

# ***THE BROOKDALE BUGLE***

Edited for the web

Brookdale Citizens' Association Newsletter January 15, 2000

## **President's Message:**

Happy New Year to everyone!

In October, Montgomery County installed a sidewalk along Western Avenue between Cortland Road and Harrison Street. Now there is continuous sidewalk along Western Ave.'s Maryland side from Westmoreland to Chevy Chase Circles. The installing contractor indicated they will return to complete the curb cuts for ramps at Cortland. A tree was spared at Cortland through careful installation. We have received many comments about how much safer and more pleasant the situation is now for pedestrians.

Recently, the County Executive approved Brookdale's request for a permit parking zone. Each block of every street will have the option of choosing whether or not to request permit parking. Those blocks that decide in favor of permit parking will determine the hours during which the permits will be in force. There is no time limit within which to act -- a block can request permit parking at any time once the zone is established.

On an unhappy note, in late December, there was an assault in Westhaven (the neighborhood just west of Brookdale). A woman was held up for her Christmas packages as she was unloading her car. In response, the police had cars and a helicopter in the neighborhood. This is a reminder to be alert, lock your doors, and keep an eye out for any suspicious people or activities, which should be reported to the police immediately.

## **Development Update**

CHASE TOWER: Construction of Chase Tower on the north side of Willard Ave began

in November with the demolition of Finnegan's and the tire store. Oil tanks on the gas station site were removed. The Planning Board recently approved a revision to the project's site plan to allow elimination of the gas station and car wash and the construction of 8,000 additional square feet of retail space. The Planning Board also approved a reduction in the number of parking spaces to be provided. The project will consist of a 12-story office building on the corner of Hills Plaza and Willard Ave and a two-story retail building along Willard between Friendship Blvd and Hills Plaza. As part of the project, the developer, JBG, will construct a park on the corner of Friendship Blvd and Willard Ave next to the Willoughby. Hills Plaza will be closed for 12-18 months beginning in January 2000, during which time the street will be realigned with Willard Ave.

CHEVY CHASE LAND COMPANY: Hearings concluded in Chevy Chase Land Company's rezoning case in November. Judge Philip Tierney is expected to produce his recommendations to County Council in mid-January. The community requested that all loading areas be located underground and that the number of parking spaces on the site be held to the minimum required by code. The District of Columbia, which has jurisdiction over Western Avenue, is on record favoring the community's layout for parking and loading on the site.

HECHT'S: The Hecht Company's developer, New England Development, is expected to file for site plan approval this winter or spring. The developer claims that the amount of rock encountered on the site will make it prohibitively expensive to provide the grocery store and the originally proposed number of parking spaces. They are expected to seek a waiver to provide fewer parking spaces and to eliminate the 40,000-square-foot grocery store. This developer has been willing to discuss options and concerns with the community, and we will work actively with them and Planning Board staff throughout this process. New England Dev. is currently negotiating with various organizations to determine how the community center on the site will be managed.

GEICO: GEICO has not pursued further development approvals since receiving the go-ahead on their subdivision application in February 1999. Neither have they put any more of the houses that they own in Brookdale on the market. Several neighbors

have expressed interest in buying some of these homes and have had difficulty contacting Allied Realty, the company which handles these properties.

With the exception of Chase Tower, which was not part of the revision of the Friendship Heights Sector Plan, none of the projects is likely to break ground within the next 18 months, and even that is a liberal estimate.

Mazza Gallerie is scheduled to complete its renovations by mid-January. The theaters opened January 7.

Allison Fultz

## **YARD SALE SUCCESS**

by Gwen Lewis

On October 2 Brookdale mounted its first community yard sale in recent history. About 25 households participated, but only two of these were in West Brookdale. Two newspaper ads and many well-placed, attractive signs resulted in numerous shoppers. Business was brisk with traffic jams reported on Cortland and Andover. Children's lemonade and cookie stands did a land-office business. Baby equipment and furniture were hot items. Some lucky households reported hundreds of dollars in sales, not to mention the excitement of clearing all that attic and basement space. Suggestions for future sales include the following. Put out your stuff early, the sharp dealers appear by 8 am. Sales and interest lags by midafternoon; so, shorten the sales period. Arrange next time for a charity to come by to collect all unsold items. Christi Perez, coordinator of the event, says there is strong interest in making the Community Yard Sale an annual or bi-annual event. Thanks, Christi!

## **Halloween Party Swings**

by Eric Sanne

This year's Halloween party was a roaring success. About a hundred Brookdale neighbors and their offspring gathered in good cheer and costume to enjoy this most ghoulish of celebrations. Food was plentiful thanks to the coordination of Ann

Warner and Mike Makuch, who were in charge of the event for the second year running. "The turn out was amazing," says Mike. The games were a great success, especially the pinatas which drew enthusiastic lines of kids waiting to take a swing. Many volunteers were needed to make this event happen including Francis Stadler, Eric Itsweire, Joy Sexton and Diane Tanman. Thanks to Ann, Mike, and all who made this a wonderful occasion.

## Schools -- **BCC CLUSTER REPORT**

by Nancy Wiegand

The schools in the BCC cluster are ready for Y2K and are looking forward to the exciting activities planned for the second half of the school year. The three Brookdale schools that are included in the BCC cluster are Westbrook Elementary School, Westland Middle School and BCC High School.

Westbrook is in full swing with a strong PTA and a dedicated staff. Many important projects are keeping the school community busy this year. The renovation of the ball fields that are used by the Westbrook students and by many community sport organizations will begin this summer. The PTA has played a very active role in this process and is extremely happy to see their efforts succeed. Recently installed sidewalks in front of the school will make walking to and from school safer. The traffic continues to be a safety issue, and parents are working to resolve it. The non-profit Friends of Westbrook Foundation will help with capital improvements. The new reading initiative in 1st and 2nd grades is up and running and is quite a success. The fourth and fifth grade Stream Team works to keep our local streams and bay clean and thriving. Westbrook continues emphasizing the Community of Caring program. The students reach out to help others both in and out of their school community.

Westland Middle School is a busy place with many activities. After completing parent conferences, fall plays, choral concerts, basketball tryouts and exams, the students, teachers and parents are ready to take on the second half of the year. The PTA will not hold their annual auction this year but looks forward to a special night in March or April where parents and staff will host neighborhood dinner parties. Other paying

parents will attend the parties to generate funds for the Westland PTA. Later that evening, a concluding party at the Leland Center will unite the group with dessert and dancing. Westland continues to support "Success for Every Student" through a wide variety of activities. Also, a new after school program, Rec-Extra, provides more comprehensive after school activities on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Come out and support the Westland boys and girls basketball teams this winter.

Though not in their local school this year nor next, the spirit of the BCC students can be felt all the way from their holding school in Silver Spring. Everyone looks forward to the beautiful new building that is due to reopen in September 2001. The remodeling of BCC has not stopped the great activities that keep the students and staff busy. With the leadership of new principal, Katy Harvey, the school is moving in full gear. Many programs are growing this year. The computer curriculum allows students to become certified in repair and programming. The Lazarus Leadership program selects students to participate in leadership training seminars. The BCC Educational Foundation continues to give money to a wide variety of school programs and academic initiatives. Other new programs are in the development stages. The Character Education Committee is working on character issues within the BCC community. The fall sports season was full. The varsity field hockey team captured their 6th straight 2A championship and the 13th straight regional title. The varsity football team and soccer team had a winning season. Get ready to support the winter sports at BCC. The boys and girls basketball teams, swimming, indoor track and wrestling are all under way.

With two of our schools renovated and the third underway, this is an exciting time for our community. Stay informed and involved in your school.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Jan. 17	Martin Luther King birthday	No school
Jan. 26	Professional day for teachers	No school
Feb. 21	Presidents Day	No school
March 7	Primary Election	No school
April 17-24	Easter Holidays & Spring break	No school
May 29	Memorial Day	No school
June 15	Last day of school	

#### Volunteer Tutors Wanted

Westland Middle School, located on Massachusetts Ave. near Little Falls Pkwy., is looking for volunteers to tutor students in writing, math and computer skills. Both long-term and short-term tutors are needed. If you think you might be interested, please call Nancy Wolfe.

#### **Citizens' Association Update**

Treasury: While Association membership dues are not mandatory, they are minimal (\$20). Since July 1, 1999, 93 households (out of 356) have paid their dues. We know that there are a number of new families and groups that have joined the neighborhood since then and that memory for such things is faulty. So, please, if you have not already done so, forward your \$20 membership to Andy Colyer, Treasurer, 4625 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20816.

Officers: There is a new Vice President for Brookdale West: Sharon Parina. Welcome, Sharon! Mette Tacheron has resigned as Vice President of the Orchardale section of Brookdale. That means that we have an empty VP slot for Orchardale. Please consider volunteering for this post. To discuss call Allison Fultz.

#### **Brookdale Market Great!**

by Kathleen McElroy (Brookdale resident and real estate agent)

Brookdale house sale prices in 1999 have increased between ten and fifteen percent over the prices obtained in 1998. Sales in 1998 increased about ten percent above those of 1997. These figures are approximate since too many fields in the computer make it hard to track all of the sales, but in evaluating houses prior to putting them on the market, this rule of thumb has been a good check. There were 17 houses sold in our neighborhood last year ranging in price from \$239,500 to \$610,000. The average sale price was \$399,332. This sale price may include credits written into the contract to allow the purchasers to finance some of their closing costs. The average time on the market was 32 days if you include two houses that took over three months to sell. Excluding the latter, the average time on the market was 10 days and

the median sale price was \$370,000. The 17 house addresses and prices are the following.

5321 Willard Avenue	\$239,500
4723 River Road	\$275,000
5014 Dalton Road	\$322,000
4627 River Road	\$329,900
4704 Dover Road	\$359,500
5328 Saratoga Avenue	\$370,000
4802 Dover Road	\$370,000
4600 Overbrook Road	\$372,000
4724 Merivale Road	\$379,000
4859 Park Avenue	\$379,000
4705 Overbrook Road	\$385,000
4605 Overbrook Road	\$395,000
5205 Murray Road	\$445,000
4719 River Road	\$490,000
4701 Merivale Road	\$532,750
4508 Dalton Road	\$535,000
5015 Westport Road	\$610,000

One of the most frequently asked questions pertains to the impact of the development of Friendship Heights on our neighborhood. The impact will vary at the personal level. We all like the almost small town atmosphere of Brookdale. That will diminish. But Brookdale will remain attractive because of the increased conveniences that the development of Friendship Heights will bring. It should not diminish the market value of our homes.

### **IT'S NOT GREEN TO BE GREEN!**

by Fiona Carson

It is very pleasing to create a beautiful yard containing beds of glorious, colorful, healthy-looking blooms, surrounded by emerald green lawns and graceful trees. Too often, however, this is achieved at great cost to the environment and to our health. Those strikingly green lawns are usually produced with the help of toxic chemicals; those attractive blooms often the recipients of artificial substances, and protected with poisonous pesticides. Many of us suffer severe allergies and asthma attacks as a result of our thirst for aesthetic beauty, and it seems a high price to pay, particularly when the use of these products can be easily avoided. Please bear in mind that pesticide runoff reaches the Chesapeake Bay and that organic, low-environmental impact products for lawn and garden should be a priority.

Late winter/early spring is a good time to remove old mulch, prune dead wood from almost any shrub and tree, bag up any leaves remaining from the fall, and cut down all brown perennial grasses. All of the above will greatly reduce the risk of pests, and will also improve the appearance and health of your plants.

When buying new blooms, trees, and shrubs, ask for varieties that are pest resistant and grow well in our clay-ridden soil. Frequent watering (except in times of drought) of trees and shrubs will keep them more resistant to disease, and grass will always be much greener after a few drinks! Should all this loving care and attention not be quite enough, there are many wonderful organic products on the market which should do the trick quite safely.

For more on this subject, and for more information on gardening in our area, there is a wonderful book entitled "The Washington Star Garden Book" by Deborah R. Fialka (\$15.95). Or for free information call the Master Gardeners' advice line of the Maryland Cooperative Extension at (301) 590-9650 or 590-9638.

## **Transitions**

compiled by Joy Sexton and Gwen Lewis

### **Newcomers**

Ricki Farber and Aaron Zitner

Emily (9 mos.)

4710 Dover Rd.

Stephen and Laudan Turnham

Talia (2)

4605 Overbrook Rd.

Jeff Florian and Shazmah Hakim

4600 Overbrook Rd.

Peter and Anne Jeliaskov  
Laura (3)  
4705 Overbrook Rd.

Nora Dudwick and Igor Barsegian  
Ariel Michael (22 mos.)  
4859 Park Ave.

Michele and Anne Herman  
5328 Saratoga Ave.

Diane and Arman Tanman  
Alex (7) and Lauren (8)  
5324 Sherrill Ave.

Richard Yates and Judy Sheon  
Nathan (3) and Lila (3)  
Diane Amos  
5015 Westport Rd.

## Births

Sylvia Helen was born October 27 to Helen and Michael Saxenian (Dover Ct.).

James Hayden was born October 28 to Jim and Kippy Clapp (Baltimore Ave.)

Nadia Maxine Langer was born to Allison Fultz and Steve Langer (Dalton Rd.) on October 28.

Alexander, son of Nancy Kim and Charles Hewitt (Westport Rd.), was born December 27.

## Death

Mrs. Olga Viola, a resident on Westport Road since the mid-1950s, died on January 1.

**If you are a newcomer, we hope that you have already received a warm welcome.**

We would like to publicize your presence and other transitions in the Bugle. Please send them to Gwen Lewis. The Brookdale Directory is useful in helping you navigate around the neighborhood. If you need a copy, contact Joy Sexton and give Doug Pearson your information (names, phone numbers, address, e-mail addresses) to add to the Spring update of the current directory.

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