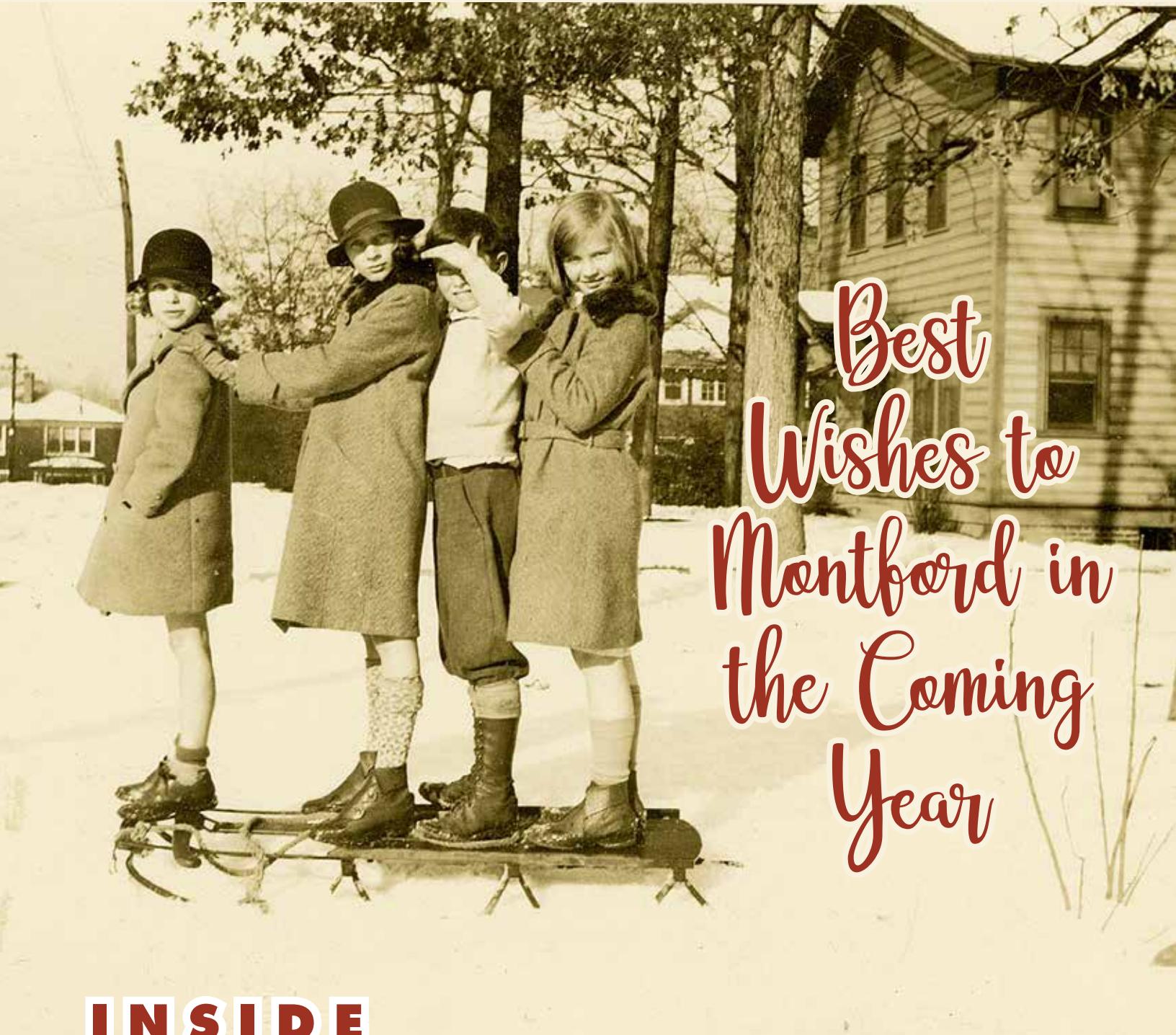




MONTFORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF ASHEVILLE'S MOST HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD
VOL. 31 NO. 1

DECEMBER '25/JANUARY '26



Best
Wishes to
Montford in
the Coming
Year

INSIDE

**Holiday Tour of Homes (page 2) and
Montford Lights (page 5) Recaps**

The Montford Holiday Tour of Homes

A Community Success!

With the generous support of this wonderful community, the 2025 Montford Holiday Tour of Homes was a tremendous success! Through ticket sales, sponsor donations and The 1900 Inn on Montford Gift Certificate Raffle, we proudly raised \$13,020 in support of our neighborhood and preservation efforts.

We truly could not have asked for better weather, finer homes, or a more lively and enthusiastic crowd throughout the day. We are deeply grateful to the homeowners who so graciously opened their doors and shared their properties. Your homes were spectacular, beautifully showcasing the unique architecture, character, and warmth that define Montford. We hope you enjoyed the experience and will encourage others to participate in future tours!

A huge thank-you goes to Gray Line Trolley, not only for their sponsorship but also for offering a guided neighborhood tour throughout the day. Guests enjoyed learning about Montford's rich history through narration created by Sharon Fahrer and Uncle Ted—a fun and informative addition that was widely appreciated.

Another exciting new element this year was the local art and community information display hosted at 11 Cullowhee. Special thanks to Nine Mile and listing agent Megan Shook with Mosaic Realty for making this space available. Featuring artwork from Kevin Hogan, Benjamin Porter, Vadim Bora, Donny Luke, Chris Rhoades, Jason Krekel, Bee Adams, Dana Irwin, and Zoe Schumaker, the home became a vibrant and memorable stop on the Tour. Extra thanks to Dana Irwin and Zoe Schumaker for helping coordinate the artist pop-up.

We were also grateful to Ami Worthen for providing an informative display about the important work happening at www.montfordandstumptown.com, and to Catherine Amos with the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County for sharing resources and highlighting their impactful projects. We plan to expand this element in future Tours and continue spotlighting our talented local artists and valuable community resources.

This event would not have been possible without the dedication of so many volunteers and supporters. Susan Loftis, thank you for opening your home and for your incredible help securing additional properties, marketing and sponsor opportunities, hosting the wrap-up party, and providing much-needed emotional support. Lynn Raker, thank you for



writing home histories and for your unwavering support—you are truly a treasure. Ross Terry, thank you for getting our website up and running and for managing countless behind-the-scenes details. Marti Boyles, our reigning Cookie Queen, coordinated an abundance of homemade treats from generous neighbors—much appreciated by all! We are also grateful to Mitch Russell for spearheading leaf and sidewalk clean-up ahead of the weekend, and to the MNA Board and many Neighbors for volunteering your time and energy in support of the Tour.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to our sponsors—we truly could not do this without you. Please support these wonderful local partners:

Gray Line Trolley; Amy Giles & Eva Hartman with Town & Mountain Realty; Odyssey School; Frugal Framer; Square Peg Construction; Asheville Home Remodeling; Adams and Adams Construction; George Zourzoukis with Preferred Properties; Bionic Man Painting; Tall John's.

Thank you all for helping make the 2025 Montford Holiday Tour of Homes such a memorable celebration of community, history, and holiday spirit!



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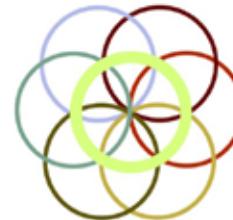
The Montford Holiday Tour of Homes

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George
Zourzoukis
Contact Info
Office: 828-258-2955
Cell: 828-215-8233
george@preferredprop.com





Montford Lights!

The 5th annual Montford Lights was a great success. As always, it took a village to organize and execute the event.

Montford board members really stepped up to the plate:

Bill Eakins did a great job as the MC, Tom Feshenfeld supplied & set up the musicians canopy, Lynn Raker & husband Steve delivered the beautiful tree which Steve, David Humphrey & David Boyles set up.

William Saupe & David Boyles tackled the task of decorating the tree with lights. Susan Loftis distributed candy canes to all the little ones. Other neighbors involved were Len & Tracey Levi with their addition of the Menorah. Leslie & David Humphrey made sure the lighting was in working order and Ben Scales supplied the audio equipment. Rodney Workman led the AHS Drumline & Rita Hayes, the Flute section. Asheville Police ensured our safety throughout.

Most important was the crowd that came out bringing the enthusiasm needed to kick off the Holidays in Montford in proper fashion. We are ever grateful for everyone who participated in making this a successful event.

Marti Boyles, Chair



**What a wonderful evening.
Let's do this again next year!**



**Thomas Valk
Fehsenfeld
(February 5, 1949 –
January 5, 2026)**

A beloved son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, and friend to many.

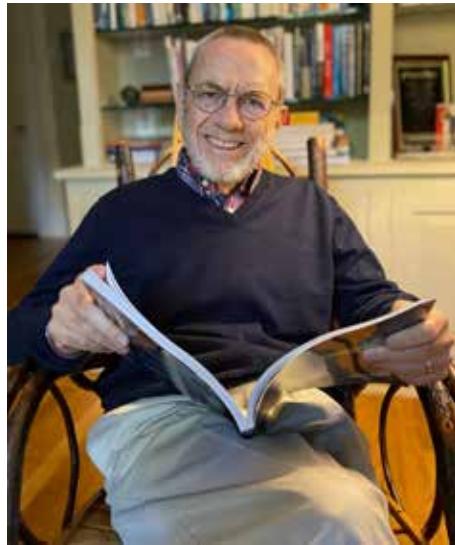
Tom was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Frank and Virginia Fehsenfeld.

Growing up, he spent his childhood with his siblings, Nancy, John, Ruth Mary, and Bill, sailing on Reeds Lake and dutifully managing his paper route. When he wasn't riding his bike around town with his brother, Bill, he could often be found in his bedroom devouring books and caramels. As a proud member of the Boy Scouts, he discovered his enduring love of pocket knives.

After earning his MBA from the University of Michigan, he walked into Quicksand Gallery one day and met Carolyn. Four months later they married at the courthouse, with Tom buying his only suit on the way. Together they built a life filled with laughter, raising their children, Alan, Ben, and Dana, by Reeds Lake in a home filled with games, books, practical jokes, rambling stories, swimming, and art.

Tom served as President of Crystal Flash for more than 40 years, dedicating his time, energy, and care to the growth of the company and the people who worked there. During this time, he also completed a PhD in Organizational Design from Walden University. One of his proudest achievements was facilitating the company's sale to its employees upon his retirement, reflecting his deep belief in shared prosperity and opportunity. A committed proponent of employee-owned businesses, Tom carried these values beyond Crystal Flash, serving on numerous boards and participating in a conflict-resolution group focused on thoughtful, collaborative leadership.

Retirement energized Tom. He and Carolyn moved to Asheville to be near family, and Tom promptly returned to school, earning his Master of Arts in Government from Johns Hopkins University with honors. A deep and



thoughtful observer of civic life, he wrote and blogged about how government could better serve future generations. His weeks were full, making friends through classes at OLLI, playing bridge, reading and writing poetry with his Second Friday group, and staying actively engaged in politics and the community.

In his final years, Tom treasured time with his grandchildren, Burdie, Ele, Elif, and Milo, teaching

them about the world with patience, curiosity, and wonder. He was a voracious reader and book collector, a lifelong aspiring musician, an admirer of the color beige, and an enthusiastic adopter of new technology (including his AI friend Claude). His wonderful sense of humor made his family and him laugh until they cried. Tom found joy in playing games, walks in the woods with his dogs (Bob, Buddy, Trip, Sam, and Liza), Carolyn's art, sunsets on Lake Michigan, meals with family, vacations in Key West, and new experiences.

Tom was passionate about equality and making the world around him a better place. He gave generously, laughed heartily, and encouraged everyone around him to live their lives fully. He will be dearly missed by his family, friends, and community.

Tom is survived by his loving wife of 49 years, Carolyn; his children, Alan, Ben (Libby), and Dana (Zac); his grandchildren, Burdie, Ele, Elif, and Milo; and his siblings, Bill (Cecile) and Nancy (Warren). He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Virginia, and by his siblings John and Ruth Mary.

In lieu of flowers, Tom's family invites you to make a donation in his memory to a nonprofit doing good in your community.

Tom's family will plan a celebration of his life this spring in Asheville. To be notified or to contribute a favorite memory of Tom, please send an email to tomlovesbeige@gmail.com

Forever Montford

WELCOME PACKET

Dan & Judith Sanford

Forever Montford, a committee of the Montford Neighborhood Association (MNA) has created a Welcome Packet for new Montford residents. The packet contains information such as a brief history of Montford, a list of MNA board members along with contact information, Montford listserv, Montford newsletter, neighborhood parks, events, restaurants, maps, volunteer opportunities and much more. Packets are being delivered by MNA board and Forever Montford committee members upon learning of new residents. Recipients of the Welcome Packet have shown great appreciation with one neighboring writing, "Looks like we lucked out in the neighbor and neighborhood department! I appreciate the history and local information. Well done, and thank you for your thoughtfulness."



If you are new to Montford or know of a new resident, please contact one of the below, and we will coordinate delivery of a Welcome Packet.

Dan Sanford: sanford.danielj@gmail.com

Judith Sanford: sanford.judith@gmail.com

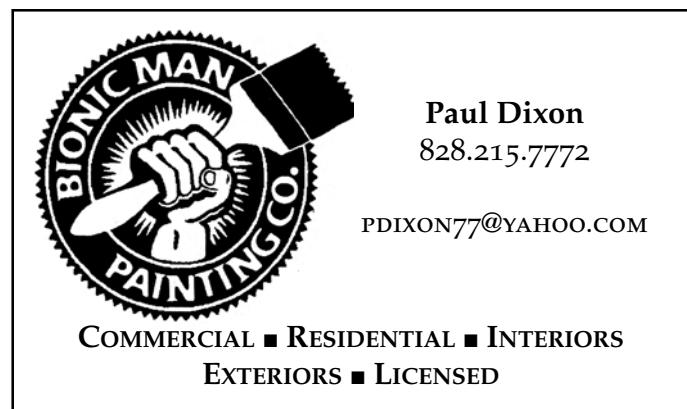
Leslie Humphrey: leslieinmontford@gmail.com

Ashima Nair: ashimanair@gmail.com



NiNE MiLE

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Paul Dixon

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PDIXON77@YAHOO.COM

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The Latest Dirt

By Cherie Morris

I'm sorry I can't report that the Botanic Garden is ablaze with springtime blooms. It's not. Instead as a tribute to the new year, I would like to look back at our accomplishments in 2025. Generally speaking, I didn't view last year as a particularly good one, But this list gives me renewed hope! Achievements in 2025 include:

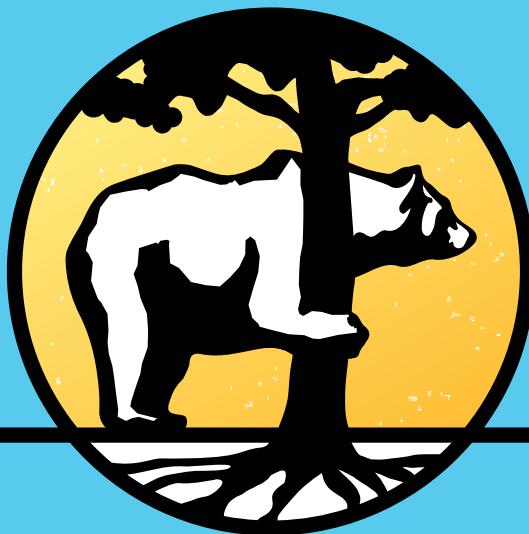
- Renovated the Bird Garden
- Added thousands of new plants
- Rejuvenated the Water Garden and replanted the Sensory Garden
- Sadly, after Helene, cleaned up 45 fallen trees and removed 20+ damaged trees



- Regraveled all the paths and installed new drainage and irrigation systems
- Replaced the front solarium with a patio complete with furniture
- Replaced the damaged greenhouse and added a hoop house
- Replaced the roof on the Hayes Cabin and installed gutters
- Installed new stone steps and repaired stone walls throughout the garden

Whew! We've made progress, but we still have a long honey-do list! In the education department, we have renewed our partnership with Bee City, USA, and will again be offering their series of pollinator classes. You have another chance to become a CPA! No, not that kind, but a Certified Pollinator Advocate!

Check our website at www.ashevillebotanicalgarden.org for class dates and times.



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Green Corner**Erin Hiatt**

For this month's Green Corner, we are interviewing another local, sustainability-linked business that would welcome your support!

**Our ninth feature is Luminosa**

restaurant, located at 20 Battery Park Ave, recently awarded a MICHELIN Green Star. They are open for dinner nightly and brunch on Sundays.

Q: Tell us about Luminosa

A: Luminosa is an Italian eatery bringing a hyperlocal lens to Appalachian cuisine, utilizing regional purveyors and local team member expertise to shape and curate the ever-evolving, seasonally driven offerings. A wood-burning oven and grill serve as the heart of Luminosa, adding an unparalleled smoky flavor profile to handmade pizzas, whole roasted fish, and locally sourced proteins, while guests can also enjoy a collection of house-made pastas and seasonal vegetables.

Q: How does sustainability factor into the restaurant?

A: Sustainability is the guiding principle behind our menu. We have close relationships with the local farmers we source from and stay nimble in what we use to ensure ingredients are in season — whether "in season" is for a week or for a month. It allows the team to be creative while utilizing the bounty of Asheville's resources.

It also means sustaining the people who work within it. Creating a work environment where people feel seen, heard, and really build a career in hospitality is how we create sustainable operations from the top-down.

Q: What is a MICHELIN Green Star and what did it mean to the team to receive it?

A: A MICHELIN Green Star is an award that recognizes restaurants that are deeply committed to sustainable practices. We were honored to receive it with the inaugural MICHELIN Guide to the American South. This recognition is a celebration of our community as much as it is our work. The farmers, producers, and makers of this region are the true foundation of our cooking, and their

ingredients guide every menu we create. Having daily access to such extraordinary local products allows us to support both the local economy and the culture that surrounds it. We're honored by this acknowledgement and grateful to Asheville for championing what we believe in.

Q: Any favorite suppliers or guest interactions?

A: Honestly, there are so many different vendor and guest interactions that stick out in my mind. We have so many regulars that we hold dear in our hearts. We know their stories, their favorite beverages and how they like their steaks cooked. I think the most memorable interaction recently was our Farmer Appreciation dinner we held this past November; a tradition I used to do when I first moved back to Asheville. This was the first year that I had a proper home to host our beloved farmers and their families since 2019. We passed out flyers at the farmer's markets in the weeks leading up to the dinner and ended up having the opportunity to host 90 of them on the second floor of the Flat Iron for a night of drinks and food galore. The general consensus from them was how amazing it was to have a night to converse and interact with the community of like-minded colleagues and friends. We will absolutely be continuing this in the years to come.

Q: Where can readers follow you or stay up to date?

A: Readers can follow along on our Instagram, @luminosaavl

Let me know what other local businesses you would like to see interviewed at montfordgreencorner@gmail.com. You can find past Green Corners on the [Newsletter Archive page](#).



Pack Memorial Library 67 Haywood Street in downtown Asheville

“The only thing that you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library.” —Albert Einstein

Are you new to the neighborhood or has it been a long time since you last visited Pack Memorial Library in downtown Asheville? There are endless resources to explore or to discover:

- **Over 150,000 items available for browsing and lending.** These resources include books, periodicals, CDs, DVDs, and research materials. The library also participates in statewide resource sharing and offers inter-library loans.
- **Free internet access, public computing, and Wi-Fi.** Photocopy and printing services are available for a small fee.
- **Free laptop and hotspot lending program.** Laptops and hotspots are now available for a free 30 day loan with a library card.
- **Free tickets to local attractions.** Use your library card to sign up for Zoom passes, which are free tickets to local attractions like the WNC Nature Center, the NC Arboretum, or the Asheville Museum of Science.
- **Free digital audiobooks, e-books, magazines, and movies.** The Libby app from Overdrive provides downloads of these items to your smart phone, tablet, or computer. It's like an Audible subscription service, but free with your library card.

- **A vibrant and inviting children's library.**

The library has books for all ages and reading levels, and board games, and sporting equipment available to lend.

- **Thousands of unique local historical records, photographs, maps, and memorabilia.**

The Buncombe County Special Collections Library provides researchers the resources and expertise they need to understand and interpret the history of Western North Carolina.

- **Bookends Used Bookstore offers bargain prices for a wide variety of books and media, including vintage and collectible materials and bestselling fiction.** Proceeds from the sales benefit the library programming.

For more information, visit the library or their website:

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/library/branch-locations/pack-memorial.aspx>

Parking in the Civic Center parking ramp is free for the first hour. The library is also walkable from the Montford neighborhood.

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Resource Directory

Historic Walking Tours

Stroll the neighborhood or downtown. Walking tours of historic Montford, Riverside Cemetery, Biltmore Village and downtown Asheville.

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Raven Invasive Plant Management

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- Call your neighbors, Leslie and David Humphrey 277-5164



Join The Montford Listserve

The Montford listserv is a neighborhood discussion list. This is the place where you can exchange news about the neighborhood. Visit <https://montford.org/montford-listserve/> to join.




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Will bears find a good winter den at your place?

Every day an estimated 6,000 acres of open space are converted to other uses, according to the US Forest Service. That's more than 2 million acres a year of forests, grasslands and wetlands that are now growing homes, communities, businesses and other developments. Less available land and more people means that bears have to work harder to find food, shelter and a suitable home for the winter.

You probably know that a hollow tree, handy cave or dense thicket would appeal to a bear in search of a winter den. But did you know the cozy hideaway beneath your deck, the crawl space or storm cellar you forgot to seal up for the winter, that pile of tires or brush out back or the shed full of gardening tools and supplies can seem like the perfect place to turn in for the winter?

Bears are curious, resourceful and very adaptable. So when days grow shorter and food supplies dwindle they know it's time to stop hunting for food around the clock and start hunting for a safe, snug place to spend the winter, they're willing to explore all the available alternatives.



By late fall, bears are all about conserving energy and keeping as many of those pounds they've been putting on as possible. No wonder they take advantage of people-provided spaces, places and features that offer move-in conditions.

It's not unusual for a bear to den up and even give birth under decks, in crawl spaces, or under bushes and hedges. Equipment you've parked for the winter, stacks of lumber, building materials, and other debris can all offer attractive possibilities.

Bears may make themselves at home in garages, storage sheds or vacation homes that are vacant over the winter.

An adult bear can easily fit through an average pet door. And even empty coolers hold odors and can attract bears. Store coolers out of sight.

To a bear, these areas can seem like the perfect winter home. They're dark, snug and often come with at least one built-in wall. Bears don't have collarbones, so even adult bears can fit through what seems like an impossibly small opening. The general guideline is that if a bear can get its head inside, the rest of the bear can follow. Many homes in bear country offer bears lots of possibilities. So, if you'd rather not have bears as houseguests.

Read on:

<https://bearwise.org/will-bears-find-a-good-winter-den-at-your-place/>



Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County

Montford Action Agenda 12/10/25

Present: Chair Will Hornaday, Vice-Chair Sioux Oliva, Cecil Holt, Celesta Gorman, Amy Moxley, Robert Mays, Jenny Bowen, Leslie Humphrey, Shannon Watkins, Bill Roberts

Absent: Amy Gharst, Hans Skouby

Staff: David Hazzard, Jannice Ashley, Drew Wilson, Logan Smith

Item, Summary and Action

Present: Chair Will Hornaday, Vice-Chair Sioux Oliva, Cecil Holt, Celesta Gorman, Amy Moxley, Robert Mays, Jenny Bowen, Leslie Humphrey, Shannon Watkins, Bill Roberts

Absent: Amy Gharst, Hans Skouby

Staff: David Hazzard, Jannice Ashley, Drew Wilson, Logan Smith

52 Cumberland Circle (PIN 9649047709)

- Removal of existing screens and kneewall on non-original porch on rear elevation, and enclosure of porch with new tempered glass single-lite sliding and fixed windows and door with Sandstone color aluminum framing and black mesh screening. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. Applicant: Jane Haverty

Action—Continued to January 2026

15 Pearson Dr (PIN 9649026247) -

Modification of two existing double-hung windows on side elevation; partial enclosure of existing porch on

rear elevation; enclosed area will have one new wood 6/1 double-hung window and wood siding and trim matching existing. Applicant: Vincent Wiegman

Action—Approved w/Conditions

123 West Chestnut Street (PIN

9649123772) - Construction of new one-and-a-half story, 1,000 square foot accessory structure. Applicant: Donald Nicholson

Action—Continued to January 2026

71 Starnes Ave (PIN 9649225103) - Removal of existing deck on rear elevation; modification of existing ell on rear elevation, including removal of shed roof and replacement with new hipped roof, replacement of an existing non-original window with a new 6/1 TDL double-hung wood window, and resurfacing of block foundation with textured stucco; construction of a new 208 square foot, two-story addition with wood lap siding and asphalt shingle roofing matching existing, 4/1 and 6/1 TDL double-hung wood windows, wood entry door and Assa Abloy garage door with multi-lite transom on lower level; construction of a 16' x 21' covered porch with Black Locust decking, painted white wood railing with 4" wide top and bottom rails and 2" square pickets spaced 4" on rear, and painted white removable lattice screening above railing on rear and east elevations. Applicant: Andrew Willett

Action—Approved

HRC Application Portal

The city is now accepting HRC applications digitally via the Development Portal at this address:

<https://develop.ashevillenc.gov/>

Please refer to the website (www.ashevillenc.gov) for the full approved minutes after the following month's meeting.



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The Montford Newsletter is published online by the Montford Neighborhood Association, P.O. Box 7181, Asheville, NC 28802, for the residents of Asheville's first historic neighborhood. We welcome articles and advertising by the 20th of the month.

Note: Opinions expressed in this newsletter by contributing authors do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the MNA.

Contact Editor Kelly Ross Terry at krtgraphicdesign@gmail.com, 230-7439 for more information.