

THE BROOKDALE BUGLE

Web edition of the distribution scheduled for January 13, 2008

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President's Report

As we turn the page on another year, it struck me that many of the issues we face as a community heading into 2008 seem a lot like the issues we faced going into 2007. Two of the big ones are public safety and development.

Public Safety

In 2007 there was good news on the public safety front. More on that in a minute. For those of you who have been actively involved in the ongoing challenges of thefts from, and of, automobiles, we had two major meetings this year with the Montgomery County Police Department. The first came in February following a rash of incidents in late 2006. The second was held a few weeks ago (December 12th) at Westbrook Elementary School.

In both cases, I was pleased at the very strong response from the Police Department. At the most recent meeting, the County's Chief of Police, Tom Manger, joined the new Commander of the Second Police District, Russ Hammill, Community Policing Coordinator Officer Denise Gill and Third District (Silver Spring) Commander Don Johnson to address the community. For those of you who have not been burning up the neighborhood Listservs, the meeting was prompted by a number of thefts from autos in Westmoreland Hills and nearly 60 emails sent to Commander Hammill regarding this issue.

Commander Hammill, who recently took command of the 2nd District, clearly understood the community's concerns and described the many efforts they are undertaking to combat the Countywide (if not nationwide) problem of thefts from autos (see separate story). Not surprisingly, the rise of portable electronics iPods, GPS devices, laptops, etc.-- makes cars particularly cars that are unlocked attractive targets. The good news that Commander Hammill reported was that thefts from autos, auto thefts, and burglaries in and around our community are all down from 2006 to 2007. If you attended the February meeting on this same issue, the 2005 to 2006 trends were far less favorable.

Here is the bottom line from our local law enforcement officials (and you've heard it before, but it is so important that it bears repeating):

1. Do *not* leave any valuables (or things that look like they could contain valuables) in your car even if it is parked in front of your house under a streetlight.
2. Lock your car even if it's in your driveway.
3. Report *any* suspicious activity (or actual and attempted thefts) to the Police by calling 911. As Commander Hammill put it, "bother us!"

While I agree that we would all like to be able to leave things in our cars and/or even not lock our cars, the data presented by the Police suggest a clear linkage between thefts from autos and cars that are unlocked have valuables inside of them or both. Locking our cars and not leaving consumer electronics in plain sight will go a long way towards making our community a less attractive target.

We can all look out for one another too. For example, if your neighbor is away and there is a newspaper on their front steps put it someplace less obvious. And although it may not be very environmentally friendly, the Police do encourage us all to leave outside lights on and/or put your lights on timers so if you're away, it appears that someone is home (use an energy efficient bulb).

Given the intensity of the community response, I also wrote about the recurring theft from autos issue to the County Executive's office, all of the at-large members of the County Council and Councilmember Roger Berliner (who represents the 1st District in which we reside. While I did hear back from staff from the offices of Councilmembers Berliner and Elrich (and got a form letter back from Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg), the most effective response was from At- large Councilmember George Leventhal, who engaged Chief Manger directly on this issue and who followed up with me as well.

We will continue to communicate directly with County Police (and others) about efforts to keep our community safe. For those of you who have not yet joined the Brookdale Listserv, I encourage you to do so at http://comjet.com/mailman/listinfo/brookdale_comjet.com. The Police have described our Listserv as a "virtual" Neighborhood Watch" that is a powerful tool for all of us to quickly share information about things happening in and around Brookdale.

Friendship Heights Development

Members of the Executive Committee along with two of our representatives

to the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (Bob Cope and Ron Tripp) spent time with our new neighbors at the old Hecht's site New England Development (NED) before the holidays to see the site and learn about NED's plans for the site. They seem to be on target to open the Community Center in fall 2008 and Whole Foods in March 2009. (See [story on Community Center.](#))

At the same time, as the site takes shape, part of the reason for the outreach from NED to Brookdale stems from their proposal (which they plan to bring to the Planning Board as quickly as they are able to do so) to seek approval to add a 1,000 to 1,200 sq. ft. structure near the corner of Western and Wisconsin Aves. to house a coffee stand (e.g., Starbucks, Caribou Coffee, etc.) They would also like to squeeze approximately 7,000 sq. ft. of additional retail into their existing site plan. Their rationale is two-fold. First, they want to attract and retain as much foot traffic as possible so that the plaza area is, as they say, more like the corner of Bethesda and Woodmont Aves. (Barnes & Noble fountain) and less like the essentially vacant plaza where the Original House of Pancakes is located between Wisconsin Ave. and Old Georgetown Rd. Second, it probably goes without saying, they want to maximize the economics of the project.

At our first meeting in November, we urged NED to identify all possible locations for any additional retail (including the proposed coffee stand to add up to their desired total of 8,500 square feet) AND encouraged them to commit to maintaining existing green space. Although many of us were skeptical of this proposal, in response to our concerns, NED produced site plans ([which are copied here](#)) and identified where they would suggest 2,000 square feet be placed (in what was originally designated on the site plans as a property management office space for NED). Given their short time frame, we expect them to seek Planning Board approval for the full 8,500 square feet in coming weeks (based on a complex formula that is tied to the construction of the Whole Foods market) with or without our support.

While it is easy to view this as a typical developer play for more retail, a number of people have suggested that to date NED has been a good and responsive neighbor and put both more open space and invested more in the community center than what was required by the Friendship Heights Sector Plan. All of this suggests that their latest concept deserves our thoughtful consideration. While Brookdale has not yet taken a formal position on this proposal, we will likely be asked for our input in coming weeks. I know that all Members of the Executive Committee welcome your comments and suggestions by the end of January on this subject.

Finally, Bob Cope has also been actively tracking progress on the Westbard Sector Plan and the Washington Episcopal School site. I encourage you to [read his update](#) in this edition of *The Bugle*. The WES site developments

are a good example of communities working together to achieve a common goal.

Finally, thanks to all of you who already sent your 2007-08 dues to Suzanne Richman. An envelope is enclosed with this edition of *The Bugle*. Your continued support of the Brookdale Citizens' Association makes it possible for us to fund efforts to help manage growth in our community and neighboring communities, as well as community-wide events such as the Fourth of July parade, the Halloween party, the biannual Brookdale directory and, of course, *The Brookdale Bugle*. Speaking of the Directory, please respond quickly to Sarah Jessup's request for your latest information to be included in the upcoming *Brookdale Directory*. As always, I also encourage you to share any suggestions you may have about how we can strengthen and celebrate our neighborhood, with me or anyone on the Executive Committee.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy, safe and successful 2008!

Steve Heyman

If you have been by Brookdale Park recently, you probably notice that just after Thanksgiving, a contractor hired by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) removed the old playground equipment in preparation for installation of the long-awaited new equipment. In our regular communications with MNCPPC staff who manage park renovations, we have been assured that our equipment has been received and should be installed any day perhaps by the time you read this edition of the *Bugle*.

Cooper Lane poet
Just published book of haiku
Words float from her home
- - *Abner Oakes*

Real estate finance attorney and Brookdale resident Roberta Beary told me that she believes in the "calming spirit of haiku."

"When I lived in Japan from 1990-1995, I turned to haiku as a way to bring some balance into my life," she told me. "My then-husband was at that time a Washington Post reporter, and he traveled throughout Asia constantly. I was left alone to care for my two small children."

It seemed that Roberta came back home to poetry; she grew up in a small house in Queens, NY, and it was filled with poetry, "inherited," she said, "from the previous owner. A Child's Garden of Verses was a favorite bedtime read."

In Japan she began to read the haiku columns yes, haiku columns! in Tokyo's English language newspapers, began to compose her own, and, when she worked for a law firm there in 1991, found a compatriot who helped translate her first attempts into Japanese, some of which got published in those very same English-language newspapers.

"My earliest influences were Emily Dickinson and the Imagist Poets, especially Pound," Roberta told me. "These two American poets influenced the American haiku movement which was later taken up by the poets Allen Ginsberg, Richard Wright, and Jack Kerouac."

(Roberta's literary history runs deep: she met her second husband Frank Stella in a reading club. He asked her out when he realized that she was the only member of the club that understood the ending of Joyce Carol Oates' 1994 novel *What I Lived For*.)

Roberta returned to the States with her two children, who were 7 and 9 at the time, and in the midst of a divorce and emotional tumult, she received news from Japan that she had won a haiku contest, one that she had entered just before leaving Japan.

"Contests are a big part of the haiku world both here and abroad," Roberta told me. "This was my first try. It turned out that this contest, to commemorate the 300th anniversary of [Haiku poet] Basho, was an important one."

Roberta soon learned of a local haiku group in the DC area the Towpath Haiku Group and during the more than 10 years that she's attended Towpath meetings and workshops, Roberta slowly built a body of work that is now her first book, *The Unworn Necklace*. Published this August by the British Snapshot Press, it includes several prize-winning poems, including one which sent Roberta back to Japan in 2005 for an all-expenses paid trip to collect her well-deserved prize.

thunder
the roses shift
into shadow

You can find *The Unworn Necklace* at Amazon or the Bethesda Writers' Center. And you can find Roberta on Cooper Lane; I bet she'd be glad to autograph your copy for you.

all day long
i feel its weight
the unworn necklace

Wisconsin Place Recreation Center -- *Dave Montgomery*

One of the few benefits for Brookdale residents to come out of the nearby, ongoing development is the recreation center on what we used to call "the Hecht's site." This community center, next to Bloomingdale's, will provide services that many of us can use. Access to the center will be through the upper plaza level of Wisconsin Place and from Friendship Boulevard.

On November 1, County officials and a representative of the developer, New England Development (NED), met with a group of local residents to review progress on construction and programming for the center. The NED representative summarized the construction schedule, saying that the recreation center should be open in the fall of 2008. Other markers on the schedule include completion of the next-door apartment building in late fall with the office building, Whole Foods, and "Kiss & Ride" open in March of 2009.

The short answer to what will be provided is to look at the Leland Community Center, five blocks east of downtown Bethesda. The total area of the two centers will be the same (although the layouts will be different). Each is/will be operated by the County's Department of Recreation. Based on the Leland experience, the center at Wisconsin Place will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., longer on Friday and Saturday evenings for special events; and the hours will be adjusted according to demand. The center will house an exercise room, a small gym with a basketball court, some computers, meeting rooms, and kitchen facilities to support various gatherings. Activities will range from organized classes such as art to occasional meetings by neighborhood associations to drop-in opportunities for exercise. Staffing is projected to include one full-time director plus another 11 or so part-time and seasonal staff.

Concern was expressed at the meeting about the possibility of noise affecting Brookdale from groups leaving the center late at night. The NED representative pointed out that their apartment building will be closer to the center than our homes, hence that they would be even more sensitive to noise and, as landlord, would protect everyone. The Leland Center representative said that noise has not been a problem there.

Washington Episcopal School - - *Robert L. Cope*

Although the focus is now on the upcoming Westbard Sector Plan study, a recent application by Washington Episcopal School reminds us that the old Westbard Sector Plan is still going strong.

The Washington Episcopal School now owns all eleven acres surrounding the school. The old Westbard Sector Plan, which currently governs the site, provides that the site can support approximately five 8-story buildings. Four of the buildings would be apartment buildings and one of the buildings would be a commercial building.

The application filed by Washington Episcopal School calls for the construction of one 9-story apartment building and additional school space. Representatives of the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights, Inc., including representatives of Kenwood and Somerset, have been meeting with Washington Episcopal School in an effort to amend the application in order to meet the concerns of the surrounding neighborhoods. It appears these efforts have been successful since the application has now been amended to reflect numerous changes, including the following.

- Washington Episcopal School will contribute funds for the construction of a traffic light at River Road and the entrance to the school.
- The height of the apartment building has been reduced to 8 stories.
- The height of any school buildings will not exceed 55 feet.
- The height of any accessory buildings will not exceed 15 feet.
- All school queuing will occur on school property.
- There will be at least 50% green space on the property.
- Sidewalks will be constructed through the property.
- Residents will be limited to senior citizens age 55 years or older.

The hearing before the Planning Board will be held on January 3, 2008, at which time it is anticipated that the Planning Board will approve the application, as amended.

As you can see, many of the changes reflect citizen concerns that traffic on River Road has become unbearable. Thankfully, Washington Episcopal School agreed to these changes even though the Planning Board staff report did not see a need for any traffic calming measures. Staff reported that in 2007 the volume of traffic moving through the critical lanes at the junction of River Road and Little Falls Parkway amounted to 1,595 movements per hour. Interestingly, when the staff studied the same intersection in 1995 (as part of the Friendship Heights Sector Plan study) staff reported that critical lane volume amounted to 1,604 movements per hour. YES, you

are correct, the staff has concluded that traffic has IMPROVED on River Road in the last 10 years.

Sixth Graders Have a Blast with Outdoor Education Course -- *Laura Jeliazkov and Naomi Langer*

Have you ever been on a camping trip? Some kids never have. Now every single 6th grader at Westland Middle School has been on one. From December 9th through the 14th in two groups the sixth grade went on a 3-day educational camping trip to the Lathrop E. Smith Environmental Center in Rock Creek Park. We left school behind, had 4 different kinds of classes, and spent 2 nights in a cabin.

Our new classes were Stream Study, Forestry, Confidence Course, and Predator & Prey. During Stream Study students used scientific equipment to dig through pebbles in a shallow stream and catch small organisms whose characteristics were studied.

In Forestry we walked to a fire tower, which not long ago had been used to scour the entire park for fires. We climbed to the top, and every time the wind blew, the tower shook and swayed. We were allowed to throw hats down from the top. By the end of the trip, there were quite a few hats and sweaters stuck in the trees surrounding the tower. It was a windy day and we were all frozen by the end of the 2 « hour walk. But it was worth it.

Confidence Course was held in a special "playground." It had an independent course where you had to complete a task alone and a group course where the whole group would participate in communicating to complete a job. The class taught us about good communication, which is essential in life.

The best class was Predator & Prey, a simulation game of real life in the wild. Each person took on the role of an herbivore, an omnivore, a carnivore, or a natural disaster. One person was the "vet" and another was "rabies." It was complicated but basically you had to run from your predators, including natural disasters and rabies, and survive on fake water and berries. If you were knocked out of the game, you could go to the vet and she would restore you.

Meals took place in the mess hall. Teachers took manners during meals very seriously. At the end of each meal the teachers announced the winner of the "Golden Spoon Award." The winning table would be dismissed first. A toy stuffed owl named Tito was hidden in the mess hall before every meal. Winners also received the privilege of choosing a new hiding place for Tito. KP duty (Kitchen Patrol) was really fun. One cabin performed KP duty at each meal.

Our favorite time of day was evening. Whether we were at a bonfire roasting marshmallows, doing "Outdoor Ed Idol" (skits), or listening to our assistant principal tell stories, it was a fun way to relax. Mr. Washington, who told stories with morals and a ghost story, really got into the story. He had a towel to wipe his face because he perspires when he gets excited about the story and starts acting it out. With drops of sweat rolling down his face and a blazing fire behind him, it really is an experience to remember!

We were back in our cabins, safe and warm, getting ready for bed about 10:00 pm. Many people enjoyed reading in their bunk beds before falling asleep. At lights off time, everyone sat around chatting. But you do want to make sure you get a good night's sleep, because in the morning, you are woken up at 7. And you need to be ready for another day of CAMP!

Outdoor Ed is one of the most memorable school trips we have been on and probably ever will be. When YOU go, be sure to take a camera!

Halloween 2007 - - Gwen Lewis

A postponed Halloween is a terrific Halloween. For the first time in my memory, the traditional Brookdale Halloween party had to be postponed from Saturday to Sunday because of rain. But Sunday, October 28 dawned cool, clear, and crisp for the enjoyment of approximately 90 children and adults. It was a time of romping and visiting with your friends, eating far too many sweets, and togetherness with your family. Naturally, group events included *the parade*, two pinata bashes, and eating doughnuts off a line. It was an afternoon well spent in good company. Thanks to Steve Heyman, Brad and Mikel Moore, Peter Smith, Laurie Sparling, and Gene Fynes for organizing this great community event. [Pictures are in the paper *Bugle*.]

House Sales in Brookdale

Since September 1, 2007, home sales in Brookdale were:

5062 Park Place, listed for \$999,000, sold for \$1,100,000 in 10 days. 14,192 square feet lot size, 3 bedrooms, 1 full bath, 1913 farmhouse. Settled 9/30/07

4808 Park Avenue, listed for \$625,000, sold at \$600,000 in 6 days. 6,250 lot size, 2 bedrooms and 1 & 1/2 baths. 1941 colonial Settled 9/25/07.

5316 Baltimore Avenue, listed for \$1,195,000 and sold for \$1,183,500 in 5 days.

5,000 square feet lot size. 4 bedrooms, 3 & 1/2 baths. 1947 colonial. Settled 10/29/07.

Renovation Tour Success - - *Marie Moylan*

It was a perfect autumn Sunday -- brilliant blue sky, warm sunshine and nobody in a hurry. The Renovation Tour included 7 houses that had seen major renovation in the recent past. The tour attracted about 50 neighbors -- from all parts of Brookdale - people who knew one another and others meeting for the first time. Michelle Hainbach helped get everyone signed up and Eric Sanne, our neighborhood calligrapher, made nametags for everyone which added a note of elegance to the festivities and also ensured that all visitors to the open houses were residents of Brookdale. The tour lasted 3 hours with each home open for one hour in clusters, to enable participating homeowners to also see other projects. The homes were spread from Andover to Baltimore Avenues which gave everyone a great excuse for a neighborhood stroll on a sunny afternoon.

Participating homeowners were generous with their time and willing to share their experiences and their results. They provided confirmation that our neighborhood is awash in creativity and talent. Handout sheets included information about architects and contractors on each project.

The tour concluded with a wine and cheese which was well attended and added to the overall sense of a neighborhood full of interesting people who enjoy where they live and enjoy the people they share it with.

Thanks to all who helped make it such a success.

Annual Dues Payment Requested

If you haven't already done so, please forward annual dues of \$20 to the Treasurer, Suzanne Richman. This fiscal year runs from June 1, 2007, to May 31, 2008. So far this fiscal year we have helped contribute to the ongoing representation of the neighborhood regarding new development and have assisted with the construction of a new playground at Westbrook Elementary School. If you have any questions regarding the Treasury or if you want to find out you owe dues for this year, please contact Suzanne Richman at 301-951-0365.

Notice on Rodent Abatement

The commercial construction in our vicinity leads to the disturbance of rats' habitat. Consequently, GEICO has extensive rodent control measures in place. You may have

noticed the hexagonal covers along the edges of their property. One Orkin employee said he was filling these with "rodent abatement materials." Steve Martz, GEICO, notes that rodents haven't been as big a problem with the second dig and that the developer carried out extensive rodent abatement prior to the demolition of the Hecht's building.

Montgomery County Beautification Grant Program

Want to beautify some communal part of Brookdale with shrubs, trees, and other landscaping? The Keep Montgomery County Beautiful Program may be just the place to look for some funding. To prepare for fall review, which begins August 1, now is the time to plan, organize, and research your project. To get more information look at http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dirtmpl.asp?url=/content/dot/dir/comm_km_cb.asp [amended 8/15/09] or call Gwen Lewis for a paper copy.

LITERACY TUTORS NEEDED

The Literacy Council of Montgomery County has over 200 adult students on its waiting list for tutors. Become a volunteer literacy tutor and teach an adult to read, write, or speak English. No foreign language skills are necessary. Tutors work one-on-one or with small groups, and typically meet with students in libraries or community centers at mutually convenient times. Tutor orientations will be held at the Rockville Library on Wednesday, February 6 from 10:30 am - noon. Sessions are also scheduled at the Rockville Library on Wednesday, February 13 and Monday, February 25 from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Registration is required. Call 301-610-0030 or email info@literacycouncilmcmd.org

- - *Shelley Block* (Brookdale Resident)
Public Relations Coordinator

Trash Collection

Brookdale's usual trash and recycling collection day slides one day when there is an official holiday. The next such holiday is Memorial Day. If in doubt, consult the Brookdale website for dates.

Classified Ads

Teens Seek Work

Tamsen Evans, 14, pet care and sitting, dog walking, and babysitting.
Annika Glennon, 15, pet walking, yard work and babysitting.
Michaela Olson, 14, babysitting, dog walking, cat feeding and similar activities.
Ana Julia Parks, 14, experienced babysitter.
Katherine Potocka, 14, certified babysitter. Will also cat-sit in her home.
Margot Sanne, 14, babysitting and pet care, (experienced and reliable)
Josie Silva-Lopes, 15, babysitting and petcare; babysitting certificate.
Victoria Silva-Lopes, 13, babysitting and dog walking.

Car for Sale Brookdale resident wants to sell 2008 Suburu Outback 2.5i limited, black, 3705 miles, call 301-718-4219.

Child Care Offered

Baku's Child Care (and after school care) in a beautiful, large, single family home located at 5019 Westport Road. cell: 301/996-1555 or 301/437-8080; home: 301/657-9329.

Need tickets to the Nationals? I'm a season ticket holder with some great seats in the new stadium. Seats are on the third base line, facing the scoreboard and should get some shade, section 204, row 2. Cost \$55 for 2 or \$110 for 4. If you are interested, please email me at atanzi@bloomberg.net, and I'll forward my list of available games. Thanks. -- Alex Tanzi

The classified section of the Brookdale Bugle is provided as a service to Brookdale residents, who may place ads free of 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.

TRANSITIONS

Births

Grant Lan Davis born to Michael and Elizabeth Davis of Dover Road on November 15, 2007.

Jimmy, Nina, and Jacob Mrose of River Road welcomed Benjamin on January 2, 2007. Benjamin was born in Korea on August 7, 2006 and his adoption was final on 10/24/07.

Mark and Christine Tatelbaum (Overbrook Rd.) and big brothers Ryan and Kyle

welcomed Amelia Margaret on December 27.

Arrivals

Mike Jacobson, Rachel Strong, and their children Adam (2) and Shayna (6 mos.) moved into 5316 Baltimore Ave. in the beginning of November.

The Brookdale Bugle is a publication of the Brookdale Citizens' Association. It comes out three times a year: January, April, and September.

Editor Gwen Lewis
Assistant Editor Deborah Kalb
Layout Steve Langer
Distribution Deborah Kalb

The deadline to submit articles, notices, and ads for the April 2008 issue of the *Brookdale Bugle* is 9 p.m. March 28.

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