Neighborhood NEWS

Winter 2009-2010

Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association

County Unveils Plan for Robert E. Lee Park

By Barbara Guarnieri

It's amazing how many people use Robert E. Lee Park! Hikers, cyclists, birders, naturalists, walkers, and dog owners were among dozens of residents who attended the unveiling of the multi-phased improvement project planned for the Park by Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks on November 17th.

Rec and Parks Director Bob Barrett said Baltimore County plans to clean up the Park, make it safe, and bring it up to County standards. This will be accomplished by hiring park rangers and maintenance staff. The County considers the Park to be a nature center where a variety of activities will be available to many different users.

...and the bridge comes tumbling down. Photo courtesy Siobhan O'Brien Photography, obrienseye.com

The transfer of stewardship of the Park from Baltimore City to the County has been in the making for more than 20 years, Barrett noted. He said the transfer is the result of the work of many interested parties, including state, county, and city elected officials and agencies and the participation of community members and private citizens, and that the future of the Park will require a like commitment from stakeholders.

Barrett cited Phase I as an example of this coalition at work. The state allocated $3 million in construction funds, the County matched this appropriation with $3.2 million, the City signed off on a long term lease of the Park and resident associations helped to prioritize the Park's most pressing needs. As a result, Phase I of the "take-over" has begun. Future phases are still in development and have not yet been funded. Barrett cautioned that though Phase I is well underway, enhancements of the long-neglected Park will require a monumental investment of time, talent, and resources.

Bud Chrismer, Deputy Director of Rec and Parks; George Klunk, Chief Engineer; and John Rohde, of the design firm of Human & Rohde gave more detailed information about the Phase I improvements. Charts and maps provided helpful visual references.

One of the project highlights includes replacing the bridge over the sluiceway into the Park. The old bridge has been demolished and work on its $2.8 million replacement is scheduled to begin in March 2010. Until the project is completed in September 2010, pedestrian access is limited.

Erosion along trails and lakeside will be abated with an ecological top soil designed to better absorb and filter run off. Dispensers for plastic bags for collecting dog waste will be available in the Park.

A fenced dog park of more than an acre will be created on the peninsula. Pet owners will be allowed to let their dogs off leash in this area. Dogs must be leashed elsewhere in the Park. Construction of the dog park should be completed by May 2011. This project and the erosion control component is budgeted at $2 million.

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Ruxton-Riderwood-
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President's Letter

Dear Members,

I am honored to have been invited to continue serving as president of the board of RRLRAIA. My past year of service has changed the way I live in our community. Most importantly, I have gotten to know my fellow board members and others involved in some of the issues we have been following. It has also changed how I look at our streets, bridges, traffic, trash, shopping areas, and parks.

I recently had an exchange of emails in which the recipient made statements which I knew to be untrue. Questioning the validity of the statements, I checked them against more credible sources and found the information to be both wanting and simply untrue. It is easy in our world of overwhelming information resources to hang our hats on sexy sound bites. It was a reminder to me that we all have a responsibility for substantiating the knowledge base of our community.

It is with that same sense of duty about our actions that I bring to the update of the community plan and the transfer of Robert E. Lee Park into County hands. The plan for the Park and the surrounding area is a 10-20 year project, with the Park leased to Baltimore County for two 50 year terms. The planning efforts for the Bare Hills area and the proposed improvements to the Park are ambitious, but both are to be phased in over a very long time.

As the board begins its new term, RRLRAIA committees have already been hard at work

Dumpster Day was well attended, but wet. We had the welcome addition of the Goodwill Industries truck to accept donations as well as Dumpsters for trash.

Our traffic committee plans to meet with state and county roads officials to review the traffic problems within our boundaries.

Our membership committee has done a wonderful job of maintaining membership levels.

The zoning committee has been monitoring zoning issues and keeping adjoining neighbors informed when changes are afoot.

The nominating committee continues to be a strong suit for the board, enlisting new board members who are engaged, intelligent and, shall we say, geographically desirable.

The Park committee has spent countless hours working on the Park turnover (see article on p. 1).

The community plan update also includes planning for improvement of the Bare Hills area and other enhancements that have engaged most members of the board. If you have not had the opportunity to view the proposals, I invite you to the Rider House to have a look.

As always, Peggy Squitieri, our Executive Director, is a wonderful resource for all of us. She holds a wealth of knowledge about our community and our local government, and is happy to assist.

You have before you the fine efforts of our newsletter committee; we are fortunate to have such a wonderful publication for communicating with our membership and community.

I hope you will attend the upcoming Holiday Party in the Woods scheduled for December 19th. Please dress warmly, mingle with your neighbors, sing some carols, and enjoy marshmallows cooked over the fire.

If there are issues that interest you, you can serve on a committee without joining the board. Submitting articles for this newsletter, participating in events, encouraging your neighbors to maintain their RRLRAIA memberships, and recycling are all ways you can help. Thank you.

Best Regards,

Kathy Frederick Palencar

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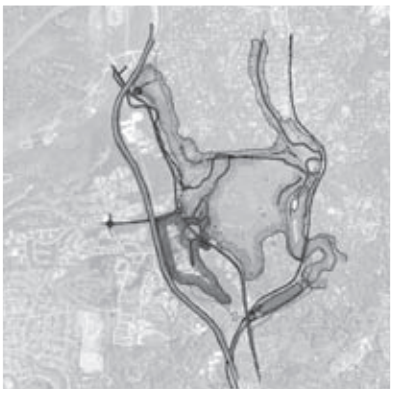
Community Plan Focus of Annual Meeting

By Bliss McCord

President Kathy Palencar welcomed neighbors to the 55th Annual Meeting of the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association on September 24th at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Following introductions of elected officials and the keynote speaker, Ms. Palencar reviewed Association activities during the past year, in particular the historic transfer of Robert E. Lee Park from City to County stewardship and the $6 million commitment from Maryland and Baltimore County for upgrades and maintenance.



Concepts illustrating a cohesive and attractive Bare Hills area

Kathy referenced the board's involvement with the controversial construction of West Towson Elementary School on the site of Ridge Ruxton School and noted that Board representatives will have a voice in the redistricting of students that will occur as a result of the addition of this new school.

Other Association year-in-review highlights included:

- Board attention to such transportation issues as speed cameras, moveable copy signs, the Trinity parking lot, installation of a stoplight at Old Pimlico Road, reporting on construction of the new Charles Street overpass at the Beltway and the impact of traffic near ever-expanding Towson University;
- Zoning and Design Review Panel issues; and
- Membership, which stands at a healthy 1,075 families.

Retiring Board members Dan Baird, Kent Walker, Kris Culp, Fran Anderson, and Judy Wright were thanked for their years of work on behalf of their neighborhoods and the greater community. The following nominees for new Board positions (and returning members up for reelection) were presented and unanimously elected by those in attendance: Jamie Heffron, Tracy Miller, Justin Wiggs, and Jeffrey Budnitz, who is returning after a one-year hiatus.

Next, Jeffrey Budnitz spoke briefly about the years of work that led up to the transfer of the Park from City to County stewardship and recognized and thanked Delegate Stephen W. Lafferty and Baltimore County Councilman Kevin Kamenetz for their invaluable aid in the process.

Past President Fran Anderson presented background history of the proposed (and still under review) revised community plan for our area. He spoke of the community plan created ten years ago which was adopted into the Baltimore County Master Plan; he emphasized that it was designed to be the guiding document for the Board in decision-making and fund allocation. He noted goals accomplished since the original plan was created ten years ago (R.E. Lee Park issues, Design Review, etc.) as well as those still in need of attention, in particular, the Falls Road/Bare Hills business corridor.

Keynote speaker Alfred W. Barry III was introduced by Scott Murphy. The consensus of the RRLRAIA Board last year was that an update to our community's original plan (adopted by the County in 2001) was advisable. Mr. Barry, along with his colleagues at AB Associates, was engaged to study the relative strengths and weaknesses of the current plan (**http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/community_planning/adopted_community_plans/ruxton.html**) and recommend the direction the Board should take on behalf of the community in the next ten years in tandem with County government's own Master Plan review, currently underway.

The proposals from Mr. Barry are ideas the Board needs to consider; Scott stressed that Board members are looking for community input. The presentation of Mr. Barry's vision summarized the prepared plan recommendations and was accompanied by colorful storyboards illustrating a cohesive and attractive Bare Hills area. Handouts were available after his talk. Mr. Barry answered generally enthusiastic questions from RRLRAIA members and encouraged their involvement in the process.

RRLRAIA wishes to thank Mr. Barry for his excellent presentation and the Church of the Good Shepherd for once more providing a home for our annual meeting. For detailed information on the Plan recommendations, please be sure to read the Community Plan article in this issue.

Gott's Hope

The neighborhoods along Meadowridge, Greenwood, Chestnut, the Willows, and Winespring were part of two early land grants for Towson. James Crooke recorded the first grant in 1706 (250 acres along Gunner's Range running along both sides of Old Joppa Court Road-now Joppa Road). Richard Gott patented the next substantial grant in 1709 (400 acres west of Towson). Eventually members of the Gott family would buy up the acreage along Gunner's Range and farther west, encompassing what is today Riderwood, until the family owned over 600 acres known as "Gott's Hope."

Gott's Hope was farmed by several generations of Gotts for over one hundred years. Two properties remain from Gott's Hope—508 Greenwood Road, a log and stone building believed to have been a stable, and 507 Chestnut, a log house dating from 1742. The latter is the oldest surviving house in the West Towson area.

"Gott's Hope," built in the 18th century, still stands at 507 Chestnut Avenue.
Photo credit: William Andersen, 2006

The next oldest home, located at what is now 1706 Charles Spring Way in the Willows, was built in 1803. The ownership of this house is unverified until the 1850s when it was recorded as the home of Richard Woods. His son William inherited the home and lived there until 1890 after which J.G. Pearce and then Mary Creaghan owned the home. Today the Creaghan home remains as the historic flagship property for "The Willows of Ruxton."

In 1860 James Boyce, a successful coal dealer, built a Victorian Gothic mansion on 39 acres along Gunner's Range. The home was designed by Henry Brauns and given the name "Chestnut Summit." The Boyce family remained on the estate for several generations but eventually sold it to the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart who used the property as their mother house until 1998. "Chestnut Summit" was razed in 1998 to make way for the construction of Blakehurst Retirement Community.

Not far from Blakehurst is the site of another seniors' complex on Chestnut Avenue, Pickersgill. In 1840 this property was recorded as the farm of William Althier who is thought to have enlarged an existing house on his land, a portion of which had been built by the Gotts before 1740. The Althier farm changed ownership several times until it fell into the hands of the Imwold family in 1882. Mr. Imwold, a furniture merchant, improved the house for his wife Anna and six children and dubbed it "Dulce Donum" (Sweet Gift). In 1910 Robert Deford bought Dulce Donum and renamed it "Folly Farm."

In 1942 Folly Farm was sold to the Aged Men's and Women's Home located at Lexington and Calhoun Streets and operated by a women's philanthropic society. The society used Folly Farm as a summer retreat. Mary Pickersgill served as the first president of the society but is perhaps better remembered as the seamstress of the flag immortalized by Francis Scott Key during the bombardment of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. The society eventually outgrew the original Aged Home which was razed in the 1960s and is the site today of the Franklin Square Elementary School. Folly Farm was razed in 1950 to become the Pickersgill Retirement Community complex.

Another member of the Deford family bought property near Folly Farm in 1911 and built "Greenwood," a Greek Revival style home designed by architect Laurence Hall Fowler, overlooking what was then Boyce Avenue. John F. Deford connected his thirty-two acre estate to the old Gott stable and then to Old Joppa Court Road, creating Division Avenue which later became Greenwood Road. This new road gave Greenwood's residents easier access to points east and west. Also benefitting from the new road was Col. Sherlock Swann who purchased lands adjacent to Greenwood in 1915 and built another Laurence Fowler designed house, the Georgian Revival home known then as "Briarwood" but known today as Xavier Hall of Loyola High School at Blakefield.

The Gott properties continued to be purchased and developed into the early 20th century. The ridge along Joppa Road saw multiple homes constructed during this period, including the 1892 estate of John Hampshire at 702 Joppa Road and the stately homes at 601 and 605 Joppa Road, belonging to a school superintendent and a state senator respectively. A large parcel of farm lands was donated by heirs of Thomas Offut in 1924 for the construction of the "Kelso Home" orphanage for girls, now the YMCA. The Offuts had owned "Marshmont," a large estate whose gracious home was comprised of several older buildings believed to have been 18th century structures of the Gotts. The home was demolished to make way for the subdivision "Offut Estates" and the 1929 construction of the Presbyterian Home of Maryland.

Major building booms took place following both world wars and subdivision home development began in earnest after World War II. In 1927 the Deford family sold Greenwood to the Lutheran Deaconess School who later deeded it to Baltimore County. The old estate now serves as the headquarters for the Baltimore County Public Schools. Remaining property from Greenwood not sold to the Lutherans was developed into the Chestnut Hill (Trafalgar, Piccadilly and Eton Roads) and Riderwood Hills (Meadowridge Road) subdivisions. In the 1960s another portion of the land was developed into the Ruxton Ridge neighborhood. In the 1970s yet another burst of development brought Charles Street Overlook along the 1000-1200 blocks of Joppa Road. And finally, the 1990s witnessed new homes built on the Creaghan property on Charles Street now known as The Willows of Ruxton and development of the lands previously owned by the Jencks and including the old Gott stable on Greenwood Road now titled the Greenwood Estates.

(Source: "A Brief History of West Towson" *by David Loizeaux at* ***www.bcplonline.org/info/history/hist_west_towson.html****)*

Lot at Corner of Joppa and Bellona Now Part of Foundation's Maintenance Program

by Joseph M. Coale

Recent written comments by the consultant hired by the Association to update the 2001 Community Plan stated that.....

The Plan can be credited with some significant successes including the organization of the Foundation and their on-going easement and neighborhood enhancement programs...

The Ruxton Area Foundation has assumed maintenance of the long-neglected MTA site at Joppa and Bellona Avenue.

So we can make a difference. One very satisfying element of the Foundation's work is that it can be seen and appreciated by all. The Foundation has sought to raise the awareness of creeping neglect that has befallen too many parts of our treasured community. Ruxton, Riderwood, and Lake Roland neighborhoods can only be at their potential if the open space and public byways equally reflect the pride shown in our own individual properties.

This summer, the Foundation assumed responsibility for the acre lot owned by the MTA light-rail at Bellona and Joppa. The site had become such an overgrown eyesore that the Foundation board initiated a debris cleanup, shrubbery trimming, and mulching effort. The enhancements undertaken by the Foundation are of long-term value only if they are part of a scheduled maintenance program.

Rider House now has a user friendly entrance and specially milled storm windows. Unfortunately, one of the old galvanized pipes broke over the Labor Day weekend and caused a flood on the second floor and damaged the first floor ceiling. The house, nevertheless, continues to be available to many groups serving the area.

The Foundation is conducting its annual fundraising appeal with a community-wide mailing. Our green oak logo will appear at our sites. Please consider your own community as part of your year-end giving. Your investments pay benefits for us all.

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DEC 20	9:00 AM	ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS*
	10:15 AM	BRUNCH
DEC 24	2:30 PM	PAGEANT & EUCHARIST*
	4:30 PM	DRAMATIC STORY & EUCHARIST*
	10:00 PM	CHORAL PRELUDE
	10:30 PM	FESTIVAL EUCHARIST WITH CHOIR
DEC 25	11:00 AM	EUCHARIST

**Child care is available*

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February 26 - March 7, 2010

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I Remember When… The Big Blizzard of 1958

by Carol McCord

Four Winds was a relatively new community in 1958; there were still undeveloped lots scattered around and many of us did not know most of our neighbors north, south, or east of us. But in the winter of 1958, that changed. For, on February 15-16, one of the ten biggest snowstorms to hit the Baltimore/Washington area literally covered landscapes, cars, and even some houses with 15 1/2"of snow. Drifts measured as high as 27" causing most of us in "The Winds" to become marooned in our homes without power, heat, services, or transportation.

Young boy emerges from the 'snow cave' he made following 15.5 inches of snow dumped in Baltimore during the Blizzard of 1958.

This drastic change in our lives brought out a pioneering spirit as, for four or five cold, blustery days, neighbors came to depend on one another as never before. Electric lines were down everywhere in Ruxton. Live wires on the ground threatened anyone venturing out; children had to be kept indoors until the power company could retrieve live wires and notify the community—which took two days. We had four active boys between five and ten years old and I was barely two weeks past the birth of our fifth child, a girl. There was no hot water or heat, our boys were not allowed out in the snow, and their playmates were already at the door! But word had spread that there was a new baby at our house and immediately the offers arrived from all corners. The mothers of our boys' two best pals took turns having ALL the boys to play at their houses for the two mornings they all had to be kept in. Lunch included. Families who were not without power offered their resources of warmth, hot baths, freezer space, hot coffee, and food to their closest neighbors. And because the outage was only on one side of the street, there was a continuous trooping back and forth daily from a cold house to the warm one opposite. The men, bundled up beyond recognition, hung out near the mailboxes, sharing the daily round of news, excitement, or gripes as they dug their cars out and shoveled paths.

We were at the dead end of the cul-de-sac. Behind us lived long-time friends, the Richard Ellingsworths. Dick, owner of General Elevator, collected pieces of wire; my husband, an engineer, loved to fix things. Dick came up with the idea, enthusiastically accepted, of splicing all the wire together and hooking our hot water heater to theirs. The better part of that first two days the two of them could be seen trooping from Dick's basement through the deep snow to ours and back. When on the third day they succeeded, Oh! such shouting, such triumph! It was like Christmas Eve with two kids getting an electric train to run.

My mother, a lovely Virginia lady, resolutely showed her Campfire Girl expertise heating water and cooking hearty soups over our living room fireplace. We had all stayed in our house, Mac and I sleeping in the living room sofa bed, little Jean in her bassinet at the warmest end of the room. Mother, in the first floor guest room bed, slept in her robe, a pair of Mac's socks, and a wool sock over her head! We kept the fire going around the clock, and due to the unusual airflow in our house, some warmth circulated to the upstairs bedrooms. Snugglies and plenty of blankets seemed to keep the boys comfortable.

The initial excitement and complication was of course followed by all the usual fun, sledding, tobogganing, and snowmen. But somehow when we think of that winter, what we talk about most are the way people responded, the bonding with neighbors nearby. That was the best thing about the Big Blizzard.

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Holiday Party in the Woods

Have fun with neighbors and friends, cook hotdogs, roast marshmallows, sing carols, and enjoy a visit from Santa.

Date: December 19, 2009

Time: 4 - 6

Olde Rugby Field between Robert E. Lee Park and Light Rail Park on L'Hirondelle Club Road

- Dress warmly
- Wear boots
- Bring flashlights
- No dogs, please

Questions? Call 410-494-7757 or send an email message to **rrlraia@comcast.net**

Discount Movie Tickets Make Great Stocking Stuffers!

Just another great benefit of membership in the RRLRAIA – Regal Entertainment Group VIP Super Saver Movie Tickets! This ticket is valid for admission after the first 12 days of "selected" new releases. Selected new releases are typically the big blockbuster films. If you want to go sooner, simply pay a $1.50 up charge at the box office. Typical tickets cost $10 for adults, $7.75 for seniors, and $7.50 for children. Your price: $7.00 each--a savings of up to 33%!

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Who Will Attend New West Towson Elementary?

A member of the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association board has been appointed to serve on the committee developing boundary recommendations for the new West Towson Elementary School.

The Boundary Study Committee is comprised of an administrator, a teacher, and a PTA representative from each of the following elementary schools—Rodgers Forge, Hampton, and Riderwood; the new principal of West Towson Elementary School; a member of Baltimore County Public School's Central Area Advisory Committee; and representatives from Towson Families United, the Greater Towson Council of Community Associations, and our organization.

The Committee will review information prepared by the Office of Strategic Planning, gather input from the community, and develop several boundary change options. These scenarios will be discussed at a community forum on January 6 (snow date January 7).

The Boundary Committee will recommend a scenario to the area superintendent. Based on the results of the community forum, the recommended scenario, along with all other possibilities, will be presented to the Baltimore County Public Schools' Board of Education in early February. The BCPS Board is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the recommendations on Wednesday, February 24, at Loch Raven High School and make its final decision in early March.

We encourage your input. Contact us at **rrlraia@comcast.net** or 410-494-7757.

*(The Baltimore County Public Schools' Policy 1280 "Boundary Changes" can be found at: **http://www.bcps.org/system/policies_rules/policies/1000series/pol1280.pdf**)*

West Towson Elementary School Boundary Scenarios Input Opportunities

Community Forum

Wednesday, January 6, 2010 (snow date January 7)

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

School Board Public Hearing

Wednesday, February 24 (time to be announced)

Both will be held at:

Loch Raven High School
1212 Cowpens Ave
Baltimore, MD 21286-1795

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Researching Your Home's History

by Nancy Worden Horst

You're intrigued by an old house and you want to know its story. How can you find out when it was built, who lived there, or how it may have changed over time? What about its architectural style and the development of the entire neighborhood?

Historic house research requires the painstaking aspects of detective work. You need patience, perseverance, and time; luck also helps. The story of a house builds as you follow leads, crosscheck facts, and track down sources to learn about the owners, architect, and builders. The work may take you to libraries, city and county offices, historic societies, perhaps even on scouting trips to meet descendants of former owners.

Begin your search by building the chain of title or ownership history of the property, tracing backward in time beginning with the current owner. Deeds—the proof of property ownership—are indexed by grantee (the recipient of the property or buyer) and grantor (disposer of property or seller) in transfer books. Look for the current owner's name in the most recent index; he or she will be listed as a grantee. (Note: alphabetical order in these books may not be exact) The grantor's name will also be listed, along with the amount of the transaction and reference number to the page and book where you will find the deed. As you proceed, keep complete notes on each transaction, source, and reference number.

Repeat the process using the previous owner's name. Remember, the grantor of the deed you are looking up is the grantee in the preceding sale. If you do not know when transactions occurred, check grantor-grantee indexes for every year.

Once you've constructed the chain of title, use the reference numbers to look up the actual deeds and copy any pertinent information you find there. In each case, check to verify that the legal description refers to the property you are researching, since many people have owned and sold several lots in their lifetimes.

In addition to property owners' names and amounts of sale or "consideration," the deed may provide birth, marriage, divorce, or death dates of owners and associated individuals and, in some cases, lists of household contents or other tangible assets, and information about buildings on the property. Deeds will also record restrictive covenants and easements.

You can also use historical documents at Baltimore County, City and state libraries and historical societies for historic house research. Old newspapers, fire insurance maps, volumes of biographical sketches, corporate and club histories, and memoirs can put flesh on the skeleton developed through deed research.

City directories are another source to consult for the names of a home's occupants (as opposed to owners), as well as an approximate construction date. Beginning with the most recent edition and working backward, find your address and record the name of the occupant in each year's directory until you reach editions in which your address does not yet appear. You generally can find city directories in the County library or the Pratt Library.

Other helpful resources include insurance maps (such as the Sanborn Maps) and atlases; bird's eye views (popular in the 19th century, these are maps drawn from aerial perspectives depicting buildings and outbuildings in three-dimensional perspective); and county atlases, which contain maps of the county's districts drawn to indicate land ownership and usually showing the position of residences on the lots, along with the name of each parcel's current owner and the acreage. Census data, Baltimore County histories, newspapers, biographical information on a home's owners or architects, and other historical resources and books about architectural styles may also be useful.

Following are local resources to help with your quest:

Baltimore County Historical Trust, 410-832-1812, **http://www.bcht.org**

Baltimore County Planning Office, Office of Preservation, 410-887-3495 or **http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/historic_preservation/index.html**

For general information and tax credits contact Karin Brown at **kebrown@baltimorecountymd.gov**. For nomination inquiries contact Teri Rising at **trising@baltimorecountymd.gov**

Baltimore County Public Library (Legacy Web), **http://www.bcpl.info**

Enoch Pratt Library - The Maryland Room, 410-396-5430, or ask a question via email at: **www.prattlibrary.org/services/**

Historical Society of Baltimore County, 410-666-1878, **http://www.hsobc.org/**

Maryland Historical Trust, 410-514-7600, **http://mht.maryland.gov/index.html**

Note: MHT has a technical assistance page with information about consultants and contractors: ***http://mht.maryland.gov/consultant_directory.html***

Maryland State Archives, 410-260-6400, **http://www.msa.md.gov/**

Maryland Historical Society Library, 410-685-3750,

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Cylburn Arboretum Reopens!

by Nell Strachan

The Cylburn Arboretum, a public park still unknown to many Baltimoreans, is reopening after more than a year of renovation and construction. The Arboretum will again welcome visitors to the grounds and—beginning in mid-April 2010—a new visitor and education center, The Vollmer Center.

Located on Greenspring Avenue just south of Northern Parkway, Cylburn has been a hidden gem for over 50 years. Its 207 acres offer over three miles of woodland trails and the grounds feature ornamental display gardens, collections of trees and shrubs, state and city 'champion' trees, and a nature museum.

Pauline Vollmer, a well-known gardening authority and resident of the Murray Hill area, donated $1 million to launch construction of the new 9,500 square foot building, which will house offices for the Horticultural Society of Maryland, the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, and the Cylburn Arboretum Association, and will feature a 250-seat auditorium, a "welcome" area to provide orientation and program information to visitors, and visitor facilities. The building has many "green" features including a green roof, composting toilets, and geo-thermal heating and cooling.

The renovated Worthley Garden at Cylburn Arboretum. Photo courtesy Jennifer Forrence.

Mrs. Vollmer's gift, matched by the City and supported with additional private funds, inspired additional improvements: a new entrance road, a new service road for heavy vehicles entering from Cylburn Avenue, new parking areas, new utility lines, new lighting for evening events, greenhouse renovations including staff facilities, and an instructional classroom attached to the greenhouses.

At the same time, improvements to the gardens have been made, with several ornamental gardens completely renovated (see picture of the Worthley Garden, in memory of Elmer Worthley, who taught a botany class on this site for many years). A new flowering shrub walk has been laid out with paved, handicapped accessible pathways linking the Vollmer Center to the historic Victorian mansion. The formal garden will be renovated, with new paved pathways, and the historic Tyson family fountain will be restored to working order. The nature museum is located in the historic carriage house and displays major collection of mounted Maryland birds, butterflies, fossils, and other natural history artifacts.

For information about programs, events, membership, and other activities, please visit the website, **www.cylburnassociation.org**, or call 410-367-2217.

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Lesley – a Ruxton resident

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When ice is forecast, perhaps the best approach for small paved areas or steps, is to cover with heavy plastic weighted with bricks and remove after the storm.

Quick & Easy Rum Shrimp

By Chef Cindy Wolf

This dish is nice for the holidays because it is quick and easy. Perhaps nice for the night after the big holiday when you aren't serving many people and you're looking for a change from traditional holiday food.

12 each 16/20 ct shrimp, peel and devein

2 tbsp. shallot, finely chopped

2 oz. Goslings Black Seal Rum

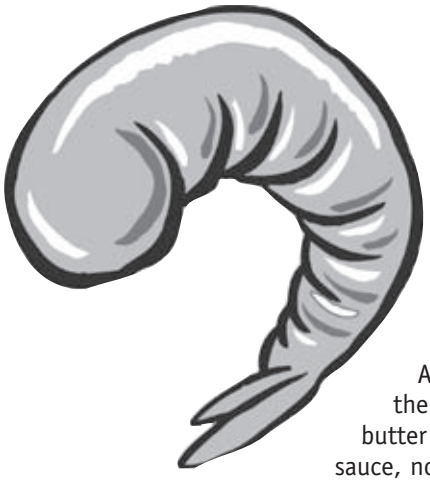
3 oz. cold butter, cut into 4 pieces

1 tbsp. fresh chives, finely chopped

corn oil for cooking

Method:

1. Heat a sauté pan and coat with the oil.
2. Add the shrimp and sauté on high heat for about 4 minutes.
3. Add about 1 oz. of butter to the pan and add the shallots.



Sauté about a minute, watching how hot your pan is. Deglaze the pan with the rum. If you have a gas stove you can carefully flambé to reduce the alcohol. Add butter, swishing the pan so that the butter becomes a cohesive sauce, not allowing it to break or separate. Taste for salt.

Immediately serve over your favorite rice—I like to serve it with rice that I cook with saffron and a touch of curry. Enjoy!!!

Recipe courtesy of Chef Cindy Wolf, Co-Owner/Executive Chef, Charleston Restaurant.

Researching Your Home's History

Continued from page 9

http://www.mdhs.org/explore/library.html

Preservation Maryland, 410-685-2886, **http://www.preservationmaryland.org/**

National Park Service Cultural Resources and Technical Assistance Publications, **http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/publications.htm**

National Trust for Historic Preservation, **http://www.nthp.org**

Books about architectural styles include *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms: 1600-1945* by John J. G. Blumenson (2nd ed. Nashville: American Association of State and Local History, 1981); *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984); and *What Style Is It?*, National Trust for Historic Preservation (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1977).

Books about historic house research include *How Old Is This House*, Hugh Howard (New York: The Noonday Press, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989); *Houses and Homes*, Barbara J. Howe et al. (Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History, 1987); and *How Old Is Your House, A guide to Research*, Joan Webber (Chester, CT: The Globe Pequot Press, 1978).

With thanks to the City of Albany (OR) Historic Preservation division: ***http://www.cityofalbany.net/comdev/historic/RESEARCH-HB.pdf***

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A Field of Dreams

by Barbara Guarnieri

The first time I saw the rear yard of our current home, I was charmed. A moss covered stone wall and stairs swept down to a lush green lawn edged by mysterious dark woods. I was totally enchanted. Though my daughter was a baby at the time, I instantly envisioned her descending those stairs in a beguiling gown to a glorious outdoor wedding ceremony. We bought the house the next day!

Twenty years later, I am still moved by the view from my rear windows. Though details have changed considerably over the years, the vista remains seductive. The moss is denser on the stairs, the woods have now been tamed, and the dark beyond is lit by the towers of a seniors' complex. But the rear field still voices a siren's call to my soul.

New Garden in the Field of Dreams

The field of which I speak lies behind five homes along Meadowridge and Greenwood Roads. The names say much about the landscape—meadowed and wooded as it is. When we bought our home in 1979 we could not see any of our 'backdoor' neighbors across the meadow and through the woods. We moved in during the fall and fell in love with the huge sugar maples, Dutch elms, ash, and chestnuts that cast the rear of our home in a deep golden halo and masked the neighbors. Leaves of every color and shape dusted the yard and field and provided hours of imaginative play for our three young children.

By December, through the tangle of naked branches we could just make out the profile of the homes behind us. By then my children had acquainted themselves with these backdoor neighbors who were generous with hot cocoa and warm conversation. They heard tales of underground springs, long-standing family football rivalries, legendary field parties, and bonfires. My kids reminded the neighbors of their own generation of children who had long since abandoned play in the wood and fields for adult lives. They were a welcome sight for the older parents and in turn made our family very happy in our new home.

In the spring, a whole new world blossomed outside our back door. The woods sprouted and spread a soft green canopy over a velvet carpet of weeds, wildflowers, and mosses. The creatures that lived beneath stirred and ventured out to be greeted. My two young boys and their friends spent hours exploring this new world. One day as they journeyed through the heavy underbrush of the woods, they discovered a 'secret garden' within. The entombed remains of decaying statues, upended benches, and a tortured brick parterre were strewn among unkempt flowering trees and rare blooming bulbs. They could not have been more captivated had George Lucas come to film the next "Star Wars" in our yard! They played in that hidden lair for many years, staging adventures both real and imagined. We later learned that the home in whose side-yard the 'secret garden' lay had once belonged to a prize-winning horticulturist.

Throughout that first year we continued to be entertained by the changing landscape of our rear yard. One warm summer evening as the sun set and we sat upon our stone steps, the hidden garden shared one of its more spectacular secrets with us. In an instant, a curtain of twinkling lights illuminated the dark woods. Thousands of tiny fire flies put on a fireworks display worthy of any Fourth of July picnic. They were so abundant that my younger son often complained of not being able to sleep because the bugs were making too much noise turning off and on—and bathing his room in light!

In time we discovered that the somnolent garden in the woods would render unto us a wide variety of nature's treasures. Many of them my children had never seen except in books— hoot owls, tree frogs, red-tailed hawks, snakes, foxes, turkey vultures, white tailed deer, hedge and ground hogs, box turtles, cicadas, brown bats—and of course the bugs and little critters that all of these hunt. The children got up close and personal with them all. It was truly a magical hideout for a kid.

But kids grow older and time moves on. When my oldest son reached high school, the non-resident owner of the magical space took advantage of an opportunity to sell his property for development. The surrounding community was changing rapidly. Homes were being built on lower Greenwood, the Mission Helpers sisters had moved into new quarters on Joppa Road and their stately stone mansion had been razed to make way for the Blakehurst Retirement Community. New neighbors with children had moved into the 'secret garden' house and other homes along the field's perimeter.

The threat of a sale bonded neighbors, new and old alike. Impromptu conversations wrestled with the issues surrounding development. One family thwarted early development by rejecting a significant offer from the owner for access to their water

Continued on page 14

To Plant a Tree…

By Frances Horwich

The act of planting a tree is the most perfect encapsulation of what it means to be a gardener that I know. My definition of one who gardens is a caregiver, a sharer, a naturalist, and an environmentalist.

Of course, there are as many different kinds of gardeners as there are people who garden; but, they all exhibit, to one degree or another, the above characteristics.

If you take the time to propagate a plant or buy it, you know it's going to need your care to survive; many people take on gardening because of the satisfaction of tending their plants.

If the plant you're putting in the ground is a tree, you're exhibiting caring on a larger scale because this act is for the future. Trees by their nature are large in human terms and therefore slower to grow and mature than your basic petunia. Duh. . .you say. I hear you, but how many times have you seen a tree and wondered why it was planted there? For me the answer is three times a day anyway! I find myself asking did they not realize it would be 30' X 30' or that the branches would block the view of the front door or hit them in the head every time they mowed the lawn or cast shade over the vegetables or drop leaves into the pool?

Human nature and its "master of the universe" way of thinking have caused some to say "let's just hack the offending branches off." That's one way to proceed and if you have a master pruner on the job, all could be well. Master pruners are artists and a rare breed. Another way to go is to be thoughtful when you plant or build and to approach living with trees in an educated way.

Know why you're planting it. Is it the beauty of that particular species; to provide shade or architecture for the landscape; as habitat or a food source for wildlife? Did you know that oak trees support 534 species of Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths)? With that nailed down and any information you can gather about its cultural requirements, you're ready for placement.

I suggest walking around your space with a large stake topped by a colorful flag. Stick it in the ground wherever you think the tree could live given its ultimate size and shape. Now, look at your stake from every possible viewpoint. How does it work from the long view, the second story window you look out of every morning, the front door? You get my drift. If you take these steps before the tree is delivered, you'll save yourself grief in the long run.

Now, back to my original thesis: you, planter of trees, will have left a legacy for the generations to follow, enhanced the environment by adding a plant that works in so many ways to do good, not least of which is converting carbon dioxide into clean air, and shown all who will notice the beauty of nature, the patience of saints, and the hope of the future.

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*

Yard Material Collection

Separate yard materials collection (grass, leaves, and small brush) ends December 15th. Yard materials will still be collected after this time, but with the trash.

Residents must not rake or blow leaves (or other yard materials) into the public street. It is a violation of County Code Section 18-3-109 to place leaves, grass, or other debris into a County street or storm drain.

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A Field of Dreams

continued from page 12

system. In the end three families pooled their resources to buy the field and woods from the original owner and subsequently placed it in a nature conservancy. The owner willingly discounted the land's potential worth, accepting that the neighborhood would be good future stewards of his land. It was a community effort in the truest sense of the word. The woods and field survived to remain an open space for all to enjoy, though change inevitably did come.

Adhering to the theory that "...you have to break an egg in order to make an omelet," the collective conservancy, now an LLC, began remodeling the old landscape. A long term plan was envisioned. The underbrush and many trees were bulldozed, potent chemicals were applied to the century old weeds and a new field was eventually seeded. Most of the 'secret garden' was removed, burdened as it was by thick gnarled vines and weeds. Several large specimen trees were salvaged and new native bushes and trees were planted in place of the old. It was difficult to let go of the romance of that old magical world and the family memories it held. But the change was full of potential.

Almost ten years have passed and the "new" trees are beginning to give birth to tall wooded secrets for the next generation of children. I am heartened to see our current young neighbors dragging old blankets and boards out beneath the bows to create their own imaginary worlds and 'clubhouses'. Their whispers and giggles are every bit a part of this woods as the winds that rustle the trees.

On the 'new' open field a fenced communal vegetable garden graces what was once a decades old heap of grass clippings and leaves. An annual garden planting ritually takes place on Mother's Day among a group of 'lady farmers' and is concluded with a dinner at which the fathers cook. Summers are measured by crops—June is lettuce and blueberries, July is tomatoes and peppers, August is raspberries, squash and more tomatoes-and of course weeds, always weeds.

At the end of summer we celebrate the garden with an autumnal feast in the field to which all the neighbors are invited. Communal feasts continue throughout the year in the field as we celebrate holidays, birthdays, children, new jobs, and new years. Teens follow suit, hosting afternoon ball games and school gatherings under the stars. And often, each evening field celebration concludes with a grand finale—a launching of spectacular fireworks.

Despite the years and the changes, the field and woods remain vigilant over our dreams. The seasons come and go, the families age and are replaced by newer ones. Trees are felled and replanted with younger saplings. But this special space still calls us from our homes to draw together as a community, to witness nature's bounty, and to set fire to our imaginations.

I had the right instincts twenty years ago when I first saw this yard. I love that we were able to give this gift to our children. And though my daughter hasn't yet settled upon her future mate, we both still share a common vision. We imagine a beautiful June day when she will wed beneath a treed cathedral and waltz in our magical yard amidst all the memories of her childhood to share with her new husband our cherished field of dreams.

Keep Holidays Green!

Shopping & Gifts

- Save gas ..... shop from home. Use catalogs, the telephone, mail, or the internet.
- Reuse mailing envelopes and boxes.
- When shopping, combine trips, take friends along, and take a tote bag from home to carry your purchases.
- For gifts requiring batteries, give re-chargeable ones and include a battery re-charger.
- Make gifts of aromatic sachets to repel insects from indoor closets in one of two ways. Here's how:
  - Wrap a handful of cedar shavings in a square of fine netting, tie with string and ribbon and hang in closet.
  - Stud a piece of citrus fruit with cloves, wrap in fine mesh, tie with ribbon and add a loop for hanging to make an old fashioned pomander ball.
- Gifts that enhance enjoyment of the out-of-doors and nature include birdfeeders, suet and seed, birdbaths, watering cans, garden tools, planting pots, and garden center gift certificates.

Holiday decorations and gift wrapping

- Reuse gift boxes and wrapping paper. If everyone wrapped three gifts in reused paper, we would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.
- Wrap only the top of gift boxes. These can be reused, thus saving future wrapping time, money, and paper and you'll only need half the usual amount of paper for your presents.
- Make wrapping paper from brown bags and let the children use crayons or potato stamps to make holiday designs.
- Use last year's holiday cards and heavy glossy paper from magazines and catalogs to make flat paper chains, origami gift boxes, gift tags, and other decorations.

For more holiday enviro-tips, visit Baltimore County's Department of Enviromental Protection and Resource Management's website: **http://resources.baltimorecountymd.gov/Documents/Environment/education/HolidayEnviroTips.pdf** or call 410-887-3778.

Meet RRLRAIA's New Governing Board Members

Jeffrey Budnitz

We welcome Jeffrey Budnitz back to the RRLRAIA board after a one year hiatus. He previously served two terms and has co-chaired the Parks committee since he first joined the board in 2002. Jeffrey lives in the Lake Roland area and spearheaded the campaign to get Baltimore County to take over the management of Robert E. Lee Park. His dogged persistence was a crucial factor in RRLRAIA's success in this area. Jeffrey's continued leadership on this issue will be key as the County undertakes major renovations and capital improvements to the Park.

Jamie Heffron

Jamie Heffron has lived in the Bare Hills community for nine years. He has been an active volunteer at Rodgers Forge Elementary, where his two daughters attend. He has worked in private club management in the Baltimore region for the last 18 years and is currently the Clubhouse Director at Caves Valley Golf Club. Jamie notes that he has seen an expansion in commercial and residential growth along the Falls Road corridor, and as a board member he will work to ensure that future development within the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland area follows a pattern of responsible growth.

Tracy Miller

Tracy Miller has been employed at Towson University for 31 years in a variety of positions, currently as an Academic Advisor. She lives in the Ruxton Crossing neighborhood with her husband and three step-children, and her son Peter lives in Riderwood with his wife and daughter. She has been politically active and previously ran to represent the Towson area in the House of Delegates. She currently serves as president of the Central Baltimore County Democratic Club and on the boards of the Maryland State League of Women Voters and the Baltimore County League of Women Voters. Tracy hopes her service on the RRLRAIA board will further her goal of "making the world a better place for my children and grandchildren."

Justin Wiggs

Justin Wiggs moved to Ruxton in 2007 with his wife Tammy, who is a Baltimore native and serves on the board of the Greater Ruxton Area Foundation. He is the Managing Director for Institutional Equity Trading at Stifel Nicolaus. As a RRLRAIA board member, Justin says that he will work to help retain the history and sense of community that led his wife and him to move to Ruxton.

Plant a Live Holiday Tree for a Lasting Memory

If you are considering planting trees in your yard, add a live tree to your holiday decorating scheme. Many varieties of live firs are available in nurseries this time of year. Follow these simple steps for a healthy holiday tree that you will enjoy for years to come.

- Choose a variety whose soil, water, light, and height needs will be appropriate for your site. Trees that are less than five feet tall have a better chance of survival.
- Choose a tree with a single, well colored, straight trunk.
- Prepare your site by digging a hole for the tree before the ground freezes. The hole should be wider and deeper than the root ball. Fill the hole with hay and cover it with a drop cloth or boards so it doesn't become a hazard.
- Buy the tree as close to the holidays as possible and store outside. The tree should not be indoors for more than three days or it will begin to come out of dormancy. Keep the root ball watered.
- Avoid the use of electric lights which may awaken the tree from dormancy.
- Before planting in the prepared hole, remove ropes and burlap surrounding the ball. Water the hole well for several days so that any air pockets in the soil will settle. The tree should be watered during thaws and during dry winters.
- If the soil is frozen, trees may be kept healthy in a container placed in a sheltered location outside. The soil ball should be covered with straw or mulch.
- Plan ahead for next year's fresh greens and decorations. By planting native trees, shrubs, and grasses in the spring or fall planting seasons, you add diversity to your outdoor winter landscape, create wildlife habitat, and provide cutting material for next season's holiday decorations. Try these: red Osier dogwood, white pine, winterberry, American holly, eastern red cedar, inkberry, or switchgrass.

Source: **www.oldhouseweb.com**

The Dam History

by Bliss McCord

To many, the restorative value of Lake Roland is a given but did you know that it also has historical significance? The culmination of dedication, hard work, and historical research by many individuals, the Lake Roland Historic District was listed as a National Historic District on October 15, 1992.

This designation was awarded for its having met two criteria. First, it was associated with an important event in Baltimore history—its 19th century establishment as the City's first municipal water supply. Second, the design and construction features of the dam and Valve House also qualified it as an important example of a major Maryland public engineering work. Today we will concentrate on stone and mortar, but first, understanding some historical context should help bring those cold materials to life.

As early as 1797, Baltimore leaders recognized the need for a dependable water supply. In 1799, the City Council directed that pipe be laid from Carroll Run, and soon after, it announced it was accepting proposals for the establishment of a permanent water supply for the city. In response, the privately owned Baltimore Water Company was formed in 1804, and within three years had established a waterworks on the Jones Falls. For the next half century, Baltimore continued to grow while the water system expanded. By 1850, however, it was clear that the system was inadequate for a city of Baltimore's size. Only fifty-seven miles of pipe had been laid, an amount significantly less than that of comparably sized cities. In 1852, a Water Commission was formed and consulting engineers were hired to survey the area for the best sources of water. The resultant Report upon a Supply of Water for the City of Baltimore by T. Sickles (1854) recommended the Gunpowder River. The next year, the Baltimore Water Supply was purchased for $1,350,000 by the City, which set about solving the water problem.

Marker designating site as a project of the Baltimore Water Works

In spite of the Sickles recommendation, the Water Commission chose a plan by James Slade, a noted 19th century engineer from Boston. Slade's plan, which ignored the Gunpowder in favor of reworking the old Jones Falls water system, had one advantage: it was complete and ready to implement. In hindsight, that "easy" solution was probably not the wise one, but happily it produced Lake Roland for our enjoyment today.

Slade's plan consisted of an interconnecting water system composed of three reservoirs and the conduits between them. It called for 1) the damming of Jones Falls to create a reservoir, Lake Roland (originally called Swann Lake for Thomas Swann, mayor from 1856-60), 2) a conduit from Swann Lake to Hampden Reservoir, 3) Hampden Reservoir, 4) a pipeline from Hampden Reservoir to Mt. Royal Reservoir, 5) Mt. Royal Reservoir, and 6) and the distribution network to city residents.

Construction began on the Lake Roland dam in 1858. Spanning the Jones Falls at a rocky, narrow ravine at what is now the south end of the lake, the original plan called for a dam of "wooden cribs" and earth. Timber crib dams were usually found where wood was plentiful and the transport of cement was costly or difficult. The good thing about wooden dams was that they could be built quickly. The bad thing was that wood rots unless it is kept constantly wet. Fortunately, this plan was scuttled when it was decided that the dam needed to be "indestructible" (perhaps in part because of the pre-Civil War political climate?), another decision from which we benefit today.

Dam contractors J. H. Hoblitzell, J. Hoblitzell, W. L.Hoblitzell, and T.S. Crowley got right down to business. The all-masonry structure first was set on "full beds of fresh hydraulic cement mortar." The "rough gigantic stone of the neighboring hillsides" was crushed to rubble and used for the heavy interior fill that measured 60 feet from the toe of the dam to its rear base. The back wall of the dam was perpendicular; the front was slanted into a spillway which, when the lake was high and water flowed over the dam, was quite picturesque. The exterior facing was made of rusticated Texas (MD) marble ashlars (or square stone) – limestone - with the slanted spillway measuring 125 feet wide at the top of the dam. The interior chambers under the Valve House were made of limestone as well. The dam was 40' high, with 6' tall wing walls enclosed in earth embankments. Once operational, water from the Valve House flowed into an underground brick conduit to Hampden Reservoir.

The Greek Revival Valve House sits at the top of the dam and to its southeast. It contains the controls for the dam beneath its floor and was built by J.B. and T.F. Connolly of the same materials. A. & W. Denmead provided the ironwork, along with the fittings to the gate chambers and the curved and branch

pipes of the pipeline. The Dunmeads, who operated the well-known Monumental Iron Works at the corner of Monument Street and Guilford Avenue, had been making boilers and locomotives since 1847. The City's Chief Water Engineer, Charles P. Manning, who oversaw construction of the Lake Roland project, described how the dam's flow control system worked:

"The gate chambers consist of two distinct apartments, the floors of which are at the respective heights of 201 and 210 feet above tide—or respectively 24 and 15 feet below the crest of the dam, the usual surface of the lake. The lower chamber is provided with gates which regulate the discharge of water through the waste flume, and by means of which the lake can be drained to the bottom. The higher chamber is provided with gates by which the flow of water into the conduit is regulated; and another gate for occasional use, when a connection between the waste and conduit chambers may be needed. The gate chambers are enclosed by a substantial stone house, upon the floor of which are placed the screw stands of the several gates."

The first water flowed over the top of the dam in mid-July and a few days later, the same day as the Battle of First Bull Run, July 21, 1861, a proud Baltimore turned out for the dedication. According to Louis F. Gorr, writing for Baltimore Engineer in 1976, "Baltimore somehow had been transformed into a civilized city, ranking with the ancients, and symbolized by the classical temples that served as gate houses and waste weirs." The Valve House was completed in mid-October. Construction cost overruns are nothing new, and City fathers were probably not that shocked that the dam and lake excavation cost more than expected. Still, the $112,752.55 price tag for the excavation and clearing of 50 acres for the lake and $152,190.65 for the dam and Valve House were worth it: by 1862, the Lake Roland – Hampden – Mt. Royal Reservoir water system supplied the entire city's water.

Unfortunately, one problem Slade apparently did not foresee was silting. Almost from inception, and long before the days of the Baltimore Beltway and suburban construction run amok, silting of the lake bottom was a serious problem and dredging had to be conducted numerous times. Murky, contaminated waters sometimes plagued Lake Roland, to the point that it is said that local Towsonites routinely passed up drinking water when dining with friends in the city. Finally in 1915, Lake Roland was deemed obsolete and was abandoned as a source of city water.

So the next time you are in the Park, why not take an extra few minutes to stroll up Lakeside Drive and take a closer look at these engineering marvels of the 19th century? Although the lake has shrunken, much remains unchanged since Civil War days. The Valve House still stands squarely as it always has and the "indestructible" dam's spillway still charms when water courses down its face. Alert observers may even be rewarded by a blue heron's patient search for dinner at its base.

Thanks to Robert Macht, who was instrumental in securing the lake's historic designation and is one of the Park's most devoted friends, and for source information he provided, specifically John McGrain's fine article, "Historical Aspects of Lake Roland"(*Maryland Historical Magazine*, December 1979), liberally paraphrased here.

Dumpster Day

Fall means many things to many people: crisp days, Ravens football, leaves to rake…and everybody's favorite, Dumpster Day! This year's premier fall event took place November 14th at Riderwood Elementary School. There were the usual piles of junk – old lamps, broken toys – but wise volunteers always know to keep one eye open as that junk could actually be 'junque' in disguise.

One improvement over previous years was the addition of a Goodwill donation truck area where useful items were donated and will be distributed to those who need them rather than going into a landfill. Great idea!

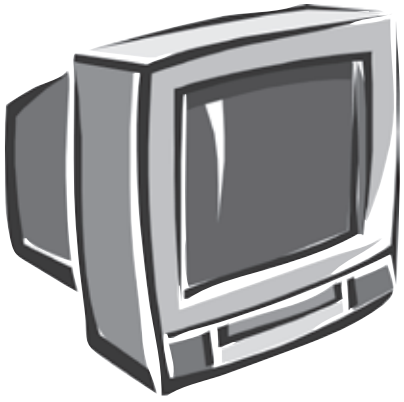
Thanks as always to the Board and other volunteers who routinely brave cold fingers and splinters to help the community clean up.

Dumpster Day coordinator Beth Purvis with her much-appreciated volunteers.

Disposal of Most Household Electronics Banned

Residents Urged to Recycle

The Baltimore County Council recently passed legislation making it illegal for residents to dispose of most household electronics as trash. The County suggests recycling or reusing electronics to keep hazardous materials such as mercury, lead, cadmium, and arsenic out of landfills.



This new law targets computer equipment (CPUs, monitors, keyboards, printers, laptops, scanners, cables, and cords); televisions, VCRs and DVD players; telephones (including cell phones and answering machines); stereos; fax machines; and video display devices.

The law does not apply to household appliances (e.g., washers, dryers, refrigerators, ovens) or electronics sold to the commercial or institutional sectors.

Residents with unwanted electronics are urged to contact electronics manufacturers or retailers to inquire about an electronics take-back or recycling program. Many electronics manufacturers and retailers have convenient programs for recycling electronics that are free or low-cost.

Or, you might consider donating unwanted electronics to a charity or reuse organization. Contact the charity/organization first to find out if they will accept what you wish to donate. For contact information regarding such organizations consult the Baltimore County Reuse Directory (online at **www.baltimorecountymd.gov/recycling** or, for hard copy, call 410-887-2000).

County residents may also drop off unwanted electronics year-round at: Baltimore County Resource Recovery Facility, located on Drop-Off Drive, off Warren Road, between Beaver Dam Road and York Road (Monday - Saturday, 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

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Neighborhood Walks

On a beautiful fall day in mid-October several RRLRAIA members and friends enjoyed a walk through Robert E. Lee Memorial Park to the Woodbrook neighborhood. We are now looking to set up a few more walks through other neighborhoods. If you would like us to schedule a walk through your neighborhood please contact board member **ElyseJacob@gmail.com** or 443-691-8714

Plans for Robert E. Lee Park

Continued from page 1

The old parking lot and access road will be refurbished and off road parking will be discouraged by a new edge design. The old concession stand will be razed to make way for more parking. Most importantly, Park users will be encouraged to use the expanded MTA light rail parking lot which will be connected to the Park by a new 'boardwalk' which will end at the Pavilion. The improved roadway and parking lot will be completed within a year and are budgeted at $1.2 million.

A park council will be created to give input to future phases of Park improvement. The group will help develop a master plan for the Park, anticipating decades of improvement.

A lively Q & A session followed the presentation and revealed that:

- bathrooms will be provided and maintained;
- the loop trail will be retained as is and fully maintained after years of neglect;
- there are no current plans to dredge the lake or control up stream sedimentation;
- there will be no asphalt walkways and all surfacing materials will be 'green';
- there are no plans to construct a stairway to alleviate the sharp height differential along the peninsula walkway;
- there are plans to protect and promote the bounty of flora and fauna within the park through its designation as a 'nature center';
- the old park ranger residence will be razed;
- the pavilion will be restored as a destination for picnickers.

Bob Barrett concluded the evening by reminding the crowd that Baltimore County's Parks Department has a celebrated 60 year history marked by many award winning projects. Robert E. Lee Park will be no different, he said; in fact, it has the potential to be the best yet.

If you are interested in assuring the success of this County effort, please contact the Rec & Parks Department: 410-887-3871.

Home Sales in Ruxton / Riderwood / Lake Roland

Sold Properties from June, 2009 – October, 2009

Courtesy of the Whit Harvey Group,
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage

ADDRESS	SETTLE DATE	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
1616 Alston Road	7/17/09	329,979	340,000
7111 Bellona Avenue	6/25/09	599,000	599,500
8005 Bellona Avenue	6/30/09	325,000	300,000
8204 Bellona Avenue	5/15/09	489,000	475,000
803 Boyce Avenue	10/1/09	799,000	750,000
1215 Boyce Avenue	8/25/09	765,000	750,000
512 Brightwood Club Drive	6/30/09	385,000	375,000
8225 Burnley Road	7/29/09		467,500
6320 Canter Way	9/4/09	699,990	649,990
1507 Carrollton Avenue	9/1/09	499,900	480,000
18 Charles Lane	9/30/09	500,000	500,000
7105 Charles Spring Way	9/22/09	639,900	610,000
621 Charles Street Avenue	9/1/09	389,900	381,000
6620 Charlesway	9/25/09	449,900	370,000
15 Devon Hill Road	5/20/09	439,000	390,000
1502 Dunlora Road	7/1/09	650,000	605,000
1507 Dunlora Road	7/7/09	575,000	550,000
530 Greenwood Road	7/30/09		2,050,000
6003 Hollins Avenue	6/16/09	1,149,000	1,100,000
1429 Jeffers Road	10/9/09		359,876
1611 Jeffers Road	10/2/09		485,000
1428B W. Joppa Road	6/19/09	975,000	905,000
1622 W. Joppa Road	9/17/09	510,000	510,000
1716 Killington Road	10/30/09	475,000	475,000
1722 Killington Road	10/30/09	475,000	435,000
1724 Killington Road	6/16/09		585,000
1221 Lake Avenue	9/25/09		269,990
6003 Lakehurst Avenue	7/20/09	239,900	235,000
6003 Lakehurst Avenue	10/21/09		130,000
829 Loyola Drive	8/31/09	327,000	327,000
1 Malibu Court	7/15/09	489,000	455,000
4 Malibu Court	7/31/09	450,000	428,000
10 Malvern Court	6/30/09	1,945,000	2,005,000
1008 Malvern Avenue	7/29/09		650,000
1504 Maywood Avenue	7/24/09	949,500	995,000
6801 Newstead Lane	9/8/09	749,900	700,000
304 North Wind Road	9/9/09		690,000
1914 Old Court Road	6/29/09		1,300,000
511 Piccadilly Road	8/24/09	435,000	420,000
514 Piccadilly Road	9/11/09		330,000
1016 Rolandvue Road	10/15/09	665,000	625,000
1514 Ruxton Road	10/20/09	445,000	430,000
1934 Ruxton Road	10/9/09	749,900	700,000
6011 Stanton Avenue	5/11/09		416,670
407 Terrace Way	7/17/09		314,900
8219 Thornton Road	6/19/09	335,000	317,500
207 Woodbrook Lane	8/25/09	1,399,000	1,250,000
8205 Yarborough Road	6/23/09		375,000

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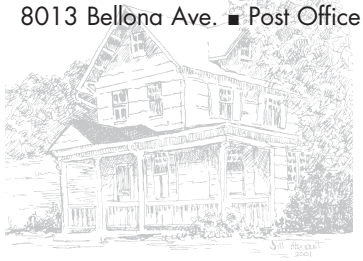

Holiday Party in the Woods

December 19th

4-6 pm

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