

Parkwood

Residents Association - Fall 2015 Newsletter

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 29th, 7:30 pm at Kensington Parkwood Elementary School

Letter from the President

The PRA is trying something new in not publishing a paper version of the newsletter that we usually deliver to all residences in Parkwood, regardless of whether they have paid the modest annual \$10 PRA dues. Instead we are providing a newsletter on the list serve and also posting a copy on the PRA website. Those of us who contribute articles, get the newsletters printed, and distribute them to the block-captains at times wonder if all that effort is worthwhile. There are 34 block-captains who deliver the newsletters, and some have been volunteering in this job for many years. They have saved the PRA considerable funds, since their work eliminates the need to mail the newsletters. Do residents find the newsletters useful? We want your input on the question of electronic versus printed newsletters as described in the "The Times They Are A-Changin'" in this issue.

I'm looking forward to our next meeting at which we will discuss the Villages of Kensington described on the next page. My own eagerness to learn more about the Villages program needs a little background. My husband and I bought our house on Wildwood Rd in 1967. It is a small house by today's standards but seemed just right for the two of us and a miniature wirehaired dachshund. The yard was big for my gardening loving spouse and little dog, and it was close to NIH where I worked. A few years later, we were able to buy the odd shaped lot next to our house, now designated a wildlife habitat (no, it is not a park). Over the years here, we came to appreciate our wonderful neighbors, the big trees, and proximity to things that make life enjoyable. Not so much the traffic, though that became less of a daily headache after I retired from NIH 10 years ago. My husband died 6 years ago, and I'm sometimes asked wouldn't I like to move, to which my answer is a resounding NO. I definitely want to "age in place" because I can't

imagine a place I'd rather be even though I do love to travel a lot.

I suspect there are others in Parkwood who feel as I do about aging in place because our neighborhood has so much to offer. On the other hand, we may get to a point where age and health considerations will start to make us wonder if we are able to do so. This is where the Villages program could be of help, so we need to find out more about it and how it would fit into our lives. The Villages of Kensington program already includes Rock Creek Hills, Kensington Heights, Ken-Gar, Rock Creek Palisades, and the Town of Kensington. Does Parkwood want to join? Suzanne Bowler, Vice-President of the Villages of Kensington will be our speaker at the September 29th PRA meeting. Come hear about the program, ask questions, tell us what you think.

Finally, I plan to attend the annual Community Leaders' Forum hosted by our County Councilmember Roger Berliner on October 7th. I will be representing Parkwood at that Forum, so if you have any issues that you would like me to present, please let me know. I look forward to seeing you at our PRA meeting next week on Tuesday, September 29th at 7:30 pm.

Kira Lueders
PRA President

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Gerald Sharp

The Parkwood Residents Association first began in July 1972 when 200 residents met to revive a residents association that first started in the early 1950's. By 1959, interest had waned, and that association became defunct. This 1975 PRA was reborn to deal with the threat of noise as the metro came into existence, and the association rallied in favor of a tunnel, a fight that all of us with working ears know was lost.

Forty years ago was also the beginning of the Parkwood newsletter, a publication that has existed in one form or another, but always on paper. Last year the PRA distributed three editions of our newsletter to all 930+ houses in Parkwood at a cost just shy of \$900. This year to spare our volunteers from delivering a paper newsletter in bad weather, we mailed the newsletter in March at a cost of just under \$1000.

In the 40 year history of the PRA, newspaper and magazine business has radically changed, primarily due to the invention and growth of the internet. Now many of us get at least some of our news online. And now this trend will include PRA news: this is the first issue of the Parkwood newsletter that exists only electronically (but of course, you can certainly print out a copy).

At the next meeting of the PRA, we will discuss moving away from paper newsletters to electronic issues. We will need to distribute at least one paper copy per year to all residents (in either December or January) with a return envelope to encourage members to pay their \$10 annual fee and an optional donation to the PRA beautification committee. A paper issue delivered to all households also allows us to inform new Parkwood residents about our organization and listserve. One question to be discussed at the next meeting is whether it is sufficient to distribute one paper copy per year. Another issue to be discussed is how to distribute electronic-only newsletters to those few PRA members without internet or email access. One possibility would be to print a handful of copies and mail them. The argument in favor of going electronic with our newsletter is that the most of our members are accessible by email, and savings in printing and mailing costs could be directed to other priorities (e.g., increased flowers and plantings in our neighborhood, doggy potty bags, etc.).

Please join us at the upcoming meeting to discuss this issue.

PRA Looking for a New VP

The PRA Executive Committee

The position of PRA Vice President is open, and elections will be held at the next meeting. If you are interested, please email Kira Lueders at kklarl@yahoo.com. The main contributions of the VP is editing the PRA newsletter and putting up the meeting signs in the neighborhood one week prior to scheduled PRA meetings (i.e., not too time consuming!). The former VP is willing to help orient a new VP into the position as needed.

This position offers a great chance for creativity in crafting an electronic version of the PRA newsletter as well as opportunities to further expand the online presence of the PRA. Should the PRA have a blog? A bigger Facebook presence? Other print ideas nobody has thought of yet? Or are things fine as they are? You can help PRA stay vital and relevant. Please consider volunteering!

Kensington Park Library Looking for Friends

Liz Brennan

In 2012, local residents organized a Friends of the Library (FOL) Chapter at the Kensington Park Library. The FOL is a 501C3 organization that is the fundraising arm for the library. Through membership dues, donations and used books sales, the FOL is able to raise money to provide for programs and/or items that the county does not fund.

The FOL organizes and supports a variety of programs and activities including: Meet the Author Events, Book Discussion Group, Teen Writing Club, Day of the Book Festival, Recommended Reads & Raves and Local Book-club Features, and the Summer Reading program for students.

The FOL is particularly energized this year because the Library building will be undergoing a "refresh," which is a county term for a modest renovation. The refresh will address a number of Americans with Disability Act issues and basic fixes to the facility, including the installation of a proper elevation (currently there is a lift providing access to the bathrooms and/or meeting room downstairs), new flooring, rehabilitation of the bathrooms, ceiling repair, and an improved configuration for the children's section and the computer areas. The library is due to close on October 15th and reopen in March 2016.

The current fundraising effort is focused on a number of items including new furniture (the existing furniture has been there for more than 30 years!) Additionally, the FOL would like to begin work on a literary garden. The Kensington Park Library was very fortunate to receive a gift of landscape plans for a literary garden from local resident and landscape architect Karin Johnson. Karin recently graduated from GW using the KP Library grounds for her master project to create a literary garden. Her plan includes seven distinct gardens with sustainable elements and design objectives. The plans are on display at the library.

The FOL's goal is to create a more comfortable and appealing environment for our library community. We are inviting residents of the Parkwood community to join the Kensington Park FOL Chapter. Additional details and a membership application can be found at: <http://www.folmc.org/kensington-park-chapter/>.

Rock Creek Trail Renovation Realigned

Lara Akinbami

The Montgomery County Department of Parks is undertaking a project to improve conditions along a 7-mile stretch of the Rock Creek Trail, known as the Facility Plan & Renovation Project. You may have already traveled the newly renovated path between Cedar Lane and Connecticut Avenue.

Previous plans to renovate the stretch between the crossing at Franklin and Beach to Cedar Lane involved a realigned path from the present location to a trail closer to Beach Drive in order to restore a continuous watershed near the creek, and to decrease future flooding of the path. But plans have changed due to general community opposition to significant re-alignment of the trail. The Parks Department decided to re-allocate funding toward the immediate and permanent repair in the current path location. Construction began in August and is expected to be complete by October 2015. Renovation includes repaving the trail, minor improvements to drainage, and environmental enhancements.

A map of the Facility Plan & Renovation Project area and description of the project can be found at: http://www.montgomery-parks.org/pdd/cip/rockcreek_trl_facility_plan.shtm.

Villages of Kensington

Donna Savage

The Villages of Kensington was formed in early 2015 by a group of Kensington-area residents who wanted to expand and formalize the network of helpful neighbors in our communities. VoK is the Kensington, Maryland chapter of the national Village movement. The vision of the Village movement is to build communities for a lifetime. All Villages are local, volunteer-led grassroots organizations for which the underlying purpose is neighbor helping neighbor. Some Villages, such as ours, choose an intergenerational model that serves all members of the community; others focus on supporting seniors who choose to age in place.

Villages are nonprofit organizations that offer programs for residents in a geographically defined community – in VoK's case, all of 20895. Most Villages charge a yearly membership fee to cover expenses. A key feature of the Village model is that members and community volunteers provide many of the services, such as help with transportation, light home maintenance, and shopping. Social and educational events reflect members' preferences and are organized to benefit members.

If you haven't yet visited our website, click here: www.villagesofkensingtonmd.org and take a look. If your household hasn't yet taken our short survey, please do so by clicking on the SURVEY link at the top. You can sign up for email alerts so you get (only occasional, we promise!) updates. We hope many of you will want to join us in this exciting venture!

VoK's goal is to be "open for business" in Spring 2016, so watch for important updates for those who'd like to volunteer or would like to become members so you can use the neighbor-helping-neighbor services!

We've elected officers and formed a 13-member Board of Directors that meets at least monthly. (See our website for a list – Parkwood is represented!) VoK is incorporated in Maryland and we are a 501(c)3 nonprofit for Federal tax purposes.

Come hear more about the Villages of Kensington from our vice president, Suzanne Bowler, who will present information and answer your questions at the upcoming PRA meeting.



The Wildwood Rd and Saul Road island before the PRA Beautification Committee installed the community garden.

The PRA thanks all of the residents who have contributed to the gardens and the volunteers who have done the work, as shown in the pictures below.



Some less welcome gardening volunteers also live in Parkwood.

PRA Income 2008-2015 and Membership Update

Gerald Sharp

As 2015 nears its end, I wanted to summarize where the PRA is this year in terms of Parkwood residents renewing or paying their membership dues, and donating to our beautification fund. I'm attaching a summary of PRA receipts and expenses since I became PRA treasurer in 2008. So far this year, 284 residents have paid the \$10 annual fee, which is about the same as in previous years. The total so far this year is \$2840 received in dues payments, which is similar to the amount received in past years. Of the 284 members renewing or joining the PRA or donating, 42 (15%) paid using the PRA Paypal account, a total of \$696.

Although membership dues payments were fairly normal this year, the PRA received a record amount of beautification fund donations. As shown in the table, beautification donations are \$3359 so far this year, more than in any other year from 2008 to now. However, the costs of maintaining the Parkwood gardens and our doggy potty bag stations have also gone up over the years, and it is not clear yet if our 2015 income will exceed PRA expenses. Thank you everyone who did send in a check or go online this year to support the PRA and your community.

Beautification Update

Gail Dalferes

PRA Beautification Committee activities since the last update the spring include:

- * Installation of new doggie bag dispenser at Kensington Parkwood Elementary School so that there are now 2 dispensers at KP. Many thanks to Debbie Blumenthal who is monitoring the existing and the new dispensers to make sure they are stocked. (Please remember to be a good citizen and pick up after your pet to save the KP staff the headache of dealing with students tracking dog feces into the school on their shoes after recess.)
- * The new dispenser brings the total to 5 dispensers monitored by PRA volunteers, including one on Wildwood

Year	Dues	Beautification Donations	Interest	Total
2008	2540	2213*	57.40	4810.40
2009	3210	2015	90.27	5315.27
2010	2880	2040	81.73	5001.73
2011	2830	2505	73.89	5408.89
2012	3120	2793	40.19	5953.19
2013	2760	2749	36.04	5545.04
2014	3150	2751	41.99	5942.99
Sept. 2015	2840	3359	—	6199.00
* Includes \$516 from community yard sale and grant from the county				

(thank you to Kira Lueders), another on the easement on Edgefield (thank you to Gerald Sharp), and one at the entrance to Rock Creek Park at Saul and Parkwood (which Gail monitors).

- * Summer maintenance was performed at the community gardens by volunteers (Kira Lueders, Bailey Condrey, Clair Murphy, and Gail Dalferes), including planting new perennials at Saul Road under the spruce tree.
- * The PRA bench at the Wildwood garden needs repair. The support bar replacements have been ordered and received, and will be installed this fall.
- * Fall cleanup is planned for all community gardens. Please contact Gail Dalferes (gaildalferes@yahoo.com) if you can help.
- * The Beautification Committee continues to work with the County on constructing a rain garden for the community at Saul and Parkwood.
- * At the next meeting, we will discuss and vote on a proposal to replace the Irene Madden memorial garden sign at a cost of approximately \$300.

Enjoy the approaching cooler fall weather, and please come to the PRA meeting to discuss any questions or ideas you may have about the PRA community gardens.

PRA Exec Committee

Officers:

President: Kira Lueders (kkklarl@yahoo.com)

Vice President (outgoing): Lara Akinbami (tojohnlara@hotmail.com)

Secretary: Judith Dighe (judithdighe@verizon.net)

Treasurer: Gerald Sharp (gbs2001@yahoo.com)

Standing Committee Members:

Beautification: Gail Dalferes (gaildalferes@yahoo.com)

Block Captains: Kira Lueders (kkklarl@yahoo.com)

Membership: Pippa Eibel (pippa_eibel@yahoo.com)

Welcoming: Randa Mostehy (rmostehy@yahoo.com)

Listserv Admin: Chris Dewey (cdpwd@yahoo.com)

Webmaster: Alex Clark (aclark@aclark.net)

Civic Liaison: Bailey Condrey (blcon350@verizon.net)

Other Committee Members and Volunteers:

Past President: Bailey Condrey (blcon350@verizon.net)

MCCF Representative: Jeff Griffith