Neighborhood NEWS

Fall 2006

Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association

"Builders for the Bay" Wins Consensus

Program encourages dialog among community, builders and county government on adopting more bay-friendly development techniques.

by Chris Nufer

Last June, Baltimore County, the Home Builders Association of Maryland, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, and the Center for Watershed Protection started "Builders for the Bay." Through a roundtable process, the program evaluates development issues and works to advance proposals for changing the review and approval process for site planning, lot design, street widths, parking, infrastructure, and storm water management.

Signed Consensus Agreement of Recommended Model Development Principles Center for Watershed Protection

The "better site design" techniques promoted by the group use a number of methods to reduce the total amount of pavement in a given area. It also looks for better ways to distribute storm water and conserve natural habitats. Despite the proven benefits, better site design techniques sometimes fail to get the endorsement of local communities. In fact, many communities actually prohibit them, primarily due to public safety concerns such as access for emergency vehicles.

Example of development principle allowing desirable natural areas to meet open space requirements. Photo credit – Baltimore County Office of Planning

However, as new studies reveal a direct correlation between the amount of pavement and the degradation of water quality, government officials are waking up to the potential public health issues involved when there's too much "car habitat" in an area.

As much as 65% of the total impervious cover in Baltimore County can be classified as "habitat for cars." This includes streets, parking lots, driveways, and other surfaces. The goal of better site design is to reduce car habitat and increase open space in new developments or areas that are being redeveloped. Designers and engineers must look at every aspect of a site plan setbacks, lot sizes, driveways, streets, parking spaces, and sidewalks to minimize the amount of paved area. At the same time, they apply creative grading and drainage techniques, such as rain gardens and old-fashioned rain barrels, to reduce storm water runoff and encourage more natural water filtration.

Over the last year, Builders for the Bay has staged a series of roundtables to allow all stakeholders in the development process to share their views and concerns. The culmination of the year-long process came June 15th at a ceremonial signing of the Consensus Document attended by members of the subcommittees as well as the County Executive. Now that consensus has been achieved, participants hope to develop a plan to implement changes in the zoning process and building code enforcement procedures.

One of the key recommendations that came out of the process is the formation of a group of technical experts to assess and revise the existing regulations.

Ted Brown headed one of the project's subcommittees and was involved in the discussions The biggest role for builders going forward will be on

continued on page 4

INSIDE

President's Corner *Page 2*

Froggies I & II *Page 3*

Neighbors In the News *Page 4*

I Remember When... *Page 7*

Handsome Is As Handsome Does *Page 8*

May General Membership Meeting *Page 10*

Foundation Activites *Page 12*

Meet the Neighbors *Page 13*

Welcome New Neighbors *Page 14*

What's Happening at Woodbrook On Charles *Page 15*

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Table of Contents

1 Builders for the Bay Effort Wins Consensus
2 President's Corner
3 Froggies I & II
4 Neighbors In the News
5 Peach and Blueberry Pudding
7 I Remember When... Milkweed Road
8 Handsome Is As Handsome Does
9 Ruxton Tree Planting and Clean-up
10 May General Membership Meeting
11 News from Department of Environment Protection and Resource Management
12 Foundation Activities Summer 2006
13 Meet the Neighbors – The Washburns
13 Thank You, Thank You
14 Design Review Panel
14 Welcome New Neighbors!
15 What's Happening at Woodbrook On Charles

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President's Corner

As I begin my term as President of RRLRAIA, I can't help but look forward to both the challenges and opportunities that face our community. The neighborhoods in the Ruxton, Riderwood and Lake Roland Area truly are blessed to have excellent schools, convenience to downtown, Towson, and the interstate system, while retaining a suburban feel. But these same qualities attract builders and developers who continue to look for development opportunities within our neighborhoods. While we strive to work with those builders who share our vision of maintaining the integrity of our historic neighborhoods, we cannot condone inappropriate or incompatible infill houses.

It is exciting that we are one of only a handful of communities in all of Baltimore County that allow neighbors to play an integral role in the development process. Councilman Kevin Kamenetz championed the creation of the Design Review Panel to evaluate all new and substantial additional construction to homes within our community. Each month there is an opportunity for builders to present their proposed construction plans to an independent panel of professional architects, engineers and land planners as well as a lay person from our community. Both the owner and the affected neighbors may testify at the meeting; the decision of the Board is delivered at the meeting itself, and is mandatory.

Another priority is Lake Roland and Robert E. Lee Park. The land preservation committee of the Association continues to focus on the maintenance and long term viability of the park. I encourage all to take the time just to walk through the park. It truly is an outstanding feature of our community, and we should all continue to work together to preserve it.

In addition, the Association, in conjunction with the Ruxton, Riderwood, Lake Roland Area Foundation and the merchants of the Ruxton business center, is working on a sidewalk/beautification project from Malvern to Locust Avenue. These sidewalks will allow those that choose to travel by foot on Bellona Avenue to have a safe place to walk. This is a long standing project with the State of Maryland, Baltimore County and the RRLRAIA Association and Foundation that we hope will soon be implemented.

Finally, should you wish to contact the RRLRAIA Board with any concern, issue or idea, we may be reached through Nancy Horst, our Executive Director, at the Rider House. Our phone number is 410-494-7757. I look forward to working with you to continue to improve and preserve our area into the future.

Sincerely yours,

James D. Cahn, President

Neighborhood NEWS is published quarterly by the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 204, Riderwood, MD 21139 Tel: (410) 494-7757

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Froggies I & II

by Joe Coale

It's amazing how delicate wild life can adapt to an environment that is pressed to accommodate development, roads, lawn chemicals and noise stress.

Joe Coale's resident frog. Coutesy: Joe Coale

Our property on Boyce Ave. has a stream that we call Rider's Run. A century and a half ago this stream was in the center of Edward Rider's pasture; it ran down from what now is the Ruxton School to Roland Run. Last summer, we noticed that a handsome bright green bull frog had established residence on the mud bank of the stream, only a few feet from the road. From here he maintained a vigil for careless insects that came within range. His presence and well being became a daily interest. Sometimes we'd check on him but not see him in his usual perch and wonder if he had moved further on down stream where the menu selections were more plentiful. But then we would see him once again, manning his duty station. He must have been a lonely frog, because we saw no others.

One day late last summer, our bucolic scene threatened to come to an end when my wife, Kim, rushed into the house exclaiming that Froggie was at that very moment being swallowed by a snake. I grabbed a extension holder and rushed to the perch. There were Froggie's legs sticking straight out of the mouth of a very happy 5-foot long water snake. I wasn't prepared to accept the loss of what had become a virtual family pet, so I picked up the snake with the clamps of the can holder and shook it until it spit out Froggie. Froggie didn't look good. He was covered with slim, motionless, laying straight out on his back. At first we thought he was in reptile heaven. Not wanting to admit defeat, I used my thumb and index fingers to administer CPR and after a bit of gurgling and some bubbles, Froggie returned, having survived a near death experience! He soon rolled over and sat motionless for what seem like an hour. Then slowly he started nudging toward the stream until he was again sitting on his mud perch. The snake slithered down the stream, seemingly quite upset at losing his dinner.

This year a different frog has taken up a position at the small bridge that enters our property. I heard him several times before I actually saw him. When he enters the water, he sounds like he is doing a belly-flop or cannon ball. Bright green around the face but dark green to black over the rest of his immense body, Froggie II seems weight challenged from too many water spiders, mosquitoes, dragon flies, salamanders, etc. I have never seen a fatter frog. He waddles and drops into the stream with the grace of a naval depth charge. In the mornings, he sits on the south side of the bridge to catch the early sun, but around noon disappears for an hour or two (siesta?). By mid-afternoons, he reappears on the shaded north side to escape the heat. He follows this routine daily. He, too, appears to be living a single life, which gives us concern that next year there may be no summer friend in residence on Rider's Run.

We are fortunate to have these little creatures and it's a credit to their tenacity that they survive to bring a moment or two of innocence and enjoyment into our hectic pace.

"Builders for the Bay" Effort

Continued from page 1

For more information about alternatives to asphalt and other impervious surfaces, more bay-friendly landscaping, and "better site design," community members can explore the following sites:

Alternatives to Impervious Pavement

http://www.uri.edu/ce/wq/has/html/imperv.html

Better Site Design

http://www.cwp.org/bfb_better_site_design.htm

Builders For The Bay

http://www.cwp.org/builders_for_bay.htm

Also, "A Homeowners Guide to Designing Your Property" is available at no charge by calling the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay at 1-800-662-CRIS or by visiting its website at www.acb-online.org.

the front lines. They have to work with architects and engineers to make their clients more aware of design alternatives – not only the positive environmental impact those alternatives can have, but the economic benefits, as well. For example, if alternative paving such as porous asphalt, cobblestones or crushed stone are called for in the specifications and allowed to count against a reduction of impervious cover on a site, then clients get a more watershed-friendly project and some economic benefits, too.

The Builders for the Bay project at the county level will end this summer. Obviously, the long-term impact the effort will have on building codes and zoning regulations remains to be seen. However, if county regulators and developers are at least beginning to rethink how projects are designed and built as a result of their Builders For The Bay experience, Ted Brown and everyone else who worked so hard on the project have done us all a great favor.

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Neighbors In the News

Hopkins Researcher seeks paralysis cure

Ruxton resident Dr. Douglas Kerr and his team at Johns Hopkins Hospital have developed a promising method of re-establishing connections to paralyzed limbs in rats using embryonic mouse stem cells, drugs and proteins. Dr. Kerr and his colleagues inserted these stem cells into the spinal cords of rats that had been paralyzed with a virus that killed neurons connecting their spinal cords to their leg muscles. Dr. Kerr and his wife, Dr. Kathleen Cardona, have recently moved into our community.

Baltimore Sun reporter Liz Bowie wins award

Journalist Liz Bowie won the Society of Professional Journalist's Sigma Delta Chi Award for reporting for her series entitled "On Their Own," an in depth article about two teenagers struggling to complete their senior year in a Baltimore City high school. Ms. Bowie lives on Ellenham Avenue with her husband, Dan Fesperman, a journalist and prize-winning author whose latest novel, *The Prisoner of Guantanamo*, has just been published, and their two children.

Vogel's firm wins ranking

L'Hirondelle Club Road resident Stuart L. Vogel is president of Shepherd Electric Supply, the oldest independent wholesale electrical distributor in the Baltimore/Washington area, which was recently ranked the 19th fastest growing private firm and the 29th largest privately held firm in the Baltimore area by the *Baltimore Business Journal*. The *BBJ* also reported that Shepherd Electric is the oldest firm in *BBJ's* list of largest privates firms. It was founded in 1892, and with three locations, the company focuses on the commercial construction market.

Ruxton Scout Makes Eagle

Hardie Smith of Darnall Road, has achieved the rank of Eagle Scout and was formally recognized for this honor in June. Hardie is a member of Troop 711, Grace Lutheran Church in Timonium and is a rising senior at Jemicy School. Hardie's Eagle project consisted of augmenting the parking lot at the Graham Equestrian Center in Gunpowder State Park and cleaning up the hiking and riding trail that had been used as a dumping ground. Hardie, the son of Judson and April Smith, can be seen working diligently at Graul's most afternoons. Congratulations!

Peach and Blueberry Bread Pudding

A real taste of summer from our local market, Graul's

One loaf of day old French bread (See note)

3 eggs

2 cups whole milk

2 tablespoons vanilla

1 cup sugar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

2 cups fresh blueberries

2 cups fresh chopped peaches

Topping

3/4 cup butter or margarine, cut into small pieces

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

Butter a 9x13 glass baking dish and set aside. Tear or cut bread into 1-inch cubes and place in a large colander; slowly pour 4 cups of hot tap water over the bread and let it stand 4-5 minutes. Gently squeeze out excess water and set bread aside. Whisk together eggs and next 5 ingredients; gently stir in bread and fruit. Spoon into prepared baking dish and top with butter, cinnamon and nutmeg. Bake for 70-80 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Do not over bake. Serve hot or cold with your choice of milk, cream, or ice cream. Serves 8-10.

Note: Unwrap French bread and leave out overnight before using the pudding recipe.

Great to take along to a picnic!

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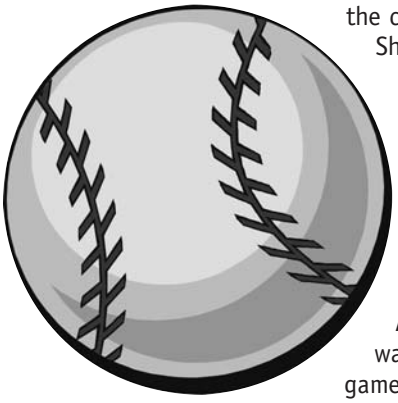
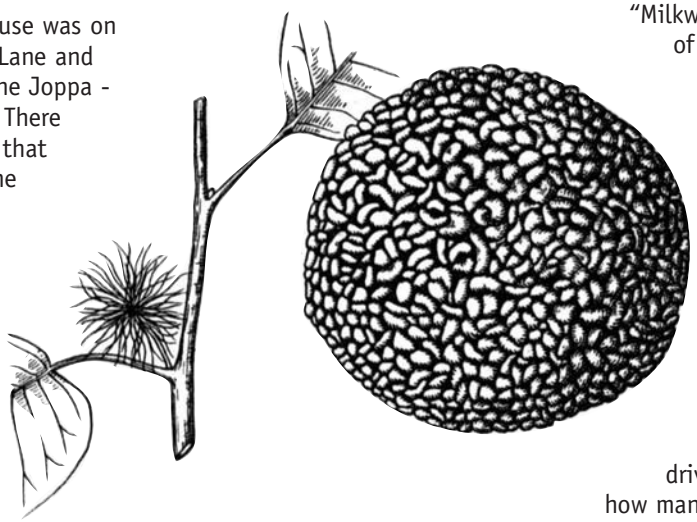
I Remember When … Milkweed Road

by Walter Mitchell



Growing up in Ruxton, our house was on the corner of Walnut Hill Lane and Sherwood Road, near the Joppa - Bellona intersection. There were lots of kids in that neighborhood in the 1960's – one family with 8 kids, one with 5, and many with three or two. After school, there was much outside games – "capture the flag," "guns and soldiers," baseball and whiffle ball, and tree tag in Fitzgerald's apple tree. This latter game was invented by the older kids who believed that playing tag aloft in a tree was much more interesting than on the ground. Unfortunately, this author put an untimely end to tree tag after falling face-first to the ground while being chased by the "it" guy, thus requiring a trip to the hospital for stitches. The neighborhood moms found out what we'd been doing; the game was banished; and I wasn't too popular for a while afterwards.

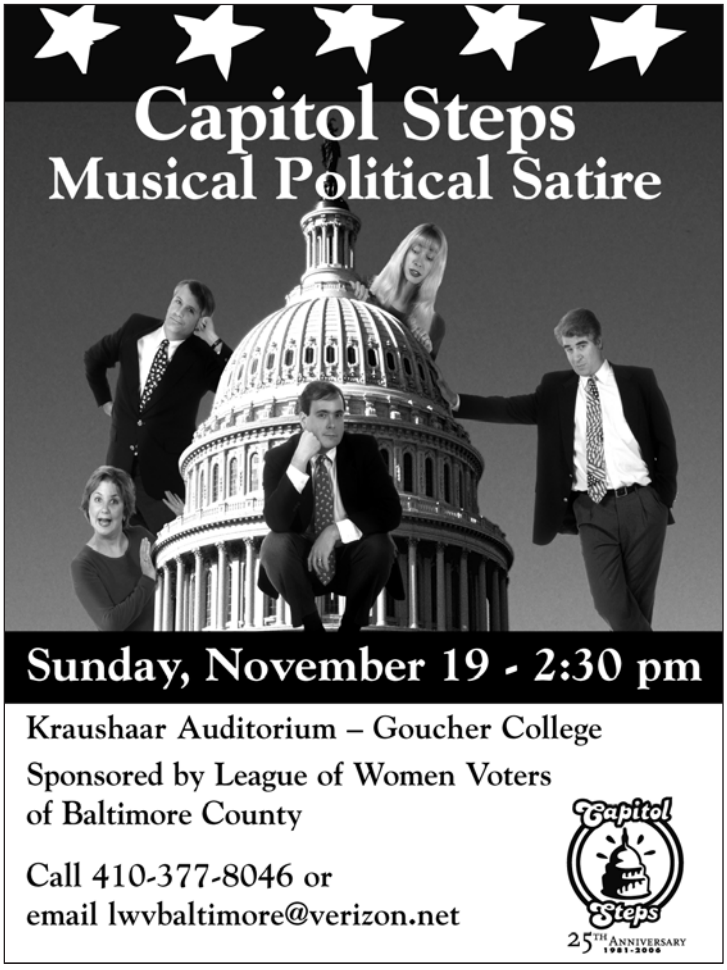


Walnut Hill Lane snaked its way up the hill to a dead end behind the former Ruxton Elementary School (now the Ridge Ruxton School), which was built on Charles Street in the early 1960's. We kids from down the hill would walk up the Lane to school each morning, usually taking about 20 minutes. About halfway there, across the street from the McCarthy's house, was a thicket of woods that hid a small grove of Osage orange plants. We wondered what these softball-size things were. They seemed squishy, and, in our quest for knowledge, we wondered what would happen to them if they were run over by a car tire.

The plants led to considerable, but hushed, excitement. We would detour into the woods on the way to school, collect some of the oranges, and place them in the road so that oncoming car tires would run them over. We'd then continue on to school, usually just in time for the bell. On the way home from school in the afternoon, we'd see how many had been squished. The count would be whispered around once we got home, and it became the subject of great debate as to accuracy. We named that area of Walnut Hill Lane "Milkweed Road," in honor of what we thought we had discovered.

We devised strategies to avoid leaving home too early in the morning, for fear of raising parental suspicions ("gee, why do the kids seem so anxious all of a sudden to get to school, dear?"). The older kids had the advantage of longer strides, and they would often get to the orange supply before the littler ones. For the afternoon count, we took great care not to be seen as we didn't want to be identified by any passing cars. Some days many of the fruit survived the wrath of the car tire, and on other days, all were squished.

Earlier this year, I described "Milkweed Road" to one of the McCarthy's. They hadn't known about it, telling me that our stealth had been successful. They also didn't recall seeing any squashed Osage oranges on the Lane outside their driveway. I wonder how many Walnut Hill drivers from the 1960's would remember such a thing?



Handsome Is As Handsome Does

by Frances Horich

I grew up with a mother who had a few regular "words to live by", and "handsome is as handsome does" was one of her favorites. I don't know if she used it so often to encourage her daughter, who was probably not going to be the queen of the hop or what. But it has had a lasting impression on me, and I think it clarifies many things in life. For one: landscaping. There are millions of glorious plants in the world, and it would be great if we could have them all. But choices must be made, and I would like to suggest that before you buy that magnificent southern Magnolia – the evergreen one that is the perfect thing to cut for Christmas greens and that presents the huge waxy white blooms in June with the lemon scent – you take a step back and consider its requirements and your requirements to make sure they mesh.

Every plant, like every person, has preferences and growth habits. If you want your Magnolia to go on the corner of your house in a 10' X 10' space with a western exposure, you're going to have some problems. Magnolia grandiflora is a very large tree. There are cultivars such as, 'Little Gem,' which are dwarf versions, but unless you get that one, your tree is going to get 60' to 80' tall and every bit of 30' wide. How's that going to look in your 10' by 10' space? Did you really want to cover up the windows in your house? Culturally speaking, evergreen Magnolias need protection from afternoon sun, especially in the winter. They also hate the wind and, as the name implies, are a southern plant. Therefore, some care must be taken to put this tree in the right place. If it's not happy, it won't look good. If it doesn't fit, it won't seem comfortable or appropriate to your space.

So, before you make the purchase, assess your space and your needs and then do some research on whatever plants you have think you'd like to have. In this age of electronic/digital/ techno everything, it's not very hard to look up the plants you are interested in and learn about their requirements. For me, though, there are two other tried and true paths to figuring things out.

Talk to someone who has experience. At your local nursery, there should be people who know the plants and their requirements. Your responsibility is to know your requirements and conditions – space size, purpose of planting, exposure, water availability. Also, the University of Maryland Extension Service Home and Garden Hotline has people available to help you Monday through Friday from 8 am to 1 pm. That number is 1-800-342-2507.

The very best way to know about a plant, however, is to see it growing somewhere where it looks good. So there's a shrub blooming in September on a street you travel and you have admired it. Is it growing in the sun or shade or a mix? Does it have protection from the wind? Is it big or little, wide or tall, blue or red, fine textured or coarse, deciduous or evergreen? What's its name? Don't know? Go knock on the door and ask. They don't know? Ask if you can cut a piece off large enough for a nurseryman to identify it.

If you have no idea what you want to use, visit some public gardens. Whether it's Cylburn or Ladew or Longwood or the National Arboretum, these places have a large diversity of labeled plants, growing in appropriate conditions, and often there are gardeners around to question.

So, bottom line: right plant, right place! And why am I going on about this right now? Because, the fall is a perfect time to plant. The heat has slacked off; the rain should be coming more regularly; and there's time for the new plants to establish their roots before we have a serious freeze. The larger the plant, the truer this is. Trees and shrubs thrive with fall planting. As you go down the scale to smaller perennials, it is sometimes a problem to plant them in the fall because if their roots have not sunk deeply and attached well, in our climate, they can sometimes be tossed out of the soil with our freezing and thawing cycles.

Now, go take a walk around your place, discuss with yourself and anyone else who will listen, how your garden has fared this past growing season. Are there any changes to be made, holes to fill? If so, now's the time!

Ruxton Tree Planting and Clean-up

Volunteers - dig in! The Jones Falls Watershed Association and the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association are collaborating on a project to plant native trees and clean up floodplain along Roland Run between Ruxton Road bridge and Circle Road in Ruxton. This area is a home to great blue and green herons, ducks and geese, many songbirds, dragonflies, ground-hogs and frogs. Together, we can make their home a better habitat! Baltimore County will supply a dumpster for trash removal. Please join us – you can make a difference!

When: September 16, 2006 from 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Where: Ruxton Road, at the Roland Run bridge crossing.

For questions, or to register, please contact Suzanne Greene at:

Jones Falls Watershed Association
3000 Chestnut Avenue, Suite 100
Baltimore, Maryland 21211 Tel: 410.366.3036

The Ruxton Riderwood Lake Roland Foundation's work to improve this site along Ruxton Road will be continued with a joint tree planting project organized by Jones Falls Watershed Association and RRLRAIA.

Photo courtesy: Joe Coale.

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May General Membership Meeting

By Judy Wright

This year's Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association's Annual Meeting was held May 24, 2006 at the Church of the Good Shepherd. A proposed by-laws change to accommodate the election of new officers and board members and to hold the annual meeting in September rather than May was voted in, so this year there will be two Annual Meetings, with the second on to be held September 28, 2006 at 7:00 PM.

Three new board members were elected: Daniel Baird, Molly Baldwin, and Scott Murphy. The 2006-2007 RRLRAIA board follows:

President – Jamie Cahn	Robert Ferber
First VP – Fran Anderson	Louise Hildreth
Second VP – Kathy Lumsden	Elyse Jacob
Treasurer – Kris Culp	David Meese
Secretary – Judy Wright	Neil Meyerhoff
Daniel S. Baird	Helga Morrow
Molly Baldwin	Scott Murphy
Martha F. Bishai	Susan B. Nestler
Jeffrey Budnitz	Beth Purvis
Candice Dalyrmple	Kent Walker
Julie D'Ambrogi	Kimberly Warren

Committee Reports

Fran Anderson, Chair, reported for the Enhancement Committee about the sidewalk project on Ruxton Road near Graul's and asked for suggestions for other areas in the community that could use improvements.

Treasurer and Events Chair Sibley Classen reported on the Holiday Party in the Woods and Dumpster Day, and asked for volunteers for these upcoming events.

Elyse Jacob discussed the walks she is leading in Robert E. Lee Park to familiarize people with the park and its assets.

Membership chair Martha Bishai said the new directory will be sent to all members in good standing during the summer.

Newsletter copy editor Candice Dalrymple reported that we have agreed to publish four newsletters per year, and are accepting advertising to help fund a more comprehensive product. She encouraged neighbors to consider writing for the newsletter, and urged those with an interesting story or slice of local history to call our office so we can include it in an upcoming issue.

Kathy Lumsden, transportation chair, reported on the Light Rail Double Tracking project and described how her committee worked with the MTA to acquire vegetative screening and/or fencing along the new track. David Meese, incoming transporation chair, reported that the State Highway Administration is beginning design work for the Charles Street bridge over the beltway, a multi-year planning and construction project.

Outgoing RRLRAIA President Kimberly Warren and Incoming President Jamie Cahn at the Annual Meeting. Photo courtesy: Neil Meyerhoff

Zoning chair Jamie Cahn asked that neighbors report any construction they observe in their areas and explained the design review process.

Guest Speakers included County Councilman Kevin Kamenetz, who reported that the highest density areas in our community were down-zoned and the design review panel was put in place to help prevent incompatible building in the area. He announced that the new sidewalk project would start during the present construction season. Counselman Kamenetz reported that the county has a balanced budget with an AAA bond rating and that there will be a 1% reduction in property taxes.

Our second speaker, Dave Kirby from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, explained the advantages of tree planting, stream cleanup and planting a BayScaped landscape using native plants to provide habitat for local and migratory animals, improve water quality and reduce the need for chemical pesticides and herbicides. BayScaping also offers greater visual interest than a lawn, reduces the time and expense of mowing, watering, fertilizing and treating lawn and garden areas, and can address areas with problems such as erosion, poor soils, steep slopes or poor drainage.

Save the Date!

Don't miss the September General Membership Meeting on Thursday, September 28th at 7:00 PM at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Carrollton Road and Boyce Avenue, Ruxton. In addition to updated reports on happenings in our neighborhoods, we are hosting a Candidates' Forum for county and state elected offices in advance of the General Election.

Benefits of RRLRAIA Membership

By now, those of you who are members of the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association have received the new Community Directory. We hope you will find the updated lists of members, useful numbers, elected officials, and bits of community history interesting and informative.

If you have paid your dues for 2006 and you have not received your directory, please contact Executive Director Nancy W. Horst by email (ruxrider@bcpl.net) or phone: 410-494-7757 for a copy. Also, if you are new to the community and have not received a new neighbor's packet, please let us know by contacting the Executive Director

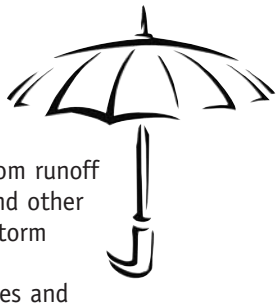
If you have not paid your dues and you wish to receive a directory, contact the office and we can send you the forms to fill out so you can send your dues check and we can mail out the directory.

If you are not currently on our email list to receive crime alerts, current area events, and notices of upcoming meetings, walks, and RRLRAIA-sponsored events, you might consider joining your community association as these emails go only to our members. And only association members can participate in Dumpster Day and the General Membership meetings.

County Agency Update

Department of Environment Protection and Resource Management

Baltimore Streams Flood Again



The heavy rains in June and July that caused massive flooding in our community also have a long-term affect on the county's streams, coastal waters and reservoirs. Streams already stressed from runoff from development are easy prey. DEPRM and other County agencies monitor and respond to storm related erosion, downed trees, debris and sediment deposition, impacts on sewer lines and pumping stations, and bacteria contamination. You can see the water levels in our area streams on the U.S. Geological Survey's web site (**http://md.water.usgs.gov/**) and select "Real-Time Streamflow." The water resources division has provisional data on stream heights with only a four hour lag time so you can watch your stream rise during the next rain event.

Environmental Variances

Variances granted by DEPRM are a hotly discussed and often misunderstood topic among County citizens. Some constituents say they have not been made aware of requests for variances nor the conditions that go along with the variance approval. To provide better customer service, DEPRM now posts variance requests and approvals on its web site. Variance provisions have been created through legislation to acknowledge and address the great variety of landscape, housing and development situations, which require some measure of relief from the regulations. DEPRM's staff of environmental professionals evaluate each variance request for its adherence to the law and the overall effect on Baltimore County's natural resources. Variance requests include an alternatives analysis and, if approved, may require mitigation or a fee-in-lieu payment. DEPRM web site - **http://www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/environment/index.html**.

Community E-Newsletter

Baltimore County publishes bi-monthly community e-newsletters in categories by council district. These e-newsletters include information and updates from many County agencies, and can help you stay abreast of important events, upcoming meetings and County actions in your area. To subscribe go to: **www.baltimorecountymd.gov/subscribe**.

RRLRAIA Sponsors Annual Dumpster Day

Saturday morning, November 4, 2006
Riderwood Elementary School
Landrake Road at Thornton Road

This is a free service to all Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association dues-paying members. If you are not currently a member, you may pay your dues at the site before dumping your items.

We cannot take paint cans, pesticides, chemicals, propane cans, air conditioners, TVs or refrigerators. Baltimore County periodically schedules days designated for various categories of waste, such as electronics – those on our email chain will receive notice of these events.

One dumpster will be for metal debris only, the others for various household items and yard debris. Try to break down larger items, and save your normal yard waste for regular county pick up.

Volunteers are needed to help unload cars for 1 – 2 hour shifts. We need four people on site at all times. If you can help, please call Beth Purvis at 410-825-6346 or call the RRLRAIA office.

Foundation Activities Summer 2006

by Joe Coale, President, RRLR Foundation

The Ruxton, Riderwood, Lake Roland Foundation is charged with assisting the Association to implement recommendations of the Community Plan adopted in 2001. To that end, the Foundation, a 501c3, has had a busy spring and summer.

With resources donated by area residents in last fall's fund drive, the Foundation has initiated several area improvement projects. In May, the lot at Ruxton Rd. and the Roland Run stream was cleared of debris, seeded, and planted with three Red Maples and fifteen Clethras. Despite several floods during the spring and early summer, the plantings have survived with some TLC from our volunteers. Once established, this site will be a community focal point once again. The Jones Falls Valley Watershed Association is planning a September planting (willows along the stream bank) and Roland Run clean-up day. The Association's Kimberly Warren is the local coordinator. Community service credit will be given for student volunteers..

Photo courtesy: Neil Meyerhoff

We are reviewing proposals for improvements to a small segment on the west side of Bellona Ave. between Sherwood and Old Orchard Lane, an area especially desperate for attention. The long stretch of Bellona from Joppa to Ruxton Rd., a primary artery for our neighborhood, looks very much like a "no man's land" lying somewhere between MTA and County ownership for which no advocacy group has ever developed a plan. A modest plan is in development, which will be implemented as resources permit; this first step will be a start.

Working closely with the Association, the Foundation has secured County matching funds for the first phase of a sidewalk program through the Office of Community Conservation. The Association has contributed $10,000, the local merchants $5,000, and the Foundation $10,000. These locally raised funds will be accepted by the County Council in August. We are indebted to Councilman Kamenetz for his aggressive support of this project, which was recommended by the 2001 Community Plan. Dennis Graul raised the local merchant portion. Work will begin in the fall for the area from Boyce to Malvern.

The entrance to our community at Bellona and Ruxton Road has needed improvement for years. The Foundation has ordered the design of a new sign....Ruxton - Settled 1694....to replace the rusted unused pole. Baltimore design firm Hord Coplan Macht is developing a scheme pro bono adopting the Victorian fonts and colors used by the Riderwood Shops and the Rider House. A local resident has agreed to fund this improvement.

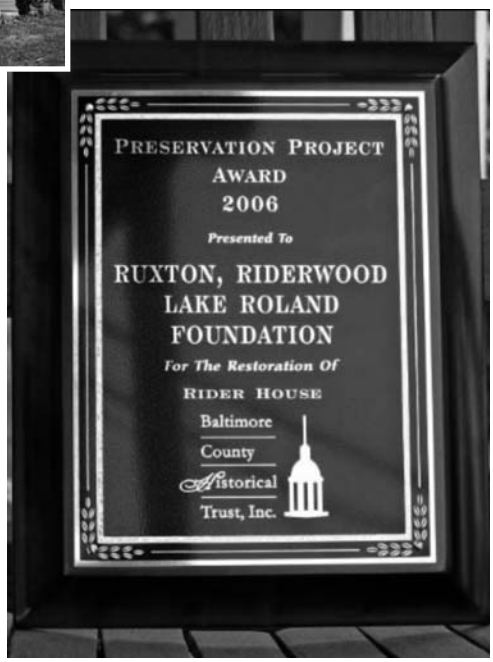
Local landscaper Charles Ives has volunteered to keep a walking path opened for the summer from the east side of L'Hirondelle Club Road around the interior of the old soccer field. We are indebted to him for this initiative and display of community spirit.

In June, the Foundation applied for a 2007 $10,000 County Community Conservation matching grant to making user friendly improvements to the Rider House entrance and to construct a three foot high landscaping wall on the north side of the House lot at the base of the sloop that leads up to Arden Court. The wall will be made of shaped field stones recovered from the Bowen House (circa 1740) that was dismantled on the GBMC property. Hord Coplan Macht furnished a design for the front entrance.

The Middendorf Foundation generously provided a $10,000 matching grant towards the landscaping wall and House program this past March. Our community donors made this possible. Thank you.

We also would like to recognize the seasonal beautification work done at the Rider House by the Lake Roland Garden Club, as well as their financial support to our House program.

The Rider House is a community resource, and we encourage local non-profit groups and neighborhood associations to use the conference room for meetings. Those who have used the House include Historic Towson, Inc.; Baltimore County Historic Trust; NeighborSpace; Baltimore County Design Review Panel; Charles Street Byway Task Force, and Builders for the Bay.



The Foundation received this award for the restoration of Rider House. Photo courtesy: Joe Coale

On June 22, 2006 Barry Truax, past president of the Association and the Foundation, and Joseph M. Coale, current president of the Foundation, received the Baltimore County Historic Trust 2005 Award for historic preservation of the Rider House on behalf of their organizations. The award and citation are on display in the House.

Meet the Neighbors – The Washburns

by Sara Engram

It's not far from their previous home on Lakehurst Drive to their new quarters on Circle Road, but the move this past April gave Tom and Nettie Washburn just what they needed – lots of romping room for three growing boys and the family's black lab, Dee Dee.

"It's nice and quiet, and there's lots of wildlife," says Tom. "Just the other day we saw an owl perched on our lacrosse goal.... All sorts of things fly through or run through. – it's cool to see."

While Nettie is busy with the boys – Ty is 10, Will is almost 8, and Pierce is 5 – Tom runs Moxley's Ice Cream. Since he opened the business in 1998, it has expanded to three ice cream parlors and a growing wholesale operation to area stores and restaurants. Along the way it has earned a reputation for high-quality ice cream and occasional dips into whimsical flavors like Old Bay or Jalapeno.

Washburn men at home, Tom with Will, Pierce, Ty, and black lab, Dee Dee.
Photo courtesy: Neil Meyerhoff

The name Moxley's is a family name of sorts. Moxley was the family's yellow lab, who died of liver cancer a couple of years ago. On their way to the breeder to pick up the puppy, Tom and Nettie spotted the name Moxley on a sign for a welding and machine shop on Route 1 north of the Susquehanna. It struck the right chord.

For a lot of Baltimoreans, the name now strikes whatever chord makes ice cream irresistible. The Washburns eat their share. Nettie says the boys are partial to Mojo and Chocolate. Her own favorite is Mango Sorbet, while Tom always falls back on good old Vanilla.

Thank You, Thank You!

- Local landscaper Charles Ives recently cut a walking path through the high grass around the interior circumference of the area formerly known as the Rugby Field (between L'Hirondelle Club Road and the light rail tracks along Bellona Avenue). Mr. Ives has agreed to keep this area cut this for the community on a regular basis, pro-bono. We greatly appreciate his community spirit.
- The Lawn Doctor (aka Clark Parriott) has been caring for the lawn at the Rider House for the past year as part of his commitment to the community. The lush grass sets off the house beautifully, and is much appreciated.
- Members of the Lake Roland Garden Club come to the Rider House four times a year to change plantings, plant pots of flowers and add wreaths and roping at Christmas. The Garden Club has also donated money to the house fund. We are very grateful for their support and enthusiasm.
- Thanks to Joe Coale for his unflagging work on the Rider House in watering the lawn and bushes, cutting the grass, arranging for repairs and keeping on top of various issues that come with an historic house. It was Joe's vision that saved the Rider House from demolition; Joe continues to guide the guardianship of this link with our community's past.
- Thanks also to Sophie Gerard and Tate Showers who have spent countless hours with the Baltimore County Office of Information Technology to have detailed maps of our area produced for community use. The maps – divided into four sections, each 3' by 4' - show zoning, topography, hydrology and lot lines and provide a real snapshot of our community. They are available for any association member to examine. Sophie also volunteers her time to paint and patch, and clean and straighten the inside of the Rider House.
- And finally, thanks to the many people who donate their time and talents to make the newsletter such a success: Copy editor Candice Dalyrmple; Photo Editor Kimberly Warren; Publisher Mary Sue McCarthy; Advertising Sales Julie D'Ambrogi; regular contributors Joe Coale, Sara Engram, Frances Horine, and Chris Nufer; Neil Meyerhoff, photographer; and Kate Poffenberger, Graul's Market, recipes.

Your association could not do all the things we do without our wonderful volunteers. If you would like to volunteer your time and efforts to any aspect of making our community a better place, please contact the RRLRAIA office.

Design Review Panel Update

As reported previously in *Neighborhood News*, all new residential development projects approved after September, 2004, including: minor subdivisions; major subdivisions, single lots of record not in a recorded subdivision, tear-downs and replacements (on single lots of record not in a recorded subdivision); and substantial additions to a dwelling (exceeding 50% of the existing gross square footage) are now reviewed by a panel comprised of architects, landscape architects, site planners and a resident of the community who are to committed to maintaining design integrity in Baltimore County's neighborhoods.

Established by Section 32-4-203 of the Baltimore County Code 2004, as amended, the goal of the Design Review Panel (DRP) is to encourage design excellence through the application of design guidelines contained in the Master Plan, the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies, and adopted community plans. The panel's general charge is to assure the overall quality of a project. In residential DRP areas, the panel may increase the setback requirements for the proposed development. The DRP acts in a technical consulting capacity; its recommendations are binding on the Hearing Officer and county agencies. (for further information go to: **http://www.baltimorecountyonline.info/Agencies/planning/DRP/index.html**.

This residential DRP evaluates development plans to ensure design compatibility – especially in mass and scale – with existing homes in the neighborhood. Neighborhoods within the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association boundaries have been designated as one of only three such communities in Baltimore County to undergo this level of scrutiny. Councilman Kevin Kamenetz initiated the legislation in 2004 after perceiving a need to ensure that infill housing contributes to rather than detracts from the fabric of our older neighborhoods.

The legislation has been in place for two years, and is working fairly well. We quote from a neighbor's letter about a recently-completed infill development house: "…the design review process prevented a disaster, and instead, while the new house is still quite large for the lot on which it sits, we are pleased with the outcome. It is an attractive stone farm house with an attractive roof line, and it sits an appropriate distance off the lane…The legislation (Councilman Kamenetz) sponsored definitely made a difference. I am sure that other residents of Ruxton will benefit from the extra work and analytical/procedural rigor that this law requires."

The Association believes that the future of our community depends on taking positive steps to restrict inappropriate infill. The DRP is one part of a multi-pronged response to actively support the neighborhood guidelines in our Community Plan.

Thanks to Baltimore County Planning Staff Lynn Lanham and Diana ltter for lending their expertise.

Election 2006

September 5 – Tuesday 4:30 p.m. Deadline for receipt of absentee ballot applications* for Primary Election; before midnight by fax

September 12 – Tuesday PRIMARY ELECTION Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

September 25 – Monday Registration reopens after Primary Election

October 17 – Tuesday 9 p.m. Deadline for registration prior to General Election

October 31 – Tuesday 4:30 p.m. Deadline for receipt of absentee ballot applications * for General Election; before midnight by fax

November 7 – Tuesday GENERAL ELECTION Polls open 7 a.m.-8 p.m.

November 20 – Monday Registration reopens after General Election

** Emergency Absentee Ballots may be applied for, voted and turned in at Board of Elections, in person, from September 7 - 12 and from November 1 - 7.*
(Information from League of Women Voters – Baltimore County, ***http://www.lwvbaltimore.org/****)*

What's Happening at Woodbrook on Charles

A Conversation with Tom Bozzuto, Chairman, The Bozzuto Group

by Mary Sue McCarthy

As a longtime resident of Baltimore, Tom Bozzuto wanted to build a community that reflects the timeless architecture found in communities like Ruxton and Roland Park. "Woodbrook on Charles" is "contextual architecture." It takes its design cues from the classic architectural styles of the surrounding neighborhoods, then adds the modern interior design features, technologies, and conveniences that complement twenty-first century lifestyles.

A number of desirable options are available per plan, among them: elevators; dens and recreation or media room; "loft" areas; butlers pantries; bay windows; breakfast rooms; and interior column accents.

Behind the walls lies Energy Star efficiency, the industry's highest rating for heating/cooling/water heating and lighting use compliance, as well as the added safety of internal sprinklers.

Bozzuto is especially pleased with the landscaping plans developed for the community. "We have given a lot of thought to the landscaping of this community. We always regret having to take down existing trees. But in this case, most of the trees that were taken down were scrub trees that will be replaced with far better materials. We hired an arborist to assess the health of the existing trees on the site with the goal of preserving as many of the mature specimens as possible. Some of those selected were not in the best of heath so we also asked the arborist to determine a prescription to help improve and maintain their condition."

Woodbrook on Charles was inspired by the classic architecture found in Ruxton and Roland Park

"Woodbrook on Charles" will be a community made up of 28 elegant residences, including 24 town homes (designed in residential configurations of two, three and four) and four single-family homes. Six plans will be available, ranging in size from approximately 2,670 square feet to more than 3,600 square feet; prices range from the mid-$700,000s to approximately $1 million.

"We are targeting completion of this community in the third quarter of 2007; first deliveries are expected to begin in the first quarter of 2007," he noted.

"We're pleased to include within the homes, ten-foot ceiling heights that enhance the feeling of airy spaciousness on the ground floor; nine-foot ceiling heights are offered on the upper level," he said. We wanted the interior plans to reflect the relatively open, entertainment-friendly flow enjoyed today with Great Room living at the heart of the homes, and most also include more formal living and dining areas as well.

Bozzuto noted that in many of these plans, the owners' suite or master bedroom is located on the first floor/entry level of the homes. This gives owners the option to enjoy convenient single-level living should they choose, while providing plenty of room to accommodate guests, children, studies or hobbies on the upper level. Closets are large (some owners' suites incorporate dual walk-in closets) and owners' baths are well appointed with large Jacuzzi soaking tubs in many cases. Kitchens feature prep islands, stainless steel appliances, granite countertops and generous cabinet space. Gas fireplaces are also standard.

In selecting the plants for the landscape design, Bozzuto emphasized that it was important to include plants that not only look good, but can stand up to the dramatic shifts in weather the area has been experiencing. "We think that the sidewalk planned along the front of Charles Street will be a significant contribution to the greater community."

Owners' will be able to look forward to an essentially maintenance-free lifestyle –landscape care, from trees to hardscape, will be addressed by professionals selected by the homeowners association.

The Bozzuto Group has been building quality communities throughout the greater Baltimore-Washington region for almost 20 years. "Spinnaker Bay, an award-winning community of condominiums and apartment homes on the waterfront in Baltimore's Harbor East neighborhood, is one of our most recent projects," said Bozzuto. "It's an honor to be building here at Woodbrook. Ultimately, the biggest compliment for us would be to hear people say that it looks like it has been here forever."

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