Neighborhood NEWS

Winter 2008-09

Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association

Arts and Crafts in Ruxton Heights

By Barbara Guarnieri

One of the benefits of living in our community is a landscape rich in winding country roads hugged by charming homes. For the architecture buff, nothing beats a late fall stroll through neighborhoods in Ruxton, Riderwood or Lake Roland watching the canopy of red and orange leaves flutter down to landscaped lawns to reveal the variety of homesteads beyond. For example, wandering through the Ruxton Heights neighborhood on the hills above Graul's Market, a keen architectural eye would spy many Arts and Crafts homes dating to the early 1900's.

(See article on page 9 about one in particular)

This charming home is a fine example of a Craftsman-style house on Berwick Road. Photo courtesy Frank Lucas

The Arts and Crafts movement began in mid-19th century Britain where the heavily decorative Victorian style had prevailed for more than half a century. Inspired by the writings of John Ruskin (1819-1900), a fierce critic of poorly crafted manufactured goods and the factory system which produced them, British artist and writer William Morris (1834-1896) rejected the ornate Victorian style in favor of simple, clean design. Morris refocused architecture and the decorative arts toward artistic craftsmanship rather than machine- and mass-produced goods so popular in the Industrial Age. The movement he ignited became known as the Arts and Crafts style and spread from architecture and decorative arts to furniture and fashion. Like most 19th century trends, the style quickly jumped the Atlantic and took hold in America.

The American Arts and Crafts movement in the U.S. began formally by the establishment of the Society of Arts and Crafts in Boston in 1897 with an exhibition of furniture, fabrics, pottery, drawings and other objects by a variety of craftsmen, artisans, and educators, half of whom were women. It was a reform movement which complimented the "progressive" political movement. It was a populist philosophy espousing simple living infused with art and nature.

In style, it differed from its British counterpart, a style inspired by Gothic romanticism and reflected in wall papers of medieval scenes, chairs with Gothic arched backs and popular novels like "Ivanhoe". American design took its cue from patriotic nativism. Rather than a room of scenic wall paper, American architects designed homes specifying the use of native materials, emphasizing techniques to enhance special wood grains or stone cuttings. Trims, moldings and furniture remained machine made in the U.S., with the craftsman working his magic on finishes, inlays and other decorative details. Metals, glass and sturdy textiles played a large role in the American Arts and Crafts aesthetic. Because American Arts and Crafts proponents used machine finished goods for their crafts, the objects remained low in price and were affordable to a broader audience than similar objects in England.

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Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland *Neighborhood NEWS*

Winter 2008-2009

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President's Letter

Dear Neighbors:

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Neighborhood News*, my first as the new president of the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association. I really enjoy living in this area. It's close to major roads, yet we are surrounded by nature. Many people in this community are warm, welcoming, generous and talented—and that definitely includes my fellow board members. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to serve with each of them.

Our family was drawn to this part of the Baltimore Metropolitan area because we value both the convenience and the sense of being in a lovely rural community. We enjoy the variety of architecture, with homes that could have been transported from Williamsburg, a New England village, Martha's Vineyard, or a California hillside. Each and every home in our community is unique, and we have a responsibility to impart our personal taste in a way that fits with the architecture of the area. While I love the history and unique architecture of homes in Ruxton, Riderwood and Lake Roland, I am interested in the future of the community, which is why I have agreed to serve as president this year.

These are exciting times for our community and there are plenty of ways for you to get involved beyond your membership. This past fall we had a well-attended annual meeting. The new school proposed for the Ridge Ruxton School site was the key topic. Baltimore County Public School officials have not been very forthcoming with information and report only that they are in the design phase of the project. The Association has taken a position that the overcrowding in the area's elementary schools is a serious issue that needs to be addressed, but the proposed Towson West Elementary School is a poor solution that will not meet the long term needs of the community.

In the next few months we will begin the process of updating our Community Plan. Volunteers are needed to help look at each of the neighborhoods in our area and the needs and goals for land use for the next decade. Topics include transportation, commercial uses and in-fill development, among many others. After the Plan is complete, we hope to have it officially adopted into the Baltimore County Master Plan as our current Plan is. If you are interested in joining in this exciting process, please contact our Executive Director, Peggy Squitieri, at 410-494-7757.

I am looking forward to seeing our community decorated for the holidays and am especially looking forward to seeing many of you at the annual Holiday Party in the Woods. I thank you for the opportunity to serve and welcome your comments and suggestions.

Best Regards,

Kathy Frederick Palencar

Recycling Container Loan Program

Do you help coordinate events at your church, school or club? If so, you may be interested in having recycling containers at your next event (at no charge). Contact Public Information Specialist Clyde Trombetti at 410-887-2791 or **ctrombetti@baltimorecountymd.gov** for additional information. Organizers of any size event—large or small—are encouraged to participate.

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School Issue Subject of Annual Meeting

by Bliss McCord

The Church of the Good Shepherd once again generously shared its Parish Hall with Association members for its annual meeting September 18th. Conducting his last business meeting of the year, retiring President Fran Anderson's agenda included an overview of the year's activities, the annual election of board officers and members, and information on plans for the additional elementary school being proposed on the Ridge Ruxton School site. In thanking Scott Slater, Rector of Good Shepherd, as well as Graul's Market, which continues to contribute refreshments to Association functions, Fran reminded us how much we truly are a neighborhood of friends.

Del. Steve Lafferty addresses RRLRAIA members at the annual meeting.

Many of the Association's activities were reviewed, from its involvement with the recently-completed Comprehensive Zoning Map Process (CZMP), Robert E. Lee Park, and local zoning issues and complaints to neighborhood event planning and larger community issues. Association membership this year has increased and an updated directory is being published. These tangible signs reflect the many behind-the-scenes hours spent by both staff and members of the board and other volunteers investigating local issues and disseminating information to area residents. Guests were reminded that the Association maintains an emergency fund for special concerns (legal representation, for example) and enhancement projects, and were encouraged to make suggestions when inspired.

President Fran Anderson bids goodbye to RRLRAIA members at the 2008 Annual Meeting.

Departing board member and former RRLRAIA president Kimberly Warren conducted the election of the new board. New board members are: Kathy Mountcastle, Rob Nelson, Marsha Ramsay, Keith Murray and Debbie Burker. Members Beth Purvis and David Meese were acknowledged for returning for a second term. Fran expressed his appreciation to Louise Hildreth, Kimberly Warren, Jeffrey Budnitz, and Martha Bishai, members leaving the board after nearly 30 years of combined

Former President Kimberly Warren wraps up the election of the RRLRAIA board of directors.

Continued on page 10

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Ruxton- Riderwood Lake Roland Area Improvement Association 2008-2009 Board of Governors

*(I - r) Steve Allen, District 3; Dan Baird, District 1; Judy Wright, District 6; Fran Anderson, District 8**

*Helga Morrow, District 10, and Marsha Ramsay, District 3**

*(back row) Linda Eisenbrandt and Debbie Burker, District 9; (front row) Ande Williams, District 6; David Meese, District 2; and Julie D'Ambrogi, District 7**

*(I – r) Rob Nelson, District 4; Barbara Guarnieri, District 1; Kent Walker, District 6; Elyse Jacob, District 3**

** For key to districts, see map on p. 4 of the 2008 – 2009 RRLRAIA directory*

All photos courtesy Nettie Washburn

*Tom Weadock, District 6; and Keith Murray, District 8**

*Kathy Mountcastle, District 2; Scott Murphy, District 9; Kathy Palencar, District 5**

*Beth Purvis, District 2; Fred Hudson, District 7; Bliss McCord, District 6**

*Kris Culp, District 5; and Nettie Washburn, District 9**

** For key to districts, see map on p. 4 of the 2008 – 2009 RRLRAIA directory*

All photos courtesy Nettie Washburn

Eco-Friendly Renovation Assures Future Cost Savings for "Green" Colonial House

by Bliss McCord

Like many homeowners in our community, Ed and Louise Smith (not their real names) wanted to renovate their outdated 1950s house. The twist? They wanted to expand and update in an eco-friendly way using "green" construction materials that wouldn't compromise the charm of their traditional-looking home.

The young couple lovingly renovated the brick house on a quiet dead-end lane in Ellenham Park that they purchased when they married four years ago. When Louise was pregnant with their first child, the Smiths decided to make the house more livable and put their individual stamp on what will no doubt be their home for years to come. This involved converting the old garage into living space, putting in a new kitchen, mudroom, and family room by adding on more square footage, and constructing a new garage. New landscaping followed.

Side and rear of house showing geothermal heating unit. Photo courtesty Bliss McCord

From the front, the house looks like a classic two-story brick Colonial. However, if you come to the wrong entrance and knock at the mudroom door, your arrival is trumpeted by great woofing and tail-wagging from the couple's two dogs. Crossing the threshold, it is clear that the addition was designed with canine requirements and comfort in mind. First, there is the doggie door. This is not an ordinary doggie door with a piece of rubber flapping from the top. It is the most airtight doggie door made, with practically no air leakage. Indoors, there are cubbies for coats and boots on one side of the mudroom and a brilliant walk-in tiled shower for the dogs on the other.

Next, you enter the spacious kitchen. Not surprisingly, the appliances have high Energy Star® ratings. The Smiths made sure there was ample and convenient built-in storage space for their recyclables. The glowing wide-planked wood floor is made from recycled fence boards from Virginia. The Smiths considered using sustainable cork flooring products, but felt they would not be practical with dogs in the house. Even their homey oak kitchen table is enjoying a second life, straight from a consignment store.

The kitchen and adjoining family room have a cheery brightness to them, aided by new windows and doors, all with high energy efficiency ratings. The ceiling beams in the family room came from an old barn. Even the primer coats of paint are "low VOC" products. This means they contain fewer Volatile Organic Compounds, the source of that traditional paint smell and a contributor to poor indoor air quality.

The Smiths' most wondrous energy saver is the heating and cooling plant. Although they originally researched the practicality of using solar heat, they concluded that they could find a better solution. Ed already knew about geothermal heating and, upon investigation, they were excited by the concept. They found a heating/cooling contractor with experience converting standard oil heating to geothermal temperature control.

Although the practice of residential geothermal heating in this country is relatively new, it has been used in Europe for some time. The principle is simple. No matter how much the air temperature outdoors fluctuates, the temperature below ground remains fairly constant (around 55 degrees) year round. This is because the ground absorbs 47% of the sun's energy (heat) as it hits the earth's surface. Some geothermal systems use an "earth loop" to take advantage of this phenomenon, using this free energy source to heat and cool the house. In cold weather, the system pulls the heat out of the ground with the submerged heat loop, extracting and distributing it through conventional duct systems in the house. Summertime reverses the process, pulling warm air from the house interior and either using it to preheat the water in the hot water tank or returning it to the earth loop. Once the heat is removed from the air, the cool air is distributed through the duct system. (More information is available at **www.waterfurnace.com**.)

Although the initial expense of installing such a system was greater than traditional alternatives, the Smiths will see a reduction in their oil bill and they know, going forward, that reliance on a free heating and cooling source, rather than on costly fossil fuels, will not only leave a smaller footprint on this earth, but will save them money in the long run.

Moving outside, close inspection of the new garage reveals not wood siding, but its look-alike, Hardieplank®. This material is made of concrete fiberboard but looks amazingly like wood. Advantages of Hardieplank (named for its inventor, James Hardie)

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Green Building Checklist

Want to go green but don't know where to begin? Baltimore County Office of Community Conservation offers a green building list of environmentally sensitive building materials and systems for affordable housing renovation projects.

This checklist is intended to encourage developers and homeowners to consider using 'green' building methods and practices in the earliest stages of project planning. Based on the intended scope of a project, budgetary constraints, availability of materials, and other factors, the goal is to incorporate as many of these practices as possible into each project. (see **http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/community/greenbuilding/index.html**)

For example, recycling job site construction/demolition waste is an obvious beginning to a project. When looking for examples of green structural members, plan to use FSC certified wood for framing; use wood I-joists for floors and ceilings; use web floor trusses; and use OSB for sub-floors and sheathing. Install house wrap under siding.

When considering exterior and interior finishes, be sure that any treated wood you plan to use does not contain chromium/arsenic. Consider using recycled content composite wood products; use materials certified by the Forest Stewardship Council* (FSC) certified materials for interior finish; and use finger-jointed or recycled-content trim.

When selecting flooring materials, select FSC certified wood flooring; use rapidly renewable flooring materials such as bamboo; use recycled content ceramic tiles; install natural linoleum instead of vinyl; and install recycled content carpet with low VOCs.

Green plumbing choices include: installing a tankless hot water heater; insulating hot and cold water pipes; using low flow faucets and showerheads (2.0 gallons per minute); and replacing toilets with ultra-low flush toilets (1.6 gallons per flush).

** FSC is an independent, non-governmental, nonprofit organization established to promote responsible management of the world's forests.*

Eco-Friendly Renovation

Continued from page 6

are that it does not warp or rot, requires less frequent painting, is pest and insect resistant, and uses sustainable products. It lasts a long time.

Conservation was also a consideration in the landscape design. Most plants are native species chosen for their drought resistance, thus requiring little supplemental watering. Trees were selected and sited for their insulation qualities. The holly tree snuggled against the garage was scheduled for removal, but Ed and Louise nixed that idea, recognizing the tree's beauty and the length of time it takes Mother Nature to grow an adult tree. The garage was moved; the tree stayed. Score another point for the environment!

The Smith's home reminds us that doing things differently and thoughtfully doesn't have to mean changing the familiar things we find comforting. Their addition looks and feels like it has always been a part of the house and complements the older homes in the neighborhood, while utilizing many of the advantages offered by new technology. All it took was the commitment to make a change for the better.

Recycling Tip

Verizon telephone directories are scheduled to be delivered in our area between the beginning of February and the end of April. You can opt-out of delivery by calling 1-800-888-8448.

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Home Sales in Ruxton / Riderwood / Lake Roland

Sold Properties from July, 2008 – September, 2008

Courtesy of the Whit Harvey Group,
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

ADDRESS	SETTLE DATE	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
Acorn Hill Lane	8/20/2008		13,712
8209 Bellona Avenue	8/28/2008	489,000	484,500
1201 Boyce Avenue	7/15/2008		789,000
109 Brightwood Club Dr.	7/22/2008		439,000
301 Brightwood Club Dr.	7/22/2008		365,000
405 Brightwood Club Dr.	8/28/2008		350,000
510 Brightwood Club Dr.	8/28/2008		375,000
6602 Charlesway	7/31/2008		575,000
6800 Charles Street	9/8/2008	469,000	420,000
1844 Circle Road	7/15/2008		1,410,000
6516 Darnall Road	8/14/2008		1,000,000
6519 Darnall Road	8/1/2008		775,000
5 Devon Hill Road	9/18/2008		535,000
7830 Ellenham Road	7/30/2008		1,950,000
7839 Ellenham Avenue	9/24/2008		1,500,000
1606 W. Joppa Road	8/7/2008		507,000
110 Judges Lane	8/27/2008	444,999	435,000
1706 Killington Road	9/24/2008	495,000	495,000
9 Malibu Court	7/15/2008		340,000
29 Malibu Court	8/26/2008		482,500
1010 Malvern Avenue	7/28/2008		400,000
1503 Maywood Avenue	8/12/2008		483,000
901 Navy Road	8/6/2008		575,000
538 Piccadilly Road	7/16/2008		292,000
631 Piccadilly Road	8/12/2008		620,000
409 Range Road	8/7/2008		310,000
445 Range Road	8/8/2008		345,000
446 Range Road	7/16/2008		180,000
8202 Rider Avenue	9/29/2008	409,900	394,000

Thinking of Replacing Your Old Windows?

When considering whether to replace or repair your historic windows to make your home or building more energy efficient, it is important to remember the following facts:

- Only an estimated 12-15% of energy loss is through windows. Most energy loss is due to cold/heat infiltration at seals, not through glass.
- Historic windows in good repair have the same or better thermal efficiency as more modern windows.
- Historic wood windows have proven performance over 60-100 years.
- Energy efficiency can be achieved by repair and enhancement including:
  - Restoring the proper fit between sash and frame
  - Repairing broken windows
  - Applying clear, non-reflective laminate to glass
  - Installing sash locks
  - Installing weather-stripping
  - Adding exterior or interior storm windows*

And, if your home or commercial building is listed as a national or local landmark, you may receive up to a 40% tax credit if you restore your windows or replace them in kind.

For further information on receiving tax credits for your historic home, contact Karin Brown at the Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation Commission, 410-887-3495.

**information courtesy Susan West Montgomery, Executive Director, Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions*

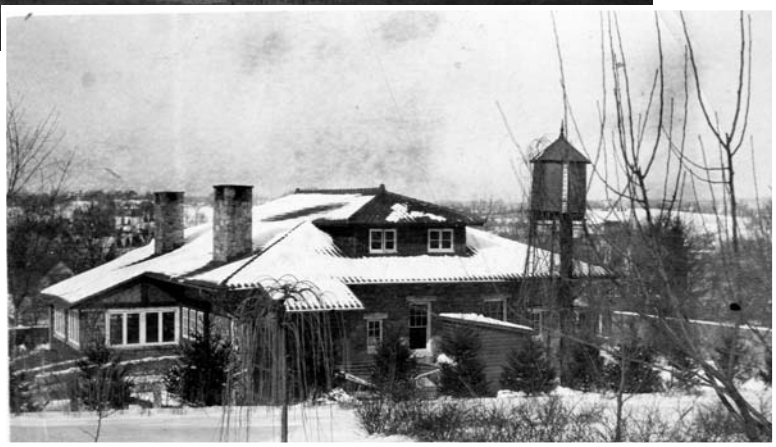
Sustainable Studio Rises from Historic Foundation

By Mary Sue McCarthy

Travelers along Berwick Road, one of Ruxton Heights' typically narrow, dead end lanes, may have noticed the recent conversion of a 1920's garage into an unobtrusive "studio" for longtime Ruxton resident and architect Frank Lucas. Frank and his family purchased their home in Ruxton Heights some 22 years ago after it had housed two generations of the Wiley family.

Wiley-Lucas home today

Sam Wiley died in 1986, leaving no heirs or successors, just about the time young Frank Lucas was settling here to launch his career and raise a family. When a real estate agent mentioned that "an estate appraisal on an old house on Berwick Road was being done, but I don't think you'd be interested," Frank drove past the 'old house'. He was intrigued by the surrounding stone wall and gate house and asked to see inside. He was completely captivated by one of the most appealing, warm, and comfortable houses he had ever seen.



Wiley-Lucas home circa 1910

On the inside were wood ceilings and high wood wainscots. All the door and window openings were tied in with integral horizontal wood trim. The wood was dark, rich oak; the hearth was huge and inviting. A frieze of plaster scenes representing the story of the Prodigal Son horizontally wrapped the panels between the openings and the ceilings. The dining room and living room had an open, modern, relationship to each other. Suspended light fixtures were strong and glowing.

Outside was that strong stone wall surrounding the house, which was also built of stone. The decaying garage was a remote accessory structure to the main house. The terra cotta tile hip roof was simple, dominant and hovering — although it later proved to be quite leaky! The overall effect was hard to define, looking Swiss, Tudor, California-like but special and intimate. Frank predicted, "Like the Wileys, we will be the next family to live out our lives here." He made an offer on the spot, and thus began his life-long devotion to his home and to a study of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Frank's home, which shares Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation designation with four of its neighbors, is one of the original Craftsman residences built about 1904 in Ruxton Heights by Stuart Olivier, a local entrepreneur who drew upon design elements taken from pattern books and magazine articles published by Gustav Stickley, the primary spokesman for the Craftsman Movement. (See article on page 1)

The object of the Lucas's recent renovation was to deal with a rotting roof area of the garage and convert the space into a studio He intended to highlight the original natural building materials but also reflect a strong commitment to sustainable architecture. Frank wanted to remain faithful to the aesthetics of the Arts and Crafts style and sensitive to the scope and scale of the surrounding neighborhood architecture.

The existing one-and-a-half car garage offered a remarkably intact stone foundation which, after removing the old roof, would support the new studio and reference the scale and style of the main house. Like the Craftsman house, the studio has a low pitched hip roof with deep overhangs and extended brackets supporting the overhang. Wood shingles in two patterns and wood trim were stained dark brown to match the wood trim of the main house and to be a subtle addition to the neighborhood. (One inspiration for the studio was the style of Bernard Maybeck, an

Continued on page 14

Riderwood Elementary School Gets Student Postmaster

Riderwood Elementary School recently commissioned a student postmaster to lead the "Wee Deliver" student postal service at the school. At a ceremony held at the school, Trevor Bishai, son of former RRLRAIA board member Martha Bishai, was sworn in as postmaster of the Appalachian Trail Post Office by Ronald Dodson, the recently appointed postmaster of the Riderwood Post Office, using the official Oath of Office for U.S. Postal Service Postmasters. Trevor received a postmaster's certificate which is given to all postmasters when they're installed.

Trevor Bishai holds the letter "P" in Riderwood's student postal srvice installation. Photo courtesy Mary Davies

The idea of the "Wee Deliver" program is to boost literacy and life skills. The program helps children learn how to write letters and address envelopes. It also helps them learn how mail is processed and delivered.

"The program gives children an early introduction to working at a job. It's a great motivator for them and gives them a bird's eye view of how the mail system works", says Dodson.

Riderwood Elementary's "Wee Deliver" postal service operates throughout the entire school and allows students and staff to send and receive mail. Nine fourth grade students will be employed as postal clerks and carriers and all had to apply for their positions," according to Dodson.

Congratulations to both of our new postmasters!

School Issue Subject of Annual Meeting

Continued from page 3

service. Kris Culp presented Fran Anderson with a gift from the board and expressed appreciation for his strong and capable leadership.

Fran touched on three areas of RRLRAIA involvement and concern this year. First, the planned building of a second school at the Ridge Ruxton site which was later addressed by invited speakers. Second, the deteriorated condition of the Falls Road corridor from Old Court Road to Racquet Road has prompted board members to work with local developers and business owners to try to enhance this area. Finally, Robert E. Lee Park, our neighborhood gem in need of maintenance, is always a topic of discussion at board meetings. For years, there has been hope that Baltimore City would surrender ownership of the park to the County. Perhaps recent problems there, such as repairs to the bridge and floodgates, will serve as a catalyst to further these efforts.

The remainder of the evening provided a forum to discuss Baltimore County's controversial decision to build a second elementary school on the site of Ridge Ruxton School. Representatives of the County Executive's office and the County School Board were invited to attend, but unfortunately declined.

Differing perspectives on the issue were presented by Cathi Forbes (Towson Families United); Mike Ertel (a West Towson resident and former president of Greater Towson Council of Community Associations); Peggy Ward, immediate past president of the Ruxton Ridge Association; and elected officials Delegate Steve Lafferty and County Councilman Kevin Kamenetz. At present, the County is going ahead with plans to build Towson West Elementary School, with completion slated for 2010. Towson Families United is happy to have a new school underway to alleviate overcrowding in Towson area elementary schools. However, opponents argue that, although a new school is welcome, this alternative was rushed through without benefit of community involvement or thoughtful site analysis and is therefore just a "Band-aid" solution. RRLRAIA members fall on both sides of the issue. Many voiced their frustration in working through the County bureaucracy.

Thank you to all who attended this event and contributed to the success of the evening.

Parmesan Spinach Balls

Recipe courtesy of Graul's Market

Little breaded balls of spinach and Parmesan cheese are baked in the oven until golden brown!

Ingredients:

2 (10 ounce) packages frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained

2 cups Italian-style seasoned bread crumbs

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

½ cup butter, melted

4 small green onion, finely chopped

4 eggs, lightly beaten

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F

In a medium bowl, mix the frozen chopped spinach, Italian–style seasoned bread crumbs, Parmesan cheese, butter, green onions, eggs, salt and pepper. Shape the mixture into 1 inch balls.

Arrange the balls in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Bake in the preheated oven 10 to 15 minutes, until lightly browned.

Thanks to Graul's Market.

Rental Housing Licenses

Baltimore County recently passed legislation requiring owners of a building or a portion of a building containing one to six dwelling units intended or designated as rental units to register and be licensed with Baltimore County on or before January 1, 2009.

Some of the items checked for include:

- smoke detectors
- electrical system
- functional plumbing
- operational windows
- proper ventilation of all combustion appliances (furnace, hot water heater, dryer
- secondary means of escape from sleeping areas
- exterior safety hazards

For more information call 410-887-3351, email **pdmenforce@baltimorecountymd.gov** or visit **http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/permits/rentalregistration/index.html**

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Arts and Crafts in Ruxton Heights

Continued from page 1

Several Ruxton Heights houses belong to a vernacular subset of the Arts and Crafts known as "Craftsman". They were not custom designed by architects, but adapted by developers from published writings and drawings of Gustav Stickley (1858-1942), a woodworker whose sturdy, simple furniture continues to be sought after by American collectors today. Stickley's influential magazine *Craftsman (1901-1916)* advocated for the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States. The magazine and later pattern books stressed a "fine plainness" in both art and the art of living. Several issues published plans for Craftsman Houses, espousing Stickley's design theories for a simple, unified home architecture. The magazine also reported on the construction of Stickley's own masterpiece, Craftsman Farm in New Jersey, built in 1908 and still much admired as one of America's National Historic Landmarks.

Photos of Craftsman Farm reveal a home that has much in common with our own Ruxton neighbors' Craftsman houses. These houses are characterized by simple dominant masses in broad proportions, low-pitched hip roofs, deep eaves and overhangs, integral porches, and the use of native stone and wood. On the inside there are large hearths, high wood wainscots, wood ceilings, window seats under horizontally grouped windows, leaded glass, wood trim expressed in horizontal bands, and warmly glowing light fixtures.

At the time, these architectural manifestations of the Arts and Crafts movement were "in the air" and were taken to a higher level of perfection by architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and the Green Brothers in Pasadena, California. Later, these ideas were spread by publications such as Better Homes and Gardens and the Sears Roebuck catalog in styles such as Mission, Bungalow and Prairie.

So treat yourself and take a stroll past these local architectural treasures which represent an historic movement with much in common with today's efforts to simplify our lives and surroundings.

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Baltimore County Trash, Yard Waste and Christmas Tree Removal Schedule

- Separate yard materials recycling collections end December 15th; yard materials (including leaves) will still be collected, but with the trash. Separate yard materials collection will resume in April, 2009.
- Christmas trees will be picked up from January 12th to January 23rd. No plastic bags, tree stands or ornaments allowed.
- You can view, save, and/or print your trash and recycling collection schedule online and also get directions to your closest trash/recycling drop-off center by visiting the Bureau of Solid Waste Management web site: **www.baltimorecountymd.gov/recycling**; click on "Collection Connection" link or call customer service, 410-887-2000, to request a collection schedule and program guide.

Recycling Batteries and Fluorescent Bulbs

Baltimore County recently expanded its residential collection program for compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), fluorescent bulbs, mercury thermometers and thermostats, and lead-acid and rechargeable batteries. Recycling these materials helps keep potentially dangerous substances, including mercury, out of landfills.

County residents can bring these items to the Baltimore County Resource Recovery Facility off Warren Road (between Beaver Dam & York Roads) Monday – Saturday, 7am – 4pm.

Tree Preservation & Maintenence

As we head into the winter months, please check the health and condition of your trees and vegetation—especially those growing near a street. Remove dead or diseased trees so they are not a potential hazard to others.

You may not cut down or trim a "roadside tree" (one growing within the public right-of-way) without a permit or work order issued by Baltimore County or the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

For roadside trees, Baltimore County may:

- Remove dead wood (i.e. dead, storm-damaged or broken limbs)
- Remove limbs blocking streetlights, traffic signals, traffic warning signs or those interfering with site distances at intersections
- Elevate limbs blocking public sidewalk or traffic vehicle lanes
- Cut down and remove dead trees
- Cut down and remove a live tree under circumstances such as:
  - Roots lifting sidewalk at least 1"
  - Driveway and/or curb and gutter raised at least 1"
  - Sewer line clogged (requires recent receipt of pipe cleaning)
  - Tree at least 25% dead
  - Extensive surface root problems
  - Interfering with utilities (water meter, gas, cable, electric, water)

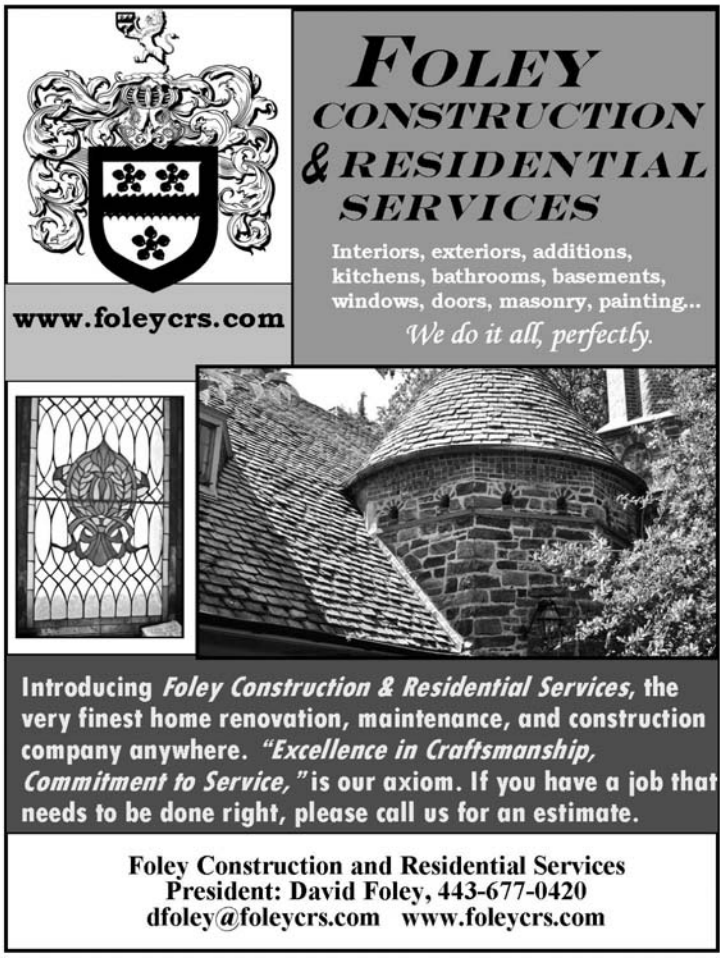
For additional information contact Baltimore County Bureau of Highways (410-887-3560) or the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service (410-665-5820).

Water Relining Update

As we went to press, Heitkamp Inc. was removing the bypass piping on Malvern Avenue. Paving and restoration was underway in the Four Winds, Army Road, and Malvern Avenue with anticipated completion in early December. In addition, the lining on Curving Lane was completed and should be back in service by now with restoration scheduled for December.

Rolandvue Avenue will be completed in spring 2009 along with various water main tie in work and service transfers along Bellona Avenue. It is possible that some work along Bellona Avenue will be performed late fall and winter depending on weather.

Robert Wright, regional manager of Heitkamp Inc., thanked residents involved with the project for their friendly and courteous cooperation and patience.



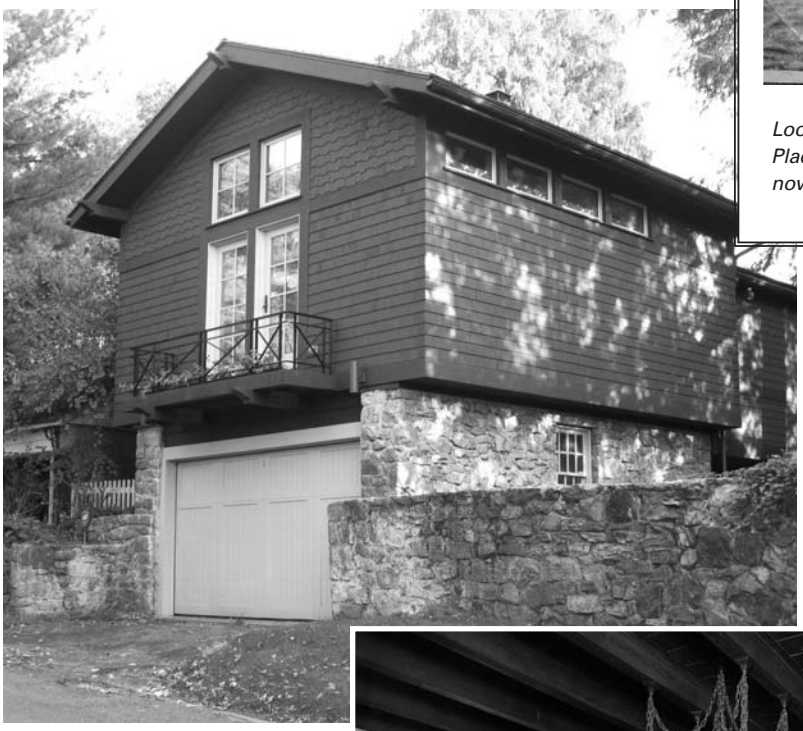
Sustainable Studio

Continued from page 9

Arts and Crafts Architect in Berkeley, California.)

In designing the structure, Frank employed sustainable approaches to obtain energy savings and to manage on-site storm water. Air tight construction and insulation, especially under the roof, are important to energy savings. The studio roof is insulated with R-60 in a combination of batt and rigid insulation. (Baltimore County requires only R-38 or 12"of batt insulation). A

Looking east from former Wiley house (Berwick Road and Emory Place), this winter scene shows what was known as Wiley's Park, now the parking lot at Graul's Market.



Above, Frank Lucas' new studio, built on the foundation of former garage.
At right, interior of Wiley home circa 1910.

central pellet stove provides heat in winter. Although a heat pump was installed to provide back-up energy, the pellet stove has warmed the studio comfortably so far. Windows and doors are oriented to prevent heat loss in winter and maximize cooling breezes in summer. The heat pump is needed for cooling on only the most humid days.

Ever mindful that rain falling in Baltimore County eventually finds its way to the Chesapeake Bay, Frank channeled rainwater from his roof into a 10 x 6 x 6 foot underground holding pit lined with filter fabric and filled with gravel. This allows storm water to slowly be released to the surrounding ground. Future plans include conversion of an existing cistern in the basement of the main home to a water source for garden irrigation to further reduce their water consumption needs.

Like many other Ruxton residents with older homes, the Lucas's intend to make their home as energy efficient as possible without disturbing the Arts and Crafts character. Frank is considering installing a ground-mounted solar panel to supplement the hot water supply. Other improvements intended for the 1904 house are patching and filling leaks for air-tightness and additional insulation before replacing the existing mechanical equipment with new high efficiency boilers and geothermal AC systems.

Frank Lucas, a former president of the Baltimore Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, is a member of the US Green Building Council and a LEED Certified Architect.

Falls Road Parking Lot Update

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) has completed design documents for the expansion and enhancement of the parking lot at Falls Road Light Rail stop. The project includes both expansion

of the existing paved parking areas to accommodate ridership growth as well as additional landscaping and design enhancements. The project includes the following elements:

- Expansion of paved parking lot areas to a total of 201 parking spaces including five accessible parking spaces designated for use by persons with disabilities
- Construction of a lighted pathway providing pedestrian access between Old Falls Road and the boarding platforms
- Replacement of temporary concrete barriers with architectural concrete bollards at the intersection of Old Falls Road and the Light Rail tracks
- Additional area lighting within the parking lot expansion area
- Additional landscaping and mulched planting beds
- Replacement of deteriorated fencing with new wood-composite fencing from Old Falls Road to the boarding platforms
- Updated signage
- Additional bicycle racks

Actual construction began this fall with the installation of the underground storm water management system. The MTA estimates completion with the planting of the landscaping in the late spring/early summer of 2009. MTA anticipates most construction activities will occur Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. No activity will take place on Sundays.

Copies of the Pavement Marking Plan and Landscape Site Plan are available in the RRLRAIA office for review.

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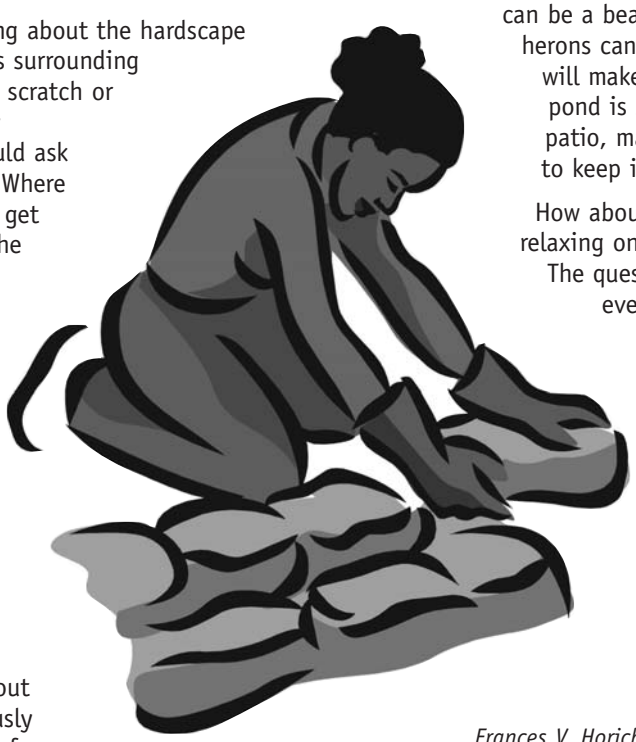
The Hard Part of Landscaping

by Frances Horich

Have you ever parked your car in someone's driveway and then wondered how to get to the front door? A graceful path to the entry is just as vital to a good landscape plan as the flowers and shrubs. In reality, the walkways, stone walls, patios, decks and even gazebos (collectively known as hardscape) are the most important elements in the plan because these pieces of the picture are often large, expensive and more or less permanent.

For me, the first step in thinking about the hardscape is to consider the house and its surrounding grounds. Whether starting from scratch or dealing with something already established, questions you should ask are: How is the property used? Where will cars park? How will people get to the house? When you're in the house, what are the views? Does the family have children or are they empty nesters? Do they do a lot of entertaining? After the list of questions about how a place will be used come the questions about wishes. Do you dream of having a gazebo in your yard?



It's the old "form follows function" saw. A well-thought-out path that gracefully and obviously leads people to the front door of your home is ideal. If you then determine how people can best travel through the rest of your property, everything else will fall into place. Can that gazebo be a rewarding destination on the edge of your property nestled into a garden of understory trees, shrubs, groundcovers and bulbs? If so, do it! Maybe your dream has been to have a stone wall? Then look for a grade change where such a wall would be appropriate or a garden that would be set off by a handsome stone wall. The key for me is whether the structure and the material you intend to use seems comfortable on the land. If you have a brick and aluminum siding house, you might not want to add another kind of building material to the overall picture. It's all about allowing the land and other circumstances of the place to tell you what works.

Water features are popular in landscaping these days and can be a beautiful asset to the property. Did you know that herons can spot a goldfish pond almost anywhere and will make lunch out of the inhabitants? If you feel that pond is something you want to have as part of your patio, make sure you understand what will be required to keep it attractive and safe.

How about that patio? Everyone can see themselves relaxing on a patio in the shade of a beautiful old tree. The question is: What's the best place for it? How can everyone get to it? How will it be until the tree you're going to plant grows up enough to do the job? Should the patio be brick or stone or wood…dry laid or mortared…geometric or free form?

The point is that there are endless questions which can be posed when landscaping or adding hardscape to your property and careful consideration of each element will pay off in the long run. Don't forget to listen to the land before you come to any conclusions.

Frances V. Horich, a landscape designer and horticulturist since 1982, designs gardens for clients throughout the Baltimore area. She can be contacted at ***fvhorich@aol.com*** *or 410-925-9383.*

Trinity Church Appeals Sign Decision

An appeal has been filed in the Court of Appeals of Maryland by Trinity Assembly of God. This case involves the Church's desire for a billboard-size electronic changeable copy sign on their property facing the beltway. Copies of the Appeal along with the Respondent's Brief and Appendix are in the RRLRAIA office if you are interested in reviewing these documents.

Website Update—Visit rrlraia.org

Our website, **rrlraia.org**, has been updated and includes past issues of the newsletter, links to state and county officials and agencies, and a history of the area written by Joseph M. Coale.

Changing of the Guard

Ty Ford

There was no parade. No artillery was fired. No flags were raised. Nonetheless, after six years of service in the Towson area, we say goodbye to Sergeant Steve Moffett and hello to Sergeant Steve Fink, our new Baltimore County Police Department Community Outreach Supervisor.

Sgt. Moffett, who lives in the Towson area, served as our community contact for over five years. Sgt. Moffett retired from Baltimore County Police Department in September and took a position with the Maryland Transportation Authority Police. He leaves with our respect and appreciation for all he and his team have done to serve and protect our neighborhoods.

Retired Sergeant Steve Moffett welcomes Sergeant Steve Fink, Towson's new Baltimore County Police Department Community Outreach Supervisor. Photo courtesy Ty Ford

The key to the success of Sgt. Moffett's Community Outreach program was multi-level communication. "I began by speaking to about a dozen neighborhood leaders on a regular basis. We grew a network of community groups who talked not only to me and my staff, but to each other. We now send out important information via our "Citizens on the Web Network" to community leaders which they then forward to their own neighbors. Sometimes I'd use the phone to get in touch with former RRLRAIA Executive Director Nancy Horst, for example, to say "This situation is happening as we are speaking. This is the suspect description. She'd start fielding calls and would send out an email to the neighborhood. It works exceptionally well in the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland area because Executive Director Peggy Squitieri and Nancy Horst have been available full time. That's a luxury a lot of communities don't have and has been very effective in combating crime."

Moffett also enjoyed working with Jeff Budnitz, a Lake Manor/Hollins area resident and advocate for Robert E. Lee Park. "There has been some crime there over the years, mostly crimes of opportunity — theft from cars parked while people are in the park and some burglaries. The park was closed a few years back and the footbridge was gated because it had become a hazard. We took several foot tours to see what was going on. We found vagrants with encampments in the park. That's generally not a good sign. We found one person who lived in the park and got up everyday and took the Light Rail to work downtown. I left my card with a note saying, 'Hi. Sorry I missed you.' He left shortly after that. The more militant dog walkers were also causing problems. They broke the lock on the fence to get into the park. Again, we'd take the gentle approach and explain that they couldn't be in there and they'd leave."

In 2005, there was a robbery problem in the Ruxton, Dulaney Valley and Cockeysville areas. "It was odd that they would hit the Ruxton corridor. The man was getting in and out quickly. I talked with Nancy Horst and we put out an email to explain what was happening and to reassure the community. As a result of that message, a community member contacted Nancy to say she saw a man sitting in a car at the Royal Farms store on Joppa Road who seemed out of place. The woman had the tag number. We talked to her and her information led us to the robber."

Sgt. Steve Fink has been in uniformed patrol for 24 years in the County, the last 12 years in Towson. "When I heard Steve Moffett was looking to retire, I was open to a change. I'm learning more from the men and women who are in the unit than they are learning from me right now. It's something different and I've enjoyed working with the communities."

Both Sgts. Moffett and Fink ask us to take notice when we are out and about. "Noticing your surroundings is the best way to keep crime away. Remain vigilant for the unusual person in a car. Write down the day and time, a description of the vehicle and at least a partial license plate. Don't hesitate to call 911. Bother us! Let us know what's going on. It's all about getting good information. What may not be obvious to us may be very obvious to you. It might be worthwhile information that can be used by our detectives."

There are other simple things we can do to remain safe. Sgt. Fink reminds us, "Remember to lock your doors, even if you're just going to be in the back yard. Don't leave the garage door open. Don't leave your car unlocked. Lock your sheds. People don't like to think they have to be that careful, but they do."

Fink says our involvement helps the police feel better as well. "We spend a lot of time dealing with criminals. Working with communities, as I do now, has shown me that there are people out there who are concerned and appreciate what we do. We can work together to be very effective."

Kudos to Peggy Squitieri and Nancy Horst for their work on our behalf. A fond farewell to Sgt. Steve Moffett and a cheery welcome to Sgt. Steve Fink. We all appreciate your efforts.

Ty Ford is a professional media specialist and lives with his wife Bette in Ruxton Hill Manor.

A Hidden Child Found

RRLRAIA EMAIL CONNECTS ACROSS TIME AND DISTANCE

by Barbara Guarnieri

During the holiday season, our mailboxes overflow with well wishes, but, overwhelmed by festive demands on our time, we may fail to savor these greetings. Snail mail is filed in seasonal baskets while email may be quickly trashed. But don't be too rash. Sometimes what arrives can be a message of such profound importance it takes our breath away.

Helga Magnus Morrow's story opens with these lines:

"Early last year, Nancy Horst, RRLRAIA's Executive Director, informed me that her office had received an email from someone who was looking for Helga Morrow. Although she forwarded the email to me, she wondered whether it was a hoax. It was not. The episode referred to in the email happened 63 years ago during the Second World War in the Netherlands when I was a Jewish child in hiding."

> *Dear Mrs Morrow,*
>
> *I'm looking for Mrs Helga Morrow, the daughter of Mr Felix and Eva Magnus. If you are so, you'll understand the reason of this mail. I'm Leo Bielders, the youngest son of the Bielders family, in Houthem St. Gerlach, the Netherlands. My family is looking for contact with your family, as after so many years we wish to remember an important episode of both families during WWII.*

Leo Bielders had Googled 'Helga Morrow' and found an on-line reference to her as an RRLRAIA board member. He was searching for children of a family his parents had shared their house with during WWII. He felt a need to reconnect with the family members—a request that startled Helga, arousing memories of her family's treatment in this home, which was anything but cordial. Indeed, she suspects that if peace had not come, her family's Jewish identity would have been revealed and they would have been deported to concentration camps – a fate that befell many members of her family.

Sign posted in German and Dutch to identify the Jewish quarter.

The Bielders were one of many Dutch families forced to share their homes with refugees from cities destroyed by the war. Most refugees were Christian but some, like the Magnus family, were Jews whose papers had been secretly doctored by sympathetic civil employees to give them new names and a Christian identity.

At the beginning of the war the Magnuses witnessed cousins, aunts and uncles assigned to work camps, never to be heard from again. When the war ended and the world fully understood the hideous nature of these death camps, more than 95% of Holland's Jewish population had disappeared.

The Magnuses were suspicious of these work 'assignments'. When an opportunity to flee arose, they took it. For two years the five children were scattered to various safe houses in the country while their parents found refuge in hotels and boarding houses. Finally, in 1944, Helga's mother found a family who would rent rooms to accommodate the entire family. The Magnuses reunited and lived in the Bielder's home in St. Gerlach, never revealing their Jewish identity. Suspicion seemed to color their host family's relationship with them. Helga's memory of the less-than-kind hostess remains vivid.

The email from Leo Bielder motivated Helga and her sister to chronicle their harrowing story as Jewish children on the run during the pogrom in Holland and recorded for the USC Shoah Foundation for Visual History and Education (**http://college.usc.edu/vhi**) and the Holocaust Museum. The sisters tell of their shadowy and often cruel existence in the unknown recesses of other people's homes; of their mother's grief at losing their sister to a common childhood disease because she could not visit a doctor; of a child's consternation at having to constantly mask her identity in order to attend school, participate in social activities, live out a childhood. There is much to mourn in their tale but equally as much to celebrate. How resilient are the spirits of those whose paths were so violently diverted by evil.

Helga not only answered Leo's email but in subsequent exchanges offered to host the Bielders during their trip to the United States. It was a remarkable reunion that led to the beginning of an understanding of each other's childhood perspectives and reconciliation between the two families. The Magnus siblings also reflected on Dutch citizens who willingly protected the Jewish refugees, including their own immediate family.

Be certain to read and treasure each of your holiday greetings. To listen, to learn and perhaps to even forgive—such gifts are often priceless.

Dumpster Day

Dumpster Day presented a wonderful opportunity for community residents to clean out their garages, attics and yards. Many thanks to board members and community volunteers who assisted with the unloading of "junk" and provided good cheer. There was actually some very good "Dumpster diving" for some volunteers....sign up to help next year and see for yourself.

Dumpster Day volunteers (l – r): Helga Morrow, Ande Williams, Bliss McCord, Beth Purvis, Scott Murphy.

Photos courtesy Nettie Washburn

Helga Morrow wheels a barrow to a waiting Dumpster.

Dumpster Diving Pays Off

Volunteer Tony Dalrymple tried to ignore a frost bitten, left-for-dead Boston fern while he helped neighbors empty unwanted trash from their cars, but he couldn't resist taking it home. A year later, the result speaks for itself!

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