

West Lanham Hills Citizen

June Edition

Annual Meeting: June 7, 2017, 8 p.m., Park Building

FAMILY FUN DAY BLOCK PARTY!

Come one, come all! **Saturday, June 3, 12-3 pm**

Enjoy food, music, dancing, games. See flyer inside!

Christmas in April Helps Our Neighbors

On Saturday, April 29, a bustle of activity surrounded our neighbors, the Boyds. More than 50 volunteers from the “Christmas in April” program transformed their house and yard, in a full day of moving, clearing, hammering, wiring, cabinet installation and painting.

Mrs. Dorothy Boyd, who has lived here since 2001, applied for the program with the help of her daughter, Rev. Angela Carpenter. In November, she received word that their home was chosen to be one of the 25 slated for renovation in Prince George’s County. Her sons, grandson and numerous family members were also on hand to help the volunteers from Berean Baptist, Cheltenham United Methodist, Holy Redeemer Parish, Alpha Phi Chi Sorority, and the Green Knights motorcycle club, as well as many veterans from Andrews Joint Forces Base.

Three Co-Captains led the project: Dave Abildgaard, Miguel Rodriguez and Walt Poliansky.

“We have a long list of goals for today,” Walt explained, “including insulation, dry wall, carpeting, replacing the base cabinets and counter in the kitchen, installing windows, installing a toilet, re-wiring some electric and yard work.”

Dave Tully of Holy Redeemer in College Park said he brought about a dozen volunteers from his church, to work from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. One of those volunteers, a first-timer, said “It’s important for the churches to be helping people, doing service, and this gets us doing that outside our own parish.”

Our own Wanda Brooks was helping trim shrubbery and clear out the overgrown vegetation in the back yard. Several canopies shielded the refreshments and lunch items provided by Alpha Phi Chi Sorority. Skilled tradesmen supervised others in the finer points of the installations. Mrs. Boyd rested in the shade next to the front doorway, smiling at the entire tableau. “I’m just thankful” she said.



Attention Neighbors that use the metro:

From May 15 to June 15th, the New Carrollton Metro Station will be closed due to construction. Buses and MARC train will be available.

Street Lights

by Dave Cole

As the weather warms and daylight become more plentiful, evenings can be very pleasant. Kids are outdoors later. Friends and families stroll the neighborhood. The fragrance of cookouts, the sounds of yard parties. What a delight.

Street lights add to the fun, but they do burn out. If you are in the dark, Pepco will make repairs. Call 1-877-737-2662. Follow the prompts and give the location of dead lights. Pepco will issue a repair order.

Library House update:

A new free library house is located at 7752 Decatur, on your way to the park. Feel free to borrow a book—or to donate one for others to borrow!



Report from May Meeting:

The annual meeting of the West Lanham Hills Citizens Association could not be held due the lack of a quorum of 25 people. (We had 18). We were therefore unable to conduct any association business. However, we received the report from Treasurer Deanna Echanique that the total income that can be expected from the interest dividends of the Association is much smaller than in previous years, around \$6,000 total. Since the Association tries to keep expenditures below the amount of interest, this will affect or even eliminate some of the activities, events or services that we can do each year.

The next monthly meeting on Wednesday, June 7, will be when we can discuss if or how to cut back on such activities as the School Supplies Distribution, the Santa's Workshop, the Family Fun Day, and the various Clean Up days.

In anticipation of the lowered income, the Family Fun Day this year is being done at very low cost. Instead of being held at the park, it will be held on Decatur Road, as a block party. (Thanks to all the great Decatur Neighbors for supporting this, and for moving their cars on that day to allow the entire community to come celebrate on the blocked off street!)

To save money, we are depending on residents. Kensei Tsubata will be our DJ. Neighbor Marikka Green will teach a Zumba class. Our president, Greg McNair will bring his grilling trailer and cook up the burgers and hot dogs. We will have some games from past years and some fun activities for the kids and parents alike: Dance Freeze led by Lan Tsubata, Magic Sand for the young kids to play with, and some games involving water squirters. (Also, kids can feel free to bring their own water blasters.) Face painting and chalk drawing will be another activity. There are rumors of a some unusual team races, so wear comfortable clothes!

We are inviting county agencies to set up informational tables as well. Officer Rickert, our new Community Oriented Police representative, who helped us attain the permit for the day, will be on hand.

However, we need a lot of help and equipment. We need to borrow tables, chairs, or equipment for activities. We also need to create barriers for the two ends of Decatur, to block off the area. Also, on Friday, June 2, around 6 p.m., we will gather on Decatur to clean and sweep the street and sidewalks, and get the area ready for the next day's events. Kids (who need community service hours) and adults (who just might like to help) are welcome.

If you can volunteer, or if you can lend tables and chairs or play equipment, or if you have access to some special equipment (snow cones? Cotton Candy?) Please contact Kate Tsubata, 301-577-1094. See you Saturday, June 3, noon to 3 p.m. for our first Family Fun Day Block Party!

Beloved Kidwell Family Passes

We are sad to announce that both Larry and Jill Kidwell have recently passed away. The couple, who were married in 2003, were active members of Peace Lutheran Church in Waldorf, Md. Jill passed on April 29, 2017, and Larry passed on May 10th, 2017.

In addition to her large and dynamic family, Jill was a foster parent for many years, and was a Godmother to three. She was a kind and bright personality, who brought a loving heart to our community.

Traffic Light Situation to be studied

For nearly 50 years, our community has been requesting a traffic stoplight at Garrison and Rt. 450, where numerous accidents and deaths have occurred. Finally, the Maryland State Highway Association (at the urging of State Delegate Jimmy Tarlau) has notified us that they will do a 90-day study of the feasibility of having a light there.

Please send us reports of any incidents you know of that have taken place there:

1. Deaths
2. Injuries
3. Vehicle accidents
4. Bicycle accidents

Please give us any names, dates, descriptive information that can help us inform and educate the Highway officials on the real need for a safe entrance and exit point for our community, protected by a light that will allow pedestrians to cross safely, and vehicles to turn left into or out of the neighborhood, safely.

Send to: katetsubata@gmail.com

Report from Parks Committee:

Since July of 2016, the West Lanham Hills Citizens' Association has been requesting a meeting with MNCPPC to discuss park policies and facility usage. The meeting finally scheduled for May 11 of this year did not have a single representative from MNCPPC. The residents who took time to attend the meeting decided to communicate the wishes of the community in a written form, and outlined the following set of requests:

We would like to have the building used for regular activities of positive benefit to the neighborhood, including:

- Fitness classes (Zumba, Yoga, etc.)
 - Educational clubs and classes
 - Homework, tutoring for school age youth
 - Adult education (finance, workforce development, citizenship)
 - English as a second language classes (high interest from our community)
 - Skills and trades training
 - Parks and Outdoor-skills activities (Biking, canoeing, wildlife observation, etc.)
 - Health education (CPR, etc.)
 - Community engagement (from Planners, Developers, Elected Officials, County/State offices)
 - Safety (Law enforcement, Drug prevention, Best practices, Child/Senior protection)
 - Family-friendly entertainment (Movie nights)
 - Mothers meetings (to share concerns, communicate needs, solve problems)
 - Other sports or physical training activities, as requested.
- We would like a regular MNCPPC liaison who attends, reports and responds to community requests.
- Rather than increase revenue by late-night building rentals—which is strongly opposed by an overwhelming majority of residents—we propose that Parks and Planning gain income through classes. For instance, a fitness class, twice weekly, for 40 can generate \$12,800 per year. The more classes and activities that are provided here, the greater income to MNCPPC— without the dangers that nighttime rentals incurred: security, building vandalism, human safety, liability to lawsuits.
- West Lanham Hills has been quite underserved by MNCPPC especially over the past 5 years. Only the Summer Park program still exists.
- Repeated requests for use of the building for legitimate community uses have been blocked or refused.
- No classes, no sports, no support for the educational, recreational or cultural needs of this community have been facilitated. This is a “services desert.”
- We are happy to have these as “paid” classes, which take place within the MNCPPC structure. If MNCPPC doesn't wish to facilitate our needs within its structure, then we are happy to organize these ourselves as volunteer events that are unpaid, but which will also not generate new income for MNCPPC.

This report of the committee reflects the input of all participants. (Lan Tsubata, Vice President, Sarah Tsubata, Secretary, Michael Driggers, Marikka Green, Dave Cole, Lee Rowe, Parliamentarian, Rebekah Rowe, Kate Tsubata) (Submitted by Kate Tsubata)

Special Benefit for Cat Owners in West Lanham Hills!

If you have a cat that needs to be spayed, neutered and get a rabies shot, please call Marsha DaBolt at 301-807-9238 to arrange a **no-cost procedure**. (This means Free). This is for residents of West Lanham Hills only. Sponsored by Alley Cat Rescue. (Email contact: outlawkittytnr@gmail.com)