



Commonwealth Park

EST. 1939

January 2012

Post Office Box 18833

Charlotte, NC 28218

Help make Charlotte a more sustainable city

By Shannon Binns

Shannon Binns is the founder of Sustain Charlotte. He has been a resident of Commonwealth Park since July 2008

I'm a bit of a newcomer to Charlotte. I was the last family member to migrate here and I was skeptical, to be honest. But it's been one of the best decisions of my life not only because I now live near my family again, but also because I love this city.

However, it didn't take me long to notice some alarming things about Charlotte. I noticed we were one of the fastest growing cities in the country yet the way in which we were growing was unsustainable. In fact, Charlotte is currently considered one of the least sustainable cities in the nation according to numerous independent studies. Yet sustainability reflects a community's future quality of life, vibrancy, and livability, making it a critical community concern for all who call Charlotte home. It also affects Charlotte's ability to attract new businesses and residents, especially educated professionals who seek the quality of life that sustainable cities promise.

The consequences of unsustainable choices accumulate over time, and are the result of decisions made by many people, which makes it a challenging issue to not only address, but also to see. However, the consequences are now visible as Charlotte has:

- Severe air pollution: the American Lung Association ranked Charlotte the 10th smoggiest city in the nation in 2011.
- Growing congestion and commuting times: the average resident drives almost 20 miles per day versus 11 miles per day in 1982, and only 3 out of 100 residents use public transit, bicycle or walk to work.
- Dramatically reduced tree canopy: 50% of Charlotte's trees have been lost to development since 1985.
- Heavily polluted waterways: one-third of local surface waters are considered impaired and 84% of streams in Mecklenburg county are considered unsafe for swimming.
- One of the nation's largest per person carbon footprints: 28th largest of 100 metro areas.
- Rising housing segregation along racial and income lines.

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NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

**Wednesday,
February 8
7:00 p.m.**

WTVI Conference Room
3242 Commonwealth Ave.

Topics:

- 2011 CPNA Review
- Committee Updates
- Budget Discussion
 - Current balance
 - Pledge for 2012 annual dues
 - Monies spent in 2011
 - Allocated funds for 2012
- Questions/comments

Don't forget to join the neighborhood association! (see last page for details)

New Farmers' Market

By Lou Galanty

My favorite Kings Drive market might be closed for the winter, but a new one has just opened uptown. The 7th Street Public Market is occupying the former Reid's building and is an eclectic mix of stalls and vendors. According to a November 2nd article in the Charlotte Observer this new facility is "not a public farmers market, it's a public market for farmers." This non-profit venture is being sponsored by Carolinas Medical Center with support from Blue Cross Blue Shield.

According to executive director Christy Shi the market is designed to do the following:

- 1 – Allow up to two dozen local farmers to bring and store produce for sale,
- 2 – Be a food market for local businesses, including local meat and poultry,
- 3 – Be a community space for nutrition and health services, and
- 4 – Be a place to eat with local vendors from coffee to yogurt.

According to Shi, they are looking to add local art and more vendors in the future. Currently two of the food vendors, one offering barbecue and the other pizza, are collaborating to provide ingredients for each other's fare. According to the Observer's article, Shi said that this collaborative mission hopefully "leads to a centrally located food distribution network for vendors and area restaurants that ultimately creates more demand for local farm products."

One of the topics often discussed among our neighbors is the need to support local businesses. In this economy they need all the help we can give. So let's plan a visit to the new 7th Street Public Market and keep our dollars in our community.

Location: 225 East 7th Street, between North College and North Brevard

Hours: 11am-7pm Wednesday-Friday, 10am-3pm Saturday & Sunday

Parking: First 90 minutes free with a validated ticket at 7th St. Station parking garage. Also next to a Lynx light-rail stop

Website: www.7thstreetpublicmarket.com

Help make Charlotte a more sustainable city

Continued from page 1

I also sensed that there were a growing number of residents who were becoming more and more aware of these impacts yet frustrated at their inability to do anything about it. So, in 2010 I decided to begin building a nonprofit organization that would give citizens a voice and help our leaders make better decisions about how we grow going forward.

I decided to call this organization Sustain Charlotte.

In November of 2010, we launched 'Charlotte 2030: A Sustainable Vision for Our Region' at the corner of Trade and Tryon with Mayor Foxx and a number of other community leaders.

Now that we have a vision for our region, the much longer and harder work has begun: making the vision a reality. But I believe we can do it, if enough people get involved, and we are organized.

Our ability to impact our community's future quality of life depends directly on how many citizens join us in our efforts to ensure Charlotte remains a great place to live. Our leaders listen, but only to those who speak up. We are a growing voice for a sustainable Charlotte, but we need you to help us make this voice even stronger. So if you haven't already, please find us on facebook ([facebook.org/sustaincharlotte](https://www.facebook.com/sustaincharlotte)) and become a member via our website (sustaincharlotte.org). And spread the word to your friends, co-workers, and families.

May 2012 bless you richly!

 <p>shade of green events</p> <p>Rebecca Stoddard</p> <p>704.299.1009 PO Box 5332 Charlotte, NC 28299</p> <p>rebecca@shadeofgreenevents.com www.shadeofgreenevents.com printed on 100% PCW paper</p>	<p>Corporate Events Social Milestones Weddings Consultations</p> <p>What shade of green are you?</p>
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Tree Banding Update

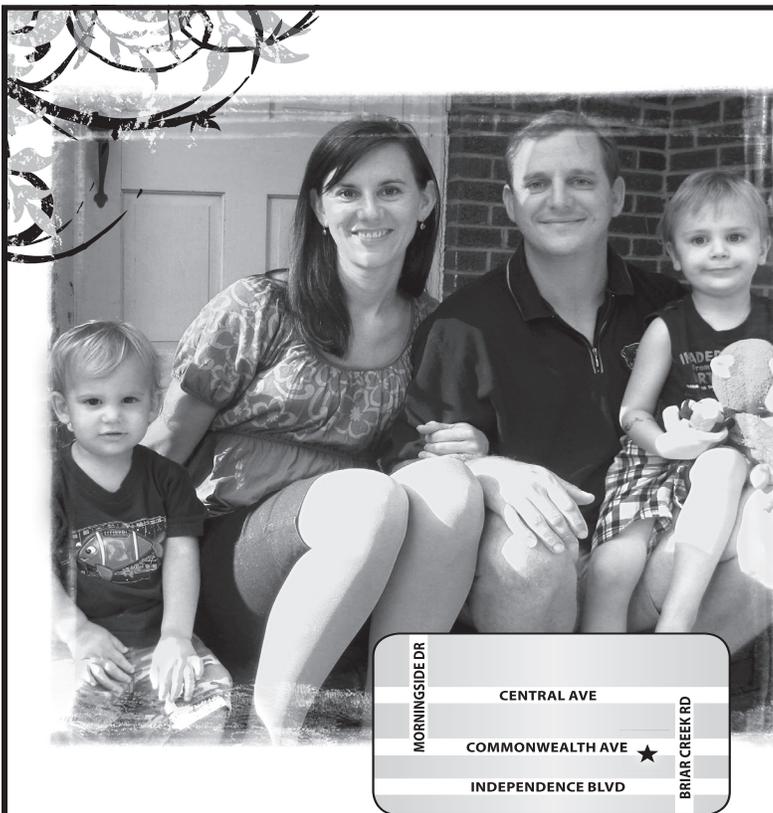
By Brian G. Green

Last year we applied for, and got our first Grant from the City of Charlotte. We had a few folks that joined together to band some trees in our neighborhood, but it became a rather daunting task for just a handful to band so many trees. On the heels of the City spraying it did, however, help keep the worms away for those that were able to band. This year, we had three times as many folks join in, that resulted in even more trees in our neighborhood being banded, we applied for another City Grant, and even more grant money from the City because of the increased participation. What was even better was the amount of folks offering to help those that couldn't band their own trees? It was awesome watching everyone work together. As we continue to get more folks involved every year, that should really help keep the Cankerworms under control, and our trees healthy.

As we move closer towards spring, just check your band to make sure that they haven't been clogged with debris, bugs, or had the squirrels pull them off from running up and down the trees. If anyone does need to

make any repairs (Like adding extra Tanglefoot), we do have some supplies left over that you can use to fix your bands up. Just e-mail me, Brian Green (ne14usc@gmail.com), and that way you can pick up some up when it works for you. When it starts getting warmer, we will start to take down the tree bands toward the end of April.

We're hoping to make this an annual event, and hope to increase the folks that want to participate next fall too. Our trees really do add a lot to our neighborhoods, and we are fortunate to have so many old and gorgeous trees. Just think of all the new neighborhoods where they simply tear all of the trees down. Besides, wouldn't that be great to walk out in the spring and not be caught in the tangled strands of Cankerworm webs! Look for the news letter and sign up sheets starting in July. We're going to keep an early start going for the tree banding in hopes that we can continue to increase the opportunities for folks to participate this coming fall. Thanks again for all of your efforts, and I look to seeing you around the neighborhood!



A Community That Cares

The Martins love living in Commonwealth Park, surrounded by caring neighbors. They also love being a part of Resurrection Church. "In our times of need, we have always felt loved and cared for."

If you are looking for a church that cares, you don't have to look far. We are only minutes away. We welcome you to experience our caring community.

Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.

RESURRECTION CHURCH

2940 Commonwealth Avenue
704-377-6575 • www.resluth.org

Spay / Neuter to Control the Animal Population

By Susan Crossland

Animals are a wonderful part of our lives. However, if they are not “fixed”, there can be problems that arise. I have noticed a new kitten population in the neighborhood and wanted to share some information in hopes these little ones can get spayed or neutered before they have a litter of their own.

Following are the top ten reasons to spay or neuter your pet (provided by the ASPCA):

1. **“Your female pet will live a longer, healthier life.**
Spaying helps prevent uterine infections and breast cancer, which is fatal in about 50 percent of dogs and 90 percent of cats. Spaying your pet before her first heat offers the best protection from these diseases.
2. **Neutering provides major health benefits for your male.**
Besides preventing unwanted litters, neutering your male companion prevents testicular cancer, if done before six months of age.
3. **Your spayed female won’t go into heat.**
While cycles can vary, female felines usually go into heat four to five days every three weeks during breeding season. In an effort to advertise for mates, they’ll yowl and urinate more frequently—sometimes all over the house!
4. **Your male dog won’t want to roam away from home.**
An intact male will do just about anything to find a mate! That includes digging his way under the fence and making like Houdini to escape from the house. And once he’s free to roam, he risks injury in traffic and fights with other males.
5. **Your neutered male will be much better behaved.**
Neutered cats and dogs focus their attention on their human families. On the other hand, unneutered dogs and cats may mark their territory by spraying strong-smelling urine all over the house. Many aggression problems can be avoided by early neutering.
6. **Spaying or neutering will NOT make your pet fat.**
Don’t use that old excuse! Lack of exercise and overfeeding will cause your pet to pack on the extra pounds—not neutering. Your pet will remain fit and trim as long as you continue to provide exercise and monitor food intake.
7. **It is highly cost-effective.**
The cost of your pet’s spay/neuter surgery is a lot less than the cost of having and caring for a litter. It also beats the cost of treatment when your unneutered tom escapes and gets into fights with the neighborhood stray!
8. **Spaying and neutering your pet is good for the community.**
Stray animals pose a real problem in many parts of the country. They can prey on wildlife, cause car accidents, damage the local fauna and frighten children. Spaying

and neutering packs a powerful punch in reducing the number of animals on the streets.

9. **Your pet doesn’t need to have a litter for your children to learn about the miracle of birth.**

Letting your pet produce offspring you have no intention of keeping is not a good lesson for your children—especially when so many unwanted animals end up in shelters. There are tons of books and videos available to teach your children about birth in a more responsible way.

10. **Spaying and neutering helps fight pet overpopulation.**
Every year, millions of cats and dogs of all ages and breeds are euthanized or suffer as strays. These high numbers are the result of unplanned litters that could have been prevented by spaying or neutering.”

(Need to footnote this: <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/spayneuter/spay-neuter-top-ten.aspx>)

As a reality check for #10, Mecklenburg County alone euthanized 3.7 million animals so far in 2011. This number can be greatly reduced by having your pets spayed or neutered.

Spay / Neuter Opportunities

There is no better time than now to get your animal spayed or neutered. Not only will it help their behavior, it will also help control pet overpopulation. Here are some contacts to make it easier for you to find who to call for assistance:

Resources for Spay/Neuter

1. Humane Society of Charlotte http://www.humanesocietyofcharlotte.org/spay_neuter/index.php They have a special going on in February for female cats: BEAT THE HEAT! Don’t miss this great opportunity, thanks to PetSmart Charities. For the month of FEBRUARY 2012, you can “BEAT THE HEAT” and have your female cat fixed for just \$20!! If your cat needs a rabies shot, that will be in addition to the \$20. Reserve your space now ... limited appointments are available. Call 704-426-1053 and tell them you want to “BEAT THE HEAT” for \$20!
2. Animal Care & Control – dial 311
3. Spay Neuter Charlotte – 704.375.2009 <http://spayneutercharlotte.org/>
4. Spay Neuter Clinic of the Carolinas – 704.542.9997 <http://www.spayneutercarolinas.com/>

Slow Your Roll

By Lori Pope

There are so many times that I am walking through the neighborhood – or hanging out in the backyard – and I see people flying down our streets. My house is on a pretty busy corner (but not nearly as much of a cut through as other areas), and there are still cars driving very fast down Commonwealth toward Independence. This makes me wonder.....could it possibly be some of us that are driving too fast trying to get home after a crazy day, and not just strangers that are cutting through our neighborhood?

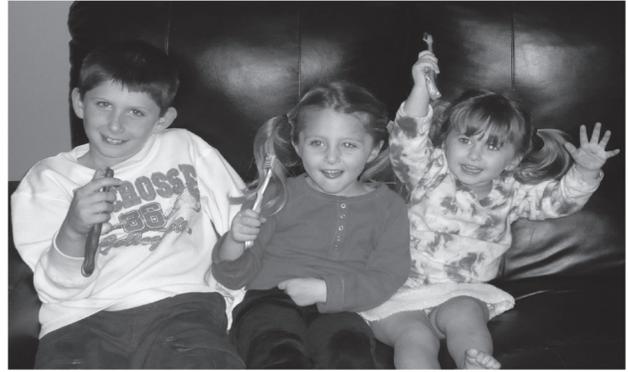
To answer this question - the other day I found myself doing the same thing I always cringe about – I looked down and I was going 40 on Commonwealth! I was distracted on the phone and I was so ready to be home, but I should have not been speeding. There are people with small children that live on this road (and everywhere in our neighborhood) and all of our roads should be treated as neighborhood streets, not major thoroughfares. I think at some point we may all be guilty of going too fast down our streets. It is my hope that if we all come together and make a conscious effort to slow down then maybe it will be evident to those that are simply passing through.

We can't fight for road humps to slow down traffic because we are a major bus route, but I think we should try to get the speed limit lowered. In 2012, it is going to be my goal to get our community to come together on this issue and work together to get everyone to slow down. I have done some research on "Slow Down 4 Families" and I would really like for all of our yards to have the yard signs they provide – something to possibly work into the budget if approved.

We are failing our families and neighbors by not making every effort to ensure that we are safe from motor vehicles on our neighborhood streets. Please visit www.slowdown4families.com for more information on this effort. I appreciate everyone taking this into consideration and I only hope that our community continues to grow together – at a very safe pace.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

-- Margaret Mead



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Go Green in 2012

By Rebecca Stoddard

A new year. Resolutions. Behavior changes. What's in store for you in 2012? Despite the long, dreary winter days ahead, why not consider making more green, sustainable choices in the new year? Just follow this 12 step program and implement one small change each month and by the time you sing Auld Lang Syne, living more sustainably will have become part of your routine!

1. **Reduce** - Ever wonder why this word comes first in the "reduce, reuse, recycle" mantra? If you reduce what you're consuming, you don't need to worry about reuse or recycling it afterwards! Make a conscious decision to buy less in 2012.
2. **Reuse** - Empty cereal bags keep baked goodies fresh for days, local farmers will gladly accept egg cartons to reuse and an old t shirt makes a great rag for cleaning. Before ditching something, take a moment to think how it could be repurposed. Check out <http://www.freecycle.org/>, which is a non-profit, grassroots movement to keep items out of the landfill. You may think something has seen the end of its life, but as the saying goes "one man's trash is another man's treasure"!
3. **Recycle** - Our neighborhood's tall green bins seem to be consistently overflowing every other Tuesday, which is great! Just remember what can be recycled in Mecklenburg County: glass bottles/jars, plastics labeled 1-5 and 7 (no #6, please!), paper, cardboard (pizza boxes go in the trash), aerosol & aluminum cans, milk & juice cartons/boxes and spiral paper & steel/tin cans. For more information visit <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/SWS/CurbIt/Recycling/Pages/Home.aspx>.
4. **Buy local** - The statistics vary, but on average between 65-80 cents of every dollar you spend locally stays in the local economy versus 15-20 cents when you shop at a chain or big box store. Try taking the 3/50 challenge: choose three local businesses that you would miss if they disappeared and spend \$50 amongst them each month.
5. **Compost** - Keep your leaves, grass clippings, vegetable scraps and other kitchen items out of the landfill by turning them into "black gold" for your garden and yard. Check out Mecklenburg County's website with more information, including links to free classes - <http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/SolidWaste/homecomposting/Pages/compbro.aspx>
6. **BYOB** - Bring your own BAG! Stock up on a handful of reusable bags and bring them with you to the grocery store, the mall, local businesses, the farmers market (of course!)...wherever you intend to leave with something that could be conveniently placed in a bag. I'm a big fan of Envirosax because they fold up into little bundles that fit in my purse.
7. **Watch the tap** - Turning of the water while brushing your teeth can save 25 gallons each month. Collect the water you use for rinsing vegetables and reuse it for houseplants. Fix leaky faucets. Easy, right?
8. **Turn off the lights**
9. **Plant a garden** - There is no feeling quite like growing and harvesting your own food. Once you have a tomato picked fresh from your own garden, you will think twice about picking one up from the grocery store in January. Start small, maybe with a few containers of herbs and squash, and enjoy the fruits of your labor!
10. **Ditch the styrofoam** - One of my favorite local specialty drink shops uses styrofoam cups, so I asked the owner if she would consider switching to a recyclable one and she said no because of cost. Now I either bring my own cup (much to the surprise of other customers!) or skip the treat altogether. Ditto for take out...how many restaurants use styrofoam containers? Make it a habit to ask what type of container they use when placing your order. Instead of using styrofoam cups and plates for snacks at home, buy some sturdy reusable ones.
11. **BYOB** - Nope, still not the BYOB you may have been thinking. Bring your own bottle this time. Why pay for something that comes out of your faucet at home? Bottled water is expensive and wasteful because of the energy it takes to produce the plastic bottles (most of which are not recycled!) and transport the product. Invest in a reusable bottle and carry it everywhere you go...a water fountain or faucet is never far away!
12. **Take a hike** - Get outdoors and enjoy all that Mother Nature has to offer. Walk around the neighborhood, spend the day in a park or visit some of the amazing hiking spots just outside Charlotte. Not only will you feel better, but the surroundings will remind you why you decided to follow this 12 step program and help preserve the beauty around you!

CPNA Stop Sign Update

By Brian G. Green

Earlier this year we found out that the City was willing to work with us on putting up stop signs in our neighborhood to help with some of the speed in our neighborhood. As more and more children are welcomed to our neighborhood, and folks are out walking their dogs, the last thing that we want is for anyone to be hit by a car. Fortunately, our fellow neighbors in Commonwealth / Morningside had this same issue a few years back, and had a lot of stop signs put up on Commonwealth between the Plaza and Morningside. Having their experience, and some conversation with the city, we were able to find out a lot about what we can do to keep our neighborhoods safe and what options are available to us.

With the ability to put up stop signs first at Commonwealth and Woodland, and then Woodland and Oakmont, we sent out requests for feedback through Facebook and e-mail. This feedback not only helped us find out if our neighbors were for it, it also helped us find out if there were some questions that we hadn't asked. We got a lot of feedback, and we also wanted to thank you all for taking the time to let us know. Some of the feedback we got were concerns on extra trash, and noise. With that feedback, we asked our neighbors in Commonwealth / Morningside what their experience was. Fortunately, your feedback was also similar to what those folks had concerns on.

Ultimately, Commonwealth / Morningside saw a major effect on traffic on the Commonwealth between the Plaza and Morningside. Trash and noise actually decreased as traffic moved from Commonwealth as the "Cut Through" traffic suddenly found it inconvenient to use Commonwealth as a cut through. Well, that may be true, but what about the Fire Trucks and City

buses? The Fire Department agreed that they would only need to sound their horns, in addition to the normal siren use, at Major intersections. So that meant that they didn't use them at every stop sign, just the busiest like Morningside and Commonwealth (ironically enough, that was there before the additional stop signs went up). They also said that they didn't get any complaints from neighbors, after the stop signs went in about the City Buses revving their engines as they went up Commonwealth towards the Plaza.

So why can't we get speed bumps instead of stop signs? Outside of the cost, the Fire Department has concerns about them because they have cause some damage to their trucks as they try to get to their destinations. Stop signs, on the other hand, don't pose that same risk of damage to their trucks.

The feedback we got on the stop signs were overwhelmingly for it. However, we did have a few neighbors concerned about the stop sign at Woodland and Oakmont. So, we are going to have CDOT put in the Commonwealth and Woodland stop sign put in first. Then we will circle back with everyone to see if the Commonwealth and Woodland stop sign has worked enough or if we need additional stop signs. CDOT is willing to work without neighborhood to help reduce cut through traffic and make our neighborhood safer. Pair that with our friends at CMPD wanting to coordinate efforts, and we feel that we have some solid steps in place to make our neighborhood safer. If you did not have a chance to ask any questions or provide your feedback, please feel free to drop a note to Brian Green (ne14usc@gmail.com), and we will work to find out any answers for you or make sure that your voice is heard on how to make our neighborhood safer.

It's A Wrap!

By Lori Pope

There it went – 2011 has come and gone. I don't know about you, but I have no clue where all the time goes. I am pretty sure there was a ton of stuff going on in 2011, but it seems like a blur when I look back. I know everyone is crazy busy with family, work, and friends – it never ends. I don't even have kids and I never have time for anything - I don't know how we all do it, but we do!

Even though time keeps ticking on and our responsibilities are endless, it is important to carve out a little time and get to know your neighbors. Our neighborhood is full of amazing people and families, and I am eager to get to know more of you throughout 2012. I want to take a moment and thank those neighbors that were able to get out and participate in some of the events we had this past year. The success of our neighborhood (and our growth) is not possible without everyone being a part of the community and volunteering at least a small amount of their time.

The group I truly want to praise is your board – this is a group of dedicated and amazing people – that are determined to see this neighborhood succeed. Just as a reminder your board consists of:

Brian Green – Vice President
 Rebecca Stoddard – Secretary
 Lou Galanty – Treasurer
 Susan Crossland – Director of Events
 Jerome Deveix – Director of Communication
 Allison Billings – Director of Government Affairs

Your board is a group of people with families, overloaded work schedules, and extremely busy lifestyles (just like you) – but we love our neighborhood and want for us to become the place to live in Charlotte. There are many neighbors that support these committees (you know who you are) that need to be praised as well – without the support of volunteers we would not be able to accomplish all of our goals – so thank you very much.

With 2011 all wrapped up it is time to re-group and get involved in 2012. Our next neighborhood meeting is going to be Wednesday, February 8, 2012, and I urge all of you to come to that meeting and show your support. I will be honest – at the past few meetings the attendance has been low and it is very discouraging.....do you guys not care about what is going on in your backyard? I hope that the next meeting is standing room only, because as I said before – without your support we cannot be as successful as we would like.

There are a lot of exciting things happening in our neighborhood and I can't wait to update you all at the next meeting. I wish you and yours the best this New Year, and I hope that 2012 is a year of prosperity and hope for us all!

CPNA Events-2011 Recap and Planning for 2012

By Susan Crossland

Neighborhood Clean-up

In 2011, we held 3 clean-up events and they were very successful. Our neighborhood really shines when there is no litter in our yards and public areas. So, after taking December off, we are starting our monthly clean-ups again. As a reminder, these will take place on the 3rd Saturday of each month. The date and time is communicated via email and Facebook.

The next session will be **Saturday, February 18th at 1pm ET**, so mark your calendars! We will meet in the empty lot on the right side of Briar Creek just before you exit onto the ramp to get onto Independence Blvd. I will provide gloves (although you may want your own), beverages, and bags. I look forward to meeting new neighbors at the next clean-up!

If you are not getting my email notifications, it means I don't have your email address. Please be sure to sign up for the neighborhood association so you can receive this information.

Yard Sale

We conducted a neighborhood yard sale in early September and had a pretty good turnout. We would like to have it again this year but in the spring instead. This will allow all the neighbors to plan for some good spring cleaning and get ready to shed your wares! We will discuss timing for this at the next neighborhood meeting, so plan on being there!

Fall Party

The CPNA Fall Party was a great success back in October! We had around 100 people in attendance and some great volunteer help! The kids enjoyed the bouncy balls and pumpkin decorating station. Chantilly Catering provided everyone some great grilling and other comestibles. This was a great opportunity for neighbors to meet one another and play a little cornhole while listening to great tunes. We plan on doing this again next fall, so stay tuned!

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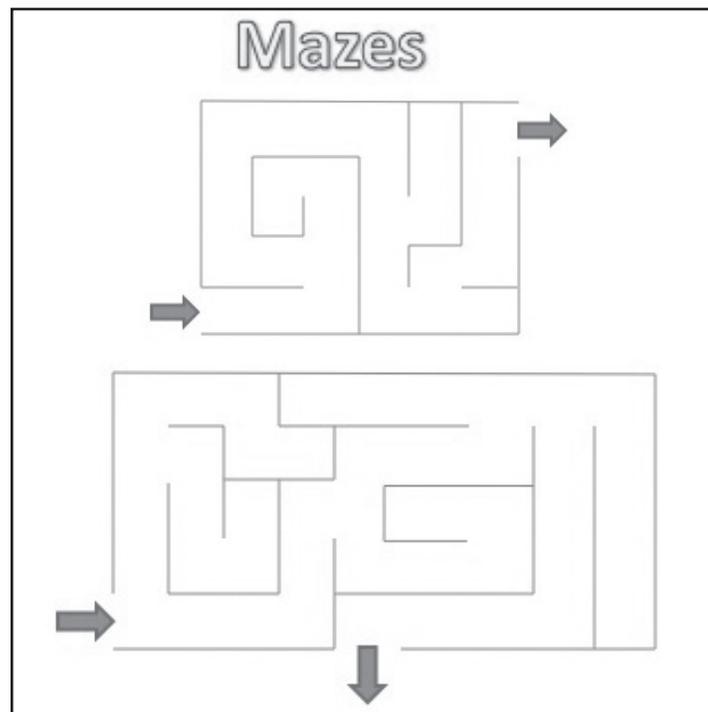
billywithapex@carolina.rr.com

MOBILE
704-506-2298

PHONE/FAX
704-900-8187

KIDS PAGE

By Louann Galanty

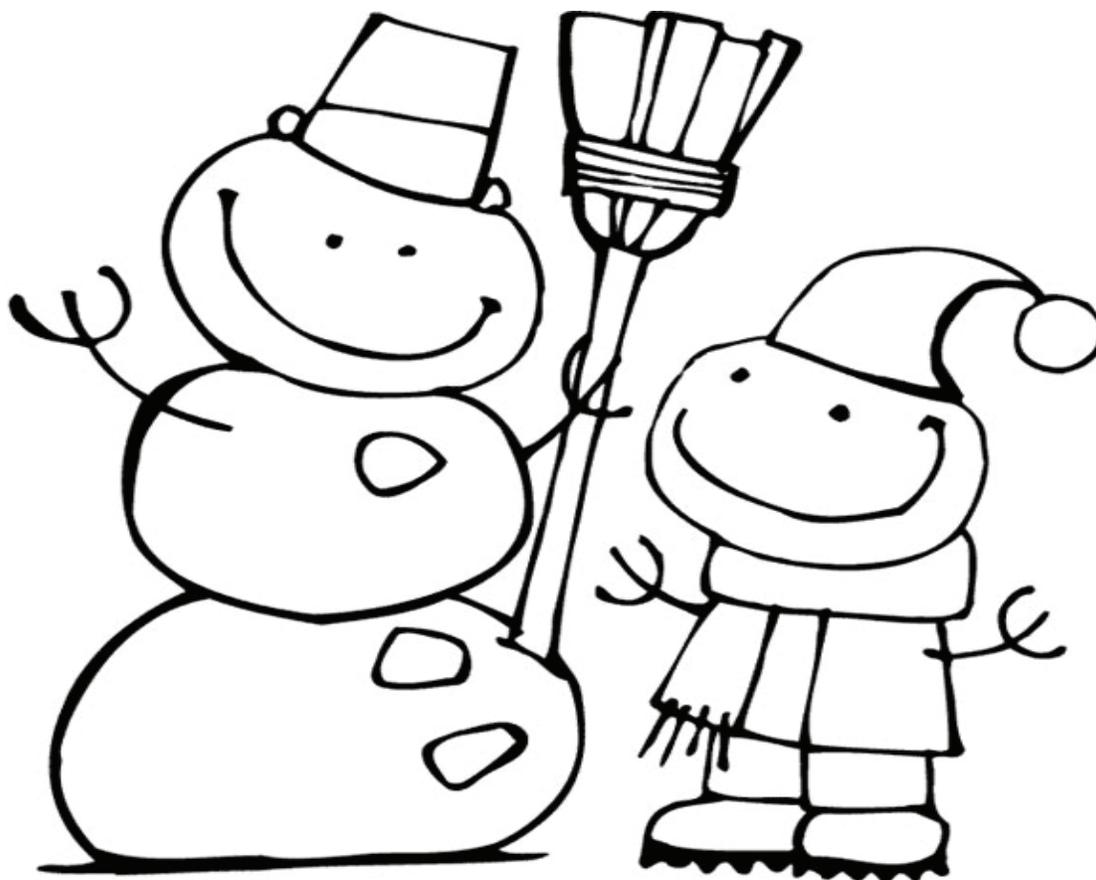


Seek and Find

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F	I	L	C	K	W	I	N	D	H	C	B
L	W	R	L	H	T	T	G	A	V	R	E
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O	W	Q	F	R	A	C	S	E	L	D	E
O	L	A	F	S	H	O	V	E	L	O	H
B	P	H	S	P	A	S	E	V	O	L	G

Find the following words – left to right, right to left, up and down or diagonally

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- GLOVES BOOTS ICICLES
- HAT SCARF FROST WIND
- COLD CHILL ICE SHOVEL



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**Commonwealth Park Neighborhood Association
Membership Form**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Annual dues are only \$20.00 per household and are very helpful in neighborhood improvements. Please send a check in today!!

Make checks payable & send to:
Commonwealth Park Neighborhood Assoc.
PO Box 18833
Charlotte, NC 28218

Check here if you would like to be contacted to volunteer on a committee or be a part of our neighborhood watch team. A neighbor will contact you shortly!