



Highlights:

PAGE 10: LOCKTOBERFEST



PAGE 12: PORCH POURS



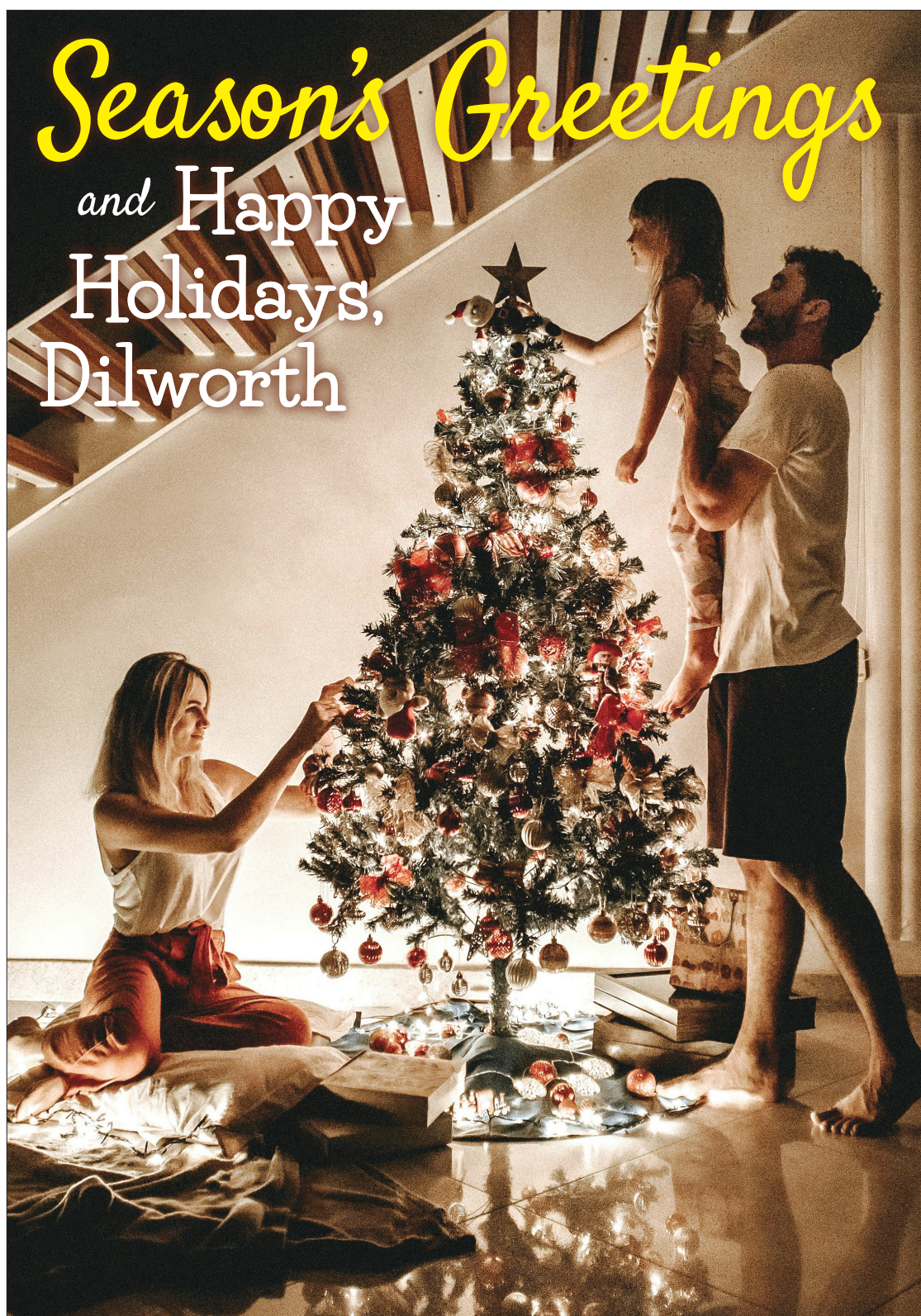
PAGE 20: SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY



also ...

Dilworth Home Tour
Santa Claus is Coming
Land Use Committee

Dilworth QUARTERLY



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Deadlines for the next issue:

ADS: January 16

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ARTICLES: January 19

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Neighbors Making a Difference

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi neighbors,

As 2025 winds down, now is the perfect time to slow down, connect, and appreciate all that our beautiful community has to offer. It's also a great time to reflect on the past year, so I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks to a very special group in our community — our dedicated Dilworth Community Association (DCA) Board and the extended volunteer groups who work with us.

When I first moved to Dilworth (almost 10 years ago!) and began working with — then joining — the DCA Board, my first internal question was, “Well, what do they do?”. I’ve since learned and come to appreciate that there is very little the DCA Board *doesn't* do when it comes to advocating for Dilworth, hosting events to help our neighbors engage, honoring our history, and raising money to support our community. Serving as president this last year has given me even more insight into the passion and hours that our Board dedicates to this all-volunteer labor of love. Some recent (and amazing) stats highlighting the Board's successes include:

■ Keeping our green spaces healthy and protecting our tree canopy.

The work done by Nancy, Ruth Ann, Steve, and Liz is some of the most visible in our daily lives. From hosting hands-on workdays to researching how to preserve the natural habitat of Latta Park, this fascinating group pours so much into finding the best options for planting, water management, and even appropriate lighting levels. This year, the Tree Canopy committee raised enough to bring in at least 15 mature trees to replace ones we're losing to age. They also continue to seek ways to protect or replace trees, which are not only great for the environment but also one of our neighborhood's best features!

■ Staying closely involved with development in and around Dilworth.

Our Land Use Committee Chair, Ellen, and several current and past DCA Board members dedicate significant time to working with developers, the City of Charlotte, and other specialists involved from the “idea” stage through construction. The Land Use committee has been especially busy this last year as new proposals are coming into our area at a rapid clip. They've been providing guidance to help preserve the character, height, and historic charm of our community as new buildings begin sharing our space. If you want to learn way too much about zoning laws, this is your group!

■ Raising funds to help power the community.

Did you know that proceeds raised by the Dilworth Home Tour and the Ladies' Party play a dual purpose? These funds help pay for the events themselves and running the DCA, but a portion of each is also reinvested in charitable causes within our community. Home Tour and Ladies Party proceeds have gone toward Sedgefield Middle, Pat's Place, and the Dilworth Soup Kitchen to help support the needs of these organizations and more. Seeing the impact this group has made is a big source of pride for the Board and a great example of the many ways the DCA seeks to give back!

This small snapshot couldn't possibly cover all the DCA does, yet it's a tangible reminder of what good can happen when we come together with a strong sense of purpose for our community. If you have an interest in being an active part of shaping what happens in Dilworth, consider joining the DCA Board. Nominations generally take place in November, but volunteering on a committee or learning more about what we do happens all year long.

There are several easy ways to engage with the DCA: join our monthly meetings (first Wednesday of each month), volunteer at DCA-sponsored events, and keep up with the latest news by subscribing to the Dilworth Express. You can always reach us via our website: DilworthOnline.org or via email: president@dilworthonline.org to learn how to get involved or ask questions about our neighborhood.

Wishing you a season full of warmth, happiness, and connection with your friends and family.

An Open Call for New Voices

FROM THE EDITOR

As I “learn the ropes” as the new editor of the Dilworth Quarterly, I’ve quickly come to appreciate the dedication and camaraderie of the many people that contribute their time and efforts to making the Dilworth Quarterly. Their enthusiasm, input and patience are a reflection of just how strong our neighborhood spirit is. Thank you for making me feel welcome.

Every magazine thrives on shared voices and fresh perspectives. I’m pleased that this, the final edition of 2025 features three new contributors: Thomas Bennett, Kanku Michelson and Jodi Dykstra-Woodcock (my editor-in-chief!). For the new year, I invite you—readers, neighbors, new arrivals, and longtime residents alike—to help us shape the stories that matter most. Whether you love writing, photography or reviewing local businesses (and speaking of that, we are in need of a new writer for our popular Merchant News segment) and you’d like to get involved, please email me: halcyonma@gmail.com. New ideas about what you’d like to see in future Dilworth Quarterly issues are welcomed, too!

With best wishes for the holiday season.



John Woodcock
halcyonma@gmail.com

In Memoriam

Prominent Dilworth leader Mary Hopper
leaves an impactful legacy



We often hear that accomplishments “take a village,” but it is the leadership of the village that strengthens what is gained. Mary’s death on September 18 deprived us of a long-time activist and leader for Dilworth and the greater community. Serving as DCA president twice, Planning Commission chair, executive director of University City Partners, and on national boards, Mary was a tireless advocate for civic engagement and a better community. Her obituary, detailing so much more and exhibiting her legendary wit, can be found at: legacy.com/us/obituaries/charlotte/name/mary-hopper-obituary?id=59833271



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BOARD MEETINGS

Stay tuned via the Dilworth Express, our weekly e-newsletter. DCA Board Meetings are open to the public. Join us at 6pm the first Wednesday of the month at the Tom Sykes Recreation Center. Time will be allotted for Q&A.

DILWORTH QUARTERLY STAFF

John Woodcock

Incoming Editor

Mary Beth Sensabaugh

Advertising Sales

Casey Horgan

Copy Editor

Wade Baker

Designer

CONTRIBUTORS:

Jennifer Baehr

Thomas Bennett

Amanda Blackburn

Abbey Boggs

Ellen Citarella

Jodi Dykstra-Woodcock

Julie Funderburk

Ruth Ann Grissom

Steve Hofstatter

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Autumn Reminders

Hello gentle readers,

As we approach one of my favorite seasons and time to live in our beloved historic Dilworth, the crown jewel of the historic District Commission, towering trees boasting their autumnal glory are about to take a rest from all the work of shading us and keeping us cooled all summer.

As Miss Dilworthia loves to traverse about the neighborhood, be sure and keep all of your sidewalks tidy from leaves, and especially those acorns as she does not have time to mend from a broken hip with all of her neighbourhood society engagements.

As we all know, this community is known for its walkability so she implores you to support all of the local shops, restaurants, bakeries, flower shops and yoga studios. It was a hard summer for us; we lost four restaurants on East Boulevard. We pride ourselves as a neighborhood where we can walk to things. We have to support all of those businesses so we have something to walk to!.

Continue with your holiday parties on the front porch and if you see me, walking by with my hand waving in the air, I hope you'll extend a warm invitation to me and all neighbors passing by for a lovely libation on the porches we love so much.

PS: Remember to celebrate one season at a time. Nothing makes me more verklempt than a pumpkin or fall gourd next to a Santa Claus and eight tiny reindeer!

Love,
Miss Dilworthia

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Founders - Andrew & Liz Porter

A Perfect Day in Dilworth

By Thomas Bennett

If you spend any time online, you've probably seen one of those "Perfect Day in (insert city here)" videos that showcase the best of what different places have to offer. They're inspiring and often make you wonder about unique experiences closer to home. It got me thinking — what would a perfect day look like right here in Dilworth?

Everyone's version looks a little different. Some would start with a long run down East Boulevard and through the parks, while others may begin with a Bloody Mary or mimosa at 10 a.m. For me, it's somewhere in between. Not too curated, not too busy. Just

**Not too curated, not too busy.
Just one of those crisp fall
Saturdays when the temperature
is cool, the leaves are changing,
the neighborhood seems to hum
at the perfect pace, and you
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know without planning to.**

one of those crisp fall Saturdays when the temperature is cool, the leaves are changing, the neighborhood seems to hum at the perfect pace, and you somehow see five people you know without planning to.

I usually start my morning with as much caffeine as a local shop is legally allowed to put in its cold brew. That means

a stop at Backyard Brew or Sunflour Baking Company for coffee and a "light" breakfast, though Backyard Brew's breakfast burrito is anything but light. Their porch setup makes it easy to linger and talk to whoever walks by, while Sunflour's biscuits tend to get the day started off right. Coffee in hand, I'll cut through or meander around Latta Park, passing the long-running Dilworth Tennis Club matches on the nearby courts, the volunteer gardeners tending the flowerbeds and the playground, already busy by 9 a.m. Some weekends I'll wander farther down toward Freedom Park, where the open green space makes the city feel a world away.

By late morning, the competitive side comes out. I'll meet a few friends for a quick tennis set at Latta or shoot around on the basketball courts before deciding whether brunch is earned. Dilworth Neighborhood Grille is a go-to, especially when the weather's good and the garage doors are open. Other days, I'll skip straight to a slow bike ride along the Little Sugar Creek Greenway that ties neighborhoods together and reminds you how connected Charlotte can be.

Afternoons in Dilworth have their own rhythm. If there's a game on (and on a perfect fall Saturday, there usually is), I'll grab a stool on the patio at Ed's Tavern, order wings, and settle in for a while. When there isn't, I'll drift toward Paper Skyscraper, where I inevitably buy something I don't need, or stop by Pour Olive on East Boulevard for a quick olive oil and balsamic tasting before heading back home. It's that part of the day when everything slows down but the neighborhood maintains its vibrancy, with dogs enjoying their afternoon walks, bikes coasting by, and front porches filling back up as the sun drops lower.

When the light turns golden, dinner depends on the mood. If it's a special night, Leluia Hall, one of the neighborhood's newest additions, delivers elevated Southern cooking in a space that already

feels like a classic. Dolce Osteria, tucked just off East Boulevard, is another favorite — small, warm, and unapologetically Italian. For something easy, Kid Cashew hits that perfect middle ground of good food, lively energy, and open-air seating that feels built for this neighborhood. Ed's Tavern easily doubles as a dinner spot, too, if the game's still going.

To close out the day, there are a few good moves. Seemingly Overzealous, the new ice cream shop on East Boulevard, has already earned its spot in the Dilworth rotation with its frozen ice cream sandwiches that live up to the hype. If I'm leaning more toward a drink, Dilworth Tasting Room or Foxcroft Wine Co. both make for an easy finish, relaxed and candlelit, with just enough buzz to make you want to linger.

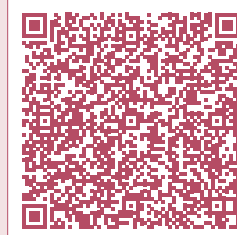
The walk home is always the best part. The sidewalks are quiet but not empty, porch lights glow, and the air carries that early-evening chill that reminds you why fall in Charlotte is hard to beat. A perfect day in Dilworth isn't about trying to do everything; it's about appreciating what's already here. The beauty of this neighborhood is that it has more than enough to fill a day, all within a few blocks, and it somehow always feels like home.

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but not empty, porch lights
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Charlotte is hard to beat.*

What's going on in Dilworth?

Dilworth Express delivers important and timely information to your inbox every Tuesday morning.

The Express is your best way to receive time-sensitive information concerning our neighborhood. Each week, we inform you about any proposals or actions city and county agencies have taken affecting Dilworth, as well as:



- Neighborhood events and festivals
- Neighborhood alerts
- DCA meeting information
- Zoning & land use issues
- Dilworth business news
- Community events, workshops, seminars, & classes

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A Record-Breaking Year for the Dilworth Home Tour

By Fran Miller

The 2025 Dilworth Home Tour was nothing short of spectacular. This year's event sold out, drawing a record number of attendees from neighbors and visitors alike. Thanks to the incredible support of our community, we also raised the largest amount in the tour's history, and these funds will directly benefit the Dilworth Community Association (DCA) and Dilworth Cares.

Mother Nature played her part as well, blessing us with beautiful weather that made strolling from home to home an absolute joy. Each stop on the tour showcased the charm, history, and creativity that make Dilworth one of Charlotte's most beloved neighborhoods.

First and foremost, we extend our heartiest gratitude to the generous homeowners who opened their doors for such a meaningful cause.

Each home on the tour reflected the unique charm and diversity of our neighborhood: an amazing modern upscale Mount Vernon that dazzled with contemporary elegance; a quintessential Dilworth bungalow, freshly renovated and absolutely beautiful inside and out; a super-cute jewel box of a home on Sarah Marks, brimming with impeccable interior design; another Dilworth bungalow on Sarah Marks, which was a hit for maintaining the original historic charm with modern touches and its backyard wellness retreat featuring a cold-plunge, sauna and putting green; a quirky and nostalgic traditional brick home on Charlotte Drive, complete with a welcoming front porch and an incredible backyard; and finally, a sublime little bungalow on Charlotte Drive, the very picture of Dilworth's timeless appeal.

Behind the scenes, our Home Tour committee worked tirelessly to ensure the event ran smoothly. Their dedication and countless hours of planning made this year's tour not only successful but truly unforgettable.

A special and heartfelt thank you goes to our Sponsor Chair, Keely Edwards, who is retiring after a decade of leadership. Keely has been the driving force behind sponsorships for nearly 10 years and leaves this role at the top of her game. Her legacy of excellence will continue to inspire future committees.

We also owe deep gratitude to Courtenay Buchan, who managed accounting details and numerous organizational tasks with her usual precision and generosity of spirit. Her behind-the-scenes work made a huge impact on the tour's success.

And to our Volunteer Coordinator, Jessica Revels, we extend our appreciation for her calm, steady leadership. Coordinating an army of volunteers is no small task, and Jessica once again made sure every home was well-staffed and welcoming.

This year's success was also made possible by the creativity and drive of Katie Rhodes, our marketing coordinator, who kept the tour highly visible through social media, Axios, the Dilworth Quarterly, and the Dilworth Express. We're equally grateful to Carrie Frye, who was consistently helpful wherever needed — including finding the final home for the tour at the last minute! And of course, a heartfelt thank you to the 150+ neighborhood volunteers whose selfless contributions of time and energy brought warmth, hospitality, and joy to the tour. Their efforts are what make this event so special and fulfilling for all involved.

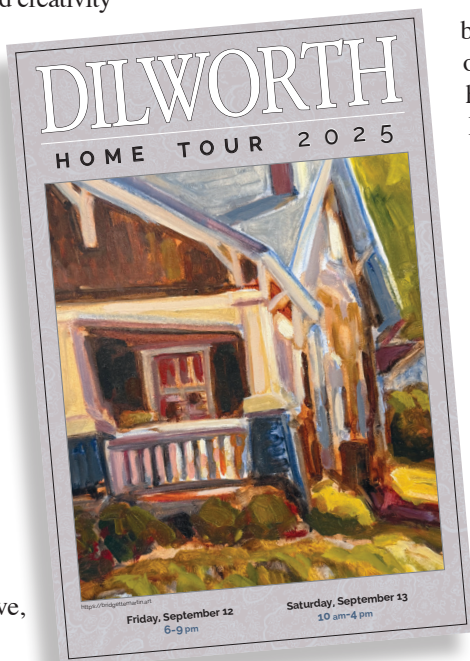
Now, let's look forward — next year!

Planning a tour of this scale takes a year or more, so we are already actively seeking homes for the 2026 tour. If you would like your home to be considered, please reach out to us. We'd love to hear from you.

In closing, it is with deep gratitude that I step back from my leadership role in the Dilworth Home Tour. After more than 10 years of planning and coordinating, it is time for new leaders in our community to step forward and continue this tradition with fresh ideas and energy. I cannot wait to see how the tour evolves, and I thank each of you for the role you play in keeping our neighborhood strong, welcoming, and inspiring.

Thank you, Dilworth, for your unwavering support, generosity, and community spirit. I am forever grateful.

[Editor's note - Fran also gets a big thanks for her 10 years with the Home Tour, which is major fundraiser for the DCA.]



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Locktoberfest Brings Fun and Generosity to Lockhart Drive

By Jodi Dykstra-Woodcock

Lockhart Drive was alive with laughter, kids, and the spirit of giving at this year's Locktoberfest, an annual neighborhood celebration that has become a cherished event for nearby residents and friends. What began years ago as a small block party for the families along Lockhart Drive has grown into a neighborhood-wide highlight, drawing families from surrounding streets for the past five years.

The October 25 event, organized and hosted by Eric and Julianne Guzik, together with their children Gianna (16) and Joey (14), once again drew a large crowd of roughly 170 residents together to enjoy good food, conversation, and a variety of games and activities for the kids.

Locktoberfest holds a deeper meaning now—one rooted in generosity. Last year's celebration followed shortly after the devastation caused by Tropical Storm Helene. The Guziks and their neighbors decided to use the event as a platform to help storm victims. The charitable effort was so well received that the "theme of giving" has become a defining element of the annual gathering.

This year's Locktoberfest benefitted the Dilworth Soup Kitchen, a local nonprofit dedicated to feeding those in need. Attendees were encouraged to bring non-perishable food items, filling a truck with supplies as well as monetary donations that will support the kitchen's mission through the coming months. "It's amazing what can happen when neighbors come together," said organizer Julianne Guzik. "Locktoberfest has always been about fun and connection, but now it's also about helping others while we celebrate."

The evening was filled with activities for everyone. Children enjoyed hours of energetic play on the bouncy house and slide and a spirited piñata contest, while adults mingled under the glow of a bonfire. What started as a small get-together among a few families has grown into something much more meaningful celebration that unites people, strengthens bonds, and gives back to the wider Charlotte community.

For Eric and Julianne, hosting the event each year is both a labor of love and a testament to what can be achieved when neighbors come together. "We're thankful for everyone who shows up, gives generously, and makes Locktoberfest what it is," said Eric. "It's not just a party, it's a reminder of what community really means."



Eric and Julianne Guzik take time out of their hosting duties to gather with their children Gianna (16) and Joey (14) by neighbor's donations.



Resident Robert McCutcheon, President and CEO of the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, took time to inform neighbors about Mecklenburg County's proposed transportation investment plan.

The Art of Returning to Dilworth

What Travel Has Taught Me About Home

By Kanku B. Michelsen

A few Christmases ago, while I was sipping tea at a café on Christmas Day, I watched a young boy ride his new Christmas gift — a scooter. His family cheered him on with joyful support as he circled endlessly with a permanent smile on his face. That moment felt so deeply familiar, and it struck me in a profoundly emotional way. My mind quietly reflected on similar special holiday moments that I have cherished with my own children in Dilworth, a neighborhood that I proudly call home.

I have watched my own children ride their new bikes around Latta Park, and I have helped them sprinkle “reindeer chow” on our front lawn. We have attended Christmas Eve service at St. Patrick’s Cathedral and lit luminaries that brought our street magically to life.

These are some of the indelible memories that our special and unique neighborhood has given me to make Dilworth feel like more than just a location; these moments have transformed it into a place that I call home.

You may imagine this café scooter scene was unfolding on a quiet Dilworth street or under the trees in Latta Park. But it was not. It was actually in Piazza Santa Maria Novella in Florence, Italy, where my family was spending Christmas that year.

For many years, we traveled during the holidays, a tradition rooted in both connection and curiosity. We would wander through unfamiliar streets and learn about the beauty of new cultures and community through their traditions and history.

And yet, on that particular morning as I watched the boy with his

scooter, a thought lingered: *What was a tourist spot for me was so much more to them — it was their home.* It reminded me that even the most unfamiliar places can awaken something intimate within us. For me, this was the recognition that home is not just where we live, but it is also what we feel about where we live when life mirrors our own stories.

Travel is clever and mischievous in that way; it sharpens not only our senses, but it also strengthens our sense of belonging. It welcomes one to quietly appreciate familiar moments that transcend location, and in that profound way, it reveals more to us than it hides.

Moments such as observing a child in Italy cherishing his new Christmas gift reconnect me to something important. No matter how far I go, I am always connected to where I belong.

On that day, as I so often do, I felt a deep appreciation of Dilworth: a place where we say hello from our porches, where we can foster deep and meaningful friendships with our neighbors, and where a stroll often turns into a conversation that makes you late — in the best way possible.

It is beautifully ironic how travel does not take me away from Dilworth, but it actually tugs at my love for our community: its warm and engaging people, its strong history, and its amazing ability to foster a sense of place even when I am far away.

Kanku B. Michelsen is a proud Dilworth resident since 1999 and owner of Dilworth Travel

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Gathering Stories and Community in Dilworth

By Abbey Boggs

For me, porches have always felt sacred — places to slow down, connect, and notice the beauty of everyday life. Wandering the streets of Dilworth, I often paused at porches, imagining the conversations and stories unfolding over a shared glass. *Porch Pours* grew out of that love—a way to turn imagined moments into real ones, one conversation at a time. It's an invitation to connect with the people and stories that make our neighborhood feel like home.

When Nancy Mullins offered to host a Porch Pour at her home, I was thrilled — and pleasantly surprised to learn that some of her neighbors would be joining us.

To choose the right wine for the evening, I turned to Mere at Mere's Concierge for her expertise. We wanted something that could flow across seasons — easy to enjoy on a warm October evening and equally fitting for a holiday gathering. Mere chose a beautiful red Burgundy from Domain Collotte, light with elegant red fruit, easy to sip, and ideal for sharing.

Nancy's home did not originally have a porch, but adding both a front and back porch was a priority. "In North Carolina, the weather holds dear to outdoor gatherings — celebrating birthdays, greeting holiday guests, reading a book, or waving to an impromptu passerby who may stop by," she said. It felt less like an architectural addition and more like a reflection of Nancy herself — warm, inviting, and open to connection.

Nancy's move to Dilworth felt like a puzzle piece falling into place. Her three children had all found their way to Charlotte. "I arrived the year my first granddaughter was born," she said. "Since then, I've had

three grandsons arrive. I am so blessed." Surrounded by her children, daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren, she describes her life here as a kind of fantasy land.

"I always wanted them to have their own lives and friends," she explained, "and I hoped I'd be fortunate enough to make friends and acquaintances, all while being a part of my children's lives." Her porch that evening was a testament to the community Nancy had hoped for and helped build.



We sat around a table of charcuterie and the inviting red Burgundy from Mere. Stories filled the air. Kathy, a fifty-year Dilworth resident, shared how Dilworth Road West and East once formed a fairground horse track. Nancy noted that Dilworth Road West is soon turning 100, and Jane Anne added stories of friends who've swapped houses. "That's really

a testament to Dilworth," Nancy said. Everyone lives close enough for impromptu chats — even early morning coffee meetups. Nancy and her next-door neighbor often catch up porch-to-porch after Kathy walks her dogs. "It's the old-timey standing over the porch and sharing the latest news," Nancy laughed.

As the conversation flowed, it became clear how the rhythms of the neighborhood morph from ordinary days to special seasons. Nancy described the luminaries at Christmas, paving the way for Santa,





“I hoped I’d be fortunate enough to make friends and acquaintances, all while being a part of my children’s lives.” Her porch that evening was a testament to the community Nancy had hoped for and helped build.

festive Halloween gatherings, and the Thanksgiving Nancy once hosted on her back porch.

“The only downfall of my porch is that I cannot keep the squirrels away that chew my rugs and desalinate my flowerpots. What a mess! But they are part of porch life here.”

As the evening unfolded, I reflected on the word *gather* — from the Old English *gaderian*, meaning “to bring together” or “to assemble.” On Nancy’s porch, that definition came alive: every story, smile, and laugh like a photo in motion, welcoming me into a moment that felt unexpectedly familiar.

Sitting there, I felt a deep nostalgia for the magic I’ve always known existed in Dilworth. The art of gathering isn’t grand or complicated — it’s neighbors on porches, symphonies of voices, good food and wine, and a sense of belonging that lingers long after the evening ends.

“If you could have one porch pour with anyone, who would it be?” I asked Nancy.

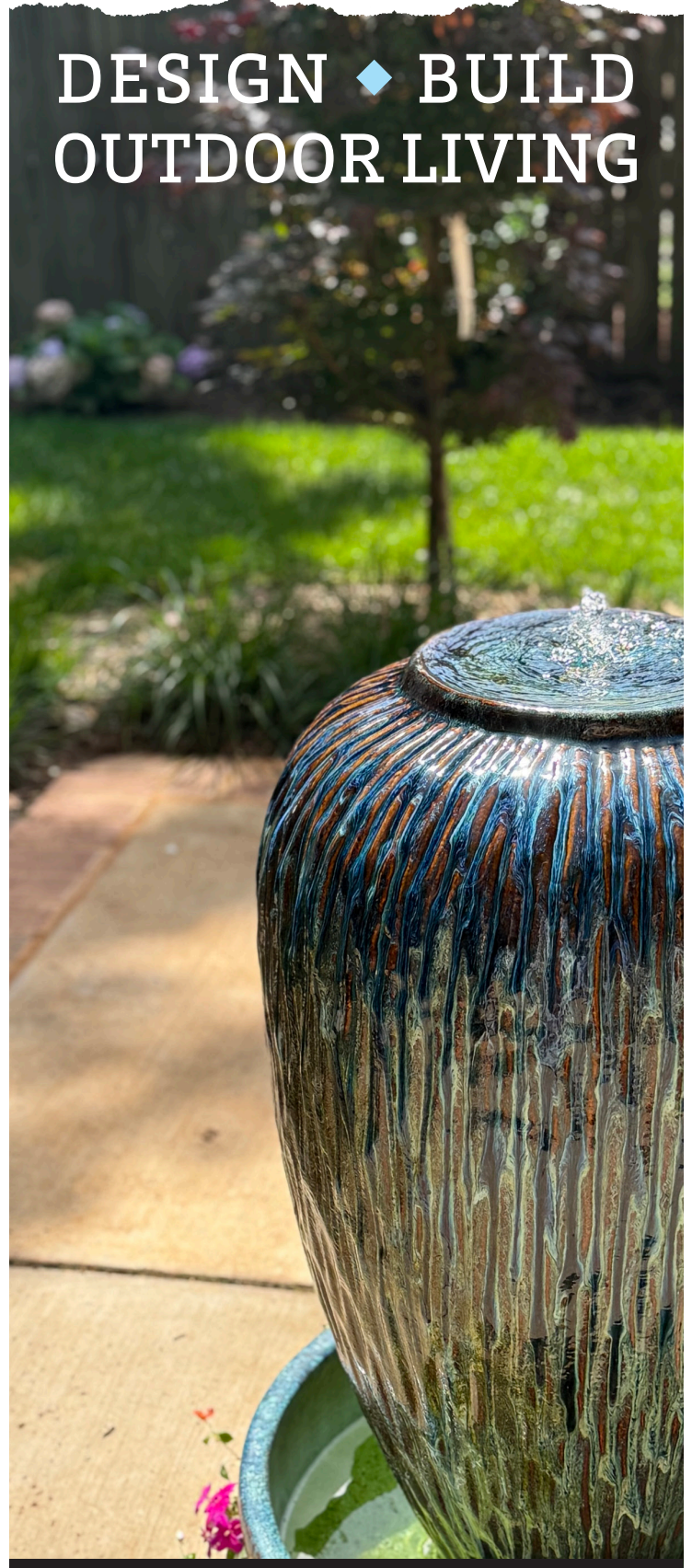
“Aside from the proverbial ‘right and true’ answer — my lovely friends and family — wouldn’t it be great to have the witty and wise Robin Williams, the talented Dolly Parton, Luther Vandross, our own Harvey Gantt, and a man from the past, Colin Powell? I love to laugh, I love music, I love history.”

This answer felt right and true. It would be a gathering of many and a great one indeed.

**For holiday wine recommendations and orders, please contact Mere’s Concierge at: meredith@meresclt.com or 513-403-5615.*

*** If you’d like to be featured in Porch Pours for drinks and conversation, contact Abbey Boggs at: abbeykristineboggs@gmail.com.*

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Valet your Sleigh and Bring your Sass to the Dilworth Ladies Party

By Amanda Blackburn

We are thrilled to announce that this year's Dilworth Ladies Party will take place on Thursday, December 11, at 7 p.m. The annual party is a long-standing tradition spanning over 20 years. It is a fantastic start to the holiday season that brings the ladies of Dilworth together to celebrate while also raising money for our community. All are welcome — the more, the merrier! Proceeds go to the Dilworth Cares Association, which is the philanthropic arm of the Dilworth Community Association. This year, the recipient of raised funds is the Dilworth Soup Kitchen.

We begin the festivities with a hostess party, where women interested in getting involved can meet, eat, drink, and be merry while planning the main event. It takes a lot of volunteers to make the event a success. Traditionally, hostesses used this get-together to discuss the menu and sign up to bring appetizers — think committing to making 100 brownies. But today's busy schedules don't always allow for that kind of time commitment. So we've made volunteering easier and more fun by partnering with local businesses to handle the food and drinks. With less time spent on planning the food, hostesses can focus on what matters most: building community and making the event memorable.

Now, on to the main event! This year's Ladies Party will be held at The Village on Morehead, located at 727 E. Morehead Street. Please note: The entrance is in the rear of the building. Complimentary valet parking is available; however, we encourage using Uber or Lyft.

Festivities will begin at 7 p.m. with live music. Food will be catered by The Village on Morehead's executive chef and will consist of various

finger foods and desserts. Wine, prosecco, and a signature cocktail will be served. The "Dilworth Ladies' Men" will be back to serve the food and beverages.

Although ticket sales contribute to the event's fundraising, the raffle is a vital part of the process. This year, we will be selling raffle "Golden Tickets" for a cash prize pot of \$500! Raffle tickets can be purchased at the event — preferably via Venmo or cash. New this year, we will have several local vendors at the event, and a portion of their proceeds will benefit the DCA and the Dilworth Soup Kitchen. This is the perfect opportunity to shop local for the holiday! If you are interested in donating or volunteering this year, please contact Amanda Blackburn at

ablackburn@dickensmitchener.com or Marcy Basrawal at mbarsawala@dickensmitchener.com

As for what to wear? From your ugliest holiday sweater to your festive finery — it's all good! Come spread holiday cheer while raising money for our beloved Dilworth Soup Kitchen. Tickets are \$40 in advance (preferred), or \$45 at the door. You can use the QR code to purchase tickets, or you can pay through Venmo @Treasurer-DCA. Simply show your receipt on your phone at the door!



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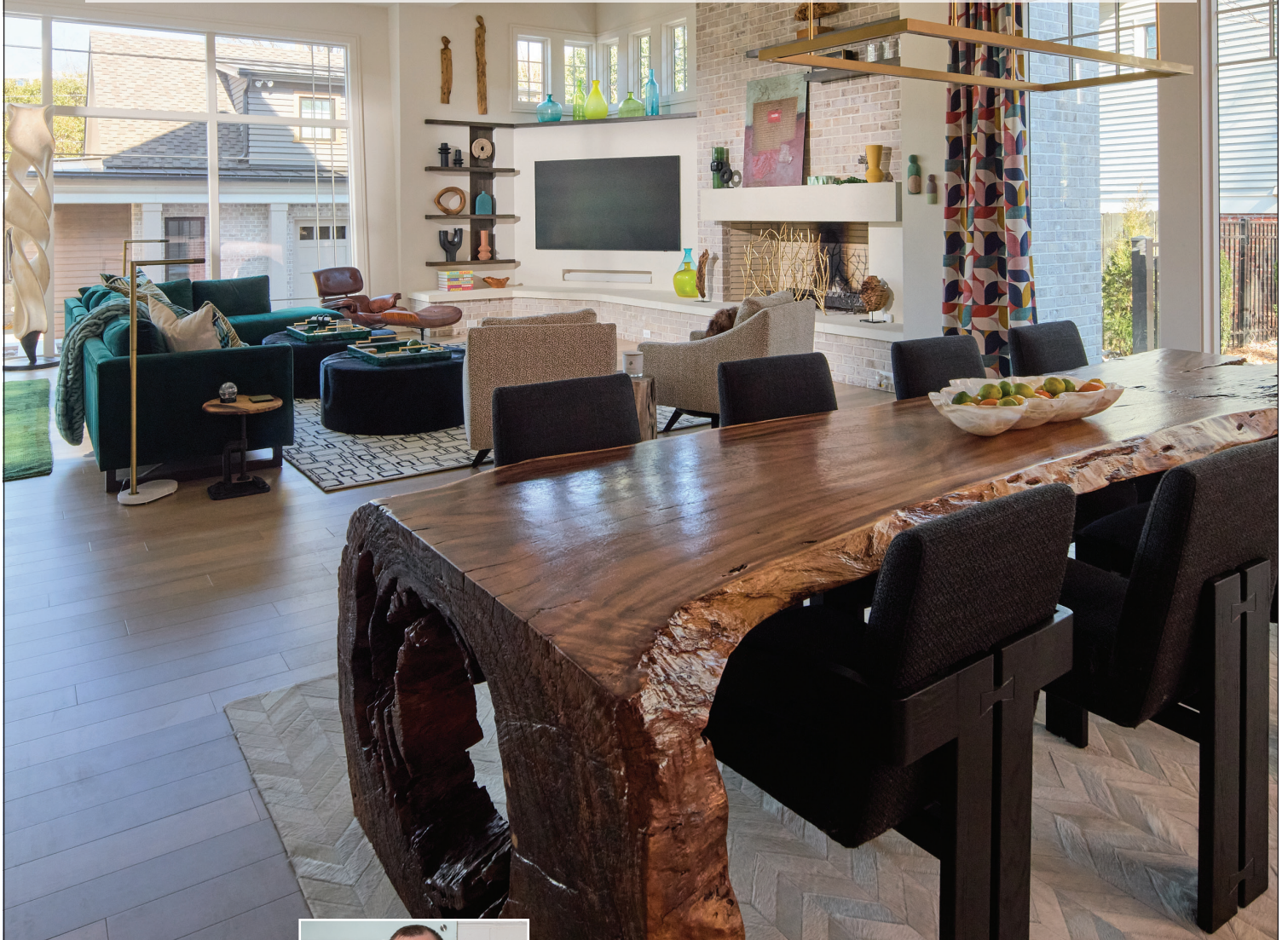
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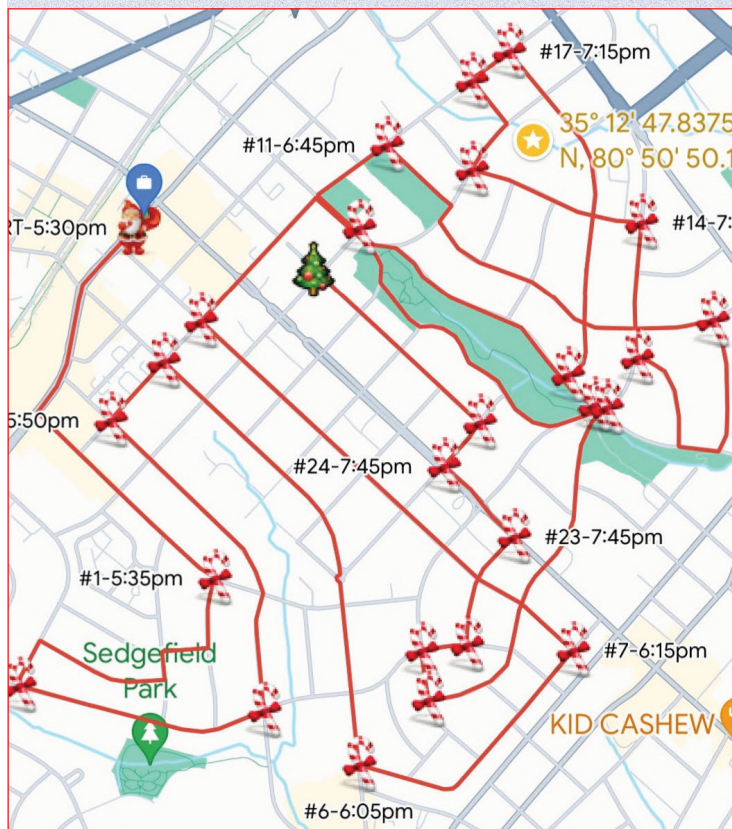
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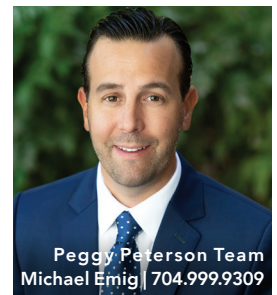
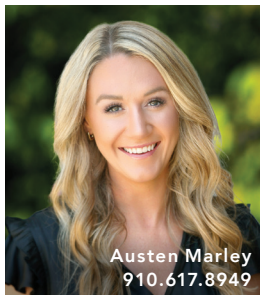
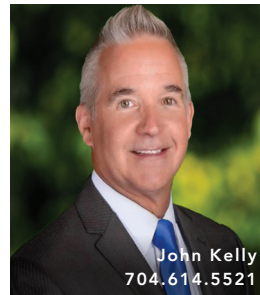
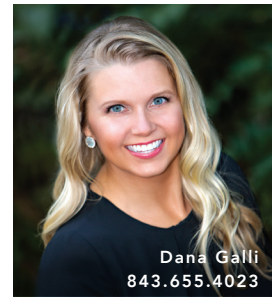
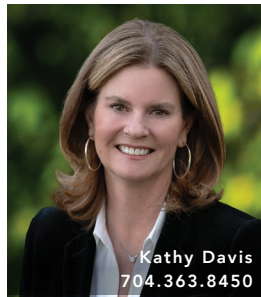
Santa Claus HO HO HO! is coming to town!

You better watch out; you better not cry — unless those are tears of joy. Santa will be making his annual tour around Dilworth on Christmas Eve! He'll head out from Firehouse 2 at 5:30 p.m. and finish his tour around 8 p.m.

Dilworth Fire Department's Santa Shift is a special group of firefighters, currently led by Captain Bill Shick. Regardless of regularly scheduled duty or time off, the same loyal Santa Shift returns each year to escort Santa as he spreads cheer (and candy) through the neighborhood. A gentle reminder: Santa's 10-mile route lists projected times of arrival.



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Merchant News, December 2025

Compiled by Mary Beth Sensabaugh

Pizzeria Sapienza

Pizzeria Sapienza is thrilled to join the Dilworth community, officially opening its doors this past February! Founded by Sal Sapienza and Nick Lathrop, New York natives with more than 30 years of cherished family recipes, Sapienza first made its mark in Charlotte in uptown's Fourth Ward in 2018.



The Dilworth location is led by longtime team member Ernesto Gomez.



The crew continues the tradition of authentic New York-style pizza, along with homemade chicken cutlets, wings, fresh rolled meatballs and more. Whether you're grabbing a

slice, ordering takeout or delivery, or planning catering for your next family gathering or office event, Sapienza's has you covered.

Stop by and experience a true taste of New York at 2212 Park Road—right here in the heart of Dilworth!

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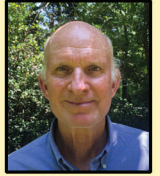
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Bringing Southern hospitality home for the holidays

Kudzu Bakery & Market

By Nina Rose

The aroma of freshly baked goods fills the air as Kudzu Bakery & Market opens its doors for its debut in Dilworth. Nestled in the Park Square Shopping Center, Kudzu Bakery & Market serves up southern hospitality with comfort foods, cookware, wine, gifts, and gourmet goods to-go.



The glimmering glass cases are filled with mouthwatering holiday treats and delectable delicacies

The glimmering glass cases are filled with mouthwatering holiday treats and savory delicacies. Behind the counter, an assortment of velvety chess and pecan pies, heavenly rum cakes, silky holiday-shaped cookies, and fluffy cranberry muffins awaits. On the top shelf, a delicate line of baked goods and pillowy pastries gleam brightly. Each item is hand-picked with everything you need to make the holidays feel like home.

Owners and husband-and-wife team, Andrew and Shelley Verhagen, enjoy simplifying the holiday experience with the convenience of southern classics. “We make everything easy-peasy,” said Andrew. He suggested, “Stop in for quick and easy gift giving —

get your bottle of wine and gift all in one place.”

From hearty breakfast casseroles and quiches to comforting southern grits, cranberry bread, and muffins, Kudzu Bakery & Market brings the warmth of southern hospitality to your holiday table.

Indulge in decadent bacon-wrapped quail or succulent scallops. Savor the delightful flavors of ham rolls and half-baked cheese biscuits, which are crowd pleasers! Save time in the kitchen by scooping up made-from-scratch sides, delectable holiday desserts, and gourmet entrees that are sure to impress your guests.

Bringing Comfort Home

As a Charlotte native, Andrew shares his passion for bringing Kudzu to his hometown with high-quality handmade goods and a feeling of home.

Kudzu’s baking mantra is simple. “We bake ‘grandma style’ with good old classic baking and simple, quality ingredients,” said Andrew. This southern style of cooking and “Kudzu-quality” has sparked a rising fandom across the Carolinas.

Kudzu has four locations. You can find Kudzu in Litchfield Beach, Columbia, and Mount Pleasant, SC, and now, Charlotte – in the heart of Dilworth.

“We know longtime fans of Kudzu from their trips to the beach. We thought there was no better place to bring Kudzu than Dilworth because our neighbors know Kudzu, along with the quality of our products



Located at 2442 Park Road, Kudzu Bakery & Market is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 am – 5:30 pm, Saturday from 8:30 am-2:00 pm and closed on Sunday.



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and the quality of our team making the products,” said Andrew. “It feels good to bring Kudzu to a community that already loves Kudzu or will soon learn to love Kudzu.”

What's on the Menu?

Kudzu Bakery & Market offers a wide selection of baked goods, breads, spreads, dips, soups, sauces, veggies, jams and jellies, heat-and-go gourmet dishes, seasonal specialties, southern classics, and more to fill your home for the holidays. Here's a sneak peek of the menu:

In the fridge/freezer: A selection of entrees including chicken pot pie, roast duck, apple & brie stuffed chicken, seafood dishes, pasta dishes, and more. Appetizers include half-baked cheese biscuits, Lowcountry crab cakes, bacon-wrapped quail or scallops, hushpuppies, ham rolls, casseroles, quiches, and more!

Baked goods: Almond lace cookies, apple squares, brownies, cheese danishes, chocolate chip cookies, cinnamon rolls, coconut

macaroons, cranberry muffins & bread, holiday-shaped cookies, lemon bars, oatmeal raisin cookies, peanut butter cookies, peach pecan spins, pecan sandies, and sugar cookies.

Cakes: Apple walnut spice, brownie

cheesecake, carrot, caramel, caramel pecan, coconut, chocolate on chocolate, chocolate on yellow butter, chocolate pound, german chocolate, chocolate mousse, lemon, pound cake, rum, and red velvet.

Pies: Apple, chess, coconut chess, chocolate chess, lemon, lemon ginger, pecan, pumpkin, sweet potato, and key lime.

More Than Just a Bread Winner

While Kudzu is known for its homemade bread, baked fresh every day, its bread is not the only star that shines on the shelf.

Barbara Spier, Charlotte resident since 1964, shared her excitement as she loaded up her cart with a jar of Kudzu strawberry rhubarb preserves. “I love anything strawberry rhubarb, so I had to get a jar!”

Shoppers at Kudzu also come from far and wide to experience the quality of goods.

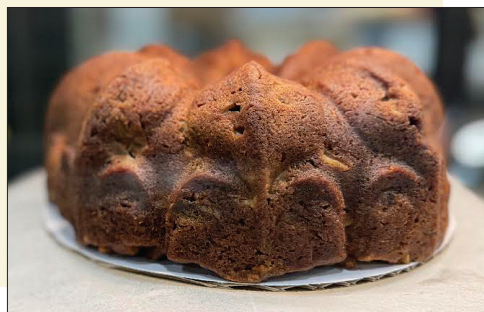
Eddie Paige, a resident of South Carolina, drove from South Carolina to Dilworth to visit the shop. When he sampled a slice of rum cake, he couldn't get enough of it. After he sampled it, he said, “Wow, I had to get another piece to take home. It's so juicy and delicious!”

Pro Tip: Enjoy the \$10 lunch special — the best deal in Dilworth. Select any sandwich on homemade bread, along with chips, a drink, and a cookie from the case! Choose from chicken salad, turkey and cheese, ham and swiss, shrimp dip, egg salad, tuna salad, or pimento cheese on buttermilk white or honey whole wheat bread. Every cookie is top-notch, including the melt-in-your-mouth peanut butter cookie and the oatmeal cookie with golden raisins bursting with flavor.

Conclusion

Kudzu Bakery & Market, a new culinary destination, invites you to savor the moments that matter most this holiday season. Let's bid farewell to the hustle and bustle of holiday hosting and indulge in the convenience of grab-and-go options at this delightful bakery and market. Neighbors, feel free to stop by, say hello, and savor a decadent treat. After all, there's nothing quite like the joy of southern hospitality and holiday cheer that brings friends and neighbors together during this special time of the year.

Nina Rose is a native Charlottean who enjoys pursuing her passion for foodie adventures. With her master's degree in communication and wide-ranging experience in the food industry, she hosts restaurant reviews on her Instagram channel @thesouthernbites.



Andrea Santos (left) and Lily Guckiean (right) are dishing out Kudzu Bakery & Market's famous carrot cake.



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The DCA Land Use Committee's Mission

The DCA Land Use committee is, essentially, the watchdog for Dilworth's development. We regularly consult with the City of Charlotte's planning department to make sure that developments in Dilworth retain the identity and charm of our neighborhood. We also work with commercial real estate developers to ensure City Council approval of the highest quality rezonings possible, and, finally, we work with the Historic District Commission to protect

our place on the National Register of Historic Places. We currently have two significant rezoning petitions in process: one at 720 E. Morehead and the other at 1912 Cleveland Ave. Below is some information on the process flow for a rezoning petition. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.dilworthonline.org/land-use> or by visiting the City of Charlotte's rezoning page at: rezoning.org.

REZONING

ZONING

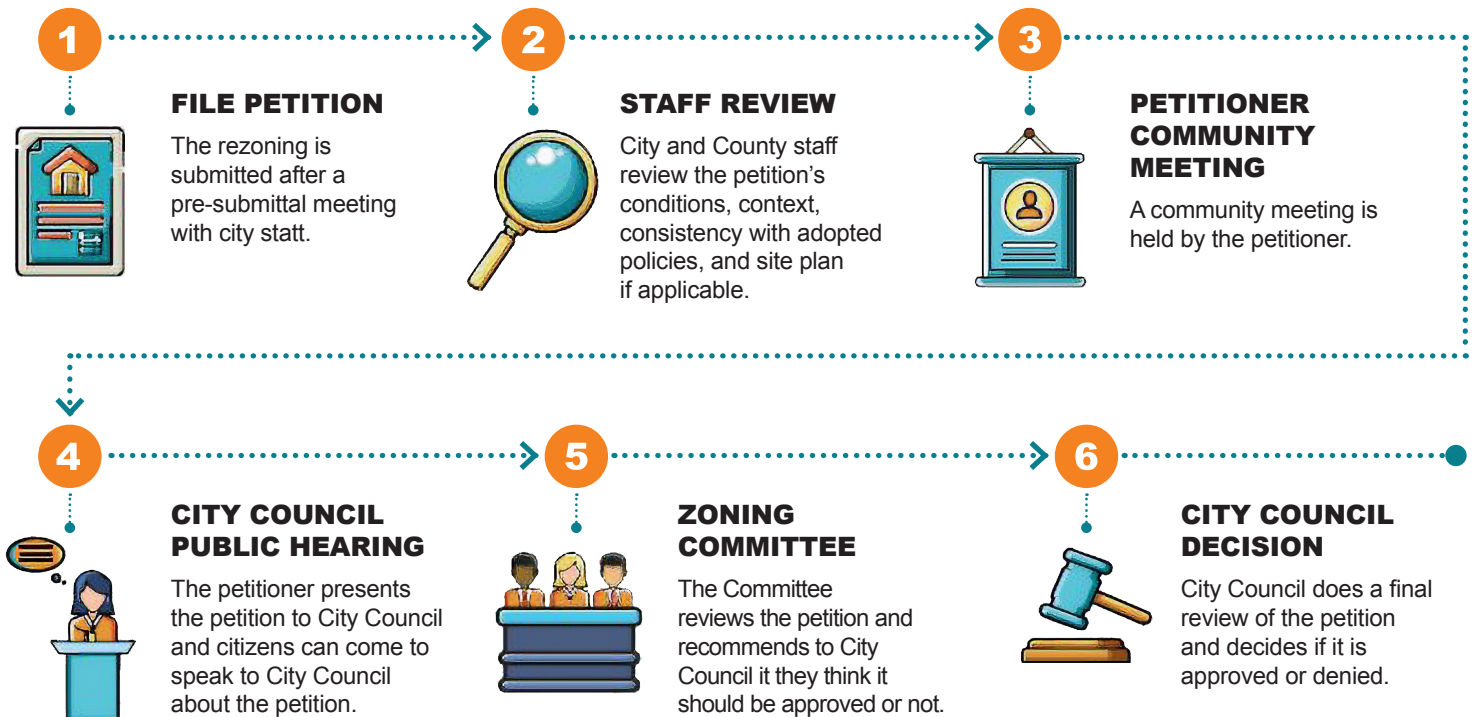
Zoning is a set of regulations that determine how land and buildings can be used.

VS

REZONING

Rezoning is used when a property owner wants to develop or use their property in a way that is not allowed by their current zoning district regulations.

REZONING PROCESS



For more information about the rezoning process, visit our website at www.rezoning.org

Tips for Success in the Historic District

By Jennifer Baehr

Since there are many new projects happening in the Dilworth neighborhood, the Charlotte Historic Preservation staff thought it would be helpful to provide you with some tips for success when you're working on projects in the Dilworth Historic District.

■ Keep Masonry Unpainted.

Brick, stone, stucco, and other types of masonry should not be painted. Painting masonry not only hides the natural beauty of these materials but also can cause damage to the building. Once a coating (such as exterior paint) is applied to masonry, it can trap moisture, leading to structural failure of the masonry material itself.

Painting masonry also requires additional maintenance, including repainting and addressing flaking or blistering paint. Masonry materials are low-maintenance in their natural state, but once painted will need to be regularly maintained and repainted.

■ Make repairs to the original parts of a building rather than replace them.

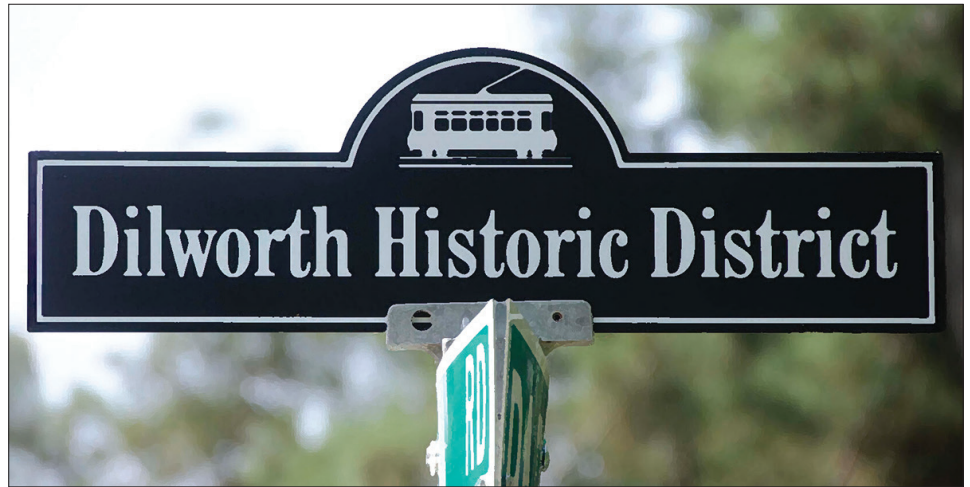
Original parts of a building, such as doors, windows, siding, and trim, are important to the character of a property. These elements should be repaired and maintained to prevent deterioration and prolong the lifespan of the historic materials.

■ Add parking areas at the rear of the property.

Adding parking areas and enlarging driveways in the front yard impacts the character of the streetscape. If additional parking is needed, place it at the rear of the property, where it is minimally visible from the street.

■ Design additions to the building that complement the existing structure.

Additions to existing buildings should complement, not overpower, the original building. Building an addition on the rear where it's not visible from the street and attaching it in a way that preserves the original building's design is encouraged.



■ Use appropriate and compatible building materials.

A wide variety of materials are used in historic buildings. Many historic materials can last for decades if properly maintained. Where new building materials are needed, they should be compatible with the building's style and reflect qualities (color, texture, dimensions, etc.) that match those of historic, traditional materials.

■ Install fences that fit the neighborhood's character.

Rear yard fencing is allowed and can be wood or dark metal. You can get creative with the style of fence, just as long as the fence is not a chain-link or stockade style.

■ Contact staff early when planning a project.

When you begin planning a project, we encourage you to reach out to staff so that we can provide feedback early in the process. Staff is here to help and is available for a call or to meet at your property to discuss your project.

Even if you are not currently planning a project, please feel free to contact staff with any questions or for more information about the Dilworth Historic District. Staff can be reached via email at: charlottehdc@charlottenc.gov.

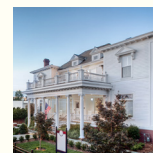


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Calling All Tree Lovers

Get a professionally planted tree for your yard — and help fund street trees for everyone

By Liz Lewis

Dilworth is losing its trees — and the Dilworth Community Association's (DCA) Tree Canopy Committee is working to replace the ones we're losing. If you appreciate our neighborhood's green canopy as much as we do, good news: you can be part of the solution!

We've created two easy ways to get involved.

Purchase a Tree For Your Yard

The first is personal. We've organized it so that Dilworth residents can purchase one or more large trees (typically 2"-3" in trunk diameter) and have them professionally planted in their yards — no sweat investment required. Information on available tree species and details about the program can be found on the DCA website: DilworthOnline.org.

Dilworth will receive far fewer 'free' street trees from the city than in prior years.

The way it works: You select one or more trees from a list of available varieties and choose a spot in your yard. Then, professional City-of-Charlotte-approved landscapers will plant your tree(s) for you.

The all-in cost is \$600 for a large tree (sourced, transported, and planted) or \$500 for a medium-sized tree. Each purchase includes a \$50

contribution to the Dilworth Street Tree Fundraiser (see below). The deadline to order is December 15, with delivery and planting scheduled for mid-January to late February 2026.

Why participate?

You're adding to our neighborhood's overall tree canopy. A significant percentage of the tree loss in Charlotte comes from tree removal on individual plots.

It's hassle-free. The trees you'd get from us are older than the ones you could typically get at big box stores, and they'll be transported and

planted for you.

Your impact multiplies. Your purchase will help fund street tree plantings throughout Dilworth, which benefits the entire neighborhood.

Support the Neighborhood's Year-End Tree Canopy Fundraiser

The second program is our year-end Street Tree Fundraiser, which plants trees throughout the neighborhood that everyone can enjoy — the street trees you see between the curb and sidewalk that form the backbone of Dilworth's canopy.

We know you've heard this ask before — and your generosity has made a real difference. Thanks to neighbors like you, we've planted over 125 street trees since 2020. But the need continues. You see the arborists in our neighborhood, you hear the chainsaws and shredders. Tree loss is ongoing, and replacing them is a constant effort. What's changed is that the City of Charlotte is now planting far fewer trees in Dilworth, making community support more important than ever.

The city's Landscape Management Division used to plant between 15 and 40 street trees each year throughout Dilworth. Recently, however, they've shifted from the old system of individual requests and city-wide allocation planning to planting trees in "heat islands" — areas of the city that are under-treed. It's a good policy; those areas need trees desperately. But it means Dilworth will receive far fewer "free" street trees from the city than in prior years.

So we're turning to you. We have over 100 open planting sites waiting to be filled, and each street tree costs an average of \$800 to source, transport, plant, water, and guarantee for one year. Your donation to this year-end campaign will help us continue restoring Dilworth's tree canopy.

As you think about year-end giving, we hope you'll consider supporting our Street Tree Fundraiser. It's rare to make a donation where you can watch your impact grow — literally — as the trees we plant take root and fill out Dilworth's canopy for decades to come. Learn more and donate at DilworthOnline.org.



The City of Charlotte is now planting far fewer trees in Dilworth, making community support more important than ever.

Great Ways to Add Trees to Dilworth's Tree Canopy

- Purchase a tree for your yard.
- Donate to the Dilworth community's tree canopy fundraiser.

For more details on both, go to DilworthOnline.org



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SNAGS: Where Nature Fosters New Life

By Nancy Nicholson

The Oxford dictionary defines a snag as an unexpected obstacle or drawback, as in, “We don’t anticipate any snags with the negotiations.” The word itself carries a negative weight — something unwanted, something to avoid.

But in the world of forest ecology, a “snag” means something entirely different: a standing dead or dying tree. And far from being a drawback, snags are ecological treasures. These trees provide crucial wildlife habitat in the form of shelter, nesting sites, and food sources for countless animal species. They are a natural part of forest ecology, brought about by disease, lightning, animal damage, or old age, and they continue to give life for years after their own has ended.

Terminology:

A **snag** is an upright dead tree. A **log** is on the forest floor and also equally important to the natural cycle. A **stump** has been cut off from its top but is still attached to its roots.

By some estimates, removing dead tree material from forests can lead to a loss of habitat for up to 20% of the animals in the ecosystem. Yet leave too much dead material in place, and fire risk increases. In parts of western North Carolina, an accumulation of dead trees has created fire hazards that threaten both forests and communities. The balance of nature is once again being challenged.

Which animals benefit from dead trees?

More than 80 bird species and more than 100 animals of all kinds rely on dead trees.

Examples include:

- **Birds:** Woodpeckers, bluebirds, nuthatches, owls, and chickadees nest in the tree cavity, while others feed on insects in the wood
- **Mammals:** Squirrels, raccoons, opossums, bears, and porcupines
- **Insects:** Carpenter bees, termites, spiders, and beetles
- **Others:** Amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates such as lizards and snakes

How do dead trees help wildlife?

- They provide shelter and protection.
- A dead tree, stump, or log is nature’s gourmet restaurant.
- Higher, open branches are the perfect lookout spots for wildlife (such as raptors) to spot potential food.
- Mosses, lichens, and fungi all grow on snags and aid in returning vital nutrients to the soil through nitrogen cycles. Decaying logs on the forest floor also act as “nurseries” for new seedlings.

Incorporating dead trees into your habitat

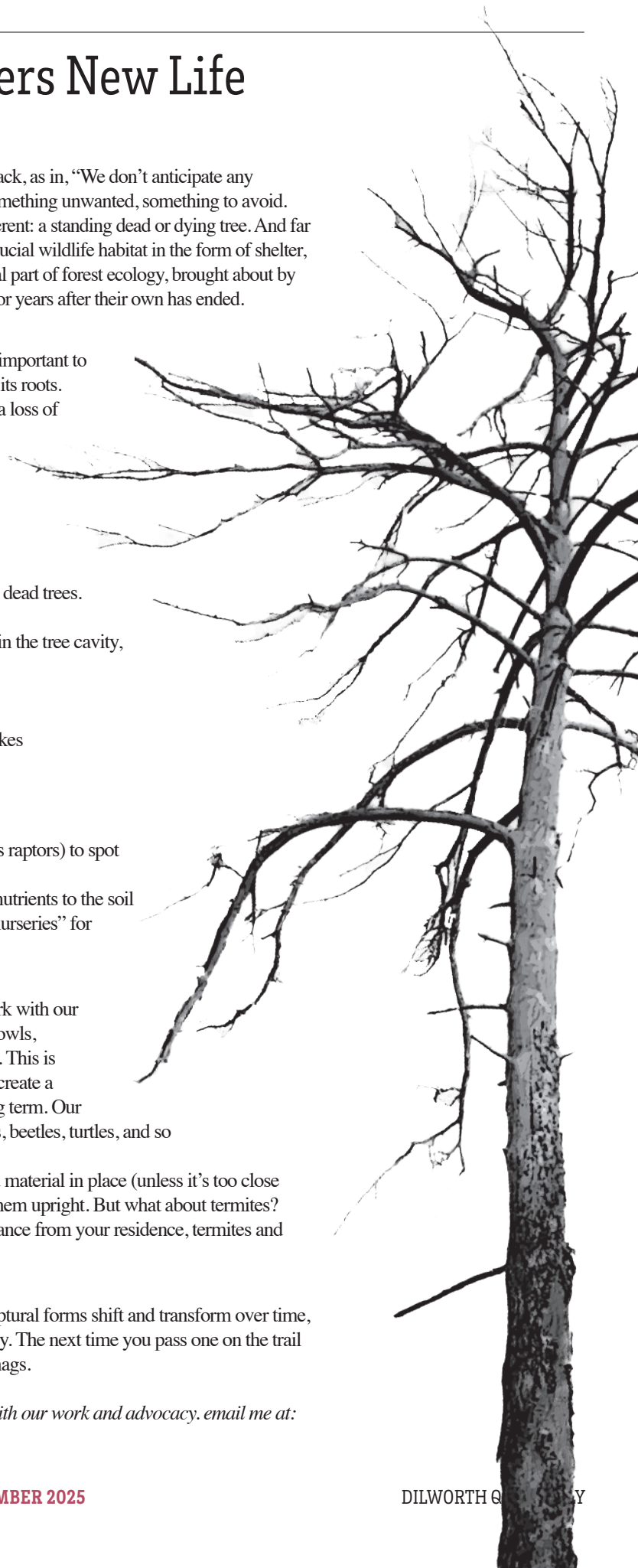
Parks and Recreation is leaving dead- and partially dead trees in Latta Park with our encouragement when there is no safety risk. They are being utilized by our owls, woodpeckers, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, squirrels, and other creatures. This is a great time to listen to the woodpeckers drumming to establish territory or create a homesite that will benefit them in the short term and many others in the long term. Our decaying logs and stumps are happy places for lizards, squirrels, chipmunks, beetles, turtles, and so many others that feed the larger animals.

If you want to create your own snag, stump, or log habitat, leave the dead material in place (unless it’s too close to your residence). If you have access to some larger hardwood limbs, put them upright. But what about termites? Research shows that as long as the snag or wood source is a reasonable distance from your residence, termites and other pests will not find their way to your home.

Dead Trees as Art

Have you ever stopped to admire a snag, log, or stump as art? These sculptural forms shift and transform over time, adorned with colorful and shapely lichen and mosses which help them decay. The next time you pass one on the trail or in your own backyard, pause and really look — there’s beauty in these snags.

Please be in touch if you would like to volunteer in Latta Park or keep up with our work and advocacy. email me at: nancyenicholson@gmail.com



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704.526.9510
HMPROPERTIES.COM

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Dilworth Community Association

PO Box 36023

Charlotte, NC 28236-6023

A holiday-themed greeting card featuring a photograph of Libby Gonyea, a woman with long brown hair, smiling and sitting on a light-colored sofa. She is wearing a dark blazer over a dark shirt and blue jeans. The background of the card is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting with a dark door visible behind her. The card is decorated with a pattern of white and gold snowflakes. The text on the card is as follows:

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Wishing you a joyful holiday season, filled with warmth, laughter, and time spent with loved ones.

LIBBY GONYEA
REALTOR®

704. 975. 8513
LGONYEA@HELENADAMSREALTY.COM

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TOP 50 AGENT
REALTOR®
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