



THE MT LAUREL CONNECTION

A newsletter for and about the Town of Mt Laurel

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2013

MT LAUREL'S FALL FESTIVAL WILL FILL THE STREETS ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12



CRAFTS, FARMERS MARKET, MUSIC, PONIES, HAYRIDES, FOOD & FUN

Mt Laurel will be filled with fun for the annual Fall Festival on Saturday, October 12, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. The farmers market and craft fair promise to be one of the best ever. Music, food and a wide selection of creative goods will line the streets. Hayrides through the neighborhood will run all day, and there will be pony rides and a petting zoo for all the children to enjoy. Special guests will be Cinderella, Harry Potter, and the Ghostbusters.

The craft fair will offer a wide array of items, including jewelry, pottery, children's clothes, birdhouses, puppets and much more. The farmers market will have produce, and quality used books will be on sale at the Mt Laurel Public Library booth. The Mt Laurel shops will be open as well as all the restaurants in town.

SCARECROW CONTEST

Children, adults, clubs and groups are invited to enter a scarecrow in the Mt Laurel Scarecrow Contest. To enter, call Marie Freeman at 337-4816 or email refree143@aol.com by October 11 to get a space and number assignment. The scarecrow trail will be at the Mt Laurel Avenue entrance. Great prizes will be awarded!



BOOKS IN A BAG, BRICKS AND BARBECUE

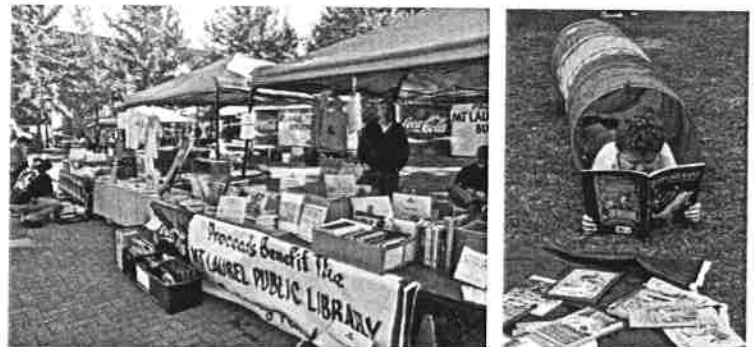


Quality used books will be on sale on Bryson Square at bargain prices. Bag some books and keep the bag with a \$10 donation to the Mt Laurel Library building fund. In other words, donate \$10 and get all the books you can fit into the green tote bag and keep the bag!

Buy a brick for the courtyard of the proposed Mt Laurel Public Library. Invest in your community and pay a lasting tribute to your family or friends. Bricks are 4" x 8" for \$100 and 8" x 8" for \$250 (tax deductible).

Jim 'N Nick's will be serving up the "world's best barbecue" and giving proceeds to the Mt Laurel Library building fund.

USED BOOK SALE: A FESTIVAL TRADITION



The Friends of the Mt Laurel Public Library Used Book Sale has become a tradition at the Mt Laurel festivals. Proceeds from the sale benefit the library's building fund.

MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mt Laurel is one of the most beautiful places in the autumn months. I always love seeing the display of mums Jim Landreth provides for us every year on the sidewalk of his grocery store on Mt Laurel Avenue. The Harvest Festival is set for October 12, and I am looking forward to seeing the community in top notch shape and ready for all of the visitors.

I'd like to thank Martha Davenport for organizing the community garage sale, which always brings a lot of folks to our community. Another thank you goes out to George Meighen and the Pool Committee for a wonderfully successful fun-filled summer of swimming. I would also like to thank my faithful assistant, Claudean Hill, for all of her hard work this summer. Also a BIG shout out goes to Scott and Christina Stone and all of the Mt Laurel volunteers who made our Labor Day picnic and fireworks a huge success.

We have completed five new homes so far this year and currently have five more in the works. We are thrilled with having great new residents in our community. Our sales team is happy to report they are currently working with several families on re-sales and helping them settle in our town.

Recently I sent a message to the neighborhood announcing Jim Summers as our official head of the Mt Laurel Neighborhood Watch. If you are new to the neighborhood and would like to help out, it would be a good idea to let Jim know that you are willing to help. He can be identified when wearing his cap that has "Security" on it and an official uniform and badge that identifies him as security officer for Town of Mt Laurel. If you see Jim Summers out and about please introduce yourself to him, and let him know that you appreciate him.



John O. Freeman, Sr.
Vice President & General Manager
EBSCO Development Company

IN MEMORY OF FRANK H. MICHAELS



Mt Laurel lost a very special neighbor recently when Frank Michaels passed away on August 7. Frank and his wife Myerna, who died in 2011, moved to Mt Laurel in 2005 and immediately became involved in the community. They were both active in supporting the Mt Laurel Library building program and its activities and the Mt Laurel Dog Park. Frank and Myerna were married for 60 years.

Frank was a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis and served in the U.S. Navy testing missiles in White Sands, New Mexico. Following his time in the military, Frank worked at Monsanto and later at Sunnen in St. Louis. He and Myerna moved to Mt Laurel to be near their grandchildren. They were active members of Briarwood Presbyterian Church.

Pictured left: Frank in his younger years. Pictured right: Frank and Myerna with Jay Price at one of the early library fundraising events.



The Mt Laurel Connection is published every other month to provide frequent communication about the Town of Mt Laurel and its residents and to foster a strong sense of community. Residents are invited to send information, news and suggestions for articles to mtlaurelnewsletter@gmail.com or call Ann Price at 981-9772.

*Editor Ann Price Contributor and Copy Editor Jill Walton Photography Kristie Arvin, Ann Price
Home Delivery Vicki Balogh, Lana Johnson, Chris Ladshaw, Nancy Ladshaw*

MT LAUREL GARDEN GROUP NEWS



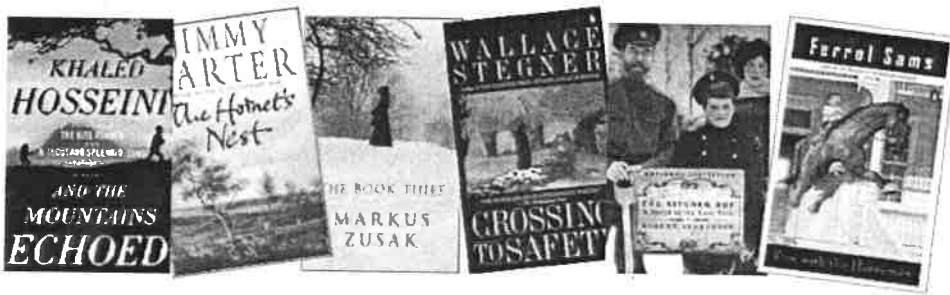
Pictured on the bridge are Pat Smitherman, Cathy Murphy, Vicki Balogh, Gwynne Sams, Anne Sturm, Chuck Sams, Monie Allen, Nancy Ladshaw and Lana Johnson.

The Mt Laurel Garden Group has been hard at work beautifying the neighborhood. One day a big group tackled the bridges on Hawthorn and Burnham, chopping, weeding and trimming. Another day was devoted to the Arboretum, and yet another along the curb in front of Stone's Throw. One member commented that the native plants have thrived, maybe a little too much, due to the abundant rainfall over the spring and summer!

August and September meetings took the Garden Group out and about. The Group went to Aldridge Gardens in August for a meeting with Rip Weaver who was the original landscape architect for Mt Laurel. Rip spoke about the early days of planning and designing our community. The September meeting was at Morgan Creek Winery in Calera.

The Birmingham Zoo will be the venue for the Garden Group's October 1 meeting where the members will take a botanical tour of the grounds. The November 5 meeting will be a stepping stone/flower pot workshop at the home of CC Prickett. Bring your favorite broken pottery plates, flat rocks, sea glass, shells, etc. A light lunch will be served.

The Garden Group, which meets on the first Tuesday of each month, is open to all residents, men and women, who are interested in learning about and growing native plants, learning about horticulture in general and working to keep Mt Laurel beautiful and in compliance with the covenants. Send an email to vickibalogh@gmail.com if you would like to receive details about each meeting.



MT LAUREL LIBRARY'S BOOK CLUB CHOOSES ITS NEW READING LIST

- October 3 *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini
- November 7 *The Hornet's Nest* by Jimmy Carter
- December 3 *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak
- January TBA *Crossing to Safety* by Wallace Stegner
- February 6 *The Kitchen Boy* by Robert Alexander
- March 6 *Run with the Horsemen* by Ferrol Sams

The book club, which meets on the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the library or homes of members, is open to anyone who loves to read. Guys and gals are invited. If you would like to receive details of the upcoming meetings, email mtlaurellibraryfriends@gmail.com.

PHARMSOUTH PLANS A MOVE TO MANNING PLACE

PharmSouth is relocating to 34 Manning Place, next to Area 41 Pizza. The expanded location will feature the same pharmacy and compounding services that are available now, along with pharmaceutical-grade vitamins and supplements. The expanded location will enable owners Angie and Jeremy Johnsey to help educate the community on health issues and support local practitioners. There will be private rooms on the upper level for the following:

- Therapeutic Massage
- Dietary/Nutritional Consults
- Success/Life/Stress and Management Coaching
- Yoga and Reiki
- Guest Speakers/Practitioners

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP BUILD THE LIBRARY

- Make a tax-deductible donation in any amount. Those giving \$500 or more will be recognized as the "Circle of Friends" contributors on the wall of the community room in the new library. However, any contribution is appreciated.
- Purchase a commemorative brick to honor or recognize your family or a loved one as a lasting tribute to be placed at the library's entryway or walk. Bricks are \$100 for three lines of text, and \$250 for six lines of text. (Also tax deductible.)
- Select an item from the library's wish list (coming soon) that you would like to purchase for the library.

The lot is cleared, the stakes are out, and we're almost ready to begin. Your donation is needed at this time!



WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS!



Shaun and Lynn Ray moved to Mt Laurel from Baton Rouge, LA in mid-September. They recently took jobs in Birmingham with the Association of Related Churches (ARC). They are joined by their two kids Graham, four, and Ava, three. They love taking walks in the neighborhood and hanging out at the playground with the kids. They also LOVE the pizza at Area 41!



RICK SHEPHERD VISITS

Rick Shepherd, the county commissioner for the Mt Laurel area and vice chairman of the county commission, was a special guest recently at the Monday morning Sippin' Seniors meeting. Rick spoke to the group about how the commission is organized and addressed various questions and concerns regarding security and Neighborhood Watch.



SAVE THE DATE!
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1



Christmas Tree Lighting
Photos with Santa
Christmas Open House

Merchants are invited to open their doors for early Christmas shopping or just to introduce their businesses to residents and visitors to Mt Laurel. Watch the Google Group emails for more information.



NATIVE PLANT LIST

The Garden Group has prepared a handy list of native plants and trees that are in compliance with the Mt Laurel covenants and restrictions. The plant lists are available in the sales office.

MT LAUREL RESIDENT NEEDS BLANKETS AND BOOKS FOR PROJECT NIGHT NIGHT

Julie Wahnish, who works with Project Night Night needs donations of blankets, fleece throws and books for children six and above, especially preteen books. The service has had a busy year trying to meet the needs of the homeless and abused children in our area. Over 725 comfort bags have been delivered so far this year to shelters and group homes. Julie will be happy to pick up donations, or they can be dropped off at 78 Hawthorn Street.

MT LAUREL PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE MT LAUREL PHOTO CONTEST!

- 1st prize Woody O'Neal "Reflection of Mt Laurel In a Puddle of Rain"
\$250 gift certificate to use in Mt Laurel
- 2nd prize Henk Sijgers "I bet this squirrel is headed to Mt Laurel Library"
\$150 gift certificate to use in Mt Laurel
- 3rd prize Jimmy Summers "Fun at Spoonwood Lake Beach"
\$100 gift certificate to use in Mt Laurel

AROUND TOWN AND BEYOND



Bella Suco and Maggie McCoy cheer for the Lions!



Congratulations to Liam Partain, winner of singles and doubles matches at the Pelham Racquet Club Tournament.



Monie Allen had a great trip to Santa Cruz, CA visiting fiends that she met when she was in Italy. While there, she walked through a forest of Giant Sequoia, saw "The Taming of the Shrew" at the outdoor theater at UC Santa Cruz, and spent the day at the famous Boardwalk and Arcade in Santa Cruz.



Adriana Gonzalez Fausto and Ricardo Perez are engaged to be married on October 19, in Fort Payne, Alabama. Adriana is one of the sweet, friendly faces employed at Jimbo's.



Congratulations to Mary Martha Parisher, whose Mt Laurel-based Cheeriodicals has been nominated (for the second year in a row) as a finalist for the Birmingham Business Alliance's Dr. A.G. Gaston Minority or Woman-Owned Emerging Business of the Year Award! The winner will be announced October 1.



Carol and Mike Scroggins and their grandchildren, Evie and Max, met Captain Sparrow on Pirate Night on a Disney Fantasy cruise this summer.

Thomas Hodo and his mother, Cindy, at the top of Pikes Peak in Colorado. The adventure also included zip lining near Manitou Springs.



Three-year-old Carolena Benelli recently played in her first soccer game.

Mark Partain wins again!



PROGRESS AND CHANGE IN MT LAUREL AND THE DUNNAVANT VALLEY

By Ward Tishler

Some time ago I was fortunate to be kept in the loop on email with some members of the original development team that founded Mt Laurel. Much of their conversation centered around their love for Mt Laurel and its wonderful legacy set in place under the leadership of Elton Stephens, the Founder. As they discussed their hopes and fears, I was impressed with their enthusiasm about Mt Laurel and its many unique qualities. The team that started Mt Laurel with such a wonderful vision and high ideals has been gone for some time now, but in their emails they all still hope that Mt Laurel will continue to prosper and stay true to its legacy. I decided to enter into their conversation by sharing with them the progress that has been made in Mt Laurel and the wonderful progress that has been made in Dunnavant Valley since their departure. I also wanted to share this information with you because as residents of Mt Laurel, most of these changes will have an effect on us.

For those of you who have recently moved to Mt Laurel, I want to go back in time to give you an idea how this progress came about. Much was due to the original founding team who did the preliminary groundwork establishing a most progressive vision and high values that set Mt Laurel apart from the run-of-the-mill developments not only in the state but nationally. This progressive vision and its values became the model for development in the County and were showcased in the Shelby County Comprehensive Plan.

Shortly before Elton left Mt Laurel, he and Rip Weaver, the Landscape Architect, established the Friends of Dunnavant Valley Greenway, Inc. (Friends) primarily for the purpose of slowing traffic on County Road 41 and discouraging attempts to turn the road into a four lane super highway. Dunnavant Valley Friends is composed of volunteer representatives from the Dunnavant Valley region. It is a non-profit, community-based corporation with membership open to the public.

Those of us who are volunteer members of this organization never thought in our wildest dreams that Friends would become as important a change agent as it has. One of those early changes occurred while working with the County to plan the Greenway from Hwy 280 to Hwy 25. As we planned, the County agreed to take responsibility for building the Greenway.

Over the years many of the members of Friends have become active in other efforts to improve the community and have been highly successful in achieving some noteworthy accomplishments.

Mt Laurel Public Library. Before Elton left Mt Laurel he, Rip and I started the work on the *Mt Laurel Public Library*. Because of the outstanding leadership from Mt Laurel resident Ann Price, enough money to begin construction has been raised, and a permanent library building will become a reality in the very near future. The Friends of the Mt Laurel Library Board of Directors is made up of representatives from communities throughout the area who work closely with Ann.

The Mt Laurel Garden Group has been excellent in working to develop the Bryson Square Arboretum. The organization also supported work to identify and describe the many special public places that are very important to the unique landscape design of Mt Laurel envisioned by landscape architect Rip Weaver. The Group has also been active in educating themselves and residents on the necessity of maintaining the original landscape design as established in the Mt Laurel Code and Landscape Design Book.

The *Mt Laurel Sippin' Seniors*, welcoming all ages, represents a solid core group anchoring the Mt Laurel community and supporting all activities in the community.

The Mt Laurel Connection, along with its predecessor the Chronicle, has served as a journal and has provided a record of life in Mt Laurel. Events, celebrations, new groups, births, deaths, the arrival and departure of businesses and neighbors are documented in this publication.

All this, the Mt Laurel community, the wider community of the Valley and in the County has been achieved through the dedicated work of people such as yourselves, other volunteers and Shelby County professionals working together to make the vision to build a better community come true. Their hard work has resulted in significant accomplishments that are excellent examples of civic pride and participation in the democratic process. Much of this is evident in the County Small Area Plan for Dunnavant Valley that represents the wishes of the people and their vision for the Valley. *

**The Small Area Plan will be submitted for approval to the Planning Commission of Shelby County in late October. A copy of the Small Plan is available for examination at the Mt Laurel Public Library.*



SAVE THESE DATES

October 1	Garden Group
October 2	Storytime at the Library
October 3	Book Club
October 12	Harvest Festival
October 12	Library Used Book Sale/Barbecue
October 12	Crafty Saturday at the Library
October 16	Storytime at the Library
October 23	Ladies Lunch
October 24	Ladies Night
November 5	Garden Group
November 6	Storytime at the Library
November 7	Book Club
November 16	Crafty Saturday at the Library
November 20	Ladies Lunch
November 20	Storytime at the Library
November 21	Ladies Night
December 1	Christmas Tree Lighting and Merchants' Open House

YOU'RE INVITED

Mondays 9:00 a.m.	Sippin' Seniors
First Tuesdays 10:00 a.m.	Garden Group
First Thursdays 7:00 p.m.	Book Club
Fourth Wednesdays	Ladies Lunch
Saturday mornings	Round Robin Tennis Farmers Markets

To receive email reminders of activities, join the Mt Laurel Google Group. Contact the Mt Laurel Sales Office for more information on joining.

FALL FUN AT THE RED SHAMROCK PUB



Fall means fun at The Red Shamrock Pub! Every football Saturday brings tailgating out front with grilled BBQ, big screen televisions, and your favorite fans dressed in their team colors. Fantasy Football teams can gather for team banter on Sundays. The Pub is the only place open Sundays this side of 280.

Plans are in order for live acoustic music during the Mt Laurel Fall Festival, and the yearly adult Halloween Party on Saturday, November 2. A D.J., specialty drinks, and costume prizes make this a gathering everyone enjoys!

The upstairs event room at the Pub is available for holiday, office, and birthday parties. You may cater in your favorite foods, hire live music, and present slideshows on 200 inches of HDTV. They will decorate to suit your needs.

WREATH FLUFFERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed on Sunday, November 17, at 4:00 p.m. at the sales office to fluff the Christmas wreaths that will decorate Mt Laurel's lampposts and bridges. Bring a snack to share. Gloves, scissors and wire cutters are helpful!

TOWNHOUSE TEA SHOPPE HAPPENINGS

COOKBOOK AUTHOR JON MCCLURE will be at the TownHouse Tea Shoppe from 9 a.m. until noon during the October 12 Fall Festival signing his latest book, *160 Best Restaurants in Alabama Cookbook*. Two Mt Laurel restaurants are featured in the book.



BRING YOUR BOSS TO LUNCH on October 16 and both of you will get a free dessert.

TAKE HOME A HOT ENTRÉE Order by noon for evening pickup of family-sized portions.

HOLIDAY CASSEROLES may be ordered for Thanksgiving week through Wednesday, November 27.

TEA PARTY CASTLE HAPPENINGS

The ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE will be held during the Fall Festival on Saturday, October 12. Meet the singing princesses and tour the castle.



ROYAL TEA CELEBRATIONS are October 11 and November 8.

SANTA AND ME TEAS will be offered throughout November and December.

LADIES LUNCH & LADIES NIGHT OUT

All ladies in Mt Laurel are invited to meet for lunch on the fourth Wednesday of every month at Stone's Throw Bar and Grill. The October gathering will be Wednesday, October 23, at 11:30 a.m. No reservations are required.

NOTE: NOVEMBER MEETING DATE CHANGE Due to the Thanksgiving holidays, the November Ladies Lunch meeting will be a week early. The group will meet Wednesday, November 20, at 11:30 at Stone's Throw Bar and Grill.

Ladies in Mt Laurel are also invited to Ladies Night. The October 24 gathering will be at Bryson Square at 6:30 p.m. Bring a chair, snack to share and a drink. The next Ladies Night will be on November 21 at Abbott Square. Bring a snack to share.

"CHEERS TO THE COOSA" BEER DINNER

Chef Chris Harrigan is hosting "Cheers to the Coosa," a farm-to-table beer dinner at Stone's Throw Bar & Grill on Thursday, November 7 at 6 p.m. to benefit Coosa Riverkeeper. Each of four courses is paired with a different local beer (wine also available). The dinner will feature fresh produce from the Mt Laurel Farm and Heron Hollow Farm. The cost is \$75 to attend (tax and gratuity included). Go to www.coosariver.org/stonethrow for tickets.





IN CONCERT WITH NATURE

"In Concert with Nature" is a regular newsletter section that features topics about the landscape and design concept of Mt Laurel and also items of seasonal interest for homeowners.

NOT ENTIRELY FOR THE BIRDS, BUT MOSTLY

"Birds are good ecological indicators. If you have a diverse native bird population, it's a sign that the ecosystem as a whole is healthy," says Doug Tallamy, Professor and Chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and author of "Bringing Nature Home." And according to a 2009 government conservation report, nearly one-third of all U.S. birds are endangered, threatened or in significant decline due to loss of habitat, invasive species and other threats, such as mining and conversion of land to agricultural use.

We can make a difference in the health of the ecosystem though, by supplying some of what native and migrating birds need in our own individual landscapes. This means much more than putting out some bird feeders. True birdscaping means you help provide for the birds in multiple ways, including not only shelter and food for winter residents, but rest stops for migrating birds and safe places for breeding birds to raise their young.

Planting a variety of native plants in your yard can fill many of these needs. For example, shelter and rest stops can be found in native conifers, such as pines, bald cypress or eastern red cedar trees. Feeding the birds with seedheads from native grasses and wildflowers or fruiting shrubs helps different birds find what they need naturally and without expending more energy than necessary looking for food. Migrating hummingbirds will be glad to find tubular flowers available. Some good native vines to provide for them could include native honeysuckle or crossvine. Sources of water are also essential, and can be offered with simple shallow saucers or birdbaths. It is important to place water sources or birdfeeders in places that are not accessible, or at the least, not easily accessible, to feral or neighborhood pet cats.

A garden filled with native trees, shrubs and perennials can go a long way toward assisting nesting birds because, according to the type of bird, they may use safe ground sites among the leaf litter for nesting, or cavities in trees or water areas like wild ponds. Many species have specialized nesting needs, and you could consider providing for those by adding specific types of nesting boxes for birds like bluebirds or chickadees.



Bluebird and House

We are lucky in Mt Laurel to have the help of the Mt Laurel Garden Group in providing habitat for bluebirds already. Here is an update from Monie Allen:

Several years ago, the Mt Laurel Garden Group put out many bluebird boxes around town, hoping to establish a robust bluebird population. They are happy to report that their efforts have been rewarding. There are currently five boxes in various locations, which are monitored by several people. The bluebirds usually have two or three clutches each summer, with an average of four eggs per box. Most of the newborns fledge, and you may have noticed that bluebirds can be seen all around town thanks to their efforts.

Doug Tallamy has also said "gardeners have become important players in the management of our nation's wildlife." If we in Mt Laurel continue to focus on respecting nature and planting native plants in our own spaces, we can enjoy watching the fruits of our efforts with a parade of birds making their way through or residing in our oases.



*Top Row: Carolina Chickadee and Nest in Tree
Bottom Row: Mockingbird and Nest*

JOIN A BIRD COUNT IN DECEMBER AND FEBRUARY

Interested in helping Audubon keep track of bird species in the United States? There are a couple of "bird counts" in upcoming months in which anyone can participate. Just look for more information online to get involved. The 114th Christmas Bird Count will take place from December 14, 2013-January 5, 2014. The Great Backyard Bird Count, which is a joint project of Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, takes place February 14-17, 2014.