

Celebrating Summer in Your Own Backyard

By RaShonda Riddle

Summer is often a time when people like to get away to relax. But even if vacation isn't on the agenda, we all still need to take a mental break. We asked a few Hillcrest neighbors to share some activities that help them destress, relax, and unwind during the dog days of summer.

Here's what they had to say:

"Relax on my back deck. It's so green and feels like an oasis away from the business of Branch Avenue." – Tanya, resident of 2 years

"When my teenagers are driving me crazy, I put on my swimsuit and sit in the baby pool I have out on my deck with a cool drink and a book. It is only big enough for one person at a time, which is perfect sometimes." – Cindi, resident of 18 years

"My favorite is spending time in the garden. Walking through the garden to see how things have grown or what insects/birds are around or picking berries/herbs/veggies/flowers (then making something out of the stuff we harvested!)." – Toni, resident of 5 years

"I like to get my lawn chair and cooler and see live outdoor music. I like to catch concerts by candlelight. They are magical!" – Monica, resident of 2 years

"I usually like to spend time outdoors when it isn't smoldering. We enjoy skating, swimming, golf and exploring the city, and being tourists." – Natasha, resident of 10 years (family has been here 60+)

"Enjoying a juicy thriller audiobook while taking an evening walk (or even doing dishes) is one of my favorite ways to escape in the summer. Even better if I have some ginger iced tea or whiskey to go with it." – Becca, resident of 6 years

"Sipping wine on the deck with music playing. I also try to play music that makes me feel like I'm on someone's island." – Taryn, resident of 8 years

"Dinner at home in the garden with friends is one of my favorite ways to relax during summer. We like to try new dishes we made together, taste rosé wines, and listen to all types of music from Bossa Nova to old school Hip Hop." – Ashley, resident of 1 year

Whether you're hosting holiday gatherings, clothing swaps, book clubs, playground meet-ups or Wine Down Wednesdays, take advantage of this weather while it lasts – summer will be over before you know it.