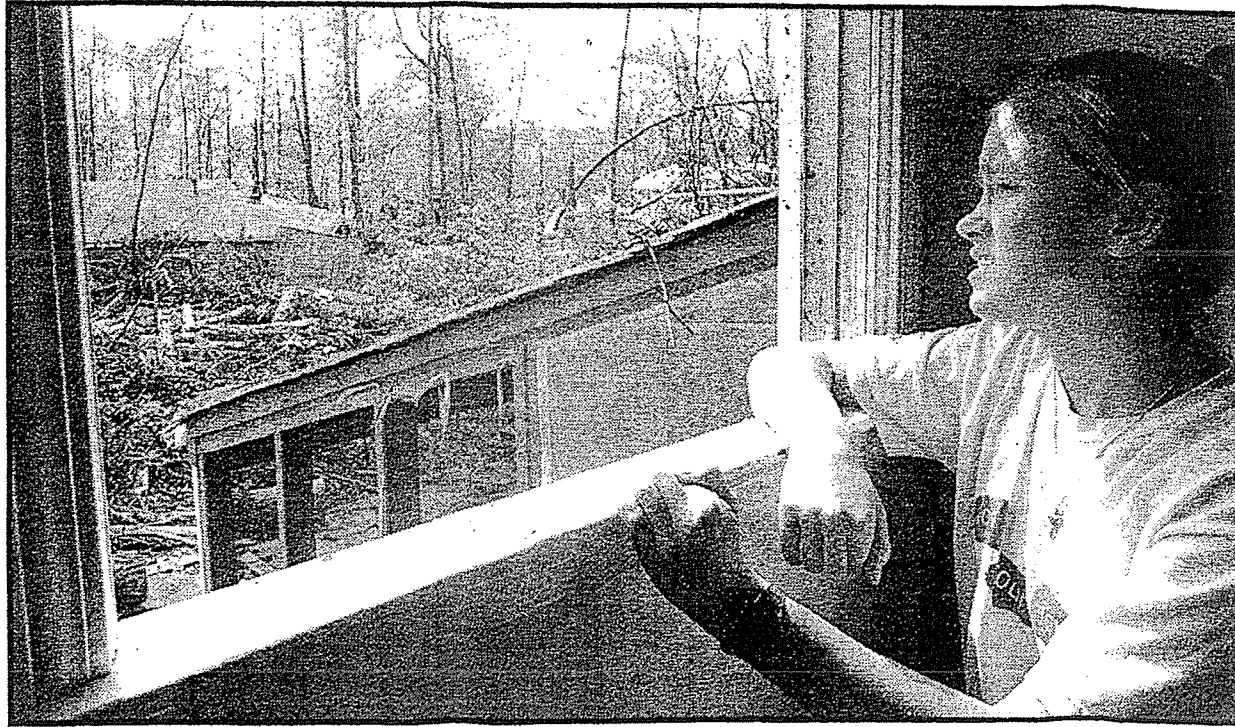


Concerned citizens and homeowners' groups have joined forces to return Dunwoody's neighborhoods to their shady past



CATHY SEITH/S

A tornado April 9 cleared Grace Seckman's wooded back yard and damaged her Dunwoody home

REWOODING DUNWOODY

By Ellen Fix

I confess. I'm a tree-hugger. So when an estimated 60,000 trees — but maybe as many as 100,000 — were devastated on metro Atlanta's north-east side the morning of the April 9 tornado, I was deeply saddened.

I knew the ravaged homes could be repaired or rebuilt. The furnishings could be replaced. The food and clothing could be replenished. What seemed hopeless, though, was the task of replacing towering trees, many a century old or more, and restoring the region's lush, green canopy.

First, tree loss is generally *not* covered by insurance. Second, the devastation was so massive — with the environmental loss alone estimated at \$10 million — it appeared that the only saving grace would be divine intervention.

In fact, a human-scale miracle is now in progress. Tree-huggers have come out of the woodwork in droves — along with members of the Dunwoody Homeowners Association, the Dunwoody Nature Center and the Dunwoody Preservation Trust Inc. All of them have joined in a campaign to raise some \$2 million to restore the arboreal character and tree-lined integrity of Dun-

HOW YOU CAN HELP

■ **Donations** should be sent to P.O. Box 888834, Dunwoody, Ga., 30356. Checks should be made payable to Dunwoody Preservation Trust Inc., which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

■ **There will be a benefit/silent auction** in September, so appealing prize donations of all kinds are also needed.

■ **For more information, call** Replant the Dunwoody Forest at 770-390-9990.

woody's neighborhoods.

The \$2 million will be used to purchase and replant some 20,000 trees within the affected 2,500 acres. The Replant the Dunwoody Forest effort will be guided by an ambitious master plan by Roy Ashley, a Dunwoody resident and landscape architect whose credits include the Ravinia office park. Ashley's plan calls for formal "tree avenues" along frontage streets plus the clustering of hardwoods in internal corri-

dors and cul-de-sacs.

Ashley prizes not only the beauty and dignity of trees, but also their handsome ecological payoff. For instance, they collect heat in winter, offer shade in summer, control erosion and reduce ozone levels in high traffic areas.

Ashley's plan specifies a variety of native tree species, to be purchased directly from Tennessee growers at wholesale cost. But that's only the beginning. At two to six inches in diameter (we're not talking saplings here), the trees will have to be transported, distributed to communities and homeowners and planted in cooperation with DeKalb County and Georgia Power rights-of-way. Moreover, the whole project has to be put in full swing without delay in time for planting season, which begins in November.

This means individual and corporate donations are needed now. You don't have to be a tree-hugger to send a check or off matching corporate funds. You just have care.

If you've wanted to help victims of the tornado but didn't know how, this is the v — putting the wood back into Dunwoody.

Ellen Fix is a writer who lives in Dunwoody.