



The Village Voice

Vol. 9, No. 8

Indian Springs Village, Alabama

November 9, 1999

INDIAN SPRINGS VILLAGE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, November 16, 7:00 p.m.
Indian Springs Village Town Hall

Agenda

- I. Mayor/Council Committee Reports
- II. Ordinances and Resolutions
- III. Citizens' Forum

Indian Springs Village Telephone
Directory Number is 982-1755
Indian Springs Village Website:
www.mantissa.com/ISV.HTML

Editor's Notes

The *Village Voice* is the official organ of Indian Springs Village, AL, established October 16, 1990. The mission of this newsletter is to foster a spirit of community and cooperation. It is the vehicle for reporting the monthly deliberations of the mayor and the council in town council meetings; additionally it provides these officials and other villagers a means of communicating--it is a "voice." Expenses are covered by the efforts and donations of ISV volunteers. Deliveries are made at no charge by volunteer couriers.

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The *Village Voice* is published the second Tuesday of each month. Articles for publication in the Dec. 1999 edition should be submitted by Tuesday noon, Dec. 7. The editor reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication, including signed letters to the editor, which will be published if space permits. All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors of articles; any opinions expressed should not be attributed to the mayor or the council.

Editor's Appreciation to:

ISV aluminum can recyclers for their support
Indian Springs Village couriers for hand delivery
Mildred Wyatt for the masthead drawing
Tricia Crapet, RealtySouth, for production

A Message from the Mayor

By Gene Weingarten, Mayor

The following article appeared in the October 25th issue of the *Birmingham Business Journal*. I believe it should be required reading for all cell phone users. Thanks to the *Journal* and to Ms. Carole Clancy, managing editor of the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*.

I want to shake the hand of Mayor John M. Coyne of Brooklyn, Ohio. Before I tell you why, let me share the latest in a string of incidents that led me to want to meet him.

On a recent Saturday morning, I was going south on Peachtree Road and tried to make a left turn into a Waffle House parking lot behind a taxi from Amigo Cab Co. But the cab driver paused at the entrance to the parking lot, leaving me stuck in the middle of Peachtree Road just as the light was changing and northbound traffic was headed straight at me. I laid on my horn, a defensive reflex I developed driving in other big cities, and after what seemed like forever, the cab proceeded into the parking lot.

I pulled into the space next to the cab, and looking through the window saw that the driver, a woman, was talking on her cell phone. Practically shaking, I started lecturing her on the dangers of talking on the phone while driving, and threatened to call the cab company. She shrugged politely and continued talking. I walked away upset. The cab company never returned my call.

An emergency is different

Had the same situation happened to me--or you--in the Cleveland suburb of Brooklyn, the outcome might have been quite different. That's because in Mayor Coyne's town, driving while talking on a cell phone is illegal and results in a ticket. Exceptions to the ordinance, which was enacted in March, are emergency calls or cell phones that aren't hand-held.

It is a law I heartily endorse. I believe it represents a proactive approach to public safety just as safety belts and laws against drinking and driving do. I don't feel it constitutes an invasion of personal privacy, or that it is in the same category as putting on makeup or similar distractions, as some opponents argued when talk of a similar ordinance emerged in Houston last month--three months after a 22-year-old driver reaching for his cell phone ran over a 12-year-old. Quite the contrary, talking on a cell phone requires listening and other brainpower that is essential to defensive driving. A University of Toronto study said the risk of accidents among drivers talking on cell phones was comparable to driving under the influence of alcohol.

Unlike for drinking, there are no prohibitions against driving while using cell phones. In Gwinnett County, 16-year-old Ashley Laing lost control of her van while calling her mother on a cell phone, killing 2-year-old Ryan Duffner and injuring his mother as they were taking a stroll in their Lawrenceville neighborhood. Laing, who left the scene of the accident, was recently sentenced to 90 days in boot camp.

In Brooklyn, police stopped 150 cars the first six months of the ordinance, letting drivers off with warnings. They started issuing tickets on Sept. 1. Coyne said summonses have been issued to 32 drivers so far. The fines are nominal, just \$2 to \$3, Coyne said, "because the worse thing you can do is give the impression that you are socking them for taxation."

(continued on page 3)

Montessori School Expands

By Ruth Goodwyn, Editor

Site preparation will begin soon on the campus of the Joseph S. Bruno Montessori Academy on Timber Hill Road for three ball courts and an outdoor classroom. Two tennis courts, an outdoor basketball and a volleyball court will be built, as well as an open air classroom for nature study near the pond, all on grounds adjacent to the soccer field. The land was acquired about one year ago, according to Theresa Sprain, headmistress and founder of the school.

A small shopping center on the south side of Highway 119 next to a trailer park, the trailer park, and two residences have been purchased to enlarge the campus to about 18 acres. One of the residences is now in use as a classroom for grades 4-6, housing 22 students and two rabbits. The rabbits are among several animals, including goats, which inhabit the campus, in keeping with the Montessori philosophy that young children employ all their senses to investigate interesting surroundings.

The Montessori Academy was opened in 1982 by Mrs. Sprain as Whispering Pines Montessori School, with four pre-school students studying in two small buildings on 10 acres. The location was chosen by Mrs. Sprain and the school's main benefactor, Joseph S. Bruno, who wanted the environment to be rural, and after visiting several Montessori schools all over the United States.

The school operated as Whispering Pines until 1989, but the name was legally changed to Joseph S. Bruno Montessori Academy at the request of several parents. The school has enlarged to 268 students, from toddlers (some as young as 21 months) to 8th graders. The student population is diverse, and includes African-Americans and Chinese, and some from the Philippines. The most recent to enter the Academy is one whose parents moved from the Ukraine. About 20 percent are on full or partial scholarships granted by the Bruno Foundation. Children with special needs and very gifted children are enrolled, but Mrs. Sprain emphasized that children are not separated by "ability to learn"--with the proper environment and guidance all learn at their own pace.

While most of the students are transported by their parents in riding groups, including those from Indian Springs Village, 25 ride the school-owned busses from two pick-up points, the Southeastern Bible College on Highway 280 and Birmingham's Botanical Gardens.

The Montessori method of preschool and elementary education is based on the teachings and methods of an Italian physician, who spent many years observing children. The method emphasizes initiative and self-direction acquired through physical freedom and self-help instruction materials. With physical freedom a strong sense of responsibility is instilled. The method focuses on children's using their hands while at the same time using their mental faculties. Teachers provide the "orderly and beautiful" environment for learning, but remain in the background as facilitators in keeping with the Montessori philosophy that you don't "impose" knowledge upon children--they must do it in themselves. The goal should be not to fill the child with facts from a pre-selected course of studies, but rather to cultivate his or her own natural desire to learn. The child is motivated from within by a natural curiosity and a love of knowledge.

The first Montessori school was opened in 1907 in Rome, Italy, by Marie Montessori, the first woman in Italy to graduate in medicine from the University of Rome in 1894. She continued her studies in philosophy, psychology, and education. Her educational methods were developed while she was practicing in the psychiatric clinic at the University of Rome and became interested in learning how children learn. Her earliest work was with under-privileged children. Her methods at the first established school were so successful that other Montessori schools were opened. For 40 years Dr. Montessori traveled throughout Europe, India, and the United States, lecturing, writing, and establishing teacher-training programs.

Headmistress Sprain trained at the Memphis Montessori Training Institute after receiving a bachelor of arts degree in both music and history. She earned a master of arts degree in education and later a degree in administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She is certified to teach pre-school through grade 12. She and her husband, Robert (Bob), are the parents of four children, now grown. It was while she was teaching music and their children were in grade school that she became interested in educational methods and later pursued this interest with travel and further education, leading to the founding of the local academy. The academy is funded by the Bruno Foundation for capital expenditures and by tuition for operating expenses.

The Sprains are Village residents who live about five minutes from the school. Bob Sprain cares for the farm animals and wildlife on the grounds and ponds, and makes all purchases for the school's cafeteria.

Teachers at Montessori schools must follow the prescribed curriculum for graduating in schools of education, then receive two more years of special training at institutions such as the one Mrs. Sprain attended or those like Xavier University, Cincinnati, or other universities or colleges where Montessori training is available. More colleges and universities are incorporating Montessori methods into their teacher training program.

About 27 teachers are employed at the Bruno Academy; six of them are extended-day teachers. Hours are 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. each weekday. In the toddlers' classes the teacher-pupil ratio is 1-6; in other grades it is 1-10. The curriculum includes art, music, physical education, along with reading, arithmetic, mathematics, literature and languages, history, social studies, and geography. Students learn through presentations, seminars, hands-on experiences, laboratory experiments, and research projects. Students also learn (by doing) aspects of practical life such as cooking, cleaning, sweeping. Two librarians are available at the excellent resource/media center to help them with research. The web site is <http://www.jsbacademy.org/> for the school.

While the day may be long, it is broken up by the noon meal served in the cafeteria. After the older students are through with classes at 3:00 p.m. they are in supervised study hall for one hour. They may then play soccer, other outdoor or indoor games, or work at the many computers available both in classrooms and in the resource/media center. Grades 4-6 have a 30-minute period after lunch to read, rest, or nap. And the toddlers and 3-year-olds take an hour-and-a-half nap after lunchtime!

Town Council Highlights

October 19, 1999

By Patricia S. Crapet, Town Council Place #2

There was a definite crispness to the air on the night of the Ninth Annual Founders' Day Celebration. The council meeting was held under the pavilion, immediately following a dinner of hamburgers and hot dogs, complete with trimmings, prepared and served by the ISV Pothole Crew, Paul Stephens, Jim Boyett, and Bart Trammell. The crew had some good volunteers in Lola Stephens, Nora Boyett, Connie Trammell, and Herb and Margie Robins, who handled serving, as well as distributing the delicious home-made desserts brought by Villagers. Turnout was less than usual, mostly due to the fundraiser at Oak Mountain Elementary, but the atmosphere was just as exciting as in previous years.

The council meeting was called to order by Mayor Gene Weingarten, with councilpersons Herb Robins, Patricia Crapet, Gary Dennis, Art Johnson, and Stewart Dudley in attendance.

Town Clerk Paul Stephens gave the town's financial report as follows: building permits, \$1,874; zoning fees, \$150; aluminum can recycling, \$103; beer taxes, \$892; and road funds, \$834. The balance in the general fund was \$120,096 and the balance in the road fund was \$88,600.

Gerald Templeton, chairman of the ISV Zoning and Planning Board, presented all council members with a copy of the wireless telecommunications ordinance which his committee has spent several months drafting. The council will review the ordinance and vote on it at the November meeting.

Due to the festive atmosphere, no other business was conducted. The meeting was adjourned to allow Villagers to resume dining and fellowship.

Town Tags for Sale

By Ruth Goodwyn, Editor

Indian Springs Village auto tags with the beautiful ISV logo created by Julia Wyatt Schenk are on sale at Neil's Pharmacy on Highway 119 across from Indian Springs School. The tags are \$8.00 each and make very good Christmas presents for friends or family members who live in the Village.

A Message From the Mayor (continued)

Coyne answers calls every day about the ordinance from all over the country and as far away as Singapore. For the mayor, who's been in office 52 years, there's a sense of déjà vu in all this--in 1966, Brooklyn was the first U. S. city to enact a seat belt law, he said. Thirty years later, I think he's right on track.

ISV Children's Fund

By Patricia Crapet, Town Council Place #2

All of us who live in Indian Springs Village are blessed. We live in nice homes, drive nice cars, wear nice clothes, and send our children to some of the best schools available, both public and private. We live close to our churches, schools, and are privileged to be within a few minutes of some of the best restaurants and shopping in the state. We have wonderful neighbors and the atmosphere in our neighborhoods is one of peaceful co-existence with nature's creatures. Yes, we are blessed with so many wonderful things that we sometimes take for granted our lifestyle and the material benefits that we enjoy. We cannot conceive that there are others who are less fortunate than we are. Others who live just as close as we do to all of these blessings and amenities that we have become accustomed to.

The holiday season is once again upon us. Each year at this time, we as Villagers come together to help local children who need our assistance have a happy Christmas, just as we provide for our own children. In December, 1994, the Indian Springs Village Children's Fund (ISVCF) was established for this very purpose. The brain-child of former Mayor Hub Harrington, this fund has provided food, clothing, and other necessities, as well as toys, to children who find themselves in dire circumstances.

Each year, assisted by the counselors at our Oak Mountain schools, the ISVCF takes on the task of providing for needy families who have children in our community's schools. Mary Veal, OMES counselor, will be providing a list of names and needs from as many as 18 children from 12 different families. These families are carefully screened by Mary and the other counselors before lists are sent home to the parents to determine the wants and needs of the children and their families.

The ISVCF is made up totally of donations from citizens in the Village. **Every penny of every dollar goes directly to the benefit of the children.** There are no administrative costs, with volunteers handling the shopping, wrapping, and distributing of the gifts. Every effort is made to ensure that each child is fed and clothed, and that wishes to Santa come true.

Of course, none of this would happen without the generosity of Indian Springs Villagers. Open your hearts and your checkbooks for this, the most worthy of our yearly ISV projects. Send your donations to: Patricia Crapet, 370 Valley View Road, Indian Springs, Alabama, 35124. Make your checks payable to: Indian Springs Village Children's Fund. Names of those donating will be published in *The Village Voice*. Your donation amount will be kept confidential. If you wish for your name to be kept confidential also, please enclose a note with your donation. To volunteer as a shopper or to help wrap, please call Margie Robins (980-9217). Thank you in advance from the children.

Can Recycling Is November 17

By Ari Johnson, Town Council Place #4

Aluminum recycling is Wednesday, November 17. To recycle, please use light-colored or clear plastic bags with the top of each bag tied with a knot. Take your recycling to the curb before 7:00 p.m. and place near your driveway (opposite household garbage). If we missed your pickup, please call Art Johnson at 988-3217.

In September and October, Indian Springs recyclers recycled 700 lbs. of aluminum. This brought the ten-month total to 3,833 lbs., or an average of 383 lbs. per month.

Last month your ISV recycling volunteers were Margie and Herb Robins, Nancy Johnson, Pat Potter, Paul Skokel and son, Sharon Durbin, and Art Johnson.

Thank you for recycling. Watch for ISV recycling reminders along Highway 119, Indian Crest Drive, and entrances to Homestead.

Volunteers Are Needed

The recycling program continues to grow, and new volunteers are needed to meet current and future needs. Volunteers spend approximately one hour per month on the Wednesday evening following the Tuesday town council meeting. We also need standby volunteers to fill in for regular ones. Recycling teams work in pairs, one driver and one person to pick up the cans. **Volunteers with a pickup or vehicle with a trailer hitch are especially needed.** To volunteer, please call Art Johnson at 988-3217. Recycling is a volunteer community project; the proceeds help support *The Village Voice*.

Building Permit Requests

By Murty Martin, Town Engineer

One building permit was issued in October to the Criss Family, 5532 Double Oak Lane, for additions and driveway.

Big Response; Nothing Settled

By Ruth Goodwyn, Editor

Paul and Lola Stephens report that Villagers responded to the appeal in last month's *Village Voice* for help with the needy family in Alabaster. The family has been befriended by the Stephens' daughter, Terry. The donation of a used trailer was requested as the family needs living quarters. Villagers called to offer monetary donations; several suggestions included getting the family settled in government housing. So far the matter has not been resolved, but Lola is open to suggestions. If you can help, call her at 988-4672.

News Around the Village

By Ruth Goodwyn, Editor

Congratulations

Ron and Sandy Luster are the proud grandparents of Grace Ann Eddins, who was born on October 14. Grace Ann, the first child to the Lusters' daughter, Karen, and husband Pat Eddins, weighed seven pounds, one ounce and was born at Centennial Women's Hospital in Nashville, where the former Villager and her family now reside. Congratulations to all!

ISS to Honor John Badham

The fall play, *Romeo and Juliet*, will be performed November 12 in the Town Hall on the Indian Springs campus for the theater dedication to John Badham. A leader in the film industry, Badham is a highly renowned alumnus of the school and a member of the Board of Governors. His expertise in film and theater helped to guide the design of the Town Hall fine arts center. He has supported the school students and community over the years through the General Henry Badham Scholarship program.

Local Schools to be Toured

During the American Association of School Librarians convention being held in Birmingham this week, tours have been arranged for three school library/media centers in the Village. On Thursday, November 11, the Indian Springs School Town Hall and library/media center will host visitors from all over the U. S. attending the convention who elect to tour local libraries. Other schools to be visited are the Oak Mountain Elementary and Oak Mountain Middle schools. Schools from the area where the convention is held are selected to be toured on the basis of their excellence.

North Shelby Library Arts & Crafts Show

The second annual North Shelby Library arts and crafts show will be held on Saturday, December 4, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. A registration fee of \$10. will reserve a table to showcase crafts or food items. For more information call Judy Lawson at 439-5510.

The library will be closed on Veterans' Day Nov. 11 and for Thanksgiving Nov. 24-26. Children's Book Week is November 15-21. Story Time with Mr. Mac will be held Thursday, Nov. 18, at 10:30 a.m.; a special **Tuesday** Story Time with Mr. Mac will be held Nov. 23 at 10:30 a.m.

To Observe Big 50th

Mrs. and Mrs. James Norman Wood of 539 Caldwell Mill Circle plan quietly to mark their 50th wedding anniversary November 23. The couple has lived in ISV about a decade. Their children are daughter Jan Arledge and her husband Scott, 943 Copena Dr., and a son, Tommy Wood and his wife Gale of Roanoke, AL. The Woods are couriers for *The Village Voice*.