries from L. Frank Baum to Dr. Spock to J. K. Rowling*, which he co-edited with Kathy Merlock Jackson.

His articles have appeared in various national publications, such as the New York Times Book Review, Publishers Weekly, Americana, and British Heritage, as well as many academic journals. Before entering academia, he worked as an early childhood educator and professional puppeteer. ■

This article originally appeared at qcnerve.com and is reprinted with permission.



A past Yard Art Day exhibit displayed on Kingston Avenue.

Yard Art Day Registration Is Underway

As our cover story proves, Dilworthians are not shy about displaying creativity. Since, 2012 Dilworth has been a huge supporter of Yard Art Day. Held every year on Labor Day, YAD was originally founded by noted Charlotte photographer, Deborah Triplett to celebrate the creative spirit in all of us by displaying or performing works of art in their front yard for the public.

This year, the reins have been fully turned over to Deborah's long-time YAD partner (and new DQ Designer!) Tom Petaccia, who has been coordinating the event since 2014.

"Some of Yard Art Day's most memorable exhibits were created by our Dilworth YADists," says Tom. "They have run the gamut from funny to political to poignant. The best thing about it is everything goes. From chalk on the sidewalk to big art installations. Imagination outweighs artistic ability here. Everyone can do it."

You can watch a video slideshow of last year's exhibits at yardartday.org. Then put on your thinking caps and register to be part of Yard Art Day 2021, Monday, September 6.

"I can't wait to see what Dilworth brings to the table this year," Tom concludes. ■

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Latta Park

continued from Page 5

They had focused workdays to clear out more invasives, spread more mulch, band trees, and create brush piles to enhance the habitat for wildlife. Mogenson was hired by Park & Rec and helped to clear out 'Wisteria Gulch' and 'Green Guardrail Gulch.' Ruth Ann and Nancy both commented that 2016 was incredibly satisfying. What started as an idea turned into huge progress to reclaim the original beauty of Latta Park.

Eagle Scout candidate James Barkley led his troop to put down a load of gravel on an eroding path between Romany and the "Bridge to Nowhere" in 2017. The Park & Rec team installed more gravel along the creek to control erosion, replaced playground equipment, and installed new fitness equipment. The Charlotte Hornets stepped in to help and revamped the basketball court too. More new trees and shrubs were planted, more invasive plants were removed and the Charlotte Woodworkers Club built and donated twelve birdhouses, which are now maintained by volunteers with Mecklenburg Audubon.

On to 2018 with wind at their back, Ruth Ann and Nancy increased the number of volunteer workdays per year from two to eight. Out with the invasives and in with more native plantings. Mulching continued to control erosion and bit by bit, the efforts in the Park continued. Over 60 trees and seedlings were planted in 2018 and over two tons of Ligustrum were removed from along the creek.

Advocacy for the park continued and momentum continued to grow. That advocacy helped convince Park & Rec to renovate the amphitheater. DCA board members advocated for increased funding for Park & Rec to improve maintenance in Latta and in other parks system-wide to address equity issues.

Work continued throughout 2019. Volunteers planted hydrangeas near the Lexington entrance. 25 more tree and shrub seedlings were planted over the winter and 40 additional trees and shrubs were planted later in 2019. Educational signs funded by the DCA were added. The Women's Impact Fund came through with a grant in the spring that enabled Park & Rec to hire the NC Youth Conservation Corp which included two weeks of work in Latta. 2019 was capped off with recognition for their efforts and success when Ruth Ann and Nancy received the Chapman Community Award.

2020...and then came COVID. A few weekends of volunteer work were cancelled, but the park continued to see improvements. Park & Rec rebuilt picnic areas near the playground and the creek. Volunteers installed ferns, cardinal flowers, and blue mist flowers - as well as planted donated perennials (blue mist flower, obedient plant, common milkweed, and jewelweed) plus donated shrubs (maple leaf viburnum, clethra, swamp rose, bottlebrush buckeye, and oakleaf hydrangea).

Local Scout Troop 33 removed invasives near St. Pat's on a very cold December day. Eagle Scout candidate Christopher Beaman led his troop on three workdays to remove invasive vines between Romany and sidewalk, from the playground area to Carlton. There will undoubtedly be even more improvements to the park in 2021. If you follow the DCA Facebook group, Ruth Ann regularly posts about the abundance of wildlife and plant growth that you can now see in the Park.

When you do something you love, time flies by and both Ruth Ann and Nancy mentioned how quickly the time has passed working on the improvements to Latta Park. The space is vastly improved from where they started in 2015. The community has banded together to help during that time. From volunteers, donated material and money, the assistance from Park & Rec, the Charlotte Hornets, and contractors that have contributed along the way, it's the help and encouragement from everyone involved that has made the journey worth the effort.

"There are too many people to name that have assisted us along the way. We are truly thankful for everyone's contributions" said Ruth Ann.

Latta Park is a special place for Dilworth residents. Take a walk through the park and enjoy everything it has to offer. Volunteers are always welcome and workdays in the park are often scheduled. Contact Nancy at nancyenicholson@gmail.com if you would like to lend a hand or find out how you can help. ■

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Did you Know?



The building that is currently home to Mrs. Howard (an upscale home decor business) at 1001 East Morehead was first erected in 1923-24 on land donated by E.D. Latta.

Designed by C.C. Hook, the Charlotte Woman's Club housed a group that used to be called the Charlotte Mother's Club. Part of a national women's club movement, it changed its name to the Charlotte Woman's Club in 1901 and expanded its membership. And it put into vigorous practice the advice of its president, Mrs. F.C. Abbott, who had written: "You should broaden your club to include civic activities for the sake of your children. There are health laws, school matters and social influences which you should investigate and discuss." By the 1920s, the club had more than 500 members. As the historic properties report said of the club: "The Charlotte Woman's Club possesses a record of substantial accomplishment.

The contributions which it has made to the betterment of Charlotte are lengthy and impressive. The YWCA, the PTA, the Traveler's Aid Society and the North Carolina Federation of Music Clubs were organized by the Charlotte Woman's Club. It established the first kindergarten in Charlotte, participated in the creation of the Domestic Relations Court and brought the first public health nurses to Charlotte. It provided vital support for the public library. The Charlotte Woman's Club was instrumental in the creation of the Mint Museum of Art. The League of Women Voters was its creation, as was the home economics program in the public schools."

— Excerpted from *Dilworth, The First 100 Years*, by Tom Bradbury.



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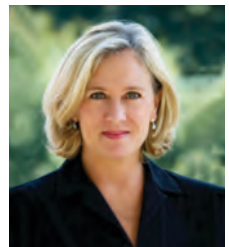
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Our Kids

continued from Page 18

Several key celebrations are as follows:

Ms. Kimpson, the amazing Band teacher at Sedgefield Middle, has been named Central Learning Community 2 Teacher of the Year! She brings passion, thoughtfulness, leadership and dedication to our Spartans each and every day.

She will continue to move forward and compete with teachers from other learning communities within CMS for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Teacher of the Year! She is already one of the finest and we wish her the best on next steps.

Ms. McNair and the Reflections Committee have designed a reflective competition for our Spartan students. Students have elected to submit creative arts projects reflecting on 2020. Student submissions will be judged by local artists.

Submissions can be from a variety of genres such as dance, visual arts, creative writing etc. We are thrilled with this teacher and student leadership.

Ms. Oberlin, our PE teacher and Athletic Director in partnership with our booster program Hoplite, won a \$5,000.00 grant from Dick's Sporting Goods to support middle school athletics. We cannot wait to have our students back in athletic uniforms.

Three Spartans, Eva Dolittle, Elizabeth Watson, and Abigail Thompson participated in the Honors and Leadership Athena Ensemble - a group made up of girls grades 6-12 from 90 schools in the US and Canada. Their month-long program included masterclasses, clinics, leadership workshops, and SEL activities. The Clinic was facilitated by notable female music educators, professors, performers, and composers.

The girls also interacted with college mentors majoring in music education and performance from various colleges and universities.

While challenged throughout this year, the support from our families, the community and the staff of Sedgefield Middle School have created a learning environment that is responsive to all students.

We are proud and will continue to be #SpartanStrong. ■

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Sedgefield Middle School band teacher Demeka Kimpson being recognized by Learning Community Superintendent Tara Sullivan. The Orangeburg, SC, native is in her 19th year of teaching and her 16th year at Sedgefield. "I started band in elementary school, and when I got to fifth grade, I just knew," she said. "I don't know a moment or a time in my life where I was not being musical in some capacity."

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