

# THE BROOKDALE BUGLE

Web edition of the distribution for January 2015

Photographs, addresses, personal emails, and phone numbers are omitted. Look to your paper copy!

## **Vice President's Report**

**– Bob Banach, VP Brookdale North**

The Brookdale community started the fall season with our annual neighborhood pot luck event attended by what looked like close to 200 residents--even with a rain delay to Sunday, Sept. 7. Thanks to Marie Moylan and her team for another great event and to the great chefs among us arriving with savory or sweet treats to share.

Dan Byerly ran the annual Halloween party in Brookdale Park in late October with dozens of children showing off their costumes and having a lot of fun playing games and, of course, enjoying some Halloween candy.

We postponed our November event with the Glen Echo Fire Department to make room for a neighborhood meeting concerning the county's development plans for the Westbard area to ensure the Board could best represent the neighborhood's view when we met with county planners--thanks to Judy Rivlin and Bob Cope for leading this discussion. See the separate article for details. The topic of the Westbard area redevelopment reminds me of the importance of a strong neighborhood association. Many Brookdale residents have lived here for years while many others only moved to Brookdale recently.

It bears reviewing some of the more recent successes by Brookdale citizens in concert with other nearby neighborhoods: Shaping the GEICO property redevelopment plans and getting the county to renew the plan (which was not easy given the county's view to increase density near Metro stations) as well as creating the Wisconsin Place Recreation Center when the old Hecht's property was redeveloped. Many residents now enjoy the Rec Center for exercise and it has given us a place for our periodic association meetings and events.

The Brookdale Citizens' Association can only be as active as the volunteers willing to serve on the Board, an event committee, or as a Block Captain. Many long-time residents have served the neighborhood well over the years. We would love to have newer residents or anyone who hasn't volunteered before to step forward to assist on our seasonal special events and to suggest new activities to the Board to serve the needs of current Brookdale citizens. We know citizens enjoy the events we sponsor just by looking at the number of people in attendance throughout the year.

Our annual meeting will be held in May and we need folks to step forward to serve now to fill the spots for retiring Board members and Block Captains. I know there are many time pressures for young families today but this is a good way to get to know your neighbors and become a fully engaged citizen. Please reach out to our current Board or your Block Captain to volunteer.

## **River Road Work to Continue** **– Bill McCloskey**

Pepco's now year-long effort to upgrade and install 6,500 feet of underground facilities along River Road was to resume in January following a short break for the holidays.

Before the halt, Pepco repaired the concrete roadbed and asphalt for three feet on either side of the trench that runs from Little Falls Parkway to Willard Avenue. Metal plates remain covering the trench from Willard Avenue to just short of Western Avenue, which is still a work in progress.

Questions about repaving all of River Road curb to curb when all of the various utility projects are complete were referred to the State Highway Administration, which did not reply to the Bugle by our deadline.

The Pepco work was to continue January 5, passing through the last 300 feet in Maryland, and then cross Western Avenue into the District of Columbia. Eventually the project will connect lines to the Pepco substation in the 5200 block of Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., which is scheduled for renovation. No completion date estimate for the trenching project was available from Pepco.

A separate sidewalk rejuvenation project by the D.C. Department of Transportation has blocked traffic lanes and walkways along Western Avenue from Jenifer Street, N.W., to River Road. Markings painted on the Western Avenue sidewalk from River Road to Park Avenue in Brookdale indicate that sections of that sidewalk will also be replaced as the project continues.

DDOT is eliminating several tripping hazards that have been caused by roots growing under the sidewalk, by utility work and by trucks driving on the sidewalk. As part of the renovations, the curb stone at the bus stop at River and Western is going to be reset after being knocked out of place by buses running over it while pulling into the stop.

## **Changes Coming to Westbard** **– Judy Rivlin**

Westbard will see taller buildings and greater density under a new development plan that will bring huge changes to the area near Brookdale.

The county's Planning Department (PD) has started to revise and update the Westbard Sector Plan, a process that will take about 18 months from start to finish, ending in early 2016. But we already have an idea about what the revised plan will look like, based on what the PD has presented so far.

The revised plan, with its higher buildings and increased density, will lead to more traffic and more students for the neighborhood schools. At least some of the property currently designated as "light industrial," for example, along Butler Road, will be changed to permit other uses.

The covered area includes everything from Little Falls Parkway to Ridgefield, both sides of River Road, the industrial areas on Butler and Dandy Lane, the Westbard shopping center and the smaller shopping center with the Whole Foods â€” in other words the nearby area many of us regularly frequent to shop for groceries and fill our cars with gas, and to use the light industrial services.

While most would agree that we don't really need such a large surface parking area at the Westbard shopping center, think about what you will do if the changes mean that the gas stations on River (or the other local services) all leave because the plan permits more valuable development.

If the plan will permit more valuable development, you can be sure that it will only be a matter of time before those services are forced out.

The Brookdale Community Association leadership, along with other neighborhood associations, individually and through the Citizens Coordinating Committee for Friendship Heights, and many of our Brookdale residents have already advocated in favor of a plan that helps the small local businesses that provide local services--such as the barber shop, cleaners, toy store, pet care, lawn mower repair and gas stations--remain in the area. However, the PD staff already has revealed an inclination to compromise on our priorities.

At each of the many public hearings the PD held in November, there was a significant consensus among residents to retain the neighborhood feel of the River Road/Westbard area, and to keep a local retail business mix. There was also consensus to improve the environmental amenities, such as "daylighting" the Willett Branch portion of the Little Falls watershed, improving and separating sidewalks on River Road from the road traffic, and adding a park and more green space in general.

Neighbors also want any new buildings, whether commercial or residential, to be low-density, so River and Westbard will not turn into urban canyons and there will be no significant increases to the traffic and school populations.

What's next? The planning process is still continuing. Now that it has received community feedback, the planning staff will study the many open issues, including traffic and the anticipated impact of any new residential building on school populations and classroom space. The staff will then present its revised draft Plan in April and there will be a public hearing in May 2015.

Ultimately, it is the county council that will act upon the staff's recommendations, but it is important that we all pay attention to what the PD staff is recommending, and let our elected leaders know what we want, especially because the preliminary indications are that the PD staff will be recommending much denser development than the residents' consensus clearly communicated.

To learn more about the Westbard Sector Plan process, to see the designs the PD presented at its last public hearing in November, and to stay informed as the matter advances, visit the County Planning Department page on this subject at:

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/westbard/>

At this site, you can see drawings of the final proposal that the staff presented at its November 18 public hearing, as well as videos from the hearing where you can hear the concerns your neighbors raised and the staff's responses.

### **Lights on for Safety and Security** **– Allie Hicks, VP Orchardale**

As I drove through the neighborhood in December I couldn't help but admire the beautiful light displays so many of you presented. Unfortunately, as 2014 came to an end many of us scrambled to pull down those lights before we got back to the grindstone and reality of 2015. With the packing away of our blinking winter scenes, not only did the beauty of the landscape diminish but, amazingly, our streets became poorly lit.

We are now knee deep in winter and several of us are walking home from the Metro on poorly lit streets or walking our dogs in nearly complete darkness. Let's lend a helping hand to our friends and neighbors and make sure our front porch lights are turned on when the sun goes down. Our outdoor lights not only add to the security of our own homes but the safety of our pedestrians.

Also, if you notice a streetlight that is out please report it to Pepco on their website, [pepco.com](http://pepco.com), or call them at 1-877-PEPCO-62. And remember, lock your car and house doors each night. Here's to a happy and safe 2015.

### **No Dog-Walking at GEICO** **– Bill McCloskey**

GEICO security guards are enforcing a no-dog-walking policy on the insurance company headquarters property.

Security Officer Wilken Kitt told the Bugle that the enforcement began early in 2014 in response to dog walkers not picking up after their dog pooped.

Kitt emphasized that GEICO and its security guards in particular try to be respectful of the needs of members of the Brookdale community, but could no longer tolerate the dog droppings, "so we took this initiative." He said an off-leash dog ran at him one time when he was responding to a neighbor's complaint unrelated to dogs. Such off-leash dogs were also creating a problem.

As for pedestrians cutting through the property on foot without a dog, GEICO has no problem with that. He also said security guards allow use of their parking lot on weekends for parents to teach their children how to drive. The company routinely allows members of the community to park on its lot when attending Brookdale Citizens Association meetings in the nearby county recreation center.

## **Yahoo 102**

### **– Dave Montgomery**

At this time, 188 residents are members of the group on Yahoo called BrookdaleCitizens. Given that there are only 360 or so households in Brookdale, the Yahoo group is a remarkably inclusive community. If you have joined, you know the fundamentals; that is, you have passed Yahoo 101. Remember, however, that you can do more with the group than just send and receive messages.

If you go onto the main page of the group, namely, <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/BrookdaleCitizens/info>, you will see options listed on a menu near the top. This session of Yahoo 102 addresses two of the options, "conversations" and "files."

Clicking on "Conversations" not only shows recent messages posted to the group, but it allows you to search old messages. If you are looking, for example, for references to "graffiti," type that word in the dialog box labeled "Search Conversations," and your search will show all old messages containing that word.

The option of "Files" has not been used up to its capability. Clicking on that word in the menu brings up helpful files that other members have uploaded. Note, in particular, a file of recommendations on service contractors. You can read previous items and add your own contribution to that file. More broadly, you can upload any other file that is of general interest.

Join our Yahoo! Group by following these simple instructions:

- Go to the website at <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/BrookdaleCitizens>. You should see instructions to join the group, BrookdaleCitizens.
- You may already have a Yahoo account; e.g., you might be a member of another Yahoo Group. If so, you can use your existing account and add BrookdaleCitizens.
- If you do not have a Yahoo account you will have to open one. Please note that you do not have to use a Yahoo email address; any email address is acceptable. Just complete a "profile" of personal information by following Yahoo's instructions.
- Once the account is established, select BrookdaleCitizens as a new group.
- If you do not want to submit a profile, you may join a "mailing list" without a Yahoo account. That option means that you will receive the messages sent to the BrookdaleCitizens list but you will not be allowed to post your own message.

- Full subscribers may post messages by sending an email to [brookdalecitizens@yahoo.com](mailto:brookdalecitizens@yahoo.com).

Since this is a private group an association officer will approve your membership.

### **Neighborhood Traffic Update** **– Campbell Graeub**

All of us are affected by the endless traffic disruptions. To add to the underground power line construction on River Road, the utility work on Willard Avenue, and the sidewalk reconstruction on Western Avenue, the District has scheduled Western Avenue for badly needed road pavement replacement.

There have been many complaints about the lack of construction coordination affecting the major arterials in our area, with lane closures and turn restrictions resulting in massive back-ups. Despite such complaints, there has been no noticeable change.

As has previously been reported, the Friendship Heights Transportation Management District Advisory Committee has approved and recommended the installation of parking meters on the Geico side of Friendship Boulevard, on the Geico side of Willard Avenue along the length of the Geico property, and on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, along the Friendship Collection and the Saks property. Subject to final concurrence by the county, installation should occur in the near future.

On Willard and Wisconsin avenues, there will be selected no-parking restrictions during rush hours. With this change in parking control, Brookdale can expect overflow parking in the neighborhood by people who don't want to pay and those who need longer times to park.

Many of our streets have no-parking restrictions, or are limited to those with neighborhood permits. If you observe violators, especially repeat violators, presumably nearby office workers, you need to take the initiative to report violators to the police. Keeping illegal parkers out of our area, with narrow streets and no sidewalks, is an important safety factor. Your cooperation to report violators is strongly encouraged.

### **Park Place Parking** **– Bill McCloskey**

Montgomery County, in early September, posted "Permit Parking Only" signs on the full one-block length of Park Place, a "no outlet" lane that runs parallel to Western Avenue at Boundary Park ending at Park Avenue.

Permits that are placed in the rear window like an inspection sticker have been issued to Brookdale residents in that block, allowing them to park during the restricted hours of 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Individual permits, valid for up to two years, are issued for eligible Brookdale residents at various parking sales offices in the county for \$40 each. The closest office is at 4720 Cheltenham Drive (Garage 42) in Bethesda. It can be reached at 240-777-8770. The store is open 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The county has extensive information on residential parking restrictions and permits on its website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Parking/faq/residential-parking-faq.html> or <http://bit.ly/1ooCNBo>.

## **Pepco's Tree-Trimming Raises Concerns** **– Bill McCloskey**

Aggressive tree trimming in Brookdale and surrounding communities has brought questions from citizens wondering if Pepco has gone overboard.

Pepco provided this statement to the Bugle:

"The work being performed in Brookdale is routine annually scheduled vegetation management that complies with state regulations. The trees being removed in this community are either in the public right-of-way or on private property. The decision to remove trees in the public right-of-way is reviewed and approved by foresters of both the owner of the right-of-way and the Forest Service of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Trees are removed from private property only with the written approval of the property owner. Removals are done either to obtain the clearances required by state regulations, because of the health of the tree, or because removal is required under the Maryland Roadside Tree Law, the Maryland Tree Expert Law, and/or the ANSI A-300 pruning standard, which is incorporated into RM43 (Maryland Regulations) and is the standard for line clearance followed by nearly all electric utilities in the United States. In all cases, each tree's size, shape and growth rate are taken into consideration.

"The work we are doing to trim and in some cases remove trees is part of our ongoing effort to supply safe and reliable electric service to tens of thousands of customers in this area including residents, businesses, and public health and safety facilities. Our vegetation management plan has helped Pepco make significant reliability improvements.

"Also, in some cases Pepco has agreed to replace trees or offer vouchers for replacement trees that are compatible with power lines.

"The trees on River Road along the Kenwood Country Club were located in State Highway Administration right of way and were removed with the consent of SHA and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources; we are providing some replacement trees for those removals.

In addition, Pepco is working with the Kenwood Country Club on tree removal work on the Club's property and will be providing replacement trees to the Club as well."

### **More Paving Work Planned for Brookdale** **– Bill McCloskey**

Paving of several Brookdale streets is still on the horizon for 2015, but no dates had been set as of the Bugle's deadline.

Nicholas Boone of Montgomery County Highway Services told the Bugle that the contract for the work has not yet been awarded, but the paving is on the project schedule for the fiscal year that ends June 30.

In addition, the county's maintenance staff "will continue to monitor the streets for any repairs" for areas "deemed to be unsafe." Residents may call 311 or use the county's website to report potholes: <http://www3.montgomerycountymd.gov/311/SolutionView.aspx?SolutionId=1-234ONR>

The project will consist of milling and paving the following streets: Brookdale Road, Cooper Lane, Overbrook Road, and Dover Road. Streets on the other side of River Road were repaved during 2014.

Once a contractor is selected, neighborhood residents will receive Community Outreach Newsletters to provide details about the project and contact information for questions or concerns. The county plans to mail out these newsletters a few weeks prior to the start of the initial activity, so residents with vacation plans or sponsoring street activities will be informed well before construction begins.

For additional information about the Residential Resurfacing Program, please visit the Division of Highway Services website at <http://bit.ly/1AQrybS>. (or [http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Highway/roadmaint/Pavement\\_Management/Residential/ResidentialResurfacingindex.html](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Highway/roadmaint/Pavement_Management/Residential/ResidentialResurfacingindex.html)). For specific questions about this project, Mr. Boone invites calls at 240-777-7648 or email at [nicholas.boone@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:nicholas.boone@montgomerycountymd.gov).

### **New Book Explores Impact of People Power on Corruption** **– Deborah Kalb**

Brookdale resident Shaazka Beyerle is the author of a new book, *Curtailing Corruption: People Power for Accountability & Justice*, which looks at the impact citizens have made on combatting corruption in a variety of countries around the world.

Bugle editor Deborah Kalb interviewed Shaazka Beyerle about her book, and here are excerpts of their Q&A:

*Q: You write that you began exploring the anticorruption themes you describe in the book after participating in a symposium in Ankara, Turkey, back in 2004. What did you learn there that inspired you?*

A: In 2004, I was on a panel at the New Tactics in Human Rights conference in Ankara. One of the other speakers was Ersin Salman. He was one of the leaders of the 1997 "One Minute of Darkness for Constant Light" campaign.

He riveted everyone with his presentation, in which approximately 30 million people in Turkey mobilized to fight the linkages among the state, organized crime and paramilitary groups. Few people in the world had heard about this. I was stunned and had a feeling that this campaign represented the tip of the iceberg of people power targeting corruption and impunity.

*Q: In the book, you describe "a paradigm shift" in anticorruption movements, from top-down efforts to those that include more citizen participation. What accounted for that change?*

A: There are at least two factors for this paradigm shift. On the one hand, there has been an honest acknowledgement that top-down anti-corruption efforts have yielded modest success. On the other hand, there has been a growing recognition in the international anti-corruption community and among donors and development institutions that corruption cannot be curbed unless civil society is actively involved, which includes citizens themselves.

Traditional top-down, anti-corruption measures were based on a flawed assumption that once anti-corruption structures are established, illicit practices will accordingly change.

But when one thinks about it, how can institutional mechanisms bring forth change, when they must be implemented by the very institutions rife with corruption? This helps to understand why top-down measures alone have had a limited impact. Those benefiting from graft are much less likely to counter it than those oppressed by it.

Therefore, even when political will exists, and honest officials and other powerholders are trying to fight corruption, their efforts can be thwarted because too many people inside the system have a stake in preserving the corrupt status quo. Campaigns and movements mobilizing citizens can bring needed extrainstitutional pressure to push for changes in not only in policy and mechanisms, but their implementation, practices and norms about integrity.

*Q: Anything else we should know?*

A: While we all have a good sense of what corruption is, I'd like to share an all-around definition: a system of abuse of entrusted power for private, collective, or political gain – that often involves intertwined sets of relationships, some obvious, others hidden, with established vested interests, that can operate vertically within an institution or horizontally cut across political, economic and social spheres in a society or transnationally.

My biggest takeaway from this research is that citizens are an essential element in the anti-corruption equation. Since writing the book, I keep coming across more cases. It looks like there's an awakening across the globe, and more and more governments and other entities are starting to feel pressure.

*-- This interview is part of a longer Q&A that initially appeared on the website <http://deborahkalbbooks.blogspot.com>, where Deborah Kalb interviews authors about their books.*

## **Transitions**

### **Birth**

- Mariel and Christopher Goetz welcomed son Theodore (Teddy) Robert Goetz on September 5. The new arrival weighed 8 lbs. 3 oz. at birth, and was 21.5 inches long, and his mom reports that he's "doing great!"
- The Paggini family --father Thomas Paggini, mother Maddalena Moroni, and older siblings Sebastian and Anna -- welcomed baby Nico on Oct. 29.

### **Moves**

- Rob and Jennifer Keller and their daughters, Rowan and Savannah, will soon be moving into the neighborhood. Rob is a corporate attorney at Cisco Systems, and Jennifer is a marketing and medical education consultant for several biotechnology companies. They moved from the San Francisco Bay Area in 2013 and have been renting in the area.
- The Gordons have moved back to England.
- Nuala O'Connor and her three children, Nora, Maggie, and Ian Kelly (and yellow lab Lily), are now living in Brookdale. Nora and Maggie are students at the Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart and Ian is at Woods Academy.
- Matthew and Ashlie Arndt moved in on Nov. 1. They had previously rented an apartment in Friendship Heights. While jogging one day, they passed the "For Sale" sign at the corner of Saratoga and Merivale, and thought it was a perfect place to live.

### **Deaths**

- Alice G. Dent, a longtime Brookdale resident, passed away Oct. 1. Survivors include her husband, Richard Dent.

## **Brookdale Real Estate Wrap-Up – Phyllis Wiesenfelder**

The last quarter of 2014 was a busy time for home sales. With its premium close-in location, tree-lined streets, award-winning schools, diverse architectural styles, proximity to Metro, and

wide variety of fine dining, shopping, and entertainment, Brookdale continues to be the neighborhood of choice for many buyers. The following houses were sold since Sept. 1, 2014:

- 5304 Baltimore Ave., Cape Cod built in 1948 with 3 bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths. It was listed for \$725,000 and sold for \$755,000
- 4711 Dover Rd., colonial built in 1936 with 3 bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths. It was listed for \$775,000 and sold for \$780,000.
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We are looking forward to another strong year for real estate in the neighborhood in 2015.

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## **Briefs/Notices/Classifieds**

### **B-CC Used Book Sale Donation Dates**

The annual B-CC used book sale will be taking place March 21 and 22, and organizers are looking for donations. Please bring used books and DVDs to B-CC on the following dates: January 10 (10am-2pm), January 25 (12:30-4:30pm), February 8 (12:30-4:30pm), February 28 (10 am-2pm) and March 1 (12:30-4:30pm). Students can earn SSL hours by volunteering at the book festival; the link for students or adults to sign up is <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0d4faea2aa02-bcc> or go to [signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com) and click on Find a Signup and Search by Email using the creator's email: [volunteerbccbooksale@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerbccbooksale@gmail.com)

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The deadline to submit articles, notices, and ads for the April 2015 issue of the Brookdale Bugle is 9pm March 25. Don't delay. Be early.