

THE BROOKDALE BUGLE

January 22, 2002

The *Brookdale Bugle* is a publication of the Brookdale Citizens' Association.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, Gwen Lewis

Happy New Year! May the new year bring us a greater sense of security as well as peace in the world.

Crime

This fall we have been preoccupied with crime issues, as you know from the special issue of the *Bugle* in November. Interestingly, I have learned through recent conversations with local police that, in spite of the recent crimes, our area has a very low crime rate historically and compared to surrounding areas. Of course, this fact does not make recent events any less troubling, but it is heartening. Since our last report, there have been other troubling events. In two separate evening incidents during November 2001, robbers used the bus shelter on Western Avenue adjacent to Cortland Road as a position from which to strike. On a week night at 8:30 pm, a lone man (Brookdale resident) was knocked to the ground and robbed by two youth. About two weeks later, two men and a 2-year old from Brookdale were robbed at gunpoint by two men. Fortunately, no one was seriously injured, however, these incidents have led to a great deal of activity on behalf of community safety.

An important issue that arose in both incidents was police jurisdiction. We are working hard to see that all parties (our community, DC police, county police, and 911 operators) agree on what procedures to follow. If an incident occurs within the right-of-way (about 20 feet) of Western Avenue, the DC police are responsible to help. If you call for help from inside their jurisdiction, they will come to you. If it is a "non-emergency" and you call from inside Maryland, you will be asked to come to the police station in the District of Columbia, which for the Brookdale area is the 2nd

District, located on Idaho Avenue (behind the Giant Food parking lot on Newark and Wisconsin). The 911 operators are instructed to make the decision about the jurisdiction in relaying your call.

I am working with Anne Renshaw, Chair of the Public Safety subcommittee of the Friendship Heights Joint Task Force, in her efforts to bring together the Commander of the 2nd District in DC with Cmdr. Luther Reynolds, head of the Bethesda District, and the officer in charge of the Chevy Chase Village police force to iron out jurisdictional issues and to address the increased crime we have been experiencing throughout this area. Cmdr. Reynolds has been very responsive.

A second line of attack has been to address the inadequate lighting on Western Avenue. I have worked through Councilmember Howard Denis' office, DC Councilmember Kathy Patterson's office, and independently with public works/lighting in Montgomery Co. and DC. An inspection took place around December 14 at which time the head of DC lighting ordered increasing lighting between 45th Street and Wisconsin Avenue on Western-these lights were replaced on January 15. Meanwhile I have been working with Steve Martz at GEICO and his chief of security, Paul Brenner, on these issues as well. Brenner has placed lights on the corner house owned by GEICO trained on the bus shelter. He also repaired the shelter and removed the trash and graffiti. On his own initiative he called the Mayor's office and had trees trimmed in this vicinity so that limbs were no longer blocking the light fixtures. We continue to work with Steve and with Steve Robbins, the May Company representative, to try to get the lights turned on in the parking lot on the south side of Western between Mazza Galleria and Lord & Taylor. The security forces of GEICO, Mazza, and Lord & Taylor have been told of the situation along Western, and they are including the street in their security scans.

I am concerned that not every incident is being reported to either me, a VP, or your block captain. As we tried to say in our last newsletter, knowledge of what is happening and neighbor movements are very important to everyone's safety. I have not heard of any formal meetings that have occurred as a result of our plea that you get together. Now that the holidays have passed, I hope that you will take time to do so.

Development of Land

You have undoubtedly noticed the sign on the Chevy Chase Land Co. building (CCLC) stating that they are renting for their expanded facilities in 2003. According to the January 2001 issue of the Chevy Chase Crier, in one of the two suits brought by the Village against CCLC (that went against them and was appealed) the State Court of Appeals has upheld the decision by the lower court. "While the Village has noted appeals regarding other aspects of the CCLC development, the Board is now focusing on negotiating an effective construction agreement . . ." In talking with Anne Renshaw, DC ANC Rep. and chair of the Friendship Heights Task Force Subcommittee on Public Safety, I learned that a number of groups in the District are working to ensure greater safety standards in the district for trucks that operate there. This has been a hot issue since the death of a high school student mowed down by a truck without adequate brakes in about 1996. They are particularly concerned because the traffic from the CCLC site and across the street from it will be using Western and Connecticut for egress.

The issue of a Montgomery Co. Park on the Wohlfarth tract on Western Avenue just east of the Chevy Chase shopping center has been in the news. The current situation is that the county (probably with the assistance of the Village of Chevy Chase) will purchase it as part of the Legacy Open Space program to help deal with the inadequate recreation space in this part of the county. Speaking of amenities, according to the Northwest Current (1/2/02), DC will be improving safety and traffic flow in the Chevy Chase traffic circle. Signage and pavement markings will be improved in three to six months. Traffic lights (probably on Western Avenue) will come later. More details are expected to be discussed January 28 at the mayor's Ward 3 traffic summit. Repairs will not be made until traffic conditions improve. You may recall the major damage inflicted on the fountain and trees in the Circle from a wild driver heading across the circle, instead of around, last New Year's Eve. The Current reported in the same issue that the damage was caused by a Prince George's County police officer!

Across from the Chevy Chase Center, the medical buildings have been okayed by DC

to be razed and replaced by housing and commercial buildings several stories higher.

The Chase Tower (4445 Willard) has had difficulty in obtaining tenants. A staff member states that the building is now 40 percent leased. Their new low-rise retail building at Friendship Heights Boulevard and Willard will NOT provide the Sutton Place Gourmet previously promised, but they have signed Chipotle restaurant to a June lease.

The New England Development Corporation is in the process of raising funds to develop the Hecht's parcel (known as Wisconsin Place). Willoughby Park at the corner of Willard and Friendship Boulevard has been completed. (Some experts say workmanship is shoddy.) Now we need a warm and sunny day to attract users. The "beauty parlor" at 4906 River Road is still sitting empty. Bought in September 2000, this house has never had a resident. It is no longer listed for sale. Supposedly, a doctor backed out of a contract when he learned that he must live there to use it as an office. The immigration lawyer's office at 5032 River Road continues to be a severe problem for Green Acres-Glen Cove. Although this business has not applied for a permit, the County is said to have inspected and said there is no violation of the code. For more information see the Green Acres-Glen Cove website (www.geocities.com/gagcca/).

Organization News

Mike Makuch will be representing Brookdale on the Friendship Heights Task Force, originally established about three years ago to consider issues that cross governmental boundaries. I will attend the first meeting of the reestablished committee on January 23 to discuss joint efforts to combat crime.

We have a new "Area Liaison Representative" (block captain) on Saratoga: Marsha Broadwell. Thanks, Marsha! We need a few more area liaison reps-for the 5200 block of Saratoga, Willard Avenue, and River Road West side, 4600 block. Volunteers please call me or the appropriate VP.

Transitions, compiled by Hal Wolman

Newcomers: We welcome the following neighbors who have arrived in Brookdale recently:

Laurie Safran & Jim Cannon -- 4622 River Road

Denise Holmes -- 4603 Merivale Road

Frank Koy & Ina Farka and children Laura & Fiona -- 4612 Harrison

Sofia Letiua Morales and sons Sebastian & Walter -- 4700 River Road

Daniel & Julianne Truitt -- 5204 Keokuk

Debra Doherty -- 4838 Park Avenue

Births: Congratulations Maria Marquez, Victor Nava, and son Eduardo, on the birth of Nicolas Nava on September 14, 2001 . . . and to Tom and Barbara Riley, and daughters Fiona and Nell, who welcomed John Warren Riley on January 1, 2002.

Deaths: On January 1, 2002, Regina Leer Conlon died. Until August 2000, Mrs. Conlon lived in the home on Cortland Road that she and her husband bought in 1947 when it was built. Mrs. Conlon served the Brookdale Citizens' Association in several capacities over the more than 50 years that she lived her, including serving as its treasurer. Our condolences go to her family, including her granddaughter Patricia Busche with whom Mrs. Conlon lived.

After a brief illness, Bill Randolph, 72, died of cancer on January 3, 2002. The Randolphs joined the Brookdale Citizens' Association by petitioning the inclusion of their home on Western Avenue just west of Park Avenue many years ago. Bill's enthusiasm and friendship will be missed by many. Our condolences to his wife Inga.

Classified Ads

The classified section of the Brookdale Bugle is provided as a service to Brookdale residents, who may place ads at no charge. A fee of \$15 will be charged for ads placed by non-residents and all ads are subject to approval by the Brookdale Citizens' Association Executive Committee.

These Brookdale students are available for work. Please contact the Bugle editor if you would like to be listed in the next issue and let us know if you do other jobs such as dog walking, cat feeding, lawn mowing, etc.

Britta Glennon: 718-1621, 10th grade, experienced babysitter with references, has taken Safesitter course. Also offers pet care.

Ian Glennon: 718-1621, 6th grade, offers to dog walk, shovel snow, and be a mother's helper. Ric Freeman: 652-8669, 10th grade, would like to shovel snow, walk dogs, give pet care, or take care of other needs you may have.

Brookdale Home Sales, Kathleen McElroy

There are no houses for sale in our neighborhood at this time. Two houses are under contract:

5034 Park Place, listed at \$519,500, under contract in 4 days

4715 Merivale, listed at \$680,000, reduced to \$625,000, sold in 63 days

The following houses were under contract at the end of the first half of the year and have now settled:

4701 River, listed at \$485,000, reduced to \$444,900, sold in 61 days for \$432,000

4612 Harrison, listed at \$475,000, sold in 5 days for \$475,000

4706 Overbrook, listed at \$495,000, sold in 3 days for \$500,000

The following houses were listed, sold, and settled in the second half of the year:

4625 River was sold in 7 days for \$410,000

4635 River, listed for \$398,000 and sold for \$389,000 in 51 days

5014 Westport sold last year for \$652,000, was listed this year for \$679,000, and sold for \$665,000 in 18 days

There were a total of 18 sales in 2000 and 18 sales in 2001. One of the reasons our prices are increasing so fast is that, since the population of the Washington Metropolitan area has almost doubled in the last ten years, demand has increased tremendously but the supply of homes in great neighborhoods like ours has not increased. Prices in close-in neighborhoods have increased between 10 and 20 percent annually in the last two years.

There were two private sales this year: 5329 Willard in August for \$265,000; and 4500 Cortland in April for \$483,000.

One of the things that makes it hard to get totally accurate statistics is that many of the homes in this area have an unusual subdivision name. Some houses are in Friendship, part of Willard's subdivision, a number of other obscure ones and, worst of all, "Bethesda Outside," all names that mean nothing to the general population or the agents who use the system. Park Avenue and Park Place are in the legal subdivision of American University Park (recorded in 1898 and therefore not necessarily falling in the zoning restrictions of the R60 zoning of our neighborhood. The realtors' computer makes a distinction between the legal subdivision and the advertised subdivision. The commonly used and well known subdivisions names are Brookdale (top attraction), Orchardale and Wohlshire (although less well known they have a charm and attraction that Bethesda Outside doesn't have). Please make sure the information is correctly noted in ads and the computer systems. It will make the house sell faster and at a much better price.

Kathleen McElroy is a resident of Brookdale and a real estate agent who provides this information as a service to Brookdale.

Announcements & News

Westbrook Fourth Graders Focus on the Environment, June Miller

At Westbrook Elementary School, 4th grade students are very fortunate to have experienced science teachers Sandra Geddes and Nancy Wong. Each year students in their classes participate in projects concerning the environment, including the

creation of rain gardens and the study of life in rivers and streams. In speaking with Sandy, who has taught this program for nine years, it is easy to see how her enthusiasm has transferred to her students. In November 2000, she was given the Maryland Association of Science Teachers Award for Excellence in Elementary Science Education. Both Nancy and Sandy work with 4th graders, all of whom are involved in many projects. Fifth graders, led by Sandy, can join the Aqua Eagles, and take more of a leadership role. Some projects are repeated each year, and others change. One of the past projects involved learning about rain gardens at Clagett Farm, a 280-acre organic farm, run by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in Upper Marlboro. Students took the information and found a good site on their school grounds to investigate further. They learned that rain runs into Little Falls Stream, where it carries pollutants picked up from the street. They built a wood-frame bed below the drainpipe, prepared soil, and when the plants grew, the rain garden soaked up the water that would have run downhill. They planted native trees to create more of a buffer, so that erosion would be slowed, and a habitat for wildlife could be created.

Another project involved extensive research on shad. Students met with a Potomac Conservancy staff member for training. They watched shad eggs hatch, and then released the fingerlings into the Potomac. Still another project involved horseshoe crabs. The children had an all-day outing on a boat, the Mildred Bell, from Baltimore. Using a video camera attached to a microscope, they could view horseshoe crabs coming out of their eggs. At school, they studied the growth of more horseshoe crab eggs and released them.

"The children are committed to science and the environment," says Sandy.

"Together, they feel that they can make a difference." --and they already have!

Ian and Annika Glennon, Brookdale residents, have participated in this program, Ian previously and Annika this year. They say they have learned a lot of practical things that people in Brookdale should know about in order to protect the environment. Since all rivers in this area flow into Chesapeake Bay, trash that gets into Brookdale sewers hurts the rivers and the ecosystem in the Bay. They say, "People should watch out not to use too much fertilizer on their lawns because it causes algae to

grow in the rivers and streams and blocks the sun and takes oxygen out of the water, making it unhealthy for the animals that live there." Since oysters filter the water of the Bay, they note that we should not over fish the Chesapeake and should add oysters back into it. They also want you to know that creating compost piles will help us not overuse land fills and will provide fertilizer for our yards and gardens.

Caring for Your Trees, Fiona Carson

Paying a professional to prune and fertilize a tree can be very expensive. And yet ignoring the health of a tree can lead to its eventual demise. Doing it yourself apparently can be very rewarding and inexpensive, and not terribly difficult, and one day I shall try it myself. Here are some useful tips that I'd like to pass on.

January: Not much happening outdoors yet. Had this issue of the Bugle come out before January 15th, I would have advised pruning the 'bleeder' trees (birch, dogwood, Japanese & Sugar maple), but it is now too late and you'll have to wait for next year.

3rd week: Whitewash trees! Mix 2 cups hydrated lime with one qt. water. Apply to any tree getting direct sun on southwest side at sunset, from the soil to the first limb. This prevents splitting bark in June. Prune every side branch of the wisteria to leave only two buds-necessary if you want flowers in May.

4th week: Tree Pruning Time! Start with the easiest which are the watersprouts. These are completely vertical, pencil-thin shoots growing from limbs, and can be removed at the base with a hand pruner. The apple, cherry and crabapple trees are very prone to these. Next, check for diseased branches and shoots growing downward from healthy branches. Finally, imagine a limb to be the hour hand on a clock, the trunk of the tree being 12:00. Low-angle limbs growing between 12:00 and 1:30 (using the trunk as 12:00) should be removed, and high-angled limbs growing below 2:30 on one side of the clock or 9:30 on the other side, should also be removed. These branches are structurally weak, and will eventually break.

How to Prune: Buy a pole tree pruner which allows you to stand on the ground whilst

pruning 25' high. Make your initial cut 12 inches from the point where the limb intersects the trunk. Use the crescent-shaped saw and cut upward through the limb. Reverse the crescent saw and saw from the top down. The limb will fall, so watch out! Branches can be heavy. On the remaining piece of the limb, identify the bark ridge, which is a wrinkled section of tissue growing very close to the trunk. Do not cut away the bark ridge, as this will affect the health of the tree in later years. Make the cut in the limb about half an inch before the bark ridge (which grows both on the top and underneath the limb), again making the first cut with the crescent saw from the top, and then a downward cut from above.

March: 1st week: Unless you fertilized your trees in the Fall, now is the best time to do it. There are many good products available in garden centers. Don't use any products containing salt. Do not fertilize trees within one year of planting, to promote substantial root development while limiting few branches and limbs.

2nd week: Insect control. Before leaf growth starts, spray shrubs and small trees with superior oil to control gypsy moths, caterpillars, mealybugs, mites and scale. Prune 1/4 inch above new growth on fuchsia

3rd week: Apply iron sulfate to azalea, rhododendron, juniper, holly, laurel, pine & spruce. Rake all debris and fallen leaves from under and around fruit trees. This will prevent many diseases later on.

April: 1st week: Plant spring-flowering trees and shrubs. Follow garden center's instructions. Prune crape myrtle & rose-of-sharon. Paint cuts with Elmer's Glue. Don't leave much later than this because blossoms only grow on new spring growth. After pruning, apply a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer to the soil at the dripline (tips of outer branches). If mulch covers dripline, rake mulch away before fertilizing, and replace afterwards.

2nd week: Fertilize azaleas, mountain laurel, camellia, and other acid-loving shrubs, with leafmold or humus from the compost. Apply a couple of inches of mulch to the azalea beds.

More to follow in the next issue of The Bugle!

Trash and Recycling

Brookdale's regular trash and recycling collection day is Friday. There are only 6 holidays a year that can delay collection until Saturday if the actual holiday occurs Monday through Friday. They are New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

To discard anything other than "normal household trash" you must request a "special pickup" by calling 240.777.6410 anytime before 9:30 a.m. the day prior to pickup to describe exactly what is being discarded. (The contents of boxes or bags need not be described.) Each household may request up to five special pickups per calendar year. Scrap metal may exceed this limit.

Brookdale's Annual Halloween Party

Dalmatians and Dragons, Warriors and Witches . . ., Christie Perez

This year's annual Halloween Party was a "chilling" success. Those who braved the winds and cold enjoyed sweets and savories, meeting new neighbors, and catching up with old ones. We had a good turnout in spite of the rare, cold fall day. Children of all ages enjoyed participating in the games, especially the piñata. The big hit this year was a magician, Rich Lessig, who was even able to mesmerize and amaze the parents.

The Halloween Party has become a wonderful tradition that brings families both young and old together, which is what makes Brookdale such a special place. Many thanks to Kiyoshi Nakasaka and Maureen McRaith for organizing the party and to all the other, wonderful volunteers: Amy Kemper-Santos, Kathy and John Pirri, Natalie Nunes, Dennis and Regina Crosson, and Sue and Gorman King for all you did to make this event special!

Recollections, Sophie and Marvin Lasky

About Orcharddale.

In 1958 we bought our house at 5208 Saratoga Avenue from Thomas Rixie, the architect and builder with whom we became lifetime friends. We met Tom after we both moved to this area after the war; many Orcharddale residents were veterans. We both were in fact: Sophie was a SPAR in the Coast Guard and Marvin was in the Navy.

About Tom Rixie.

Tom had lost a thumb in action during World War II, and thus abandoned his plans of becoming a surgeon. He trained to become an architect and with a superb group of expert workmen, Tom designed houses and supervised their building.

Our house was one of the first Tom designed and built in Orcharddale. He subsequently designed or modified houses on Baltimore and Saratoga Avenue and two houses on Dalton Road. As Tom prospered and his business expanded, he built quite expensive homes in large housing developments (he would build in Hawaii in later years). Along the way, he was employed to redesign and remodel the Vice President's home on the grounds of the National Observatory. He was an extraordinarily talented architect, designer, and home builder . . . and a fine friend and human being.

About Westbrook

One of the major attractions of our area is the excellent Westbrook Elementary School. We were there in the beginning. In the early 1950's, the parent/teacher's association was largely formed, organized, and controlled by the school principal Hazel McNamara. Ms. McNamara was a top sergeant kind of dynamo-autocrat who drove the system and set the example for all of us by her endless hours of devotion to the children and the school to excel. Among the many tasks on which she enlisted the parents' help were:

safe walking for the children to and from Westbrook, which featured a school safety

patrol and a paid crossing guard at Baltimore and River Road (then a two-lane road); and
a nature-walk behind the school on a path about a quarter of a mile long to 'big rock', and assistance from parents who were skilled in botany and birdwatching to help teachers make the walk interesting for kids.

Ms. McNamara also managed to corral talented teachers for Westbrook's musical program, theater productions, and the glee club. "Our Hazel" also raised funds to supplement the school library and tried, although unsuccessfully, to start and maintain an orchestra program.

Transportation Idea, Robert L. Cope

The County Executive will shortly forward his budget to the County Council. Hearings will then be held. Although money will certainly be tight and many budgets will be cut, there is one area where the county can redirect funds in order to provide free ride-on bus service. This involves a current county program where the county provides free or subsidized metro passes to employees of local businesses within the Metro Planning Areas. For example, approximately \$100,000 may be budgeted for Friendship Heights. Local residents may not apply for these subsidized Metro passes. Rather, only employees that commute to Friendship Heights will qualify.

Since the Internal Revenue Service has recently increased the business deductions for subsidized Metro passes purchased by employers, in an effort to redirect county funds to free ride-on service would seem to make more sense. Accordingly, let's begin a campaign and notify all members of the County Council that free ride-on service is a better way to spend County money. (Ed.: If you think increased transportation between FH and our neighborhood would be useful, contact Bob at 301.654.7891.)

Gardening

The Brookdale Garden "Club" will meet Monday, February 25, at 11:15 a.m. at the home of Vijaya Mitra, 5311 Baltimore Avenue. Everyone is welcome.

Maymount Flower and Garden Show: Want to go to Richmond to a great alternative to the overly crowded Philadelphia Garden Show? Maymount is open February 21-24.

Call Grazia Narkus-Kramer at 301.320.3183 to join a group from Brookdale.

Treasurer's Report, Regina Reed Crosson

The Association entered fiscal year 2002 with a balance in our account of \$5,400. Since fall 2001, we have collected \$2,640 in dues for the '02 fiscal year, bringing our balance up to approximately \$8,000. Keep in mind that your \$20 per year dues help keep the Association active, allowing us to publish the Bugle and the Brookdale Directory, and sponsor fun-filled events such as the Halloween Party, Fourth of July Parade, and Block Party. In addition, funds may be used in this fiscal year for important expenses, including security and legal expenses.

Only 132 of Brookdale's households have paid their 2002 dues thus far! If you haven't paid yet, please mail a check made out to Brookdale Citizens' Association to: Regina Reed Crosson, 5110 Westport Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

NEW?

If you are a newcomer to Brookdale, we hope you have already received a warm welcome. We would like to publicize your presence and other transitions in the Bugle.

Please send them to Hal Wolman, secretary. If you don't have a copy of the Brookdale Directory, contact your area liaison representative. Please contact Gia Regan (4723 River Road) with additions or updates to the directory.

The *Brookdale Bugle*:

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