

Brookdale *bugle*

ESTABLISHED 1938

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Dick Podolske

Our Brookdale community continues to be very active. The activities are briefly summarized below.

Events since the last (September) *Bugle*

- **Art Walk on Oct. 6th** - Jan Rowland organized this event, which was held in several homes in Brookdale South.
- **Bill Grigg on his new book Oct. 17th** - Bill presented his book entitled *A Perfectly Natural Murder* at his home with interesting verbal presentations.
- **Halloween on Nov. 1st** - Tamar Nicolson organized this well-run event which was held a day later than planned due to rain. Our panel of judges for the second year in a row awarded Tom Sinks the Spooky Home Award. (See photos of the events.)
- **The Collection on Nov. 7th** - We had a very interesting presentation by Stephanie Smarr of the Chevy Chase Land Company on the changes being made to The Collection located along Wisconsin Avenue. The event was held at the home of Adrienne Nassau. Four new restaurants will be opened, along with other venues, all of which will enhance the patronage of The Collection and will be a great addition to the Friendship Heights neighborhood.

Upcoming Events

- **Israel, Lebanon, Jordan** - By the time this edition of the *Bugle* is delivered, a Brookdale-at-Home event will have been held on January 23rd at the home of Richard Podolske. The Rispins, Podolske/Waters, and friends will present a slide show and discussion on their adventures in these Middle East countries.
- **Other presentations** - We are looking for additional ideas for Brookdale-at-Home events as well as people to volunteer in sharing their interesting experiences with our community. Please submit any ideas or suggestions you may have to any member of the Brookdale Board.

Brookdale Communications

- **Introducing IO Groups as our primary means of communications** - Given the difficulty in getting all Brookdale residents signed onto our Brookdale listserv, the Brookdale Yahoo Group, and due to ongoing changes in management and performance of the Yahoo Group, we have decided that the best means forward is to change to IO Groups as our primary means of community communication. Under this arrangement, all Brookdale residents

whose email addresses appear in the Directory, will be automatically signed up on this private site. The Brookdale IO Group will be managed by Paul and Amy Rispin. If you don't wish to be included, please get in touch with them.

- **Bugle Layout** - We wish to thank Jim Hicks for his several years of work in preparing the *Bugle* for publication. Michael Oliwa has kindly offered to take over this important work. Sibyl Erdman remains as editor of the *Bugle*.
- **Traffic Representation** - Bob Banach has taken over from Manuel Ochoa as our traffic representative with Montgomery County. Please contact Bob with your traffic concerns. We thank Manuel for his work on our behalf and wish him well as he pursues his planning consulting work.



The new crosswalk at Western & GEICO.



by Dick Podolske

Matters Affecting Brookdale

- **Completion of Pedestrian Crossing of Western Avenue** - We are very pleased that the DC Transport Department, in response to our request, has finally completed well-designed pedestrian crossings of Western Avenue on either side of the driveway into the GEICO parking lot. (See photos of the crossing.)
- **Protected Crossing of Willard Avenue** - Due to our advocacy on the Friendship Heights Transportation Management District, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation has installed a High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk, also known as a HAWK signal. (See separate article on this matter.)

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

continued from cover.

- **Little Falls Village Volunteers** - As you are probably aware, a major reason for our Brookdale joining the Little Falls Village group is the work that they do in assisting residents in staying in place as they age. Volunteer training will have occurred prior to the issuance of this *Bugle*. Nevertheless, we encourage possible volunteers to contact the Village if they are interested in helping out.

The contact person at the LFV is Lisa Rosenthal, the Executive Director. She can be reached at 301-320-3267 or info@littlefallsvillage.org.

- **GEICO Smoke Shack** - Partially in response to our concerns regarding after-hour loitering in the smoke shack, GEICO has just completed a new structure (see photo). This structure can be seen by the GEICO security cameras inside GEICO and hopefully will result in better monitoring of the loitering. We will continue to observe this new set-up and trust that the maintenance and lighting of the adjacent pathway crossing into Brookdale will be well monitored by GEICO.

- **Boundary Park mowing/maintenance** - We will be in discussion with the Montgomery County Parks Department with respect to the continuation of the mowing of the entire grass area in Boundary Park along Western Avenue. The County currently plans to substantially reduce the area that will be mowed. (See separate article on this matter.)



GEICO's new gazebo/smoker.

by Dick Podolske

BOUNDARY PARK

by Bill McCloskey

The county parks department is planning to reduce mowing of Boundary Park starting later this year.

Richard Kharman, a park manager, said the current mowing protocol covering the complete footprint of the plot from Park Avenue to River Road will be curtailed to be more appropriate for a "neighborhood conservation area", the county's designation for Boundary Park. The county does not consider the space to be a "park". In the future, twice a year mowing -- mid-summer and mid-winter -- will only be performed from Park Avenue to approximately the bus shelter. The rest of the park property will be left unmowed with the exception of a strip along Park Place to allow pedestrians to step out of the way of vehicle traffic.

Incorrect mowing in the past encroached on the natural setting of the tree area, said Kharman.

As for the path that has been created where people have

walked from the River and Western intersection up the hill into the park, he said the parks department does not maintain "people's choice trails", meaning the mowing of that beaten down path will cease.

Maintenance of the trees and shrubs will be stepped up, he said. Non-native invasive species and vines crawling up the trees may be removed and dangerous tree limbs will be taken down. Downed trees will generally be left in place, unless they present a hazard. The county also plans to remove the stump by the boundary stone.

The Parks Department may also remove what Kharman termed "illegal plantings" of trees in the park, saying the county wants the conservation area populated only by "native species".

Mr. Kharman may be reached at Richard.Kharman@MontgomeryParks.org or 301-765-8714.

Brookdalebugle

Editor: Sibyl Erdman
Layout & Photo Editor: Michael Oliwa

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

Visit Brookdale online at www.brookdalecitizens.org.

The deadline to submit articles, notices, and ads for the April 2020 issue of the *Brookdale Bugle* is 9 p.m. on April 20.

BROOKDALE ART WALK 2019

The Art Walk on Sunday, October 6, 2019 was a brilliant success for the Brookdale neighborhood. Everyone who participated had a great time. We had three host houses where folks were able to see, sit and talk to neighbors as well as view a variety of artwork from paintings to flip books to jewelry to decorative trays.

Thanks to hosts Jan Rowland, Dominique Rychlick, and Tom Olson for opening their homes to display a variety of artwork as well as to initiate interesting conversation. Participating artists were Heather Paul, Wendy Smith, Penny Kovach, Alexandra Webel, Tom Olson, Stacy Yochum, Dick Erdman, and Jan Rowland.

It was fun to be part of this event and everyone loved the casual nature of the art walk, moving from house to house and meeting up with friends and neighbors.



Enjoying their neighbors' talents.

by Wendy Smith

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

by Bob Banach

Thanks to Manuel Ochoa for his four-plus years of service on the Transportation Committee representing Brookdale and the Citizens Coordinating Committee of Friendship Heights (CCCFH). We've seen a number of recent improvements in the neighborhood with the new crosswalks and lights at GEICO and Western and a pedestrian light on Willard by Whole Foods, now nearly completed.

I was able to attend the January 14th meeting as I will be taking over the role from Manuel. Several important issues were discussed that may impact Brookdale citizens.

Gary Erenrich from the county DOT presented a summary of Metro's 2021 budget and 2021-2026 capital improvement program. Metro feels it has turned a corner with significant upgrades to on-time service, new eight-car trains, and no more truncated service on the Red Line. As such, they plan on restoring late night train service but propose cuts in other areas to balance the budget. These proposed changes include: Delaying the start of train service to 5:30 a.m. from 5 a.m.; eliminating some bus service (E6 and D5 in our neighborhood), reducing some bus service (T2 bus in our neighborhood will drop the first and last trip of the day). The county council will be scheduling public hearings soon, so watch your email and the news for an update.

Stephanie Smarr, from Chevy Chase Land Company gave an update on The Collection which was similar to what she presented at a Brookdale-at-Home in the fall with a few additions: Joining Little Beet Table in the late spring/early summer will be three more restaurants – Urban Plates, Junction Bistro, and Hunters Hound. In addition, Giant offered to vacate their space if a new grocery tenant could be secured (the Giant lease ran until 2027). A new tenant was secured, but can't be named due to a non-disclosure agreement. The store will open later in 2020 and will have a new Western Avenue/Wisconsin Circle entrance in the former bakery on the corner opposite the bus

depot. Watch for more community activities and other retail tenants as the year progresses. Better lighting and signage will be added to the 1000+ car garage to ease the access to the elevators to the various stores and restaurants in The Collection.

HOUSING IMPACT FAIRNESS ACT

by Manuel Ochoa

Although impact fees have been collected in Montgomery County since 1986, over two-thirds of all buildings have been exempted from impact fees. This includes teardowns and large additions even though studio apartments and townhomes pay impact fees which have much less of an impact on schools and traffic. Councilmember Evan Glass has introduced the Housing Impact Fairness Act which he hopes will close the loophole for teardowns are generate over \$100 million in impact fees for new school construction and affordable housing.

The fees will impact large additions and teardowns. In this case size matters. The impact fee would only be charged on the additional size of construction. For example, a 1700 sq. ft. home that is torn down and rebuilt for 1700 sq. feet would pay no impact fee. However, if the house were doubled in size to 3400 sq. ft. then the homeowner or developer would pay an impact fee on the additional 1700 and not the entire amount. Homes that have already paid an impact are exempted as well as smaller additional, expansions, bump outs, and dormers. We will be monitoring this legislation as it makes its way through the County Council.

HALLOWEEN FESTIVITIES

We had a terrific turnout for the Halloween party last October! Lots of well-dressed/costumed kids ready to play games and get their scare on! The kids had a blast wrapping their parents up in toilet paper for the Mummy twist, and playing in teams for the candy corn race. And we had the perfect neighborhood dinner for Halloween night – PIZZA! Every year we seem to get more and more neighbors joining us before we take the neighborhood by storm Trick O' Treating. Many thanks again to Tamar Nicholson and all those who contributed to another great celebration of Halloween.



Fun was had by all!

by Dick Podolske

HALLOWEEN HAUNTED HOUSE WINNERS

Our Brookdale neighbors came up with a large number of great haunted houses this past fall. Our panel of judges selected one winner and three honorable mentions. The winning home belonged to Tom Sinks and Kelley Scanlon at 4611 Merivale Road for the second year in a row! The photo doesn't do full justice to the presentation as it was difficult to capture the wide range of lighted, animated, and other spooky objects on display. Honorable mentions went to Caroline and Dejan Zdravkov at 5013 Dalton, Marina Brower at 5321 Baltimore, and Bill and Patty Jensen at 4700 Overbrook.



Winner of the Haunted House Contest

by Dick Podolske

NEIGHBORHOOD HOME FIRE

by Sibyl Erdman

Very sadly, Brookdale suffered another house fire in late November. The home of long-time resident Nancy Hervey at 5103 Westport Road was significantly burned. The fire was caused by spontaneous combustion due to small amount of wood staining substance on cloth in kitchen. Linseed oil and stain were the culprits. The fire ignited in the middle of the night and the working smoke detectors set off the alarm and the alarm company informed the fire department, which reacted immediately. Without this rapid chain reaction, it could have been much worse. Fortunately, Nancy, her husband John O'Connor, and their two dogs were at John's home nearby when fire occurred. The interior of the house is a total loss. Presently the debris and all possessions that remain are being removed and the house is being taken back to the studs and made "construction ready" for a new owner.

Thankfully, they have John's house nearby and both of Nancy's children live in the area. We wish them all the best in recovering from this calamity. Should anyone be interested in the sale of the house, Nancy has hired Dana Rice as her realtor.

THE COLLECTION ON WISCONSIN AVENUE

Stephanie Smarr, vice president of Asset Management for the Chevy Chase Land Company, made a presentation on November 7th about the remodeled Collections Mall at a Brookdale-at-Home at Adrienne's house. She said that there will soon be four new restaurants, one opening within a month. The facility now has over 1000 parking spaces. Parking is intentionally set at low rates, and for special holiday and weekend events, it is free. Pedestrian access has been re-designed for better flow through the mall and community seating has been installed outdoors, with children-friendly art/sculpture.

The Board is enthusiastic about these changes, which will cater to local neighborhoods, and wants to support The Collections Mall. The Board agrees we should send a summary of Ms. Smarr's remarks to the Brookdale Community on the Listserv. Residents will be invited to submit their email addresses to Ms. Smarr if they wish to receive announcements from The Collection of happenings and events.

The Board also discussed other changes at Friendship Heights' commercial areas. Mazza Gallery will soon close, the site to be re-developed as condos. We discussed the fact that in comparison with Friendship Heights, downtown Bethesda is having greater commercial success. Mike Makuch noted that he used to participate in a group to further local commercial interests, but that organization has been discontinued. Manuel Ochoa will contact Council member Friedson about the current lack of a local commercial council for Friendship Heights, because the Brookdale Community wants to support a lively commercial and restaurant scene in our area.

LINSEED OIL SAFETY TIPS

Tips from the Web

Linseed oil is a natural substance extracted from flaxseed, but it is very dangerous. Oil-soaked rags or papers can be a very serious fire hazard.

Linseed oil can heat up within an hour when it combines with air since the oxygen molecules cause a chemical reaction that creates heat. According to the science behind this phenomena, if the linseed oil is on something flammable (like a rag you might use to clean your patio deck), it can catch fire with no outside spark at as low as 120 degrees.

Given the right atmosphere and the right amount of ventilation, it does self-ignite. So that makes it extremely dangerous. Linseed oil in a sealed can is perfectly fine (so long as you keep it away from heat and flames like any oil or gas). Balled up rags and other debris are the real problem due to concentrations of oil that can heat up and provide fuel for a potential fire.

Manufacturers recommend putting objects soaked with the oil in a metal can full of water that has a lid you can seal tightly. The can must then be taken to your local hazardous waste site for disposal.

SIDEWALKS

by Bill McCloskey

There has been movement on a neighbor's February 2017 request to Montgomery County to construct a sidewalk along Little Falls Drive on the creek side from River to Wakefield Roads. The neighbor positioned it as a safety issue for walkers on the street. In 2017, 90 percent of those who responded to an informal survey supported the idea. Although the proposal concerns a street outside the immediate Brookdale footprint, it is of interest because Brookdale neighbors use that street to access the Little Falls Pool and Westbrook School.

In October of 2019, Jane Padelford Gomes, a registered

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2020 DUES OFF TO A GOOD START!

by Heather Paul

Thanks to over 25% of Brookdale families who already have paid their new \$40 dues in the first quarter of 2020! I personally appreciate so many folks checking with me on the status of their dues--and I welcome any more questions as well. Certainly this is a sound endorsement in the first quarter for the work of the Brookdale Citizens Association (BCA). Our Brookdale-at-Home events continue, as do our traffic safety initiatives, local government advocacy, and our planning for other community events such as block parties.



The Princesses of Brookdale



by Dick Podolske

RAW SEWAGE FLOODS BROOKDALE HOME GREASE IN BROOKDALE SEWER IS THE CULPRIT, SAYS WSSC

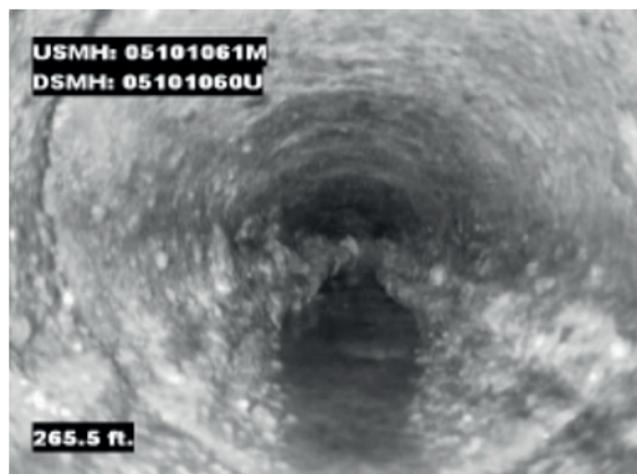
by Jonah Kaplan

A recent raw sewage flood in the basement of a Brookdale home was caused by grease that collected in two places in an underground street sewer line, says utility company, the WSSC. Emergency night crews from the WSSC and a local plumbing company spent hours pin-pointing the problem, and were able to clear the blockages by blasting water into the underground main sewer line using a high-pressure jetting device. Because the blockages were located beyond the home property line, the WSSC took responsibility for this particular flood and the damage it caused, but residents need to be careful about what goes into their pipes, says the WSSC, to help prevent future clogging. The WSSC says it is not responsible for pipe blockages located within a homeowner's property line.

Many Brookdale residents recently received a

WSSC-sponsored flyer hanging on their front doors with tips for keeping pipes clog-free. Residents are urged to keep certain items out of their pipes, especially cooking fat, oil and grease, as well as coffee grinds, potato skins, sanitary napkins, and wet wipes. Many of these items are not only bad for pipes, but also for the environment. In addition to the harm and distress of a home flood, direct exposure to untreated sewage can cause serious medical problems, such as gastrointestinal illness, including nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

The take-away, says Mr. Rooter Plumbing, is "your toilet and sewer system were designed to handle just three things: urine, solid waste and toilet paper." In other words, "it all comes down to three P's: pee, poo and paper," says Mr. Rooter. All else is forbidden.



The damage fat, oil and grease inflict on sewer pipes.

Photos by WSSC (<https://www.wsscwater.com/canthe grease>)

REAL ESTATE

by Tamar Y. Nicolson

A Year in Review: Brookdale/Wohlshire/Orchardale January 1 - December 31, 2019

Address	Sold/Active	Presale/List Price/ Sold Price	BR	FB	HB	Acres	Age	DOM	Closing Date
4817 Park Avenue	Active	\$1,575,000	5	4	1	0.12	14	1	
5306 Sherrill Ave	Sold	\$2,099,000/\$1,950,000	5	4	1	0.11	1	126	01/09/20
4709 River Road	Sold	\$873,500/\$874,000	4	2	1	0.19	53	8	12/06/19
4628 River Road	Sold	\$899,000/\$952,600	3	2	0	0.12	85	5	12/06/19
5304 Baltimore Ave	Sold	\$1,060,000	3	2	1	0.13	72	0	08/25/19
5309 Baltimore Ave	Sold	\$849,000/\$834,000	2	3	0	0.12	69	25	10/21/19
5205 Murray Road	Sold	\$1,749,000/\$1,725,000	5	4	1	0.18	82	\$7	09/16/19
5305 Saratoga Ave	Sold	\$1,520,000/\$1,417,000	6	3	1	0.24	97	79	08/21/19
5328 Saratoga Ave	Sold	\$1,009,000/\$1,100,000	4	2	1	0.13	72	8	06/25/19
4709 Dover Road	Sold	\$899,000/\$997,000	3	2	1	0.14	84	5	06/07/19
4727 River Road	Sold	\$789,000/\$820,000	3	3	0	0.14	73	6	06/13/19
5102 Murray Road	Sold	\$1,099,000/\$1,105,000	4	2	0	0.15	82	8	06/14/19
4603 Cooper Lane	Sold	\$1,095,000/\$1,095,000	3	2	1	0.15	84	7	04/15/19
5306 Sherrill Ave	Sold	\$710,000	2	1	0	0.11	72	0	01/08/19
4711 Dover Road	Sold	\$979,000/\$990,000	3	2	1	0.14	84	4	01/08/19

Address	Rented/ Active	List Price/ Rented Price	BR	FB	HB	Acres	Age	DOM	Closing Date
5203 Saratoga Ave	Active	\$3,200	3	2	2		71	4	01/12/20
4709 River Road	Active	\$3,700	5	4	0		53	7	1/9/20
4630 River Road	Pending	\$3,650	4	2	1		86	20	2/15/20
5324 Baltimore Ave	Closed	\$4500/\$4500	3	3	1	0.11	72	10	10/7/19
4601 Overbrook Road	Closed	\$4600/\$4600	4	3	1	0.14	85	8	9/12/19
5332 Saratoga Ave	Closed	\$5500/\$5500	4	3	1	0.13	72	5	7/19/19
5203 Saratoga Ave	Closed	\$3200/\$3200	3	2	2	0.12	71	82	4/3/2019
5205 Saratoga Ave	Closed	\$3,395/\$3300	3	2	1	0.15	70	65	2/20/19
4732 Merivale Road	Closed	\$4300/\$4150	4	3	1	0.14	71	125	3/15/19
5322 Baltimore Ave	Closed	\$3300/2800	4	2	1	0.11	72	123	2/21/19
4372 Merivale Road	Rented	\$4,300/\$4,150	4	3	1	0.14	70	125	3/15/19
4601 Overbrook Rd	Rented	\$4,600	4	3	1	0.14	84	8	9/12/19
5332 Saratoga Ave	Rented	\$5,500	4	3	1	0.13	71	5	7/19/19

Information provided by, Tamar Y. Nicolson, a Real Estate Agent with EXP Realty, LLC. If you have any further questions about this information, please feel free to contact Tamar Y. Nicolson at 240-350-4060. Tamar has lived in the neighborhood since 1998, and lives with her family on Merivale Road.

Calling all Real Estate Agents residing in Brookdale, Wohlshire or Orchardale! The Brookdale Bugle wants to support YOU! We would like to give all Real Estate Agents, who are residents of the Brookdale Community, the opportunity to share information about the Real Estate market and how it relates to our neighborhood in particular. If you would like to be part of this rotation (each Bugle a different agent will share the info) please reach out to Sibyl Erdman at snerdman@mac.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

UPDATE ON THE SHOEMAKER FAMILY BURIAL RESERVATION

by Dawn Sikkema

In May 2018, Paramount Construction, Inc., the current owner of 5200 Murray Road, filed a Quiet Title action in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, seeking clear title to the portion of his property that is half of the Shoemaker Family Burial Reservation. The Shoemaker descendants filed a response and a trial was held during several days beginning in July 2019 and ending in October. In an interim

decision in August, the court found that Paramount has legal title to the burial ground reservation part of the 5200 property. On January 7, 2020, the court issued a final decision, finding that there is no "burial site" on the half of the Reservation that is part of the 5200 Murray Road property. The Shoemaker descendants intend to file an appeal of the decision.

TRANSITIONS

New Neighbors

Renovations are at last done and the new owners are moving into the house at 5305 Saratoga.

We'd like to send a warm welcome from the Brookdale community to Ralph Torbay and Lyda Sarmiento and their 2-year-old son, Philippe.

Passing

Anne Brient, 94, of 4610 Overbrook Road passed away in October. She moved to Brookdale in 1945 where she resided for 74 years. She loved the neighborhood where she raised her 3 children and will keep Brookdale in her heart for eternity.

A sign has just gone up for the auction of Ms. Brient's home at 4610 Overbrook. The starting bid is \$400,000. The original home is ripe for renovation and, unfortunately, a possible tear down.

Auction Notes: Auction to be held on the premises and online simulcast Wednesday, February 26th @ 12:00 PM.

<https://realestate.alexcooper.com/auction-proper-ty/1-2LY5OX/trusteeauction-sale-4610-overbrook-rd-bethesda-20816-classic-cottage-style-colonial-in-the-highly-sought-after-brookdale-neighborhood-well-located-just-a-short-walk-to-the-friendship-heights-metro>.

CLASSIFIEDS

Local Home Repair Services

In these winter days there might be small or medium-size house projects that need to be done before the Spring. Jesse Zhang is available on Cortland Road to stop by and offer a free assessment for inside or outside home repairs and even general oversight of homes for short or long absences.

Local references available.

(Contact: jczhangchina@yahoo.com or call 202-853-4519.)

SIDEWALKS

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landscape architect who lives on Wakefield, reported on the Westbrook neighborhood listserv that Montgomery County officials had responded to her two-plus-year-old request by sending two field supervisors and two arborists from the county's Department of Transportation to meet with her and inspect the area.

The officials reported that following a county-run survey and public hearings the county would build the sidewalk in 2021 if public support still existed. A fall 2019 repeat informal survey of neighbors via the listserv again showed a majority in favor of the sidewalk proposal Gomes reported.

Separately, the county told another resident that two of the trees along the right of way, planted in the 1950s and '60s, are in decline and soon would be removed. Other trees are fine and others are sufficiently back from the road and are not in the way of a sidewalk. The county's response to that neighbor said that thirty-one healthy trees would need to be removed and that three trees would be planted in the neighborhood (not necessarily on Little Falls Drive) for each one tree removed. Also, improvements in drainage along Little Falls Drive would be implemented at the same time as the sidewalk construction.

The county is evaluating possible solutions in case a sidewalk is not feasible because the height of the bridge over the culvert may create problems under the Americans with Disabilities Act. A survey has also been ordered to determine right of way limits. If and when those issues are resolved residents along Little Falls Drive would be solicited for comment on the proposal. A public hearing would also precede any final decision on construction.

Other neighbors on the listserv discussion opposed sidewalks on various grounds, noting that speed bumps or speed cameras would slow down traffic that endangers those walking on the shoulder. One suggested installing a sidewalk over part of the existing roadway and making Little Falls Drive one way.

There are several chapters in this saga yet to be written.

**Please consider paying your 2020 Association dues
of \$40 online at our website, www.brookdalecitizens.org**

**or send a check to the
Brookdale Citizens Association
c/o Heather Paul, 4502 Cortland Road
in the enclosed envelope.**

Help us meet our goal!