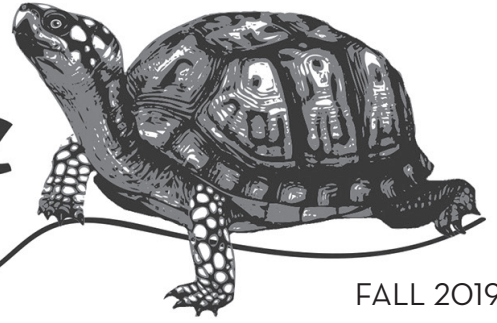


# The Optimist



FALL 2019

INDIANHEAD LEHIGH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## *A Spooktacular Party and Potluck* **Saturday, October 26 • 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. • Optimist Park**

Polish your fangs and pull out your scarespray for the annual Indianhead Lehigh Halloween Party and Potluck Dinner. Open to residents young and old, the event will feature hair-raising music by Tao Jones and the Ontological Elephants and an array of gruel fit for zombies and ghouls.

Bring potluck dishes to the clubhouse by 5:00 p.m.; dinner begins at 5:15 p.m. IHLNA will provide beverages, plates, and utensils, but consider bringing your own eating tools to reduce waste. Volunteers are needed before, during, and after the event to decorate, coordinate, and clean-up. Contact Grant Gelhardt ([grant.gelhardt@gmail.com](mailto:grant.gelhardt@gmail.com)) if you're willing to add your spooktacular talents and time.

## *In This Issue*

- Halloween Party and Potluck
- News & Notes
- IHLNA Board Request
- Sustainable Indianhead Lehigh Community (SILC)
- Hartsfield Corner
- Aging in Place
- IHLNA Development

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## *Fall/Winter Calendar*

### **Sunday, October 20**

N3: Technology for Seniors  
Optimist Park, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

### **Saturday, October 26**

Halloween Party & Potluck  
Optimist Park, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

### **Sunday, November 3**

Daylight Saving Time ends at 2:00 a.m.; turn back clocks one hour (fall back).

### **Sunday, November 17**

Pony Party and Petting Zoo  
4:00-5:00 p.m., baseball field

### **Friday, December 20**

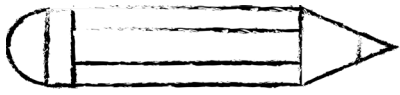
Holiday Lights Bike Ride  
Optimist Park, 6:30 p.m.



Bygone joy: Halloween party at a Tallahassee school, 1953

*Courtesy of State Library and Archives, Florida Memory*

## NEWS & Notes



### Potlucks and Ponies

For years, IHLNA residents gathered at Optimist Park on the second Sunday of each month for a friendly potluck dinner. Adults chatted; kids played; everyone ate and enjoyed the camaraderie. Free pony rides, and then a petting zoo, were added to the November event as a special attraction for families. However, consistently low participation in recent years caused the potluck program to be suspended last spring.

But, youngsters, don't despair! On November 17, IHLNA again will offer free pony rides and a petting zoo for neighborhood kids, from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m., at Optimist Park. These activities will take place on the baseball field. The petting zoo typically includes rabbits, baby goats, and other farm animals that kids and even adults love to cuddle. For information, contact Doug Martin at martin.douglas.w@gmail.com.

### Holiday Lights Ride

Fall and winter are filled with traditions, and IHLNA's Holiday Lights Bike Ride is a neighborhood favorite. Join us with bells and lights for the seventh annual bike ride on Friday, December 20, at 6:30 p.m., at Optimist Park. During our pedal through the neighborhood, about three miles, we'll pass the best holiday lights and decorations. We welcome adults, kids riding independently on two-wheels accompanied by a parent, and children "as cargo." All bikes must have front and back lights, and we give extra credit for holiday lights! At the end of the ride, please join us for a traditional treat of cookies and hot chocolate at 1911 Wahalaw Court. For additional information, contact Marie-Claire at (850) 728-7514.



## Safety First

Former Florida State Trooper Walter Liddell Jr., our neighborhood's dedicated safety watchdog, can't help but notice when people wearing dark clothing and listening to music with ear buds are walking with traffic in the roadway. "They're an accident waiting to happen," he says. As the end of daylight savings approaches and days become shorter, he has several reminders for folks who walk and ride bikes in the Nenes.

- Always walk against oncoming traffic and be sure to wear a safety vest, which you can purchase for a few dollars at a hardware or box store.
- When cycling, always ride with the traffic and, of course, wear a helmet and safety vest.
- Always carry some form of identification for the benefit of first responders in case you do have an accident.
- As you walk along our tree-lined streets, be aware of your surroundings. If you see something that doesn't look or feel right, call the Tallahassee Police Department at (850) 891-4200. Safety is their first priority.
- When cold weather finally arrives, be sure to check on neighbors, especially seniors.
- If you leave town for the holidays, stop your newspaper and ask a neighbor to pick up mail and packages to foil the efforts of "porch pirates," who look out for home deliveries.
- Finally, regardless of the time of year, lock your vehicle when it's parked.



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# IHLNA Invites Your Help

By Mary Louise Bachman  
IHLNA At-Large Board Member

After collectively accruing fifty-plus years of service to the Indianhead Lehigh Neighborhood Association, four members of the board of directors are rotating off for personal reasons and to open participation to other residents. Secretary Marie-Claire Leman, Treasurer Ashley Arrington, and At-Large Members Connie Bersok and Sandy Neidert are retiring from the board, although not from participation. Each has made significant contributions to the Nene community, and the board thanks them sincerely for their input and efforts.

Two people have volunteered to fill the at-large seats, but the secretary and treasurer positions are open. If you or someone you know might be interested in these jobs, please contact Board President Grant Gelhardt at [grant.gelhardt@gmail.com](mailto:grant.gelhardt@gmail.com).

When seeking volunteers for the board, we sometimes are asked whether a "neighborhood association" is the same as a "homeowners' association." Actually, they are different entities. A homeowners' association usually has a mandatory membership requirement that includes yearly fees as well as restrictions and rules that members agree to follow. It also may pay elected officers for their service. Neighborhood associations such as IHLNA usually are composed of volunteers, generally charged with promoting and maintaining the environmental integrity, safety, and well-being of the community. The annual dues is an optional contribution to support the group's mission. IHLNA's board members are all volunteers and represent a wide range of interests and expertise, which is vital to understanding the needs of a community. In addition, all residents may enjoy Nene programs and products regardless of their membership.

The Indianhead Lehigh neighborhood is composed of diverse, interesting, and capable citizens who have much to offer. Contributions and service take many forms besides being on the board. Many hands are needed to successfully accomplish our activities—Nene Fest, Halloween Party, Crime Watch, Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes, hurricane preparedness, and monitoring governmental activities that may affect our area. If one of these activities interests you, or if you hear about something that could benefit the neighborhood, please get involved! Your help and ideas will always be welcomed.



*Thank you for your service!*

**Connie Bersok** (left),  
**Marie-Claire Leman** (center),  
**Ashley Arrington** (right);  
**Sandy Neidert**, not pictured

## CELEBRATING

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## Create a Backyard Habitat

By Connie Bersok

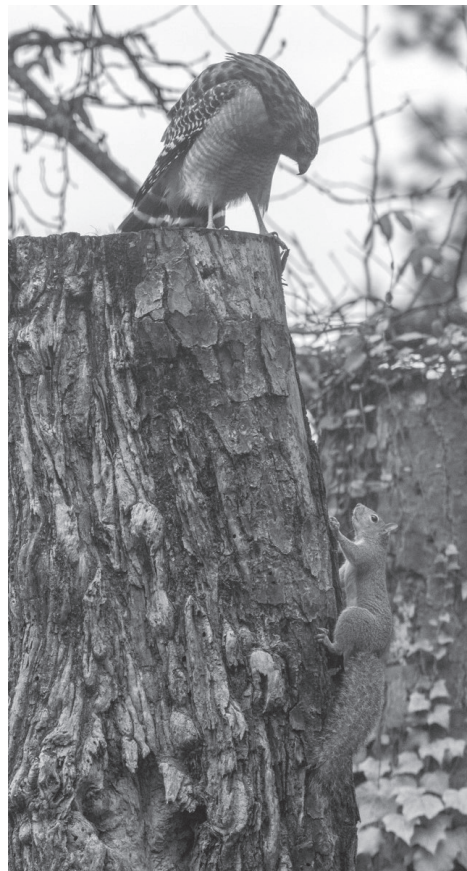
We are so fortunate to live in a neighborhood where we encounter wildlife without leaving home—the hoot of owls, swoop of hawks, surprise of a snake, or visit from our neighborhood mascot, the box turtle. Is there any way to make this oasis better for our urban wildlife neighbors? The answer clearly is yes!

A National Wildlife Federation program called “Garden for Wildlife” provides guidance about how to create or enhance a wildlife habitat in your yard ([www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife](http://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife)). The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission hosts a “Backyards and Beyond” initiative with Florida-specific information (<http://floridanaturetrackers.com/backyard>). The Leon County Extension Office can assist through its “Florida-Friendly Yards and Neighborhood” program (<https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowner.htm>). The key elements of a wildlife habitat that are common to all of these programs are food, water, shelter, and a place to raise young.

- **FOOD**—Native plants provide nectar, seeds, nuts, fruits, berries, foliage, and pollen that support an array of wildlife. To provide habitat specifically for butterflies, be sure to include plants on which the larvae (caterpillars) feed. Most songbirds eat insects in addition to seeds and berries; a variety of native trees and shrubs will provide a well-rounded diet. The right native plant in the right location in your yard not only will serve the needs of many native wildlife species, but it also will be sustainable and viable in the long term.

- **WATER**—All animals need water to survive, and some need it for bathing or breeding as well. You don’t need to dig up your yard to create a pond (unless you want to); a birdbath or saucer of water can suffice for many species.
- **SHELTER**—Wildlife need places to find shelter from weather, hide from predators or stalk prey, and raise their young. Shrubs, trees, dead trees (snags), logs, and leaf litter all provide cover and nesting areas.
- **GO NATIVE**—To create or improve a wildlife habitat, invasive and exotic plant species must be removed and replaced with native species. Combine these elements with sustainability practices, and you’re now ready to get your habitat acknowledged. The National Wildlife Foundation presents its criteria for certification at [www.nwf.org/certifiedwildlifehabitat](http://www.nwf.org/certifiedwildlifehabitat).

*Connie Bersok is a long-time IHLNA resident and a semi-retired Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner.*



*“This nature pole isn’t big enough for both of us!”*  
Red-shouldered hawk and pesky squirrel, photographed by master naturalist and St. Mark’s Refuge ambassador Nick Baldwin in his backyard on Chowkeebin Nene.

MELISSA FARLEY

850-591-9590

HAIR STYLIST



# Creating a Community Wildlife Habitat

By Marney Richards

*"Chances are, you have never thought of your garden—indeed, of all the space on your property—as a wildlife preserve that represents the last chance we have for sustaining plants and animals that were once common throughout the U.S. But that is exactly the role our suburban landscapes are playing and will play even more in the near future." —Douglas W. Tallamy*

Imagine taking the idea of creating backyard habitats to the next level. Imagine Indianhead and Lehigh neighbors worked together to plant native plants, to work on habitat restoration projects, to link yards, common areas, and even a school together to form a Community Wildlife Habitat.

In a program sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), communities earn community-wide certification by certifying individual properties—homes, parks, schools, businesses—in their community as Certified Wildlife Habitats, and by doing education and outreach in their community. Education and outreach points are earned by engaging community members in habitat restoration projects, providing resources like native plant lists, and communicating through websites and social media.

Through this program, our neighborhood could enhance and restore islands and corridors of wildlife habitat in an urban area, and connect to existing work around climate and community resiliency, urban forestry, water conservation, neighborhood beautification, and more.



Monarch  
sunflower

Photo by  
Marie Lehmann

It would be a grand project, with lots of different ways for people to be involved. Some of the ways to build a project and work toward certification are:

- Name the project, gather a team, develop goals, track progress;
- Write press releases, get support from city/county officials, hold a kick-off event;
- Coordinate a family nature event, stream cleanup, or native plant sale;
- Create/maintain a FB or social media group for the project;
- Hold a garden tour featuring certified habitats in the neighborhood;
- Write a regular column in our community newsletter about backyard habitats; and
- Create a backyard habitat and certify your yard.

We would be the *first neighborhood* in Tally to certify as a community habitat! The project would fit beautifully with goals of Sustainable Neighborhoods!

I work with the Florida Wildlife Federation, an affiliate of NWF. I am currently working with Hartsfield Elementary School on their Schoolyard Habitat and Eco-School certification projects with NWF. If you are interested in being part of such a community project or would like more information, please contact me at: [marneyrichards370@gmail.com](mailto:marneyrichards370@gmail.com). You can read more at <https://www.nwf.org/CommunityWildlifeHabitat>.

Marney Richards works for the Florida Wildlife Federation as an Environmental Education Outreach Coordinator. Quote source: Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants

## Calling Indianhead Lehigh Artists of All Ages!

Our neighborhood's aging-in-place organization—Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes (N3)—is planning a silent auction of local artists' work as a fundraiser to help us provide more services to more older adults in our community. If you'd be willing to create and donate artwork for the auction to be held at Nenefest 2020, please contact Anne Barrett at [mchocchip@comcast.net](mailto:mchocchip@comcast.net) or Krista Dolan at [dolan.krista@gmail.com](mailto:dolan.krista@gmail.com).

# Excitement in the Air

By Dr. Rhonda Blackwell-Flanagan  
Principal, Hartsfield Elementary School

## Hello, Indianhead Lehigh Community and Friends of Hartsfield!

We are excited about the new academic year and have had a great opening to the 2019-20 school year. Hartsfield is a school that establishes a culture of care through connection and kindness. We promote the principles and practices of Conscious Discipline to increase the social-emotional learning of all students and maximize learning in a safe environment. As part of the Indianhead Lehigh community, we value your support and thank you for your ongoing partnership with, and contributions to, your neighborhood school.

This year we are celebrating with pride the improvement of our school grade to a "C." Our theme last year was *Reaching Our Goals With Heart and Soul*, and that is what we did. We plan to do it again this year, with goals to continue improving our school.

### On the Hartsfield Horizon

Lots of exciting things are happening at Hartsfield this year, and we invite you to join us on our pathway to excellence.

- At the end of the school year in May, we partnered with John Wesley United Methodist Church, one of our faith-based partners, for a weekend of "On Mission Together." JWUMC's members helped with service projects around campus, hosted a community concert, and shared a Saturday evening dinner over dialogue.
- We are beginning the second year of school-wide implementation of the Conscious Discipline program. This approach has changed the culture and climate of learning at Hartsfield as well as the way we think about managing student behavior and how we teach children to self-regulate.
- We are in the process of transitioning to a creative curriculum called Primary Years—International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. We will apply for candidacy in October and once approved, we will complete the IB program pipeline in Leon County Schools that connects Hartsfield to the IB Programs at Fairview Middle School and Rickards High School.
- In addition, we are expanding our curriculum and projects to become an EcoSchool, a growing phenomenon in education. EcoSchools encourage



young people to engage in their environment by giving them the opportunity to actively protect it. The process starts in the classroom, expands to the school, and eventually fosters change in the community at large. This year, one of our initial projects will be to create a sustainable habitat on our campus in the form of a Butterfly Garden!

- Finally, we have applied for grants to support our STEM initiatives, which include materials for our seven 3D printers, Maker Space project learning, and the startup for a Robotics Club.

Great things are happening, and we invite you to come out and experience Hartsfield! We hope you will join us for the following outreach events this fall.

**October 8: Pastries for Parents and Partners**

**November 8: Veteran's Day Breakfast and Parade**

We look forward to another great year ahead, and we Wish You Well!

Above: Dr. Rhonda Blackwell-Flanagan joins students, teachers, and administrators participating in the Nene Fest 5K & Fun Run, the annual neighborhood race to support Hartsfield. Adults, left to right: Jordan Seymour, Taylor Miller, Tara Lynch, Lisa Thompson, Nancy Oakley, Blackwell-Flanagan; students, l to r: Amelia Birmingham, Graeme Lemons, Ingrid Hanley. Photo by Mary Jo Peltier



# N3: One Year Later

By Betsy Tabac

We opened our doors, metaphorically speaking, in May 2018, offering information and referrals for Indianhead Lehigh elders in three categories. Throughout the year, we added referral categories and social opportunities, and in January 2019, we offered the first education program. Leslie Spencer from AARP talked about large and small home modifications that elders can make to stay safe in their homes. In 2019, more social opportunities occurred via “Meet and Greets” in four areas of the neighborhood. We also recruited fifteen fabulous direct service volunteers, who have provided free services seventy-three times—tasks such as rides, grocery shopping, home repairs, and yard work—and another eighteen people to help from time to time with administrative tasks.

Now that we are up and running, we are beginning to fine-tune what we do. We want to answer the question, “What is the greatest need among elders in Indianhead Lehigh that we can do something about?” The two-pronged process includes a survey of elders and secondary research by an ad hoc committee of elder care practitioners. If you are seventy-five years or older, you already may have been contacted, or soon will be, about the survey. We appreciate everyone who has answered the survey questions. You are helping us focus our resources.

While we are sorting out programmatic priorities, we also are dealing with administrative issues. We wish to expand the board of trustees by adding individuals with board experience and others with specific skills—especially in the areas of accounting, fund raising, and board development. We also are working to take full advantage of Club Express, software we pay for each month that helps organizations like ours to operate efficiently.

N3 would like to partner with more residents, and there are numerous ways to do that. For example, partners might host a Meet and Greet, join the N3 board of trustees, help with fund raising, or share knowledge about working with frail elders. Help us create an organizational infrastructure that ensures N3’s longevity and ability to help elders remain at home as long as possible as they age.

*The Optimist* — FALL 2019

**N<sup>3</sup>** Neighbor to Neighbor  
IN THE NENES



For additional information, visit [AgingInNeneland.org](http://AgingInNeneland.org) or contact (850) 901-7818 or [ageinplace@earthlink.net](mailto:ageinplace@earthlink.net).

Above: Leslie Spencer, associate state director of AARP Tallahassee, shows how homes can be modified for elder residents during N3’s first educational outreach.

Photo by Bob Burke

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# Development in the Neighborhood

By Ramona Abernathy-Paine

## Magnolia Drive Multiuse Trail

Two phases of the project to put sidewalks along Magnolia Drive are nearly complete—between South Monroe and Meridian Streets, and from Meridian to Pontiac Drive. However, existing sidewalks in the latter section will be modified to reduce the width from 10 to 7 feet and to add a 3-foot strip of grass between the sidewalk and the curb. The planting strip will include low vegetation and irrigation features. Work to begin putting electrical lines underground is scheduled to start in early 2020.

Plans are about 90 percent complete for phases of the project from Pontiac Drive to Chowkeebine Nene; this work will involve placing all utilities underground. The county/city Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency is contacting residents along Magnolia to acquire easements as needed and ensure that the work fits agency and residents' needs. Construction between Pontiac and Chowkeebine will continue after the first two phases are completed. The project also will include installation of new streetlights along Magnolia.

Blueprint will manage a cooperative project with the city and county to redesign the Jim Lee intersection. A traffic signal will be installed during later stages of this project.

## Lafayette Gardens

HTG Properties is in the planning process for building Lafayette Gardens on the property east of The Moon.

This “work force” housing in three buildings will offer a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments, with most being one bedroom. The complex will have one entrance from Lafayette Street. An existing alley that runs behind the apartment property to Magnolia Drive will have pedestrian access only, although it will remain accessible by utility and emergency vehicles servicing businesses along the south side of Lafayette Street. Still in the design phase with permitting not yet started, the project is slated to begin construction in 2020.

## Tallahassee Suites

Equinox Development, doing business as Tallahassee Suites and the company that built Chuy's Restaurant, had a presubmittal review for construction of a small hotel on land between Chuy's and the now-closed Mongolian Grill. Surprised to find the design would require deviations to the building code, the developer has taken no further action. Tallahassee Suites is the second firm to explore building on the site.

## Chick-Fil-A

Chick-Fil-A has proposed building a new store at the edge of the Winn-Dixie Plaza at Magnolia and Governors Square Boulevard. Given the nearby traffic problems caused by Chick-Fil-A and Starbuck's, the City is requiring both businesses to arrange a greater area for drive-thru vehicles to stand without interfering with traffic on adjacent streets.

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## IHLNA Real Estate Report

Jan. 1-Aug. 31, 2019

By Terry Anne Kant-Rauch

During the first eight months of 2019, forty-six houses were listed through the Multiple Listing System. Thirty-three were sold, and among the thirteen active listings, nine are under contract and expected to close. For the same period in 2018, only twenty-three homes had sold.

Here's a summary of 2019 data relating to homes that have sold.

- Asking price for homes: \$75K-\$279K
- Sale price for homes that closed: \$50K-\$279K
- Size range of homes: 952-2,552 square feet
- Days on the market before sale: 1-339

- Price/sq. ft. of homes: \$33-\$163
- Sold home averages: 1,528 sq. ft. and \$110/sq. ft.

For current active listings, asking prices range from \$119K to \$355K. Median size is 1,485 sq. ft., and median asking price is \$175K or \$125 per sq. ft.

Unlike most neighborhoods, Indian Head/Lehigh is more complicated to price homes as a seller or buyer, or to predict outcomes, due to variations in size, condition, updates, land, and home style. Most Realtors will provide a free Current Market Analysis for a home, but be sure to select someone familiar with the complexities (read: quirkiness) of our unique neighborhood so they can factor in such details.

*Kant-Rauch of Kant Realty of North Florida has been an Indianhead Lehigh Acres resident for nearly thirty years.*