



# MORNINGSIDE LENOX PARK ASSOCIATION



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## President's Note

Happy new year! And almost Happy Chinese New Year at this point – in any case, we hope you all enjoyed a nice holiday and that 2020 is off to a good start. With the theme of “new”, here goes my top three for January:

1. New and improved board roles! We have added new volunteers to the board to help on two fronts: education and events. On education, we have a lot happening in the coming years with the renovation of Morningside Elementary and the resulting size and look of the building – we are glad that Kristen Pollock has joined us as Education Chair to help ensure the entire community will have a say when it comes to the impact of the construction and final plan on all of us. On events, we have watched

neighboring associations longingly as they raise community connection and funds!) through annual crowd pleasers such as the Virginia Highland Tour of Homes or Ansley Park Art for the Park. With Alan Smith now on board as Events Chair we hope to develop new ways to bring neighbors together (and in fact an idea for a community-wide event in November is fast brewing! Don't worry – it will have nothing to do with the election...).

2. New security plans. In our first meeting of the year, the MLPA board approved several updates: we authorized an increase in patrol hours, we authorized the use of a new patrol tracking software to ensure accountability on thorough patrols, and we authorized increasing our pay and recognition programs to security officers as we have been below market compared to neighboring efforts.

3. New membership fee. (Waaa-waaaaa.) Although we have successfully managed our budget in the last year, we cannot take the aforementioned actions and ramp up action over 2020 without building additional funds. We compared our membership to neighboring associations and believe we were underpriced compared to Druid Hills (\$395), Ansley Park (\$350), and Inman Park (\$300). This price will go into effect for both new and renewed memberships as of March 1 – so if you know someone who needs to join, encourage them to join before then. (Residents over the age of 62 will continue to receive a \$25 discount.)

As we look to the year ahead, we will revisit our objectives as well as welcome new leadership on the events and education fronts. Virginia Highland's Summerfest and Tour of Homes are big successes every year so we are thinking of unique ways to draw excitement to the neighborhood. There is also a lot going on with schools in our cluster – not to mention a \$20 million renovation of Morningside Elementary School for the 2020-2022 school years, so getting feedback from all residents of the neighborhood will be critical to ensure we have an even better facility to keep the safety and value of our homes improving. Stay tuned for more and naturally if either of these topics interests you please reach out to get involved.

Ben

## **MLK Day of Service in Herbert Taylor Park**

To celebrate and honor Dr. King's legacy, all our invited to help preserve our nature preserve at Herbert Taylor Park. We will be removing kudzu and other invasive along Peachtree Creek South Fork and working to help protect the eight chestnutlings recently planted throughout the park.

Our efforts are aligned with the state campaign to control invasive plants in Georgia and in the USA in general. See [www.gainvasives.org](http://www.gainvasives.org). Our work for volunteer days focuses on [invasive plants](#). There are many types of [invasive species](#): plants, insects, fish, even birds, etc. Urban parks need regular care.

If available, please bring the following gear.

- Rugged footwear and long pants (to protect you)
- Loppers, Shears, Cutters, Pruners, Shovels
- Large bags (paper for yard trimmings or plastic)
- Gardening gloves (some may be provided)
- Water (some will be provided).

[Park Pride](#) and [Atlanta Community Toolbank](#) have kindly provided tools to assist us.

This will be our fourth volunteer workday this season. We had 10 workdays in 2018-2019, and 3 last fall. Our group is recognized by Park Pride & Atlanta Dept. of Parks as a Friends of the Park group.

If you are interested in volunteering in other capacities, such as communications, sharing photos in social media, or fundraising, please let us know. Our group is growing. Good social opportunities too!



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## Morningside's Own Kathryn Johnson

A December [NY Times writeup](#) reminded us of long time Morningside resident Kathryn Johnson. We thank Dot Matthews for providing the following remembrance of

her life. Dot holds warm memories of many weekends spent on Ms. Johnson's screened porch discussing Atlanta and national affairs and neighborhood gossip.

Kathryn Johnson moved with her family (mother Lulu, sister Rita and brother Luis) to 1258 Cumberland Road in Morningside after graduating from high school in Columbus, Georgia. She graduated from Agnes Scott College in 1947, and her father died that year at the age of 42. Her first job was with Associated Press in Atlanta. Because she was a woman, she was told she could not get a job as a journalist, so she took a job as a secretary and did that for 12 years before finally becoming a reporter. Growing up Southern and hanging out with all men at the office gave her an interesting combination of Southern grace and irreverence. In fact, though not totally substantiated, some say she was the first woman reporter AP ever hired. Her whole professional life she was passionate about journalism and was greatly distressed about the modern-day sacrifice of rigorous fact-checking for the sake of getting the story out first.

She was extremely compassionate and empathetic toward disadvantaged people, especially blacks. If she saw someone in the grocery store who looked like he/she was struggling financially, Kathryn would drop a \$10 or \$20 bill and then say "I think you dropped this bill." She was a loyal friend and family member, and she adored the five German Shepherds she had during her lifetime. After her time at AP she moved to Washington DC and took the job of Congressional Correspondent for U.S. News and World Report during the Carter administration. While in Washington DC her mother Lulu Johnson still lived in the house and she made frequent trips home to look after her. When her mom needed more care she moved back home and took a job at the CNN News Desk. Lulu suffered from Dementia, but Kathryn was determined to keep her at home, and she did until Lulu died. Her sister Rita and brother Louis predeceased her mother, and she sorely missed her first family for the rest of her life. Though she was engaged three times she never married. She was married to her career.

As a young reporter she got the beat of covering Dr. King when he was an unknown Baptist minister in Atlanta because no one else wanted it. She was awakened to the civil rights struggle by Dr. King and was in awe of his intellect, vision and spirituality. She became friends with the civil rights leaders, particularly Coretta Scott King, and on the night Dr. King was assassinated she was the only reporter allowed into the King household. She stayed with the family, helping with chores, correspondence, cooking, etc., until the funeral. When Jackie Kennedy arrived at the door she showed up with her apron on from making pancakes for the kids. She said that Jackie was overly solicitous, and she felt that Jackie must have thought she was the white maid!

Kathryn had an exciting career. In addition to the civil rights movement in the South she covered the court martial of Lieutenant William Calley, the only conviction for the My Lai massacre in Vietnam. She covered the families of the Challenger astronauts, the returned P.O.W.'s from Vietnam, including Jeremiah Denton and John McCain. She co-wrote a book called [Calley](#) and wrote [My Time with The Kings](#) about her civil rights coverage. She was in the process of writing her memoirs when she became ill

and died. Her niece Becky Winters and her husband Michael have the papers and are working to get her memoirs published.





## Half-Priced Wine at Varuni Napoli

Stop by Tuesday and Wednesday for half-priced bottles of Montepulciano and Pinot Grigio with a purchase of any artisan pizza.



### Brick Facade Wall Falls Down at D.B.A Barbecue

Tom Coggin submitted the following heartfelt note from on behalf of DBA and the Coggin family.

Managing Partner of DBA Matt Coggin received a phone call at 2:30 am on New Year's Eve morning telling him that the brick façade on the front of DBA had fallen into the driveway between the two commercial buildings at N Highland and Amsterdam. The bricks covered the driveway between the two buildings and closed the entrance on North Highland that lead to the main parking lot behind them. While the timing was fortunate since no people were hurt or cars were damaged, there was a section of bricks still leaning over DBA's front door making the front entrance unsafe and unusable.

Matt and Partner Lee Coggin were both contacted by concerned neighbors like Kay Stephenson, Susan Schlittler and Marsha McNeer who immediately got the word out in Virginia-Highland and Morningside that we were still open. As you may know, Matt has numerous followers who lit up social media and shared our story. Likewise, MLPA Communications emailed MLPA members that we were still open, but the only entrance we could use was our rear stairs. We posted signs directing people to the stairs that lead up to one of our smokers and through a swinging door to the patio and then the bar and the restaurant. Despite the unusual entrance, the support from both neighborhoods was easy to see in the full restaurant on New Year's Day and through much of the rest of the holiday week.

Meanwhile the property management company did a terrific job of quickly cleaning up the bricks and filling a full-size dumpster. Most importantly to us, they removed the last remnants of the bricks over the door on Saturday Jan 4th so we could safely use our front door, and for the first time make our disability ramp accessible. We had seen people pushing baby carriages up our back stairs and other people moving slowly and carefully up them, so this was much appreciated.

We want to thank all our regulars, friends and neighbors who navigated their way to the back stairs and kept us busy and engaged during this incident. This meant a lot to us.





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## Social News

Several groups gather monthly or so to share interests. These are a great way to meet your neighbors and have a great time. All are open to new additions, just contact the organizers.

**MLPA Garden Club** met this week to hear about Horti-therapy at Hillside. In addition we learned more about the work and history of Hillside, one of our neighbors. See the

photos below of us “pounding pansies”. Everyone left with a new bookmark! Contact Marti Breen to join us.

The **Morningside Supper Club** gathered at Nowak’s to celebrate the new year. Everyone had a great time meeting some new neighbors and eating a fabulous meal. Contact [Sarah Chatel](#) to be added to our list—the group meets monthly at one of our homes or at a nearby restaurant.

The next meeting of the **Morningside Book Club** is Thursday, January 23 at 7:00 PM. The club will be discussing the Pulitzer Prize winner *Less* by Andrew Sean Greer. Contact [Jill Cobb](#) to join the group. It is open to both men and women—besides discussing the book there is time to socialize and meet new neighbors that share a love of reading.

A new **Parents Group** is forming in Morningside, a reboot of the [Virginia Highland Morningside Parent Association](#). Any interested parents are encouraged to watch Nextdoor or contact [communications@mlpa.org](mailto:communications@mlpa.org) for details.

If you have an interest not currently shown, consider starting a group of your own. Lastly, you can always meet neighbors by volunteering with MLPA. Write [volunteer@mlpa.org](mailto:volunteer@mlpa.org) with your interest in the subject line and we will be happy to help you spread the word and find like-minded neighbors.

## Security

### Bringing Security Patrol Operations into the 2020's



Over the next few months, the MLPA Security Patrol will be working to setup new software to help Ric Vazquez with managing patrol operations. The system will ultimately place about 60 QR codes around the neighborhood. A QR code is the

trademark for a type of matrix barcode first designed for the automotive industry in Japan. The QR codes in this case will contain neighborhood location information. During each hour of his shift, the officer on patrol will be scanning several QR codes. So you may see one of the officers walking up to a telephone pole or into a park and scanning something with his or her tablet or phone. Be sure to say hi if you see one of the officers.

This software has been used in Ansley for about 10 years and has features that help with setting up shifts, doing time sheets, etc., for the officers. The system includes an easy way for officers to report street light outages, abandoned cars, security incidents, and other concerns. The MLPA will work with Ric to install the QR codes in phases over time and make sure the system is working easily and effectively for the officers. Stay tuned.

### **Zoning Committee Report**

At the December meeting, the zoning committee reviewed the following variances.

V-19-280 - 1676 Noble Dr; Committee approved 5-0-0; Board approved 13-0-0

V-19-276 - 1042 McLynn Ave; Committee denied 4-0-1; Board approved 6-5-2

V-19-282 - 1634 Johnson Rd; Committee approved 5-0-0; Board approved 12-0-1

V-19-265 - 1480 Lanier Pl; Committee approved 5-0-0; Board approved 9-0-4

The next zoning meeting will be held at Morningside Presbyterian Church at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, February 4. The cases to be covered will be posted at [www.mlpa.org/zoning/](http://www.mlpa.org/zoning/). Any neighbors interested in the outcome should come to these meetings.

New committee members are always welcome. Simply come to three meetings to qualify to vote.

### **MLPA Events**

**Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM**, [CHARM Recycling](#), 1110 Hill Street, SE. Check the website before visiting for accepted items and schedule changes.

**Saturdays, 8:00 - 11:30 AM**, Morningside Farmers' Market, Morningside Village.

**Every Fourth Saturday, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**, Morningside Nature Preserve Volunteer Day

**Monday, January 20, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM, [Volunteer Workday](#)** at Herbert Taylor and Daniel Johnson Parks. Meet at the Johnson Rd entrance, 1795 Johnson Rd.

**Monday, January 20,** Martin Luther King Day, no school

**Tuesday, February 4, 7:00 PM,** Zoning Committee Meeting, Morningside Presbyterian Church. See [mlpa.org/zoning](http://mlpa.org/zoning) for the variances to be reviewed.

**Monday, February 10, 7:00 PM,** MLPA Board Meeting, Morningside Presbyterian Church

**Tuesday, February 17, 7:00 PM, [NPU-F Meeting](#),** Hillside Center, 1301 Monroe Dr. NE. All neighbors are invited and those 18+ have a vote.

**Saturday, February 25, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM,** Volunteer Workday - [Forest Reservation](#) in Morningside Nature Preserve

**Friday, March 27, 6:00 PM,** First 2020 Concert in the Park, Sidney Marcus Park

This is your newsletter. Please send us your ideas for articles, interviews, and photos for inclusion. Send them to [communications@mlpa.org](mailto:communications@mlpa.org).

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### **News from Atlanta City Council District 6 Representative Ide**

[View and sign up](#) for the latest newsletter from our Atlanta City Council District 6 Representative, Jennifer Ide.

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Neighborhood Meeting Schedule:

**MLPA Zoning Meeting** - 1st Tuesday each month, 7:00 PM, Morningside Presbyterian Church

**MLPA Board Meeting** - 2nd Monday each month, 7:00 PM, Morningside Presbyterian Church

**NPU-F Meetings** - 3rd Monday of every month, 7:00 PM, Hillside, 1301 Monroe Drive

*All neighborhood meetings are open to the public, and your involvement is always welcome.*

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Quick Links:

[MLPA](#) - Morningside Lenox Park Association website

[\*\*NPU-F\*\*](#) - Neighborhood Planning Unit F website

[\*\*APD\*\*](#) - Atlanta Police website – we are in Zone 2

[\*\*PEDS\*\*](#) - A quick link to report pedestrian hazards to city

[\*\*City of Atlanta\*\*](#) - City's website

[\*\*Atlanta District 6\*\*](#) - Our City Council District website

[\*\*Senate District 36\*\*](#) - Nan Orrock, Georgia State Senator

[\*\*House District 57\*\*](#) - Pat Gardner, Georgia State Representative

[\*\*House District 83\*\*](#) - Becky Evans, Georgia State Representative

[\*\*Atlanta Public Schools, Morningside Elementary School, Inman Middle School, Grady High School\*\*](#)

[\*\*VHMPA\*\*](#) -Virginia Highland Morningside Parent Association