

THE BROOKDALE BUGLE

Web edition of the distribution scheduled for January 2012

How Does Local Development Affect Brookdale? - *Bob Cope*

New zoning designations could mean denser development on the borders of Brookdale. Currently, most of the commercial properties around Friendship Heights are zoned CBD (commercial business district) or TSM (transit station mix). For example, Wisconsin Place is now zoned CBD and part of GEICO is zoned TSM. But now, the County Council has created a new family of commercial zones, known as the CR zones, to replace the current designations.

The CR zones can best be understood by taking the GEICO property and comparing development as proposed in the Friendship Heights Sector Plan adopted by the County Council in 1998 with development that might take place under the new CR zones. Under the 1998 plan, the GEICO property was rezoned to permit construction of three fairly large office buildings along Friendship Boulevard. In addition, the plan permits construction of a low-rise apartment building along Willard Avenue. The 1998 Plan also calls for the construction of low-rise townhouses next to the Brookdale single-family neighborhood. These townhouses would serve as a buffer between Brookdale and the commercial development along Friendship Boulevard.

But evidently 21st century thinking does not look favorably upon the use of townhouses as a buffer. Thus, were GEICO to be rezoned under current thinking, it is possible that the townhouses would be replaced with 65-foot buildings with retail on the first floor and an additional five floors of apartments. The new CR zones include the CR zone itself (which I refer to as CRU or CR Urban), which permits building heights of up to 300 feet. The CRT (CR Town) zone permits heights up to 150 feet. Perhaps the most dangerous zone is the CRN (CR Neighborhood), which permits building heights of up to 65 feet and which has been specifically designed to serve as a buffer zone between residential neighborhoods, like Brookdale, and the more dense CR and CRT zones.

Meanwhile, GEICO has three years to begin construction of the buildings called for in the 1998 plan. If it does not do so, it will lose all of its approvals and will need to start the application process all over again. Because GEICO does not have any current plans to develop its property, it has applied for an extension of its current approvals until 2020. The extension request should come before the Planning Board within the next few months. Most citizen groups appear to be supporting the extension, since the

development you know is generally deemed to be better than the development you do not know.

Just outside Brookdale, the Westbard business district lies on both sides of River Road between Little Falls Parkway and Ridgefield Road. The current sector plan for Westbard is more than 30 years old and Westbard is overdue for a new sector-plan study. But the County Council has once again delayed the new Westbard study, and it now appears that the Planning Board will not begin its study of Westbard for at least another two years.

Since the Planning Board and the County Council have made it very clear that they do not like strip malls, the current Giant and the neighboring stores will most likely be demolished. Most likely, a new Giant will be built near the tennis courts before the old Giant is demolished. The rest of the property will most likely be rezoned to something similar to a CRN zone or something a little more dense.

RainScapes: Reducing Water Runoff — *Jody Benjamin*

You've seen the problem. Local streams are reamed out after rain: the onslaught of water collapses stream banks, uproots old trees, and (this is gross) uplifts sanitary sewer lids to spew out their unspeakable contents. Local streams rush their waters to the Potomac, where riverside paths disappear into muddy waters and more old trees are ripped from the riverbank to head downstream. It is not nature at work.

The natural order allows a lot of rain to be absorbed into soil (some to be eventually taken up by plant roots) before runoff is sent into the local stream. I have interrupted this process by putting a roof over my head, living on a paved road, and putting some pavers around my house. Rain from those areas is not generally absorbed by the soil, but immediately rushed off to local streams. And when my runoff is combined with yours, we put too much water too quickly into the street where it picks up trash, speeds its way to storm sewers, races to the local stream, and we ruin the stream banks, uproot the trees, etc.

Montgomery County is so concerned about the degradation to our local streams that they instituted a RainScapes Program to encourage residents to undertake projects on their property to reduce water runoff. Ann English, RainScapes coordinator at the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, spoke to a group of Brookdale residents at the Friendship Heights Community Center on September 21 to explain the various steps each of us can feasibly take to reduce runoff.

Rain barrels and cisterns are obvious choices and easy to understand: you collect water at the downspout before it hits the street, and use it later to water gardens. Plant a tree, and its canopy can intercept ¼” of rainfall. Replace that concrete driveway or flagstone patio with permeable pavers and allow the soil underneath to absorb rain. A dry well can hold and slowly dissipate water. Not quite so obvious is the rain garden: a shallow garden in a depression with very permeable soil (lots of compost) designed to intercept water from your roof or impermeable driveway and soak it up.

When enough residents undertake these sorts of projects, local streams benefit. There is less erosion of stream banks, better water quality for aquatic life, and certainly improved esthetics for anyone wishing to enjoy a walk along the water, among other benefits.

If doing good by itself isn't enough of an incentive, the RainScapes Program offers rebates for approved RainScapes techniques. These rebates can underwrite a sizeable portion of your water quality investment; for example, they will pay up to \$200 for rain barrels that capture 200 gallons of water, or up to \$1,200 for a rain garden. Guidance for projects and the application for a RainScapes rebate, as well as general information about the RainScapes program, can be found by Googling “RainScapes Program Montgomery County.”

WSSC Replacing Some Water Mains — *Bill McCloskey*

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission is planning to replace and in some cases relocate .74 miles of water mains in Brookdale and nearby neighborhoods. House connections will also be replaced.

One project is already underway and WSSC hopes to complete it by the spring of 2012, weather permitting. The segment where work is underway affects streets in Green Acres: Baltimore Avenue from Massachusetts Avenue to River Road, Newport from Massachusetts to Glen Cove Parkway, and a short segment of Glen Cove between Baltimore and Newport. The path next to Glen Cove at Baltimore is also impacted.

The projects have been in the planning stages for a number of years and the work turned out to be more difficult because of the narrowness of some of the streets in Brookdale and Green Acres.

At the Bugle deadline, WSSC was waiting for approval to proceed with a second segment of the work that will replace and relocate aging mains on the entire length of Dover Court, Keokuk Street, Park Avenue, the 4700 block of Overbrook Road

(between Newport and Keokuk), Montgomery Avenue between Newport and Keokuk, and River Road at Keokuk. This project could be underway by the time you read this. WSSC hopes to complete it by December 2012, weather permitting. Experience from the current project tells us that there will be all-day noise from the construction work and that there will be water-service disruptions from time to time. Houses affected will have their water service connected to the water system via a network of what are essentially fire hoses while the old main is turned off. These disruptions are intermittent.

Some of the pipes in the Brookdale area were first installed as long as 50 years ago. WSSC says it costs \$1.4 million a mile to replace mains.

WSSC has instituted a customer notification system that provides email or text alerts when your water service is disrupted. Here's the link to register. The service is free; however, standard text-messaging rates apply. (https://ww2.everbridge.net/citizen/EverbridgeGateway.action?body=home&gis_alias_id=260711)

WSSC also has a new mobile app, WSSC Mobile, which can be downloaded by customers with smartphones. The free app allows you to pay your water and sewer bill, report a problem, check service alerts, contact WSSC and browse job postings and other WSSC news. (<http://www.wsscwater.com/home/jsp/content/wsscmobileapp.faces>)

The Trails are Closer than You Think: Larry Broadwell and Hikes in the Washington Region — *Christine Ryan Jyoti*

It seemed appropriate that I meet Larry Broadwell for a short hike to discuss the newly revised Hikes in the Washington Region (Part C). Not only did I get to check out hiking options within walking distance of Brookdale, I got a serious workout that left me quite tuckered (I will admit I had trouble keeping up with Larry and his dog, Abishag). It also gave me a sincere appreciation for the kind of volunteer work Larry has been doing for over a decade.

Larry, a 16-year resident of Brookdale, has been working with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) on a three-part series of pocket hiking guides since 1995, when he revised their first guidebook, Hikes in the Washington Region (Part A: Montgomery and Frederick Counties in Maryland). The most recent edition of Part C is an expansion on the original, which includes coverage of the District of Columbia and Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, Carroll, Howard, Baltimore and Harford counties in Maryland.

The revision process, which took more than a year (and 2,000 miles on Larry's car), involved revisiting all of the trails covered in the original edition, expanding the geographic coverage of the guide (it now covers four more counties), adding more trails and hike options (quick walk versus day-long trek), confirming measurements, updating maps and photos, and collaborating with a GPS specialist as well as a cartographer. From what I can tell, putting together a thorough and easily digestible hiking guide is both an art and a science, and Larry and his fellow PATC collaborators have managed to create a valuable tool for hikers and even non-hikers, such as myself.

Hikes in the Washington Region, which is available through PATC, Hudson Trail Outfitters and REI, is unique in its size (it is a "pocket" book that can easily be carried around on hikes), price (just \$7.20 for PATC members and \$9 for non-members), and level of detail, capturing everything from travel directions and GPS coordinates, to historical information, geology and flora and fauna.

What many Brookdale residents may not know is how close we live to so many amazing hiking trails. Whether you are completely inexperienced, as I am, or seriously advanced, like Larry, there is something close to home that will suit your ability. For ideas on great family, adult or solitary hikes, check out the Hikes in the Washington Region series or contact PATC at <http://www.patc.net>.

Real Estate Report — *Phyllis Wiesenfelder*

There are only a few real estate transactions to report since the end of August.

Sales:

5328 Saratoga Avenue. Sold for \$740,000 on November 28, 2011, with a \$10,000 seller subsidy to the buyer. It was originally listed for \$779,000. It is a colonial built in 1948 with 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths.

4717 River Road. It is under contract, with the current list price of \$899,000, and will settle at the end of February 2012. It was originally listed at \$1,095,000. It is a 4-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath colonial built in 1964.

Rentals:

4625 River Road—listed for \$3,850 for a 3-bedroom, 3-bath colonial built in 1938.

More Metrobus Service on Western Avenue — *Bill McCloskey*

Metro has rerouted the N2 bus, and for those who like to take the bus for the short trip

on Western Avenue between Friendship Heights and home, it has essentially doubled service on weekdays.

There are several bus stops along Western between Wisconsin Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue, before the bus turns on Massachusetts to head downtown. For those who find that the term “close to Metro” can be a little misleading on a hot, cold, rainy or snowy day, this is a warm/cool/dry option. If you use the rail line for part of your trip, your SmartCard “knows” this and you get a reduced rate on the bus (or on the subway if your trip starts on the bus).

For those who commute from downtown Washington to Brookdale, rush hour service to the neighborhood is also essentially doubled, since now the N2, N3 and N4 (and the RideOn 29) routes all cover Western. During midday, what used to be every-30-minute service is now every 15 minutes.

For those taking the full trip, the N2 takes a short detour off Massachusetts between Cathedral Avenue and Nebraska Avenue at American University, but this only adds a few minutes to the trip to or from Farragut Square. The N2 used to operate from Friendship Heights down Wisconsin Avenue to Nebraska at Tenleytown and then join Massachusetts at Ward Circle.

The change occurred at the end of September.

Starting December 24, the time between buses on Saturday will be changed from 24 minutes to 30 minutes between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on the N6. The N6 is a hybrid of N2 and N4, with a mid-route loop so that the bus serves both Massachusetts Avenue and Cathedral and New Mexico Avenues. A schedule for the N buses can be downloaded here: <http://www.wmata.com/bus/timetables/dc/n246.pdf?n>

New Streetlight on Park Avenue — *Diane Tanman*

Brookdale's Park Avenue now has additional lighting, thanks to the efforts of Leslie Kefauver and her neighbors on the street. About 18 months ago, Leslie noticed that her street was very dark after sunset. She requested an additional streetlight by following a Montgomery County petition procedure. Leslie reports that the process was easy to initiate. The petition can be downloaded from the Internet and must be signed by all the neighbors who would be directly affected by the light. Leslie reports that it did take a long time for the county to act (about a year and a half), but residents are delighted with the results. The new streetlight appeared on Park Avenue in early December. Other neighbors may be interested in requesting a streetlight. The direct link is

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/trstmpl.asp?url=/content/dot/traffic/Streetlights.asp>

Transitions — *Compiled by Diane Tanman*

Births

- On September 12, 2011, a baby boy, Timothy, was born to Rebecca and Chris Anzidei at 5020 Park Place. Timothy joins his big sister, Helen (almost 2), and big brother, Vincent (5).
- Tara Rice and Keith Crosslin at 4709 Dover Road welcomed a baby girl, Natalia Elizabeth, in October.

Arrivals

- Sourena Moayed, Isabel Navarro, and young adult daughter Shadi Moayed moved into their newly built house on 5303 Sherrill Avenue.
- Xavier and Cristina Faz and their children, Jimena (9), Elena (6), and Santiago (almost 2) moved into 4717 River Rd.
- Chad and Nicki Pence and children Hannah (12) and Chance (2) have moved into 4505 Cortland Rd.

Death

- Gideon Frank Rothwell IV, a longtime resident of our community, passed away on December 25, 2011, near his home in Naples, Florida. Frank and his wife, Sissy, lived on River Road before moving to their home on Westport Road in 1967, where they resided until their move to Naples in 2004. Frank was a leader of the patent bar, and co-founded the intellectual property law firm of Rothwell, Figg, Ernst & Manbeck in 1981. His many longtime friends in Brookdale will miss his intellect, his kindness and his delightful sense of humor. — *Don Solberg*
- Paul Webb, who delivered Brookdale's mail for many years, passed away in September 2010. "He cheerfully touched the lives of our Brookdale community, bringing news of births, deaths, employment, and weddings," Brookdale resident Frank Koye recalled. "He delivered our mail with a smile in rain, sleet, and snow. His service to our community will be fondly remembered."

News from B-CC High School — *Michelle Hainbach, B-CC PTSA president*

Whether it is sports, theater, music, a community service project, a student publication or one of more than 70 clubs, there is an activity to interest and challenge your student at B-CC. This past fall, a student-directed play, "James and the Giant Peach," as well as "Bye Bye Birdie," a musical for all ages, graced the B-CC stage.

B-CC has more than 20 varsity and junior varsity teams and two club teams (ice hockey and crew). This past fall, several of the B-CC teams earned state championships. The girls' cross-country team, including Brookdale resident Laura Nakasaka, won their first state championship. B-CC's girls' soccer team won its fourth consecutive state championship with help from Brookdale resident Elizabeth Makuch. Field Hockey Captains Cristina and Sofia Shoffner of Merivale Road led their teammates, including Helen Webster (Westport Road), to the state finals. Varsity cheerleading also took home a state championship trophy. Barons Football had a historic season, participating in playoff games for the first time in 16 years. Boys' cross-country, with Brookdale residents Reed Crosson, Kyle Nakasaka, Paul Witten, and Sam Hainbach, also had an impressive season, advancing to the state finals. Community members as well as families of prospective students are welcome to cheer the B-CC Barons at a sporting event. Check out the winter sport schedules at <http://www.baronsathletics.org>.

B-CC continues to rank high on the Washington Post Challenge Index, a measure of a public high school's effort to challenge all of its students. The Index divides the number of AP and IB (International Baccalaureate) tests a school gave by the number of graduating seniors. B-CC, which offers more than 20 AP and more than a dozen IB courses annually, ranked seventh on this year's Post Challenge Index (for high schools in the metropolitan Washington area). For more information on this Index, see <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/challengeindex/ranking/2010/>. Also, this past fall, 14 B-CC seniors were named National Merit semifinalists.

MCPS has begun a feasibility study for an expansion at B-CC. This is the first step in a lengthy process aimed at allowing the school to accommodate a projected student enrollment of 2,200 in 2017 (current enrollment is 1,850). Tours of B-CC are offered to prospective parents and students on the first Wednesday of each month, starting in October. Tours leave from the office at 8:30 a.m. and last about an hour. To reserve a spot, please call the main office at 240-497-6300. (Please note that all Westland students are given a tour in the spring of their 8th grade year.)

To learn more about B-CC, visit the school web site at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bcchs/> Both current and prospective parents are encouraged to view the PTSA website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bcchs/parents/>

PTSA programs are open to the public.

News from Westland Middle School — *Ann Geary*

Fall is always busy at Westland with community-building events, starting with a New Parent Orientation in late August, just before school begins. This is followed by Study Skills Night and the Student Service Learning Fair, both well-attended events. The After School Program and newly formed Flex Academy for extracurricular activities offer classes ranging from photography and app making to hip-hop dance and lacrosse. The drama department performs two plays each year, one in December and one in the spring.

There are many events planned for 2012. Come see our talented students in action at the following performances: the Westland Talent Show on Friday, Jan. 27, at 7 p.m.; the Spring Musical on Thursday and Friday, May 17-18, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, May 19, at 2 p.m.; the Westland Spring Instrumental Music Concert at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School (B-CC) on Wednesday, May 30, at 7 p.m.; and the Westland Spring Choral Concert at B-CC on Thursday, May 31, at 7 p.m. Some other fun events on the calendar are the Staff/Student basketball game at B-CC on Friday, Feb. 24, and Westland International Night on Wednesday, March 28.

Westland Principal Danny Vogelmann hosts a parent coffee on the third Thursday of every month from 8:30-9:30 a.m. All parents are welcome, including those who are thinking of sending their kids to Westland. Tours of the school are provided for those interested after the end of the coffee. Westland's parent community offers an International Connections Committee for those who have recently moved into our area from overseas or out of state. The committee consists of a group of international and out-of-state parents who have experienced all of the ups and downs that moving to a new area or a new country can bring. They can help answer some of your questions, both about school and about the wider community, while extending the hand of friendship to you and your student. Please contact either Laura Elsey (elsey.laura@gmail.com) or Jennifer Kagan (jwkagan@rcn.com) for more information.

Some of you may know that Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has started a new process for the site selection of a second middle school in the B-CC cluster. A second school is needed to alleviate significant enrollment growth at Westland. The site selection committee is scheduled to conclude its work by early spring, and the new middle school is projected to open in 2017.

For those of you who would like to find out more about our middle school, you can visit the school website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/westlandms/>.

Westland PTA President Laurie Rosen and B-CC PTSA President Michelle Hainbach contributed to this article.

Update on Westbrook Elementary School Construction — *Marina Bowsher*

Plans continue for the renovation of Westbrook Elementary School, which is scheduled to start in February 2012 and last approximately 18 months. The renovation features the addition of a three-story wing built immediately to the left of the school on what is currently the tiered blacktop areas.

Approximately 46,000 square feet of space will be added to the school, including a gymnasium, which Westbrook currently lacks, and an outdoor living classroom named in honor of Westbrook's beloved retired teacher Sandra Geddes. Westbrook's parking lot, on the right of the school, also will undergo renovations, adding several parking spaces and creating a traffic pattern in the form of a loop within the parking lot to provide a safer pick-up and drop-off for young students attending the WCC daycare center located in back of Westbrook. An ADA access ramp will be constructed in the rear of the school to provide easier access for wheelchairs and strollers.

Finally, although plans have not been finalized, discussions about widening Allen Terrace and the bus circle in front of the school are ongoing, with the objective of easing traffic and ensuring safety on Allen Terrace, particularly during the school's morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up hours. To the relief of many families, what has been affectionately called the "sledding hill" will remain.

Because of the graded elevation leading up to the school, the height of the addition will not exceed the current height of the school. The appearance of the school will also be maintained through use of masonry on the outside façade, similar to the masonry used in Somerset Elementary School's renovations a few years ago. Beginning on March 1, 2012, a fence will be constructed to surround the work area, including the blacktop and part of the lower area near the soccer fields and the playground. During this initial construction stage, utilities will be relocated and the area housing the eventual addition will be dug out. A limited part of the playground will remain open for use, as will the sidewalk leading up to the school.

In the summer of 2012, the construction fence will be extended to include the entire construction site, including the sidewalk leading up to the school, the steps near the side of the school that currently lead to the side door of the school facing the fields, and part of the hill to the right of those steps. Construction will focus on the ADA

access ramp at the rear of the school, the parking lot, and the beginning of the addition.

During the 2012/2013 school year, the primary focus will be on the construction of the addition. In the summer of 2013, the addition's interior will be completed, landscaping will be installed and the bus loop will be expanded, with the goal of having everything completed by the start of the 2013/2014 school year.

An informational meeting regarding the upcoming construction took place on Oct. 26, 2011, at Westbrook. Principal Rebecca Jones led the meeting, which included presentations and questions answered by Muse Architects (the architects on the project), Hess Construction (the construction management company hired to manage the renovation), and representatives from various Maryland departments, including the Department of Transportation, Montgomery County Public Schools, and the Department of Parks and Planning.

The meeting included a discussion about the impact the construction would have on the current school grounds. Although it is in everyone's interest to maintain the trees, a loss of trees is expected in the area of the planned addition as well as the rear of the school in order to accommodate the ADA access ramp. There will be no upfront removal of trees unless absolutely necessary. If, as a result of construction and the disturbance of root bases, certain trees show signs of decline in the years following the construction, the removal of those trees will be considered at that time. The trees removed to accommodate the addition and the ADA access ramp will be replaced proportionately with young plantings (trees approximately 12 feet tall and 2" – 3" in diameter). For example, if an established tree with a one-foot diameter is removed, four trees with 3" diameters will be planted.

Additional information concerning the construction can be found at <http://www.westbrookexpansion.com>.

Anyone for Tennis? — *Fiona Carson*

If any Brookdale residents would like to play some USTA league tennis this spring, either by joining a team or even getting together some friends and captaining one, I'd be happy to help get you started. The Montgomery County Tennis Association (MCTA) runs USTA leagues for all levels. You have to be able to heave the ball over the net in some fashion, and you're good to go. That would be the 2.5 level! There are programs for Juniors, Adults, and Seniors (age 49 and up) at all levels; ladies leagues, men's leagues, mixed leagues, combo leagues, pretty much every league you can think of!

Matches are held at tennis facilities in Montgomery County: Bethesda Country Club, Potomac Tennis Club, Cabin John Indoor Courts, Wheaton Bubble, the Aspen Hill Club, Bullis School, Georgetown Prep, and others.

Most matches are played in the evening, at night, and on weekends, but in the fall and winter there are the Ladies Day Leagues, and these teams play in the mornings at either 10 a.m. or noon. Matches are two hours in length. Players don't have to play every match on the schedule. After checking out the schedule, they tell their captains which matches they are available for. Some only wish to play a couple of matches in a season, and some more than that.

If you are lucky enough to be on a team that wins a league, you may find yourself going to the Maryland Districts Championships, usually held in Olney or Columbia, and the winners of this tournament goes down to the Mid-Atlantic Sectionals in Newport News, Va. If your team wins both of these events, you could go to Nationals, which are held in Palm Springs, Calif., Tucson, Ariz., Puerto Rico, and other locations. My senior team played at Nationals and had a blast!

MCTA has teamed up with the Montgomery County Special Olympics of Maryland, and forms teams of volunteers to coach and cheer these wonderful athletes through a heartwarming few weeks of fun and competition every year. Volunteers are always needed for this program.

Classifieds

Dave Montgomery publishes book

Dave Montgomery has published a book available on Kindle, PROBLEM SOLVING IN REAL LIFE: HOW TO GET FROM HERE TO THERE. You can read about it and read a sample of the book for free at <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B005R41CJW>.

[If you do not have a Kindle reader, you can download an application called Kindle for PC (that resides on your PC) by going to this page:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/kindle/pc/download>. The download may start automatically.]

Problem solving means more than getting out of trouble, even though one chapter of the book addresses that limited meaning of "problem." More broadly, problem solving means getting from a given point to a desired end. Readers should be interested in knowing how to solve problems as usually defined or how to make changes in the world they encounter.

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.

Neighborhood Briefs — *Campbell Graeub*

New restrictions on parking have taken effect in Montgomery County. Violations that are not addressed within 30 days could result in a \$500 fine. They include: 1) Vehicles parked in front yards must be on surfaced areas; 2) The maximum amount of paved surface in front yards in our Residential Zone (R-60) is 35 percent, or 320 square feet; 3) Inoperable or unregistered vehicles are not allowed anywhere on residential property.

Our curb space parking continues to be used by non-residents, mostly by GEICO and nearby office workers. Brookdale residents are encouraged to be vigilant about such parking violations, and to take appropriate action. Call the police non-emergency number to report violations. As a good neighbor, GEICO is interested in knowing about offending employees. Call the security officer, Wilken C. Kitt, on 301-986-3483 to report offenders.

Street light outages, including on-and-off flashing, should be reported to Pepco, which is responsible for maintenance. The information needed is telephone pole number (found on a metal plate), whether it is a metal or wooden pole, and the abutting street address. Pepco is very responsive and typically takes two to three days to correct the problem.

Car Thefts Hit Brookdale — *Regina Reed*

In mid-June, while the weather was warm and many Brookdale residents slept with open windows, thieves roamed our community. They quietly rifled through vehicles looking for anything of value -- cash, gift cards, small electronics, etc. Thefts from vehicles, surprisingly both locked and unlocked, were reported throughout Brookdale and in neighboring communities.

In addition to the thefts from vehicles, two vehicles were stolen, including our black SUV, taken from our driveway on Merivale, and a blue minivan parked on a nearby street. These two were among several vehicles stolen in Brookdale over the course of the summer.

Six days after it was stolen, our SUV was found in Prince George's County, with three flat tires with busted rims, and front-end damage. After the car was impounded and towed to a local dealership for repairs a few days later, a Montgomery County police detective, Officer Harris, and I went through the car sorting through the debris, gathering stolen items and evidence. A monogrammed money clip, which we later learned was taken from a neighbor's vehicle on Merivale, was found, in addition to CDs, a Nationals jersey, other clothing, sunglasses, lotion, food and food wrappers and a number of receipts. Of course, important personal items from the vehicle were missing, including a camera and bike rack.

In the meantime, the minivan was found in Northwest D.C., only a few miles from Brookdale. The minivan was recovered with no damage and then later stolen again from outside the owner's house in broad daylight, before eventually being recovered again.

Weeks later, after much back-and-forth questioning from Detective Harris, our SUV was conclusively linked to theft of the minivan. When three men were later arrested for the theft of the minivan, one of them was wearing a Penn State lanyard with a meal card that was issued to our son during summer hockey camp at Penn State. The lanyard was in the SUV at the time it was stolen.

In early September, the owners of the minivan and I received a notification to appear at the trial of Kevin Tyrone Petty vs. the State of Maryland. Other Brookdale residents and residents of the Fort Sumner community were also summoned. The other two men arrested in these thefts were being held at the time on other charges, one in the District of Columbia and one in Prince George's County. To my knowledge, they are still being held in those jurisdictions, and will be returned to Montgomery County to face charges when their other issues are resolved.

On October 3, a group of about six "victims" gathered for the trial. Most of us had not seen or heard anything during the robberies and certainly could not identify the thief. An assistant state's attorney, Rosalyn Tang, was negotiating a plea bargain. Mr. Petty agreed to a guilty plea on two counts of car theft and two counts of rogue and vagabond. He received a minimum of one year of incarceration, and the additional time (three years) of his sentence were suspended. According to the judge in this matter, if Mr. Petty is arrested on other charges after his incarceration period but prior to the conclusion of the suspended time, he will then be incarcerated for the full period of his sentence, including suspended time.

In the meantime, residents hope the spree of vehicle thefts and thefts from vehicles has come to an end. However, due to Brookdale's urban location, neighbors will need to always be vigilant in the fight against crime.

Brookdale's 75th Just One Year Away — *Cathy Solberg*

Brookdale's first concentrated group of settlers arrived around 1938, which places us one year away from celebrating the neighborhood's 75th anniversary. Of course, even before the late 1930s, there were a few houses in what is now Brookdale, and the Brookdale designation came to include Orcharddale and Wohlshire in more recent decades. Over the past few years, Gwen Lewis has written a series of articles for the Bugle on Brookdale's history, beginnings, and original residents. If you have recently moved to Brookdale and missed Gwen's stories, you can find them at our community website, BrookdaleNews.org.

My husband and I were drawn to Brookdale when we moved here in 2005. We enjoyed the attractive homes, beautiful trees, and walkable neighborhood. Brookdale's location makes it convenient to Friendship Heights, Northwest D.C., and the less charming but still-useful Beltway. After living in the D.C. area for 20 years, I was pleasantly surprised by the sense of community, which reminds me of the small-town feel of Pleasant Hills, my hometown in the suburbs of Pittsburgh.

Brookdale combines charming appearance and convenient location with warm friendliness. The impressive diversity of Brookdale has revealed itself more gradually as we came to know our neighbors. Admittedly, our initial glimpse of Brookdale's character came early, as our real estate agent first showed us our current home. A shelf in the family room displayed a cluster of Emmys awarded to the owner, Phil Jones, as a correspondent for CBS News. Over time, we've found that our neighborhood is full of journalists, diplomats, authors, and people from the world over who choose Brookdale. Many of you have already discovered that your neighbors are not just friendly folks out walking their dogs or raking their leaves, but people of diverse backgrounds with fascinating experiences to share.

At a recent neighborhood dinner party, I heard an interesting tale of a visit years ago by Vladimir Putin to the United States. Apparently, he was staying at a home on our street rented by the Russian Embassy, and was seen cutting the grass for a photo op, since he had heard it is a typical American thing to do.

The first meeting of the 75th Anniversary Committee took place December 7, at the home of committee chair Marie Moylan. Other committee members include Bill Grigg, Jerry Knight, Campbell Graeub, Diane Tanman, Jonathan Cedarbaum, and Cathy Solberg. The committee needs more volunteers, so please contact Marie Moylan or anyone else on the committee if you would like to participate. Our meeting covered many ideas for the celebration, including a homecoming party for current and former residents, house tours, a new logo to commemorate the anniversary, and

permanent signs and banners at the entrances and through the neighborhood. The committee plans to meet again soon, and will present a proposal for the 75th Anniversary Celebration at the next annual meeting in May 2012.

President's Report — *Diane Tanman*

As a neighbor recently said, “We moved to Brookdale because of its beautiful tree-lined streets, its quaint houses, and proximity to great shopping. But we were happily surprised to find such a strong community feeling. It’s the people in this neighborhood that make it such a special place.”

Gwen Lewis and Dave Montgomery are two people who have greatly contributed to that special feeling. Gwen started the Bugle in 1999, and edited it for the past 12 years. Dave designed the Brookdale website in 1998 and managed it until this past November. Dave continues to operate the Brookdale listserv. Thanks to both Gwen and Dave for keeping us informed and connected over the years. Our neighborhood would not have been the same without their tremendous efforts.

Brookdale residents Michael Oliwa and Bob Banach have worked to transfer our website to a new host and address (BrookdaleNews.org). The website includes neighborhood maps, past Bugles, the Association’s constitution and by-laws, officer/block captain listings, new resident information, links to community resources and details on where to send annual dues. A web manager is still needed for occasional updates to the site. Please contact Bob Banach at robertbanach@yahoo.com if you or your tech-savvy teen can volunteer. In addition, Deborah Kalb has graciously agreed to take over responsibilities for the Bugle. Thank you all for keeping these important pieces going!

I would also like to recognize the recent efforts of 25 Brookdale families who wrote letters and testified to the Montgomery County’s Department of Permitting Services expressing their opposition to a Sherrill Avenue resident who intended to operate a full psychiatric practice out of his home. In order to do so, the psychiatrist was required to provide off-street parking for his patients. Off-street parking was not possible given his lot size, so he requested to waive the parking requirement. This would mean that his patients would be parking on Brookdale streets. As you know, Sherrill Avenue is very narrow, most homes don’t have driveways, and it is used by many residents and children as a safer pedestrian alternative to Merivale. There was unanimous opposition from Sherrill Avenue neighbors who felt their safety would be jeopardized by patients [SEP] (Continued on page 12) [SEP] (President’s Report, from page 1) [SEP] arriving for appointments and exacerbating the already difficult parking situation. Neighbors who regularly walk on Sherrill Avenue were also greatly concerned about

their safety. The waiver request was denied in early January by the director of permitting services, who wrote, "I am denying the waiver due to the fact that the property involved is located in a well-established, older neighborhood with narrow streets and a high degree of on-street parking. Waiving reasonable parking requirements for a home health practitioner's office will further burden this street and the community that resides on and adjacent to it. Given the significant concerns expressed by the community to the proposed waiver, it is apparent that the community feels the pinch of existing conditions." Norm Knopf, a land-use attorney who lives in Brookdale, provided excellent legal representation at a very discounted rate and a lot of pro-bono time. Thanks again to everyone who worked to preserve the safety and character of our special neighborhood.

It's been great to meet new neighbors and catch up with old ones at the Brookdale social events. The Halloween Party and Fall Rain Garden Social were a lot of fun. Many thanks also to Michele Parisi and Michael Oliwa for organizing the October yard sale. A winter "zoning" social is being planned. It will be a great time to learn about commercial and residential zoning issues that affect our neighborhood and mingle with your neighbors. Our speakers will be Bob Cope, our resident Brookdale development specialist, and Meredith Wellington from Neighborhood Montgomery. As you may remember, Meredith led the community advocacy efforts surrounding the recent Commercial/Residential (CR) zoning amendments. Hope you can join us! It promises to be interesting conversation, especially after the wine starts flowing!

Finally, thanks to all of you who sent your 2011-12 dues to our treasurer, Larry Broadwell. Your continued support of the Brookdale Citizens' Association makes it possible for us to organize community-wide events, advocate for the neighborhood, and fund the website and Brookdale Bugle. Best wishes for a happy, healthy, and safe 2012! Wave of Criminal Activity Hits Brookdale

Although the spate of vehicle thefts (see page 11) seemed to be over as of press time, many Brookdale residents have been on edge because of robberies in and around the neighborhood. One armed robbery took place on December 26 at 7 p.m., in the 5100 block of Newport Avenue, which is just outside Brookdale. Another robbery occurred on November 22 at 9:25 p.m., on Brookdale Road near Overbrook, within Brookdale. A third incident took place the night of January 6 near Western and Park, and other incidents reportedly have taken place just across the D.C. line.

The following information comes from Montgomery County Police:

Robbery of Citizens

12/26/2011 @ 1900 hrs: 5100 block of Newport Avenue

Suspects: two b/m's, 20-25 yrs, 5/8-6/0, 150-175 lbs, wearing all black with face covered, armed with handgun.

The victims were walking home from the Friendship Hgts Metro Station and upon reaching the 5100 block of Newport they were accosted from behind and then held up at gunpoint and ordered to turn over their valuables. Upon obtaining the surrendered items the suspects took off on foot, running towards River Road. Police and Police K-9 searched the area with negative results.

Robbery of a Citizen

11/22/2011 @ 2125 hrs: Brookdale Road near Overbrook

Suspects: two unknown race males, one was 5/8-5/10; the second unknown male was wearing a possibly yellow jacket. No further information.

The female victim was walking home from the area of Western Avenue and Jenifer Street. As she walked along Brookdale Road near Overbrook Road she was accosted from behind by suspect one. The victim fought back. The victim then observed suspect two who approach from in front. The victim was then hit on her head with an unknown object. The suspects then fled with the victim's wallet, credit cards and laptop. A person nearby then heard the victim screaming and went to her aid. He was able to observe the two suspects flee down a dirt path towards Western Avenue. Police responded and K9 attempted to track the suspects without success.

Robbery / Strong Arm

01/06/2012 @ 2054 hrs: Sidewalk grassy area of Western Avenue near Park Avenue

Suspects: two unknown males; one was approximately 5/9 wearing all black clothing and a black ski mask; the second suspect was approximately 5/10 also wearing all black clothing and a black ski mask.

The victim was walking along Western Avenue when the two suspects jumped out from behind the bus stop. The victim was grabbed and robbed. Both suspects then fled on foot down Park Place. A search of the area by K9 and police was negative.

On Sunday 01/08/2012 the following similar robberies occurred nearby in DC:

1810 hrs – 3900 block of Jenifer St – a male was robbed.

1820 hrs – 3600 block of Warren St – a woman walking in the rear alley was robbed. She had walked from Connecticut and VanNess.

1830 hrs – 2500 block of Porter St – a male and female were robbed.

Suspect description for all three: two black males wearing hoodies; 20-25 years with a slim build.

Both Montgomery County and the Metropolitan police departments are actively working these robberies. Beat officers have been apprised of these incidents and will be in the area as often as possible. Residents are reminded to be mindful of their

surroundings when walking at night in these areas and to immediately report all suspicious activity to the police: (301) 279-8000 or 911 in an emergency.

A neighborhood meeting to discuss crime-prevention strategies will take place on February 2 at the community center. More details will be forthcoming. Denise Gill, the community liaison police officer with the Bethesda District, will attend. Free parking will be available at the GEICO lot.

Please join the Brookdale listserv to find out the latest crime alerts and security suggestions. If you are not able to join the listserv, ask your neighbors about the latest incidents. Register for the Brookdale listserv at http://comjet.com/mailman/listinfo/brookdale_comjet.com

Pepco has purchased additional space next to its current substation on Wisconsin Avenue, south of the Friendship Heights Metro. We will follow up with more on Pepco's plans in upcoming issues of the Bugle.

Looking for an Easy Hike with the Kids? — *Christine Ryan Jyoti*

As a parent of young children, I was curious what hikes Larry would recommend for my family. Beyond the Capital Crescent Trail just down the road, Larry suggested the National Arboretum in Northeast D.C. The Arboretum has easy hiking options with exotic plants and rare species. It's also a great place to experiment with portable GPS systems if you're looking to master a new skill. The Arboretum is an easy drive from Brookdale and is a lovely way to spend the day, no matter what level of hiker you are.

Brookdale residents may be familiar with the B-CC PTSA Annual Used Book Sale. This is your chance to pore through some 30,000 books priced from \$1 to \$3. Dates of this year's Used Book Sale will be March 17 from 10-4 and March 18 from 10-3. Buy best sellers, award-winning fiction, nonfiction, art, classics, business, history, college prep books, cookbooks, textbooks, and a wide array of children's books. Proceeds from the Used Book Sale support the many programs for students, staff, and parents that the PTSA sponsors each year. Drop off books you want to donate from 10- 2 at the high school on Saturday, Feb. 4, Saturday, March 3, Sunday, March 4, and Sunday, March 11. Please, no encyclopedias, magazines or Reader's Digest, no textbooks or travel books pre-2007, and no videotapes.

Princesses, Superheroes Emerge for Halloween Party – *Laura Jeliazkov*

This past October, the time of year came once again for Brookdale's annual Halloween party. At Brookdale Park on Dalton Road, the sun shone on the beautiful fall colors. Purple, black, and orange balloons waved cheerfully to the gathering crowd of princesses, knights, mad scientists, spiders, vampires, superheroes, firefighters, witches, and ghosts. The picnic tables were decked out with cupcakes, cheese cubes, and carrots, as well as a new treat this year – apple slices smeared with peanut butter and lined with mini marshmallows: a Halloween grin! A bright orange pumpkin piñata, suspended in mid-air from a high branch, blended in with the other autumn oranges, while a skull-shaped piñata sat on the snack table and bared its teeth at a plate of grapes. In its usual place, a long piece of twine was strung with chocolate doughnuts. There was a table covered with stickers and markers to decorate “boo-bags” for collecting piñata candy.

As always, there were many intriguing and creative costumes. Louie Cedarbaum, a third-grader, got the idea to dress up as a Roman demigod from a book. Eric Moore came decked out in a knight's armor, and Jacob Mrose was disguised as an FBI agent. A baby spider with purple antennae and belly crawled along, investigating leaves. An ironman perched in a tree and superheroes biked and scooted around the park with their capes streaming out behind them. Possibly one of the most impressive costumes was Derek Oliwa's; for the past four years, a month in advance of Halloween, he and his father Michael begin creating an epic Ugly Doll costume. Derek picks the doll and Michael does the sewing, with a bit of help from his son as well. A giant one-piece, expertly sewn, plush Ugly-look-alike slip-over-the-head costume complete with facial features and see-through netting for Derek is the result – Michael's handiwork is quite the masterpiece. The costumes have been improving each year, according to Derek, and so far 2011's is his favorite.

Suddenly, there was a shout: “Everybody get their boo-bags!” The kids all rushed to surround the piñata swinging gently in the air; the games had begun! First the younger kids attempted to bring down the candy, the older group looking on, anxiously waiting their turn. They had to wait a long time though, for that pumpkin piñata was certainly a tough one to crack. Several rounds went by with no success – only a few dents that released a couple of lollipops. Eventually a parent tore a final hole in the piñata, and the mad scramble began as candy flew everywhere. The doughnut-eating contest was close this year; not many doughnuts surrendered to the dirt.

Competition was tough! There were also a couple of new activities this year: the “Feel and Scream,” brought by Kathy Chen, in which kids reached their hands into a small slot on a covered box to feel mysterious items and guess what they were. A sack race was organized by Paul Szostak, with equipment brought by Diane Tanman. Parents

clapped and cheered as dainty princesses and brave heroes hopped and stumbled their way past the finish line.

A big thanks to Diane Tanman, Sophie Pestieau, Crystal August, Alice Winkler, Mikel Moore, and Paul Szostak for all their contributions to make this great annual party happen. As the festivities were coming to a close, everyone was called for a group picture. Kids of all ages and costumes squeezed together and smiled at a solid wall of parents wielding cameras. “Okay, now everyone say, ‘Halloween!’”

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