

THE BROOKDALE BUGLE

Scheduled for January 15, 2003

quick link to [home sales](#)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Brookdale has had a good Fall 2002; it's usually our busiest time of the year. We had our September Block Party, another community yard sale, the annual Halloween party, and we delivered the largest number of welcome baskets to date; in addition the Executive Committee, along with some residents, has been addressing residential development issues that will be covered below and in separate articles.

Block Party. The Brookdale Block Party was a resounding success. The weather was quite decent and the turnout was good. Regina Crosson and her family did the majority of the setup and coordination, but lots of residents participated by bringing delicious food. Many commented that they were surprised there were so many gourmet and international food items. Regina found a great DJ who kept the kids well entertained. We used the block party as the vehicle to recognize our long-time, retiring mailman, Mr. Paul Webb. His wife, children, and grandchildren attended our presentation of a large collection of cash and checks. The *Washington Post* covered the presentation of our gift and ran a brief article with pictures. Thanks to Jean Junior and Campbell Graeub for their hard work in running the collection which ensured that Brookdale expressed its heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Webb. In my opinion, of all of Brookdale's events, the annual block party is the best opportunity for neighbors to meet and get to know each other and share some great food.

Brookdale Development. Since our last *Bugle* the Executive Committee has been working on a few residential development issues. (See a more detailed report on the issues in the adjacent article.) At the 8 Oct. Executive Committee meeting we first discussed these issues. Sometimes addressing such issues requires professional legal

assistance. In past years, Brookdale has decided what action to take based on the merits of each case and we continue to use this method. There are three main options for pursuing and funding of such initiatives association only, concerned resident(s) only, or a combination. The Executive Committee chose a "combination" in which the concerned residents and the association would split the costs of minimum legal counsel 2/3 1/3. We felt the greater good of the neighborhood was involved in these particular cases, but the treasury balance is not sufficient to fully fund many such issues. So far, legal counsel has been used in only one case. I wanted to outline this background for the benefit of all residents as such issues evolve and as other development concerns present themselves.

Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) Testimony. On 10 Oct, Norm Knopf, Ron Tripp, and I attended the MPDU hearing on Emergency Bill 33-02. I testified about my concern that the bill as written might provide a loophole that would permit builders to replace existing single family homes with multi-unit townhomes. I did state that Brookdale supports MPDUs as a county goal, but not at the expense of redeveloping an existing single family neighborhood. The bill's sponsor Councilmember Silverman apparently heard the concerns expressed that evening. He has reworked the bill to make it apply only to townhouse developments of over 20 such dwellings, which would require at least 3.28 acres of land. Given this we could presumably support the new bill 38-02.

Block Captains. I want to remind residents that the block captains are the real connection between residents and the four area V-Ps. Without the block captains, each V-P would have to deliver to and collect information from upwards of 100 homes. We expect to be using the block captains to assist in dues collection and for the update to the residents' directory.

Dues Collection. We need to start our Brookdale Association dues collection drive for the 2002-2003 year. Sissy Rothwell and Regina Crosson are heading up this effort. We expect V-Ps to provide the dues collection envelopes to the block captains for distribution very soon. If you have paid dues since the 8 May 2002 annual meeting you can consider yourselves paid up for this year.

Directory Update. Shaazka Beyerle is heading up the *Brookdale Directory* update. She is working closely with the V-Ps and with our Brookdale Data Manager, Nancy Lavigne. We appreciate the assistance both are providing in this endeavor. You should receive a data collection form with this *Bugle*. We'd appreciate it if every household would complete and return the form (even if you request not to have your name or your phone number included in the directory). If you'd like to help with the directory, please contact Shaazka at 301-718-7861.

Playground Equipment. Montgomery County Parks and Planning Commission has budgeted for new/upgraded playground equipment for Brookdale Park. Fiona Carson and Maureen McRaith are Brookdale's focal points. If you would like to participate in the first meeting, which is as yet unscheduled, please contact either Fiona or Maureen. Linda Komef, the MCPPC rep, will come to Brookdale to meet with concerned residents, probably some time in February.

--William Geiger

RESIDENTS OPPOSE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN BROOKDALE -- Barbara Ingersoll & Kathy Mintz

With property values soaring to all-time highs in the close-in suburbs, developers are looking with interest at the possibility of subdividing lots in order to build more houses on available land. However, many residents believe that large houses on small lots would be inconsistent with the character of the Brookdale neighborhood and, with the support of the Brookdale Citizens' Association, some have actively opposed such development.

On Park Avenue, residents whose property is adjacent to, or confronting, the property at 4811 Park Avenue were notified that the owners had applied to subdivide the lot to create two buildable lots and that they would seek a waiver from the Montgomery County Planning Board because the property is not large enough to be resubdivided under current R-60 zoning regulations.

Several residents opposed to the resubdivision have retained legal counsel to represent them before the Planning Board. At a meeting of the Development Review Committee at the Planning Board on October 21, the applicants were informed of the opposition and asked to provide more information concerning analysis of other lots on the block in terms of size, subdivision, and the like. No date has been set for a subsequent hearing before the Planning Board.

As reported in the September 2002 issue of the *Bugle*, two lots on Dalton Road (5002 and 5004), one that had a modest house, are being developed. This is a joint venture between The Haines Companies and GEICO, the land owner. The lots are only 42 feet wide, and the first home has been constructed 5 feet from the adjacent lot (5000), rather than the more usual 7 feet required in our neighborhood.

On Dalton Road, the issue centers on correct application of zoning ordinances. The lots are part of the original Wilbert estate that was subdivided in 1923 as a result of a court case brought by family members with conflicting interests. That court decision was never entered into the county land records; so it is thought that it is the date when the first deed was issued that should be the salient date for rules that apply to the new construction. Evidently the rules have not been applied consistently in the past development on that block of Dalton.

Neighbors to the properties, with endorsement from the Brookdale Association, filed an appeal citing that the Department of Permitting Services issued the permit for 5002 Dalton Road in error. The original hearing before the Appeals Board was scheduled for December 11th, but was cancelled due to the ice storm. The new date has been set for January 15th at 1:30 p.m.

Meanwhile, since no "stop order" has been issued by the county, construction has advanced, and the house was advertised for sale in the *Washington Post* as a 5 bedroom, 4 level, ready for occupancy in January. The list price is now \$899,000. On December 31, the developer applied for an 1800 sq. ft. addition to the 4224 sq. ft. house authorized on September 17. On December 4, the construction company was granted a permit to build a 5001 sq. ft. house on the lot at 5004 Dalton, again

under the conditions of a 5 foot set back from the lot line.

Zoning and Development Issues -- Ron Tripp, Chairperson, Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

Developers have again changed their plans for the Hecht's site, and once again the changes are a positive improvement for residents of the Friendship Heights area. New England Development Company (N.E.D.) is submitting a new site plan that they say reflects changes in the market for commercial office space. The new plan eliminates one of two office towers by reallocating about 150,000 square feet from office space to residential space. A hotel along Friendship Blvd. was previously eliminated.

Under the new plan the project's apartment building will now be as tall as the office tower (14 stories), and although it will front Willard Ave., the building will have a wide side along Friendship Blvd. adjoining the community center. N.E.D. also seeks to take advantage of an option that allows for additional footage if used for a grocery store. The new plan includes a 50,000 square foot specialty type grocery store at the Metro level and fronting on Willard Ave. in the area of the present Hecht's loading docks.

From early in the Sector Plan process CCCFH has insisted that there was more need for residential space than office space, and more importantly we have pointed out repeatedly that homes are less taxing to our already congested roads than offices. People residing at a Metro station are more likely to be regular Metro users than people working near a Metro station. And, office workers all tend to use the roads during the same few hours, whereas road use by residents tends to be more spread out through the day and evening, causing less congestion.

While pleased with N.E.D.'s changes, CCCFH does have concerns. Among them are having the apartment building's rooftop utilities pushed back out of sight, maintaining a Wisconsin Avenue drop off area where standing cars would be allowed, and making sure that the apartment dwellers don't overwhelm the Community Center facilities. The plan will be subject to County Planning Board review. Watch for hearing date(s).

Another Friendship Heights project now in the planning stage is the redevelopment of the Washington Clinic site. This project proposes mostly condo's, about 125 units. As part of this project the developer will also be making improvements to a nearby D.C. park.

CCCFH continues to follow County Council bill number #38-02, the reintroduced "Moderately Priced Dwelling Units - Optional Construction" bill. "Optional Construction" can be viewed as a loophole around the basic R-60 & R-90 restrictions. This legislation will allow Moderate Price Dwelling Units to be built voluntarily by developers on any size parcel-including in-fill projects in R-60 and R-90 neighborhoods. Under existing law, MPDUs can consist of townhouses and attached housing, which could be built in neighborhoods zoned for single family detached houses.

We do not and should not oppose MPDUs, just this change in the law. CCCFH is asking that townhouses be prohibited when the surrounding homes are single family homes. We're also asking that MPDU units be similar in size to other housing stock in a neighborhood; and that instead of allowing voluntary MPDUs in smaller projects, have the smaller projects contribute to a housing fund to build MPDU units on larger parcels.

Tap Water or Bottled? -- Ricardo A. Perez, D.D.S., Pediatric Dentist/ Brookdale Resident

That is the question . . . and one that many people are asking these days. A family decision to switch to bottled water is a personal one and therefore one that I respect. However, it is important to know that, as of today, our water here in Montgomery County is safe and clean to drink. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) is responsible for the drinking water of more than 1.5 million people and is committed to ensuring that every gallon of water is pure to the highest standards. Our water here in Chevy Chase comes from the Potomac Water Filtration Plant (WFP) which takes its raw water directly from the Potomac River for treatment.

Fluoride is a naturally occurring element that prevents tooth decay. Half of the American children under the age of 12 have never had a cavity. Much of the success of this "cavity-free generation" is due to the effective use of fluorides, mostly in drinking water and toothpaste.

A tap water analysis in 2000 at the Potomac WFP found fluoride on a yearly average of 0.93 mg/liter, which is an "ideal" concentration for the prevention of dental decay.

Regarding home water filtration devices, it is important to know that only those which operate by reverse osmosis can remove up to 90% of fluoride but most

charcoal carbon-based systems remove only a very small amount.

There are today over 500 brands of bottled water sold in the U.S. Only a small percentage of those have added the fluoride. To see if the water you are using has fluoride, contact the distributor or call the International Bottled Water Association, IBWA, at (800) 928-3711.

The bottom line is that no matter the source of your drinking water, nothing takes the place of proper brushing and flossing beginning at an early age and throughout your life. Remember: only brush the ones you want to keep!

GOBLINS GATHER IN BROOKDALE PARK -- Karen Baratz

Once again, the annual Brookdale Halloween party was a howling success! The goblins chased away the rain clouds and neighbors gathered under sunny skies and balmy temperatures (especially compared to last year's chilly event) in the Brookdale Park on Saturday, October 26 for an afternoon of tricks and treats.

Kids of all ages took part in a variety of games including the ever-popular donut-eating contest, striking a cat-shaped pinata filled with candy, and a parade around the park's perimeter. Among this year's creative costumes were a fairy princess, the Tin Man from The Wizard of Oz, Spiderman, a dalmation, a cowboy and a ladybug. Proving that no one is too young to enjoy Halloween, some of the adults donned costumes such as a Viking, a witch and a master chef.

Many thanks to William and Marie Geiger and Judy Sheon who organized this year's party. Victor Abdow and Pat Kitchen (dressed as a British bobby) were the grill masters, cooking up hot dogs and hamburgers for all to enjoy. Everyone had a wonderful time taking part in this annual tradition which contributes to the warm and sociable environment that is so unique to the Brookdale neighborhood. We look forward to more ghoulish fun next year!

TRANSITIONS compiled by Hal Wolman, Secretary

Julie & Jim Pope moved with their children Jack (5) and Will

(almost 2) from Sherrill Ave. to 4501 Cortland Rd.

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

Joan and Mel Christie and their daughter Anne, 4712 Dover Rd.

Risa and Kenny Elias, 5007 Westport Rd., from Bethesda.

Richard and Liz Kaufman and their daughter Emma, 4715 Merivale Rd.

Dwight and Darcy King and 4-year old Weston, 4611 Harrison, from Berkeley, CA.

Jeanene Laird and Michael Ryan, 4714 Dover Rd.

Elisabeth Layton and Louis Jacobson, 4727 River Rd.

Mark Posin, 4602 Overbrook Rd.

Gregory and Dawn Rutland and children Sara (11) and Ben (2), 5302 Westport Rd. from Georgia.

Births:

To Ricki Fraber and Aaron Zintner, 4710 Dover Rd., son Nathaniel

To Shazmah Hakim and Jeff Florian, 4600 Overbrook Rd., son Ali.

To Christine and Scott Montgomery, 4712 Dover Rd., son Quinlan

To Deniz and Peter Sisler, 4720 Merivale Rd., son Louis

To Tao Wang and Luis Kuijs, 5010 Westport Rd., son Sander

To Victor Nava & Maria Marquez, 5000 Dalton, their third son, Andreas, on December 29.

Death:

Andrew Colyer, longtime Treasurer of the Brookdale Citizens'

Association, died of cancer on Oct. 27th, 2002. Andy lived in Brookdale from 1968-2001. An Atlanta native and graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, Col. Colyer was in the Army from 1941-1972 and served in both World War II and the Korean War. Our deepest condolences to his wife Mary and his sons.

Get Well Soon:

Best wishes for a speedy recovery and rehab to Lilyan Atkinson after her recent knee surgery. We look forward to seeing her out walking again when the weather warms!

COMMUNITY NOTICES

[See also the regular [community information](#).]

Brookdale Garage/Yard Sale -- Marina Bowsher

Brookdale held a community yard sale on Saturday, October 19. At least 13 families participated in the sale, and many purchasers were on hand to take advantage of the bargains.

Recycle Old Cell Phones

The Montgomery County Sheriff's "Cell Phones for Domestic Violence Victims" Program is collecting used phones. If you have a cell phone you are no longer using, you may take it to the Village of Chevy Chase Community Center, Communication Center, a collection point, located on Connecticut Ave.

Avalon Theater to Reopen

In a public/private partnership with Douglas Development, The Avalon Theater Project is restoring the old movie house on Connecticut Ave. near the Chevy Chase Circle to its former state. It is anticipated that the theater will reopen in the winter of 2003. Before that can happen, six hundred seats must be replaced.

Purchase of replacement seats would be a tax-deductible contribution (according to the Avalon organization). The cost is \$200 for one seat or \$350 for two seats. Recipients' or donors' names will be engraved on brass plates that will be placed on the seats.

For further information, call (202) 249-9510 or e-mail [info @ theavalon.org](mailto:info@theavalon.org) to reserve your piece of history.

BROOKDALE QUIZ I - Dave Montgomery & Gwen Lewis

This is the first installment of a quiz about the neighborhood of Brookdale.

We *think* we know the answers to these questions in contrast to the questions of the second part. Answers will be given in the next *Bugle* along with the names of readers who submit answers and either agree with us or can explain why they are right.

1. What famous children's book is rumored to have been written while the author lived at 5308 Westport Road?
2. Some say that an Indian cemetery was located in what is now Brookdale. Where?
3. How old (at least) is River Road?
4. What is the Shoemaker connection with Brookdale?
5. Name the original developer of Brookdale. In what year did he first build a house here?
6. Why did houses on Western Avenue cost more than others in the original Brookdale development?
7. The covenant of the original Brookdale subdivision required all houses to appear alike in one respect. What was it?
8. Where did the name Wohlshire come from?
9. Who is Brookdale's police liaison officer?
10. How many houses does GEICO currently own within Brookdale?

Update on Brookdale home sales -- Kathy McElroy

The second half of 2002 continued to show serious price appreciation in the neighborhood of 10% although this is more of a rule of thumb based on experience as so few houses that have sold are exactly comparable to each other.

Of the houses on the market for sale or under contract in the last report they have settled as follows:

4727 River Road, listed at \$449,929 sold on August 18 for \$449,927 in 15 days.

4714 Dover Rd., listed at \$549,500 had two offers and sold in 4 days on August 12 for \$567,000.

4637 River Rd. was originally listed at \$589,500, reduced several times to a final list

price of \$519,500. It sold for \$500,000 in July and was on the market for 52 days.

There were only 3 additional sales in our neighborhood in the second half of the year:

4611 Overbrook Rd. was listed at \$649,000 and sold in 10 days with 2 offers for \$664,000 on June 10.

5329 Willard Ave. was listed for \$549,000, reduced to \$499,000 and sold October 7 in 31 days for \$450,000 with a \$10,000 subsidy for a net price to the seller of \$440,000.

5000 Park Place sold on Nov. 4 for \$645,000. It was listed for \$698,000 and sold in 3 days.

One house is under contract:

5002 Dalton Road, listed originally at \$999,000, reduced to \$899,000, and under contract in 79 days on December 19.

One house is currently on the market:

5304 Saratoga Ave. is listed at \$725,000.

As always, the first half of the year has many more listings with April this year being the strongest month in number of sales. And, as always, careful pricing of a house, considering its strengths and weaknesses is critical to getting the house sold quickly and at a good price.

The market is expected to continue strong barring a sharp rise in interest rates. It was interesting to see, while in Ireland over the holidays, that the market there has been very strong with enormous price appreciation in the last 12 years and a minor correction in 2001. The outlook there, according to the locals and a property report in the paper, is for the Dublin market to remain strong due to continued high

demand as the city continues to grow and due to low interest rates. Like here, the expensive property sales have moderated but the starter and middle range properties continue very strong. The expected growth there should be in the 3-5% range.

In the last thirty years of working in sales here, the 90s didn't follow the pattern of the 1970s and 1980s where the boom market lasted about six years and the slower market only four years in each of those decades. We had a middling to declining market starting in 1990/91 to the lowest point in 1995/1996 and then the usual strong appreciation of 1997-2002. A great deal of that was due to pent-up demand which is no longer as frenzied but still strong.

Chevy Chase Land Company Site

Rumors abound about the likely delay in development of the Chevy Chase Land Company site (N of Western and E of Wisconsin), until May or possibly later. Robert Dalrymple, attorney for CCLC, confirmed that CCLC is going to apply for building permits shortly and that no building will begin until late in the second quarter. The first action will be to build the buffer between the site and the Village of Chevy Chase. The buffer will consist of a fence above the wall that separates them, plantings, and a pedestrian walk in that area.

Wohlfarth Tract

The agreement between the Village of Chevy Chase and the County to acquire the Wohlfarth property, along Western Av. E of the shopping center, is completed and the park is assured. Since there is a life estate in the property, do not expect a park right away.

Development Issues in DC

The initial meeting of the newly elected ANC representatives in the District of Columbia is being held January 13. A number of development issues will be discussed there. These include the WMATA site; the Chevy Chase Circle traffic study, signals,

etc.; a major study of the Military/Missouri crosstown traffic that will begin in January or February and take 3-4 months; a Wisconsin corridor study launched January 7 to study traffic, streetscape, and zoning matters from Tenley Circle to Friendship Heights which should be completed by June; and the partial TV tower standing on Wisconsin Ave. at Tenleytown, a matter that is in the courts.

Home Business Parking Legislation

On October 29, the Montgomery County Council unanimously approved legislation concerning the parking at home businesses introduced by Howard Denis, our councilmember, and revised by the Wisconsin Ave. Action Committee and the Citizens Coordinating Committee. Norm Knopf, Brookdale resident and attorney, was very important in crafting this legislation so that it could be passed. The amendment to previous law limits the number of vehicles (at any one time) and parking spaces that may be located in front of residential property being used as a home business and makes it possible to monitor and enforce that number. Kudos to Howie, Norm, and all the others engaged in this several-year effort.

Gardening Enthusiasts!

After a short winter hiatus, the Gardening Group will resume meeting at 10:30 am on March 12, 2003 at Maryn Goodson's home, 4608 Overbrook St. Everyone is welcome to come share ideas. Please e-mail (mpgwlg -@- erols.com) or telephone (301-652-6843) before the meeting to let Maryn know you're coming.

STREET TREES -- Gwen Lewis

Many of the large trees that were planted or already existed when Brookdale was begun 75 years ago are now dying or heading into their elder years. To ensure that Brookdale has the tree cover for which it has been valued so much in the past, in 2000 the Brookdale Citizens' Association initiated a program to assist residents in requesting free street trees from Montgomery County.

Already this program has led to the planting of 15 new trees along our streets. Eight more are requested for planting in Spring 2003.

Street trees do not solve the entire problem. Back yards in a number of areas are without trees and may be the logical place to plant when an old, but still viable, tree is in your front yard. Because these trees generally take 20 years to provide much shade, one must think ahead, perhaps even to those who will come after us. A recent estimate by a tree surgeon was that an old oak would add as much as \$100,000 to the value of a property. This, of course, deals not at all with the health-giving properties of a tree (cooling and reduction of pollutants). Hence, we encourage you to examine your property and make the minimal investment in trees now.

If you would like help in requesting a street tree from the county, look on the [Brookdale website](#) for information, and call Fiona Carson (301-986-0574) or me (301-215-9224).

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