

Great Neighbors Make Great Neighborhoods



## Sunset Hills February 2016

Greensboro, North Carolina

### Annual Neighborhood Events

January

February

March

*Neighborhood Meeting*

*Easter Egg Hunt*

April

*Great American Clean-up*

May

*Annual Pig Picking*

June

July

*July 4th Parade and Picnic*

August

*National Night Out*

September

*Big Sweep Event*

October

*Halloween Party in the Park*

November

December

*Lighted Christmas Balls*

*Food Drive, Running of the Balls*

### Treasurers Report

Hi,

I'm Elaine Brune your new Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association Treasurer. Those of you who live south of Market may already know me as the newsletter delivery coordinator and may have picked up newsletters from our porch. Taking over from Emily Herman as the Treasurer is an honor since Emily capably served the neighborhood for many years before moving to Friends Home West (she is still a Neighborhood member).

Maybe it is an ambitious goal, but I would like to increase our resident participation rate from its current 46% to at least 60%. Why? The following are some of the benefits of living in Greensboro's finest neighborhood:

- The Listserv – If you are a member you can buy, sell, swap or give away your material possessions, find personally-recommended people to do work on your house, and locate your missing dog/cat/armadillo. We also offer a crime report and a report of suspicious people. We coordinate with the police to make sure they are not a threat.
- The Spring Easter Egg Hunt and Great American Clean-up.
- The May Pig Picking that is both fun and delicious.

(continued on page 3)

## Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

### Co- Presidents

Joann Strack joannstrack@gmail.com  
Carl Phillips cwpjr5524@aol.com

### Vice-President

### Secretary

Kerry Meyers kerry.meyers@gmail.com

### Treasurer

Elaine Brune sunsethillsysonc@gmail.com  
Mail dues to: 2504 Sylvan Rd.

### Neighborhood Watch

Doug Thurbon dougnkaren@att.net

### Neighborhood Watch / Block Captain Coordinator

Elaine Brune bardsley-brune@triad.rr.com

### Transportation Committee Chair

Gerry Alfano mtisdel@att.net 272-3512

### Social Events - OPEN

### Environmental Affairs - OPEN

### Garden Club Representative

Mary Jacke maryjacke@yahoo.com

### Web site coordinator

Robin Timmins timmins203@gmail.com

### Listserv coordinator

Carl Phillips cwpjr5524@aol.com

### Historian

OPEN POSITION

### Newsletter Team

Elaine Brune and bardsley-brune@triad.rr.com  
Roger Bardsley 378-1990  
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Carl Phillips cwpjr5524@aol.com  
Carole Potter cllindse@gmail.com  
Marlene Pratto mrpsunset@gmail.com  
Robin Timmins timmins203@gmail.com

### Representative to the Neighborhood Congress

Mike Pendergraft, Gerry Alfano

## Sources of Neighborhood Information

The Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association has a website, Facebook page, and a listserv. Many pictures of neighborhood events appear in color on the website and on the Facebook page.

Get to know your neighbors in text and print and learn the news: <http://www.sunsethillsneighborhood.org>. The *information* tab contains a list of tradespeople recommended by neighbors. If you are not on the listserv go to *Email listserv* and submit your email address to be added as a member of the monitored listserv. The neighborhood Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/SunsetHillsGSO>

• • • • •

When you have a question about tradespeople, spot a stray dog or cat or note something unusual, submit a message to the listserv and the message goes out to all the members. The listserv is monitored to keep the messages relevant to this area and on topics about the neighborhood. You must have paid your 2016 dues to submit a message to the listserv.

• • • • •

**DUES are due in January. However, it is never too late to pay for the current year. Please remit your \$10 directly to the treasurer, Elaine Brune at 2504 Sylvan Rd. Checks for more than \$10 will be accepted as donations to the Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association.**

## Rates for 2016 Newsletter Advertising

\$20- biz card size

\$40- 1/4 pg (3.5 x 4.5)

\$80- 1/2 pg (3.75x9.75)

\$160- full pg(7.5x9.75)

Add \$10 if your dues are not up-to-date. Contact Carl or Marlene (see Newsletter Team on the left) to arrange for an ad. Then send your check to Elaine Brune, address above. Thanks to our advertisers for helping to offset the cost of this newsletter.

(continued from page 1)

- The July 4th Parade and Picnic.
- The August National Night Out.
- The September Big Sweep
- The October Halloween Party in the Park.
- The November Lighted Christmas Ball-Making Party on Ridgeway.
- The December Lighted Christmas Balls and Running of the Balls fun run.

If you pay your dues it helps all of us find new ways to make the neighborhood great. And, it lets us know you are here. I don't know about you, but I can go anywhere in Greensboro, say I am from Sunset Hills, and people nod appreciatively.

So, if you haven't already paid, send your \$10 dues to Elaine Brune, 2504 Sylvan Road Greensboro, NC 27403 in the envelope enclosed in this newsletter, or stop by the house and push a check through the mail slot, we also accept donations by check.

*or*  *go to*

[www.sunsethillsneighborhood.org/contact.html](http://www.sunsethillsneighborhood.org/contact.html) and pay by PayPal. (look under the Treasurer section for the PayPal link). Is that not cool!

Next newsletter I will report who has paid their dues and who has added a contribution.



## March 15

Use your only opportunity to vote  
on the Connect NC bond.

For information go to  
<http://connect.nc.gov>.

## Thanks for a great year Sunset Hills!



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# Meet a Neighbor Who is Money

By Carlee Dempsey

As kids, we're always asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up? Firefighter, doctor, astronaut, chef, rock star?". Some of us pursue the childhood dreams until we realize, "Hey, maybe I don't actually like blood or being in a tiny air tight container thousands of miles above Earth". Others passionately chase their dreams and realize being a doctor, astronaut, firefighter, or even a rock star means much more than their youthful-self could have ever imagined.

Although Kevin Dollar would never classify himself as a rock star, it's evident that his work has made him just that in the eyes of those he encounters.



**Me:** When did you decide to pursue music, specifically becoming a guitarist?

**Kevin:** I began playing the guitar at the age of 14. Then, Rock n Roll was my main focus but as I got older I began to appreciate all genres. I ended up getting my graduate degree in classical guitar from UNCG and going on to teach at the Music Academy of NC in 1995. Now, whenever I play live, it's mostly swing jazz or Latin.

**Me:** Why did you become a teacher?

**Kevin:** Originally, I became a teacher to support myself so I could continue playing in bands. However, I quickly realized I loved the teaching side way more than the performance side.

**Me:** Do any moments in your music career stand out more than others?

**Kevin:** I've always been a life-long learner; redeveloping my "performance-self" every 3-5 years but honestly, the biggest moments in my life have come during lessons with

my students. Sure, I've played with some famous musicians, but nothing compares to the excitement of a new student when they have their "Ah ha!" moment (e.g. learn a new note). Those moments are what stick out the most.

**Me:** Why did you choose to move to Sunset Hills?

**Kevin:** The overall sense of community is what drew us to Sunset Hills. Yes, it's a convenient walk to work for my wife (a faculty member at UNCG), but it's also so locally focused. Shopping local is very important to us and Sunset Hills makes it so easy; with Bestway, the Corner (Elam and Walker), the Farmer's Market. You can't beat it.

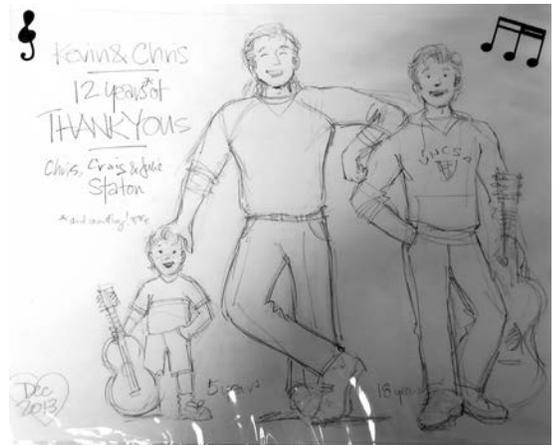
**Me:** What's your favorite part of Sunset Hills?

**Kevin:** The walkability. I don't need a car to get anywhere!

**Me:** What's your favorite local spot?

**Kevin:** Rioja! Two bands I play in, Nueva Voz & The Minor Swing Band, play there monthly. The owner, the food, and the wine are all incredible. Which makes the atmosphere and the clientele incredible

as well.



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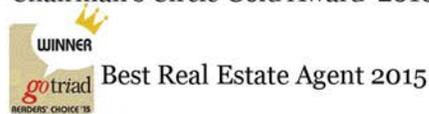


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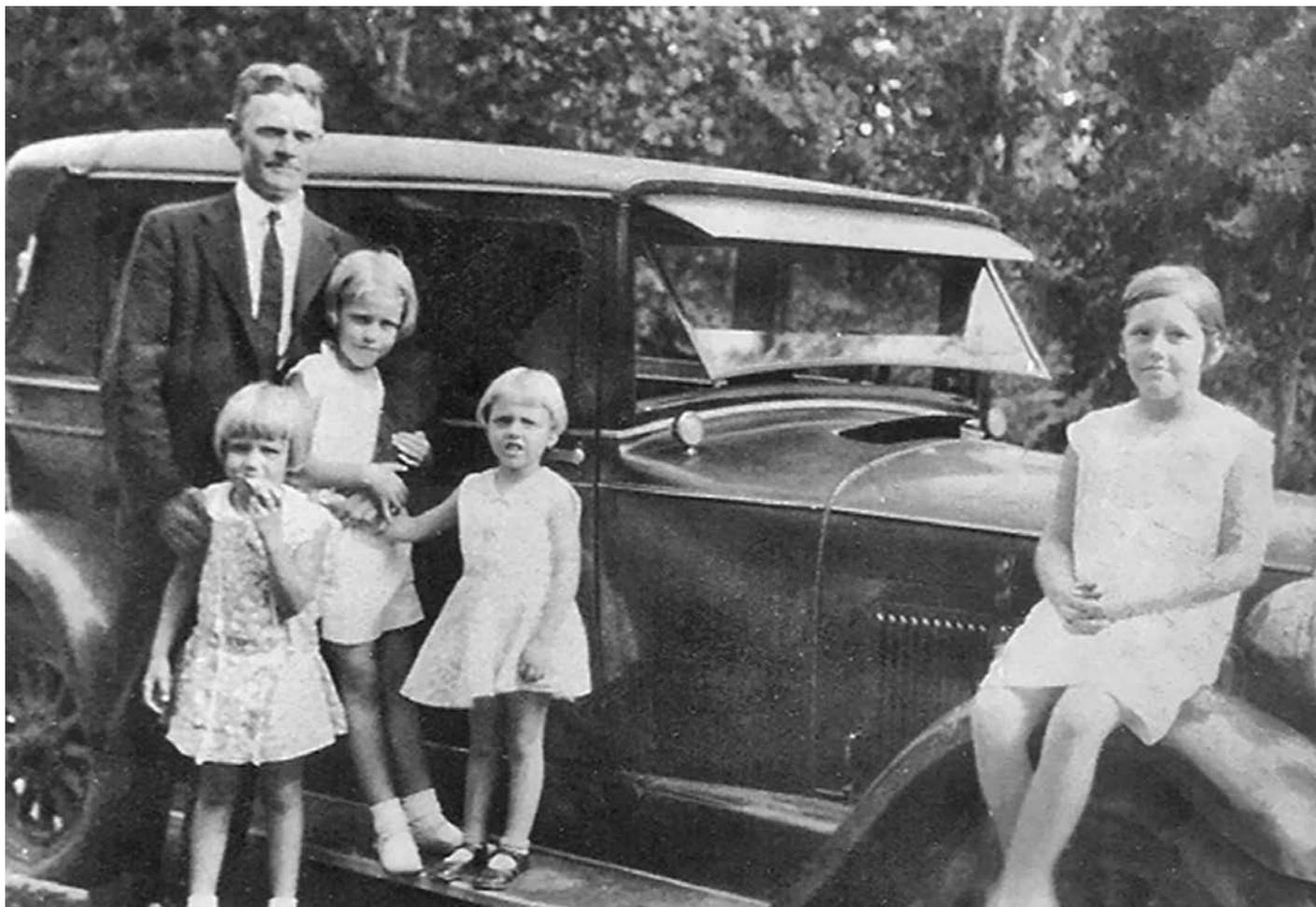


**Melissa Greer**, GRI, CRS

- BHHS 5 Year Legends Award 2014
- Chairman's Circle Diamond Award 2014
- Chairman's Circle Platinum Award 2013
- Chairman's Circle Gold Award 2010, 2011, 2012



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## Revenants: The Elliott-Dodson House

By R.S. Gingher

Since the late 1920s, only three families have danced to the music of time at 303 W Greenway N. If a Tudor Revival house could talk, this one would likely speak with the directness of an appealing 1930 picture taken from its front yard. Or maybe with the artless candor of a remarkable 89-year-old lady I met nearly three years ago. Billie Janssen Hutton stands on the running board of a 1920s automobile, Greenway park in the background. She poses with her older sisters and with the driver, pharmacist William Clarkson Porter, II. He has come from his father "Clark" Porter's 121 S. Elm St. drugstore to give Mittie Elliott Dodson, their grandmother, her vitamin shot. His late cousin, William Sydney Porter, was the master storyteller we know as "O. Henry," who also worked at his uncle's store, earning his pharmacy license there at 19.

Mrs. Hutton's daughter, Corrie Middleton, has meticulously recorded her mother's memorial reconstruction of 1930s domestic events here and of the character of this home's principal inhabitants. She has answers to questions even the most diligent research could never uncover. She remembers the servants who occupied the garage annex—Mary Cook (not her real last name, but her job description) and Monroe and Mary Jane Elliott's chauffeur, Velmore. She recounts the 1939 story about how her Grandad Dodson in his final hours begged the Lord to take him and to take his good friend Monroe with him and how Monroe protested, "But I'm not ready to go yet!"

Mrs. Hutton was born in January 1927, the same year construction on this home began. That year her great uncle, James A. Elliott, a successful Thomasville businessman and mayor, had contracted A.K. Moore to build a house for his family—including his mother, sister, and her husband.

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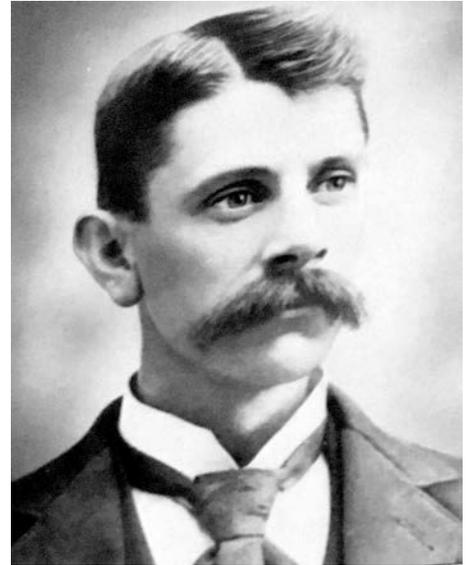
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But there is a dark knot at the heart of his story. In January 1928, just as construction was completed, Elliott died of a cerebral hemorrhage. His body lay at the 1812 Rolling Road home of his niece, Mrs. Hutton's Aunt Mary and her husband, Hugh N. Preddy. An existing deed shows that the Preddys took out a \$10,324 mortgage a few weeks later, acquiring Elliott's dream house.

Greensboro Preservation Society's Benjamin Briggs notes that "with the crash of 1929, Preddy lost his position at the brokerage firm [the Greensboro branch of E.A. Pierce & Company] and the couple took on several family members who shared their home, including his niece Mary Wooters, in-laws James and Mittie Dodson, grandmother-in-law Mary Jane Elliott, aunt-in-law Mary Lines and lodger Laurence McRae. Preddy found a position as telephone operator the next year, but by 1933 the family defaulted on their mortgage. The property was sold at public auction, only to be purchased by the estate of Mary's grandfather [Lockie Elliott]. Her grandfather's estate held ownership of the property until 1941, at which point the family disappeared from public records."



303 W GREENWAY N



JAMES A. ELLIOTT

Mrs. Hutton's account does not accord with extant deeds and records. She maintains that Uncle Hugh had no money, much less the wherewithal to buy the house; that though his name appears on the deed, he never truly owned the house; that the money he used was Grandmother Dodson's; that his name is on the deed only because of his collusion with a Lexington banker, a Mr. Montcastle. After Elliott's death, she says, the banker sold Elliott's Thomasville property piecemeal, using it to keep his bank afloat during the Depression.

The only ones in the family with financial resources, according to her, were his sister Mittie Dodson and their mother, Mary Jane Elliott. Uncle Hugh, she says, borrowed a lot of money from the Elliott estate and from James Elliott, after whose untimely death he removed any trace of the loan. She further claims he embezzled funds from Dan River Mills, that Mamie (Mary Jane) and the Dodsons, ancient and decorous, simply wanted to keep Uncle Hugh's relentless and unscrupulous machinations quiet. While I do not pretend to know the full story, I can tell you the ghosts at 303 are uneasy.

In 1941 Wylanta and David Buckner, bought the property. By 1943 David had become vice-president of Jefferson Standard Life Insurance. After his death in 1956, Wylanta remained in the home until her death here in 1980. Our friend and neighbor June Barron remembers her fondly.

Susan McMullen and her husband Russell Harter lived here together with two of his three children until his death here in 1990. Nearly two years later Susan and I married, bringing my two sons aboard into the one blended family.

(continued on page 8)

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One evening a Buckner son turned up at our door with his wife and children, asking if they might see his childhood home. But instead of taking them through three floors of family history and home design we listened, spellbound, as he guided us through the rooms of his own memory in his former habitation.

Occasionally we've found buried treasure here. One day, a score of vintage empty liquor bottles in the crawlspace. Another day a 1930s or 40s breakfast cereal box cutout on war pilots' insignia surfaces in the back of the butler's pantry. Mrs. Hutton's "Uncle Hugh" was the paternal uncle of George and William Preddy, the well-known WWII combat fighter pilots. While remodeling the attic floor, we discovered a vintage model of a prop plane of their era. Other than these, the only public traces of Mary and Hugh Preddy are certain deeds, city director entries (1929's has them at 203 E Greenway N), and their Greensboro Forest Lawn Cemetery headstones.



Hints of mortality and common ground abound around this home. Seventy-six years ago my teenage father inhabited the house directly across the street and closest by, where our friends the Kuhns now live. I didn't quite believe it until I saw the ocular proof—my grandparents' five-digit Pinecrest phone number in a 1940 city directory.

At first it was hard to picture my super-athletic dad ("Sonny") living a few yards from our drive, passing the football in the park six years before I was born. At the time he is in his last year at Greensboro Senior High ("Student," as the city directory cites). There I will come to share the same math teacher, Ida Belle Moore (IBM) and the same ageless principal, A.P. Routh.

The first big family loved to play croquet here, just as do we, our children and grandchildren. The last photo, on the front lawn, shows Mary Preddy standing with her sister Corrie and Corrie's four daughters. Billie is seated between her grandmother Mittie and matriarch Mary Jane.



For me, Mrs. Hutton's memories and Benjamin Briggs's research all seem to have fused into a haunting 90-year time-lapse. These former lives have once again taken up residence here, casting their anchors in the ordinary and mundane. It's as if all impulses, even those long since submerged in time and space, insist on declaring themselves anew. They once were, after all, blood-vivid, the motivating energy of living forms.

The whiff of memento mori sharpens with age, urging this sojourner to take closer stock of that trip from cradle to grave and its meaning. It may be that grace is nothing less than genuine fellow-feeling for the aches and desires of all its temporal residents, the living and the dead. In the end, everything else seems small beer.

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## Tax Credits Are Back

By Katherine Rowe

On January 1, 2016, North Carolina got its historic rehabilitation tax credits back. Last fall, the North Carolina legislature adopted a state budget that included a new historic rehabilitation tax credit program.

As a neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places, most Sunset Hills homes qualify for the credits.

The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office writes:

"Income tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic structures are important tools for historic preservation and economic development in North Carolina.

"Since 1976, over 3,100 completed "certified rehabilitation" projects have been reviewed by the N.C. State Historic Preservation Office, representing almost two billion dollars of investment in historic properties."

"The spinoff from all this activity includes job creation, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, improved community appearance, and greater community pride. Historic preservation is smart growth, and smart investment."

There are new rules for tax credits for NC historic neighborhoods but one change may help homeowners with smaller projects; the threshold to claim credits begins at \$10,000, down from the previous \$25,000 minimum.

Tax credits may be helpful for any home improvement projects you have in mind. There are some limits and requirements to earn the credits and homeowners should check in with the NC SHPO before starting a project.

Here is a link to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office site:

<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/>

And a direct link to the summary of tax credits:

<http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/TaxCredits/2016-NCTaxCredits.pdf>



## Heart & Stroke Walk

to the Bahamas along the way. We encourage all of you to get outside and walk regardless of your participation. Sunset Hills is a beautiful neighborhood to enjoy and walking for 30 minutes a day, five times a week is proven to greatly reduce the risk of heart disease. It's a win-win!

Last year's walk was one of the top Heart Walks in the country; Yes, right here in Greensboro! Let's lean into this spring event and show the town that Sunset Hills has HEART. Visit [www.guilfordheartwalk.org](http://www.guilfordheartwalk.org) to find our team page. It only takes 3 minutes to register.

The funds you raise in the Heart Walk stay in this affiliate and will support projects like these:

- **Putting up-to-the-minute research into doctors' hands** so they can better prevent and treat heart disease among patients.
- **Groundbreaking pediatric heart and stroke research.** About 36,000 babies are born with heart defects each year —research is the key to saving babies' lives.
- **Getting life-saving information to those who need it most** – information that can save a life, like how to eat better, how to recognize the warning signs of heart attack and how to talk to a doctor about critical health choices.



You don't have to have festive dress to walk in the 2016 heart and stroke walk, but do join in..

**Did you know that cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of all Americans?** In fact, someone dies from CVD every 39 seconds! Heart disease also kills more women than all forms of cancer combined. And congenital cardiovascular defects are the most common cause of infant death from birth defects. However, heart disease is up to 80% preventable! This is a disease we can greatly reduce through diet and exercise. Let's walk!

Sunset Hills has put together a Walk Team in support of the 2016 Guilford Heart & Stroke walk; May 21st @ UNCG. The event runs from 8AM-10:30AM, is family and dog friendly and there are plenty of prizes and even a trip

to the Bahamas along the way. We encourage all of you to get outside and walk regardless of your participation. Sunset Hills is a beautiful neighborhood to enjoy and walking for 30 minutes a day, five times a week is proven to greatly reduce the risk of heart disease. It's a win-win!

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## Spring 2016 Friends of the UNCG Libraries Events: A Preview

By Barry Miller

The spring calendar of the Friends of the UNCG Libraries culminates with the March 22 visit of author Chris Bohjalian, who has published 18 books, most of which were New York Times bestsellers. Three became movies. His newest novel, arriving in January, is *The Guest Room*, a story of human trafficking, a party gone horribly wrong, and a marriage in crisis. The paperback of his most recent novel, *Close Your Eyes, Hold Hands*, was published in May. He is perhaps best known for *The Sandcastle Girls* a journey that travels the terrain of his Armenian heritage, making it his most personal novel to date.

Tickets for the Friends Dinner may be purchased by calling Triad Stage at 336-272-0160. Sponsored tables are available for groups wishing to show their support for the University Libraries and must be reserved by March 1. For individuals who want to attend the dinner and the program, reservations must be made by March 15. Program only tickets will be available as long as they last.

Other events on the January-March Friends calendar are all free. We inform local bookstores, including the UNCG Book Store, Barnes and Noble, and Scuppernong Books, of the books we are highlighting.

Visiting author Peter Golden will speak on the topic, “The Impact of World War II on Segregation.” He will also promote his new book, *Wherever There Is Light*, which follows the intertwined lives of two families from the late 1930s until the mid-1960s—the Roses, who are Jewish and have fled Nazi Germany, and the Wakefields, a wealthy African American family that has founded a historically black college on the site of the former plantation where the maternal grandfather had been born a slave.

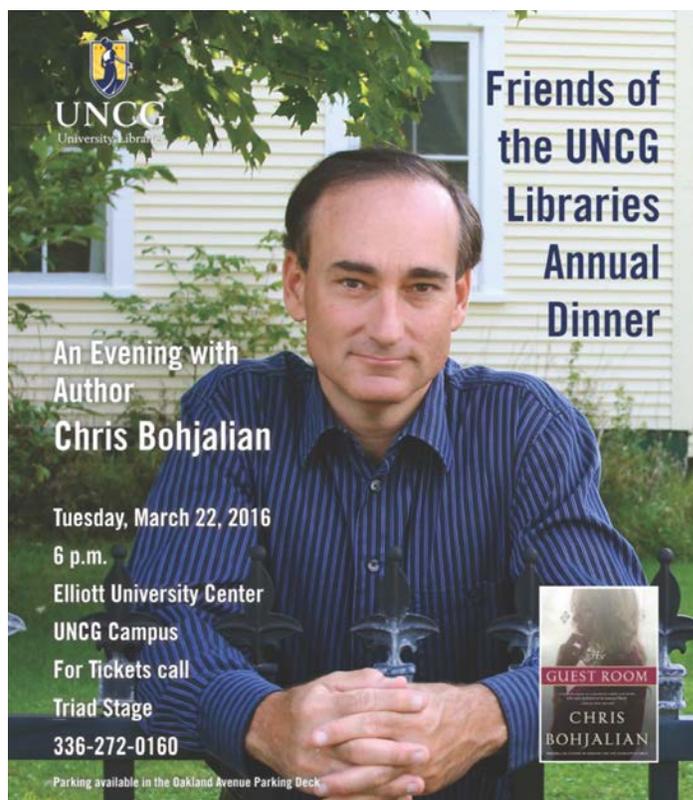
UNCG faculty members Jody Natalle and Jenni Simon will discuss their book, *Michelle Obama: First Lady, American Rhetor*, an edited anthology exploring the persona and speech-making of the country’s first African American first lady from a rhetorical and cultural point of view.

Book discussions will examine: 1) the autobiography of a woman born a slave who later worked for Mary Todd Lincoln in the White House; and 2) Ian McEwan’s novel *Black Dogs*, set in the aftermath of World War II and the fall of the Berlin Wall. As a 1992 review in the NY Times put it: “The black dogs that give Ian McEwan’s novel its evocative title come from the name that Winston Churchill once bestowed on his depressions. As used by Mr. McEwan’s heroine, however, they signify something larger and more menacing: evil, darkness, irrationality, “civilization’s worst moods.” They give Mr. McEwan a metaphor by which he can turn a fictional family memoir into an elliptical meditation on Europe’s past and future.”

Join the Friends of the UNCG Libraries today at <http://tinyurl.com/qjdzc2v>.

For more information about our events, see [uncgfol.blogspot.com](http://uncgfol.blogspot.com). You can also find us at [www.facebook.com/uncgfol/](http://www.facebook.com/uncgfol/)

Friends enjoy several privileges, including book discussions, notices about author visits, and book and DVD checkout.



**Monday, February 22:** Friends of the UNCG Libraries Book Discussion - *Behind the Scenes, or Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House* by Elizabeth Keckley, led by Karen Weyler of the English Department. 7 p.m. Hodges Reading Room, Jackson Library 2nd floor, UNCG. FREE.  
**Monday, March 14:** Friends of the UNCG Libraries Book Discussion - *Black Dogs* by Ian McEwan, led by Keith Gorman of the University Libraries. 4 p.m. Hodges Reading Room, Jackson Library 2nd floor, UNCG. FREE.

## Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association Board Meeting

Monday, January 18, 2016 - 7:00 p.m.

### *Discussion:*

- Revisited a request from the fall: A neighbor asked that streets in the neighborhood (Wright to Sylvan) be shut down on Halloween night. There is a \$50 fee from the City of Greensboro to do this. After discussion, it was decided that neighbors throughout Sunset Hills can ask for this service from the City of Greensboro, but the SHNA cannot pay for individual requests.
- Katherine Rowe has stepped down from the Historian role. We need to fill this Board position.
- Has Greensboro Beautiful filled our requests to honor the two longtime SHNA Board members who have recently stepped down? (Planting trees in the neighborhood to express our gratitude for their years of service to our community.)
- Future discussion: honor names engraved on rocks
- Newsletter
  - ◇ Deliver weekend of February 20th
  - ◇ Deadline, beginning of February
  - ◇ Discussion of when newsletters will go out in 2016
  - ◇ Post guidelines to use listserv, on a quarterly basis.
  - ◇ Post detailed information about annual dues.
- Treasurer's Report:
  - ◇ \$12,598.00 SHNA current balance YTD
  - ◇ \$9,275.00 SHNA balance last year, at this time
  - ◇ Payment for 3 SHNA Newsletter ads are currently outstanding
- Running of the Balls – feedback about parking
- PayPal – discussion about using it to receive payment of SHNA annual dues
- Discussion about the next community meeting, and Crime Watch
- Street Toppers on street signs in Sunset Hills, to show our Historic Designation, are expected to go up in two installments: 20 in 2016, and 15 in 2017.
- 

*Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm*

*Respectfully submitted by Kerry Meyers*

### Poem by ca hoff

Lost in thoughts of my own irrelevance of the inconsequential meandering  
Of the visions that wrap around colors that spill on the roads and sidewalks of the seasonal Splendor  
reds, green ,silver blues and lavender  
They paint the sky's and rooftops in the skies deep blue with twinkling stars that watch over the evening  
sky in a neighborhood street full of eyes seeking a visionary splendor of this yearly event  
Trees of colors when the leaves are spent  
by towering canopy with limbs of life reaching out a embrace in a lacework more detailed than one can  
express ,draped in colors that's impossible to describe  
Like paint flowing with range of colors never seen, the night descends in a dream of never ending curves  
just beyond the farthest point ahead ,and you reach sooner than you think ,enjoy the ride like dreams that  
drip in front of you that are always just beyond your reach



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## CREPE MURDER STILL OCCURING IN SUNSET HILLS

By Gerry Alfano

Crepe Myrtles are a popular landscape plant in Greensboro. You can see them on almost every street in Sunset Hills. There are several reasons why they are popular. They can be grown as a bush or a tree. Depending on the cultivar, they can be as small as three feet (dwarf varieties) or as large as 30 to 40 feet. They are well suited to our hot, sunny climate. They produce showy blooms in pinks and whites from late spring through summer. In the heat of our summers, the crepe myrtles are blooming when most other flowering trees and bushes are not.

Unfortunately, a popular method of pruning these plants is to commit "Crepe Murder", i.e., severely topping the plant. This type of "pruning" creates a weak plant that sends up spindly shoots. This is done in the mistaken belief that a severe pruning produces more blooms. If planted in the right location, with enough room to reach its full growth, the crepe myrtle requires little or no pruning. There are numerous examples of crepe myrtles in the neighborhood that have been allowed to grow to their full height. They have graceful shapes and beautiful bark on their trunks.

Sometimes the crepe myrtle may not have sufficient space and/or it may need to have dead branches removed. They can be pruned without weakening the plant.

Check out the video from NC Cooperative Extension on how to prune your crepe myrtle:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2he8\\_mo1oWc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2he8_mo1oWc)



This is what Crepe Murder looks like

### BEWARE OF IRS SCAMMERS

Tax season is here and many of us will see an increase in calls from IRS scammers. These scammers claim to be agents with the IRS who want to help you stay out of jail. They claim that you owe the IRS money and unless you act quickly, you will end up in jail. **ALL OF THESE CALLS ARE BOGUS.** The IRS will not call you or send you an e-mail if you owe them money. They will contact you by sending a letter via the US Postal Service. These scammers use threats and they like to target vulnerable people, like the elderly and immigrants. They try to collect the money over the phone by demanding information on a debit card, credit card, or prepaid card. The IRS would not threaten you or demand payment over the phone. If you are concerned that you might owe the IRS money, contact them at 800-829-1040 and talk to an IRS agent.

It is best not to answer these calls. Scammers' calls may show fake caller IDs, such as "IRS GOV". If you do answer, hang up immediately so they don't have an opportunity to get any information from you. In general, it is a good policy to screen your calls and only answer when it is a number you know. You can report these calls by going to [https://www.treasury.gov/tigta/contact\\_report\\_scam.shtml](https://www.treasury.gov/tigta/contact_report_scam.shtml) or by calling the TIGITA (Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration) Hotline at 800-366-4484. IRS scammers have bilked Americans out of 23 million dollars. Make sure that it doesn't happen to you, to your family members or to neighbors.

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## State of the Neighborhood for 2015

By Michael Driver

Time to take a look at the Sunset Hills real estate numbers for 2015. Once again we had a really busy year in our neighborhood- 35 sales in the last year and 4 currently under contract. Those 35 homes ranged from \$94,900 to \$640,000 (though technically the \$94,000 home was in College Park) and had a Dollar per square foot range from \$57.71 a square foot (which was a foreclosure) to \$175.37 per foot (on Madison). Taking into consideration last year's average of \$120.14, even with the foreclosure we still averaged \$125.30 per square foot in our neighborhood. This is over a \$5 per foot increase and also shows that our neighborhood is on the rise price wise. The Average Days on Market also decreased from 88 days to 67 days- that's the number of days from list until contract. All this bodes well for all our property values- older, established neighborhoods are more popular than ever!

Take a look at the full sales report here-

<http://yourhometriad.com/state-of-the-neighborhood-2015/>

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## Sunset Hills and the Arts

By Scott Michaels

It's easy to overlook how much the Arts are connected to Sunset Hills. But for many of us, two of the many great things about living in Sunset Hills are living close to so many working and teaching artists, and being close to so many arts venues. I'm not sure everyone is aware of what a vibrant artistic community Greensboro provides, and Sunset Hills is right at the heart of it.

There is a lot of talent in Sunset Hills! I won't attempt to name all the artists in our neighborhood, as I know I'll miss some if I do. But off the top of my head, I can think of musicians, writers, actors, playwrights, composers, singers and visual artists who all live within the boundaries of Sunset Hills.

If you look at the arts calendars around town, you can really see the impact these folks are having. From readings at Scuppernong Books, to performances at Triad Stage, Community Theatre of Greensboro and other performance venues, to concerts and productions at local colleges and churches, Sunset Hills is always well represented.

And living in Sunset Hills makes it convenient for us to take advantage of all the artistic opportunities Greensboro artists provide. Many of us are within walking distance to hear local and regionally known bands at places on Walker Avenue and Spring Garden Street. We can walk to or easily drive to the Coliseum for some of the big name attractions presented there. We are close to both UNC-G and Greensboro College and the excellent theatrical and music performances they produce.

It's a short drive or, for the physically ambitious, walk to downtown Greensboro and all the diverse artistic activity on Elm Street. The historic Carolina Theatre showcases a wealth of musical and theatrical performances. Looking forward, we will easily be able to access the new Steven Tanger Performing Arts Center. When The Tanger Center opens, it will present a whole new world of artistic options. We will be able to see newer touring Broadway shows that could not play at the old War Memorial Auditorium due to its technical limitations. The Greensboro Symphony will also be making its home there. And all of this will be minutes from Sunset Hills.

It is hard to beat our location here in Sunset Hills. It's wonderful for those of us who live here. The proximity to the colleges, theatres, and restaurants are key reasons why many people want to live in our community. Our proximity to all these attractions helps make our neighborhood attractive to so many potential home buyers and helps our property values to rise.

I encourage my neighbors to look around for the chance to support our Sunset Hills artists. Believe me, they are everywhere around town!

(Scott Michaels writes reviews for the News and Record)



## The Trouble with Vines

Part of the charm of living in Sunset Hills is the lovely centrally located park that runs through our neighborhood. The park is an incredible playground filled with all the wonder of mature hardwoods, spring flowering shrubs, bulbs, and trees. One of the best features of the park is also the stream that meanders through this space.

Over time, most of the vegetation on the banks of the stream has become a tangle of vines. The vines consist of poison ivy, wild grape, and a maybe even a few wild roses. Some of the positive aspects of these vines are that they provide habitat and food for birds and other wildlife. However, the wild grape, in particular has become problematic for the health and life of the trees and the other smaller story flora along the creek bed. This particular vine tends to proliferate just about anywhere, climbs into the tops of trees seeking sunlight, and becomes so heavy that it breaks the top out of the tree it is climbing, and eventually kills the host.

It is not an easy creature to manage or tame! It tends to not tolerate shade, so if it can be maintained at ground level, the shade from the trees sometimes keeps it in check. If the vines can be taken out of the trees and relegated to certain places in the park, this may be very beneficial to the existing trees and the more desirable vegetation along the stream. In addition, the stream could again become more of a focal point and lovely feature of the park, for both sight and sound!

The Sunset Hills Garden Club is interested in working toward a plan to manage and control these vines in the park. The Sunset Hills Garden club has been instrumental in maintaining and caring for the park for decades. However, it will take "outside" help, both physically and fiscally to address this challenge. Watch the listserv for times when you may help.

Sincerely,  
Sunset Hills Garden Club/ Park Committee



### **Scott Michaels**

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## Staying free of crime and mischief

By Doug Thurbon

Hello everyone. For the crime watch section of the newsletter I'd like to bring up a few bullet points.

1. Solicitors - Solicitors should have a permit to solicit and it should be prominently displayed at all times - it is a light orange color this year. Each solicitor is required to have one with their name on it. They are also required to carry their own ID to match the solicitor's badge. The story of "my manager has it and he is on the next street over" is a good sign they are not legal solicitors.

The first thing you should ask a solicitor is to see their solicitation permit. They may have it and just not be wearing it. If they don't have one, you would be crazy to give them money, a check or your credit card info.

2. Cars being broken into - 99% of all cars that are broken into are left unlocked and that really gives the phrase "broken into" a bad name. You should always make a report with the police department when you find your car has been rummaged through. It's embarrassing, but, it allows the police to identify the areas where they need to increase patrols. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" is a perfect analogy for this.

Also, leaving your car unlocked with the thought that "well, they won't break my window if I leave it unlocked" is not smart. The truth of the matter is that "you're feeding stray cats" in that the thieves learn which areas leave their cars unlocked and target those areas first. You're calling the criminals to you, and your neighbors. The facts are the facts. I've only known of one car in our neighborhood, In the last three years I've only known of one car in our neighborhood where thieves broke a window to gain access.

The police are reporting is that the criminals use bicycles to ride around the neighborhoods and they just slowly ride down the street checking door handles. So lock your bikes up too!

3. HEY I'M NOT HOME! - That's what you say if you don't stop your mail when you go on vacation and it's seen piled up in your mailbox. It's the same with newspapers piling up at the end of your driveway. Get a neighbor

to pick up your mail and your papers. Or have both stopped until you intend to return home. Also high on the list is a driveway with no tracks after it snows. If you're away, you can ask a neighbor to park their 2nd car in your driveway rather than on the street.

4. Vegetation - Don't let your bushes grow high enough so that they cover your windows. The criminals will have a great place to hide while they go in and out of your window.

5. 911 - The number you should call if you see any suspicious activity. Even if you don't know what to say, call and the police will know the questions to ask you to get the information they need. AND YOU DONT HAVE TO HAVE AN OFFICER COME TO THE DOOR. One of the questions they will ask you is "would you like the officer to come and speak to you?" If you're afraid the bad guy will see the officer at your house and target you out of revenge, just answer NO. But still call and get your neighbor the help they need. One day you may be the one that needs the help.

So far in the month of February we have had zero reported crimes. We've got a great neighborhood. Everyone keep their eyes open and report any suspicious activity.

Everyone take care and stay safe.

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# Food in the 'hood

By Marlene Pratto

The Lighted Christmas Balls (LCBs) were in the trees to celebrate the season. The Running of the Balls was sold out and more entertainment was added this year. A choir from High Point sang on the corner of Ridgeway and Madison. Other musicians were positioned along the running route. Everyone had a great time in perfect outdoor weather in December. The Today show sent a camera man to video the activities of the day: making LCBs, putting them into the trees, interviewing the Smith family and talking with others.

Trailers for collecting food for the food banks were placed on the corner of Madison and Ridgeway and Rolling Road and N. Greenway East. All of this activity brought in almost \$60,000 and over ten tons of canned and packaged food for the local food banks. Thank you Sunset Hills for joining in this fun activity, spreading the cheer in the trees, and helping those less fortunate than most of us.

Thanks to those who unloaded the trailer on Monday mornings and sometimes other days. Elaine Brune and Roger Bardsley and their "little white truck that could" delivered tons of food as did Jonathan Smith and Gardner Sheffield in their vehicles.

We set a high bar this year and made it to the ten tons and over. What goal will we set next year?

Now plan ahead to another food sharing event: the May Pig Pickin'. The date is the first Saturday after Mother's Day and that is May 14th this year. Remember that many volunteers will be needed to cook the meat, set up the tables, organize the games and inform the neighbors. Your help is always appreciated.



In the January snow, the wind and snow collapsed the tents that protected the food in one of the trailers. Luckily the tents fell in and covered the food and it was all taken to a food bank.



# Lighted Christmas Ball Party



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