

NEIGHBORHOODS MAKE DO AFTER HURRICANE'S VISIT

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Written By Linda Duffy

Maggie Palmer, the unofficial tour guide of wind-sheared Engleside Street, delicately stepped over a spaghetti power line, tiptoed through a yard toothpicked with pine needles, tapped her red high-heels gently on a set of old, wooden steps and rang Myra Anderson's doorbell.

"You just won't believe this," she told a gaggle of Lafayette Park neighbors sauntering about, looking for hurricane aftermath, "this tree is in Myra's living room."

A muffled voice came through the front door and then a front window flew open. "You'll have to come around the back, Maggie" said Mrs. Anderson, the window of Warren Anderson and many, many-year resident of the neighborhood.

The neighbors decided not to bother Mrs. Anderson with a visit, but one called out to her, "Oh, honey, we're so sorry."

Inside, Mrs. Anderson's green-and-gold living room was cleaved by a pine tree. Her green damask sofa and wing chair faced splintered beans that had crashed down, and everything in the room – all the furniture, the antique tables and the Chinese rug – were covered with a lumpy layer of attic insulation that had been turned gray-brown by age and rain.

"I was sitting at the dining room table when the tree came down. I just froze. I could have at least crawled under the table," Mrs. Anderson said, winking to a couple of old friends.

"I'm sorry I can't offer you all some coffee," she continued somewhat blithely, considering the condition of her home. Perhaps Maggie Palmer's outfit had put her in a festive mood.

Mrs. Palmer, wearing a red-and-black crepe dress, two gold chains, expensive perfume, red hose and the aforementioned red pumps, had taken the time during the morning to touch up her perfectly coiffed blonde hair and apply pale blue eye shadow and rosy lipstick.

"My husband and I were at the Golden Pheasant last night," she said, amused by her own dash, "and my husband kept saying, 'are you sure there won't be much to this hurricane business?' Well, of course we had to drive up over curbs and through yards to get home -