

The Berwyn News

Published by the Berwyn District Civic Association, Inc.



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P.O. Box 535, College Park, MD 20740

Volume 15, Issue 4

www.myberwyn.org

April 2007

College Park Preschool Education Fair Saturday, April 21

Meet the teachers and parents from local preschool programs. This free event will be held from 2-4 pm at College Park Youth and Family Services, 4912 Nantucket Road (near the intersection of Rhode Island and Edgewood).

Anacostia River Earth Day Clean-up April 21

The Cleanup takes place from 8:30 am to noon at sites all over the watershed. Afterward, celebrate the event at our rally from 12-2 pm at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park. Watch the newspapers for more information.

College Park Boys and Girls Club Parade Sat. & Sun., April 21 & 22

The Boys and Girls Club Parade lines up at 1230 pm, runs from REI shopping center down Rhode Island to Duvall Field. Come to the Arts Exchange Bike Decorating Workshop at Davis Hall on Sat. April 21, 2-4pm, and ride in the parade the next day.

Maryland Day Saturday, April 28

The University of Maryland opens all of its doors for its annual open house. There will be lots of hands-on activities for all ages. Walk on over to the campus for the terrific free events

Neighborhood Clean-up Sat. & Sun., April 28 & 29

It's time for our annual neighborhood cleanup. Take just a little time out of your weekend to improve your neighborhood. More info can be found on the attached flyer.

Berwyn District Civic Association Meeting

Thursday, April 19, 2007
THIRD THURSDAY, 8-10 pm, Fealy Hall

1. Roll Call for Officers, Minutes from last meeting
2. Presentation on the Future of College Park or on the Purple Line
3. Treasurer Update
4. Committee Updates
5. Civic Association Updates
6. College Park Reports from our Council Representatives
7. New Business
8. Adjournment

BDCA 2006-2007 Officers

President	<i>Timothy Triplett</i>
Vice Presidents	<i>Jerry Anzulovic & Chuck Ireton</i>
Corresponding Secretary	<i>Mark Shute</i>
Recording Secretary	<i>Liesl Koch</i>
Treasurer	<i>Al Cutino</i>
Board of Directors	<i>Harry Pitt, Necole Lindsay, & Debbie Mimms</i>
Neighborhood Watch Directors	<i>Janeen Miller & Gina Tomko</i>
Berwyn News Editor	<i>Bob Baca</i>

THE NEXT ISSUE of the *Berwyn News* will be distributed on the weekend of **May 11th**. The deadline for articles & ads is **May 7th**.

Send articles and ads to Bob Baca at cookwithbob@hotmail.com

Bits and Pieces of Berwyn and Branchville,

Part 10. (From the story of Berwyn resident Bill Werber, who traces his baseball career from the sand-lots to college and the major leagues.)

Contributed by: Jerry Anzulovic

Also a contributing factor to the molding of a Berwyn lad was the surrounding environment. Maryland Agriculture College was only about a mile away from my home and those experimental plots where so many good things to eat were grown – grapes of several varieties and color, peaches, apples, watermelons, gooseberries, and those cantaloupes, later filled with croton oil. Our swimming hole in Paint Branch Creek was only a hundred yards or so from some of these delectables, and we kids, too, were experimental by nature. It was the responsibility of old man White to keep us away from the vineyards and out of those melon patches. His wild cries – “Get out of there, you thieves,” and the blast of his shotgun added to the thrill of our forays. I can to this very moment see my brother Fritz, shirt front loaded with grapes, sailing over a four foot woven wire fence and shortly thereafter clearing a twenty foot wide stream to disappear in thick alders. On numerous occasions, I was pushing him hard. I later years, at Rotary, I learned from Charlie White, his son, that the old gentleman enjoyed his role as much as we had ours. He did have one advantage. He knew his shotgun was not loaded, whereas we were certain it was.

Other challenges were provided by Cedric Johnson's handsome dahlias and farmer Schromm's red eyes and gnarled outstretched ham-like hands as he bore down on me on one occasion in his patch. I am sure I ran the entire three miles home, and it seemed to me he was right behind me every step of the way.

The woods near Berwyn also offered an array of treats, and without the threat of a gun-toting White or a physically fearsome Schromm. Patches of sweet, small wild strawberries were numerous. All one had to do was sit down and eat those within reach, then move a few feet and repeat the performance. Huckleberries were plentiful, and you couldn't beat them served at breakfast with lots of sugar and milk. Chiggers, unhappily, we also in full supply, and how their bites did itch. At times, my skin was scarcely visible because of the salt which my mother had dabbed on to fight the pests. After the first frost of the fall, we would gather chinquapin and hickory nuts and walnuts, some of which we cracked for eating. The rest found their way into Mom's delicious cakes and cookies.

Since it snowed quite a bit in winter, that season provided barrels of fun. Belly-flopping on our Flexible Flyers, their runners gleaming like fine silver, we would race down Jewel's Hill (about where Goodkey's woods was and the hill that they sledded down was about along where Quebec Street is now - JVA) clear to the streetcar tracks. A super effort might even take one

across the tracks to Charley's barbershop. Around Christmas time, we'd venture into Branchville swamp to gather the holly and mistletoe. There were always lots of both just loaded with berries.

But summer was best. There was always that good swimming in Paint Branch Creek, although its silt imbedded in my hair gave tell-tale evidence to Mom that once again I had violated her admonition to stay away from the stream. And, of course, there was baseball.

Have something to share with your neighbors?

We're interested in your neighborhood stories, photos, opinions, and community interest items. Send them to the editor at cookwithbob@hotmail.com and we'll try to get the in the next issue of the *Berwyn News*.



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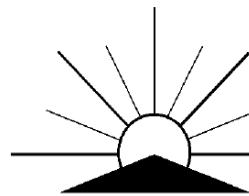
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Tim Triplett, ttriplett13@comcast.net

Greetings Neighbors,

I don't have a lot to say this month as I have just returned just from my trip to China. I am happy to report that everything went well and I am now busy parenting a second daughter. Unfortunately I had to miss the March BDCA meeting, but like everyone else I can read the minutes from the meeting on our website www.myberyn.org/minutes.htm. At the April BDCA meeting, we will either discuss the proposed Purple Line and how it will impact our neighborhood or have a presentation about the future of College Park.

April has traditionally been the month in which we have designated a weekend to cleaning up our neighborhood. Over the past several years the weather has not been too cooperative, but this year I think we are due. In addition, this year we plan to give people more options by organizing three cleanup crews. You can volunteer by joining one or all three groups. Group one will start at 9am on Saturday April 28 and will meet at the intersection of Pontiac street and 48th Avenue (for directions see Berwyn map on the website www.myberwyn.org/map.htm); Group two will start at 11 am on Saturday April 28 and will meet at the intersection of Berwyn road and Rhode Island Avenue with the goal of cleaning up Rhode Island Avenue; Group three will start at 10am on Sunday April 29 and will meet at the end of Berwyn Road by the train tracks. Hopefully, most people will find one or more of these times to be convenient and we will have a good turnout. The BDCA will supply gloves and trash bags and the cleanup should not take more than a couple of hours.

Finally, with the current BDCA board members terms ending in June, we will soon begin the process of finding people willing to serve next year. Given how successful our Neighborhood Watch program has become and the strong attendance at this year's Berwyn day, I would expect this to be an easy process. Unfortunately, nobody likes to volunteer. So, my tip of the month is please consider helping us out by serving as a BDCA board member in whatever capacity suits you. It really doesn't take too much time and you will feel more attached to the community.

CITY COUNCIL MUSINGS

Jack Perry, 301-345-7526

Your council has been busy, busy, busy; with the redevelopment of the downtown parking garage and East Campus of the University of Maryland at Paint Branch Parkway and Route #1 behind the steam plant and Harrison Labs (the old greenhouses). We are having a lot of executive sessions. The East Campus Project is being overseen by our state senator and

county councilman for its impact on their areas. They may have some plans or ideas that they will ask the city to do their bidding – as a result, we, and other select folks are meeting in secret to discuss this project.

Changes are now on the books to allow the city to go into debt for the financing of downtown redevelopment. When the city charter was written, the accepted method of selling bond was to advertise. This monetary market had changed. Now a more efficient way is to have banks and financial institutions compete with each other and offer the city their best "package" or bonds. It is an accepted and cost-effective method of selling bonds. Now our city laws and rules permit this procedure. All of the safeguards are still in effect and it is possible to obtain the best deal for the city and future taxpayers.

Comcast, one of the city's cable providers, has done some new math and now submits that they are in compliance with the franchise agreement on answering the phone for subscribers who wish to talk to them – yes, they are improving during "normal business hours" which are not necessarily normal viewing hours. But the mayor and council will not fine them as of the present.

An aside: the council is televising a picture along with audio of the work sessions. Let us know if you find it a little more helpful. These are wide angle shots without close-ups. The informality and relaxed nature of the work sessions differs from the formal council meetings. There may be some improvements as we go along.

We are heavy into review of the manager's proposed budget for the next fiscal year ('08). The good news is there will not be a tax increase. Some fees and fines may be increased, but no services will change. Berwyn and Branchville will not see any major street paving, but spot repairs will be evident. All over College Park, streets are in very good condition as a result of our pavement management system. This was implemented by the city years ago and removed from the political system. The professional staff evaluates what should be done. The evaluation process is based on professional and accepted standards on a scale of 1 to 10. With continued attention, none of our streets ever reaches the worst rating of a 10. Costs are contained and you live with some of the best streets in any municipality in Prince George's County.

The council has had conversations on global warming, the ICC, certain chemicals used on weeds, and historic preservation. An upcoming discussion on the improvements to sections of Route #1 and East-West Highway and improvements to Rhode Island Avenue north from Univeristy Boulevard will, I'm sure, take a lot of our time. There are still undercurrents about the use of the Friends School (old College Park Elementary) on Calvert Road bubbling beneath the

surface. There are ongoing discussions about solid waste collection and recycling. This issue directly affects you and I. You will be kept informed both by me and the city staff on any changes.

One change is that the city facilities will be open twice a year for you to drop off legal solid waste (trash) & brush. As it stands now, it is only open during April. One more time in early fall will be added.

Please bear with me; I'd like to do a little "soap boxing". Why is it that some of my neighbors in Berwyn have such sloppy and unappealing front yards? There is absolutely no reason except for laziness that trash and junk should be in front of your house. College Park will pick up just about any trash that you put at the curb on collection day. Special or bulky trash is picked up by appointment (call 301-474-4194). Some of my neighbors have been very successful with this. Others must walk up to their houses with their eyes closed. Curb appeal benefits your/our entire neighborhood. Maybe while I'm up here I'll share another pet peeve. Why is the gutter in front of your house full of crap? A broom and shovel and the city trash cart will do wonders for the streets in Berwyn. If you have a very wide lot, do it a little at a time or call Russell and I to work something out. College Park will also haul away sticks and branches if you bundle 'em and call for pick up. I will not point fingers. All I ask is that you open your eyes and see what the community sees when it looks at your property.

See you Thursday.

– Jack Perry, Councilman

Have you paid your dues for the year? We need your support to help publish and distribute this newsletter, run our website, and sponsor all those great community events. Check page 5 of the newsletter for dues information.

COUNCILMAN VIEWS AND COMMENTS

Bob Catlin

301-345-0742 or Catcprtc@aol.com

Greetings neighbors On Saturday, April 21st, the Mayor and Council will meet at City Hall all day (8am to 3pm?) to complete their initial review of the City Manager's proposed budget for FY2008 (July 07- June 08). The public is invited to watch. The proposed budget to date, calls for the real property tax rate to remain at 29.9 cents per \$100 of valuation. As you may recall, because of the City's enhanced Homestead Property Tax credit, property assessments for owner occupied homes will only increase by one percent in FY08, so any significant City tax increase is highly unlikely to occur. The proposed budget projects

revenues of \$11.7 million, an increase of less than \$300,000 from the current budget. Likewise, expenditures are projected to increase by less than \$200,000. The City's reserve is about \$2.5 million, while the City's debt service on a \$600,000 loan, taken out in 2000 to pay for City Hall renovations in 1996, is less than \$70,000 a year.

As a result of an analysis to show the economic feasibility of a downtown 300 space parking garage, the proposed budget calls for an increase in parking meter rates from 50/55 cents per hour to 75 cents per hour, with the increased revenue going into a fund to help finance the parking garage. The analysis shows that a garage can be built without a tax increase, while maintaining a \$700,000+ surplus from meter revenue and fines that we currently experience and use to pay the City's bills. A decision to proceed with the parking garage is pending the City receiving more information about the University's 38-acre East Campus Project. Recently the University announced a proposed development partner, Folger-Pratt, for the \$600,000,000+ project. Folger-Pratt is the developer who is credited with the Silver Spring redevelopment, sometimes called "Silver Sprung." This project will not begin in the near term, think 2010 at the earliest, with at least two phases, that would have about a ten-year build-out. The proposed project involves a lot of housing, both market rate and for graduate students, a lot of retail and some office buildings, too. A major conference hotel is also a possibility.

Returning to the proposed City budget, the proposed budget has a number of small projects proposed for our neighborhood. Projects include slightly widening (by two feet) the dead end block (8300) of Rhode Island Avenue and adding curbs and gutters to its west side, and improving the storm water drainage where that portion of the street intersects with Patuxent Avenue and 49th Avenue. The proposed budget also calls for constructing curbs and gutters on Mohegan Place to address road problems there. The final 1/3 of the Trolley Trail bank landscaping project will be completed, too. Almost \$20,000 is budgeted to provide for additional plantings to help stabilize the bank that is located at the southern end of the neighborhood's trail.

The City has about 67 guardrails, mostly made of metal, scattered throughout the City. Some of the guardrails are old and not in the best condition, so the City is beginning a new project to replace or rehabilitate its guardrails. The budget calls for the paving of about 1.5 miles of City streets, though none are located in Berwyn or anywhere in District 2, for that matter.

Please remember to join or renew your BDCA membership for 2007. I hope to see you at the April 19th meeting.

BERWYN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH
Gina Tomko (GTomko@epe.org)

Burglar Arrested in Berwyn: On Friday, March 30, a 25-year-old, white male (from Hyattsville, MD.) made his rounds in our neighborhood. He was using the old familiar tactic of knocking on doors to see if anyone was home before attempting to break in. He knocked on our door at about 8:45 in the morning before moving on to several other streets in the neighborhood (Rhode Island Ave., Potomac Ave., Berwyn Rd., etc.). Because of those who observed his suspicious behavior and called the police, his luck ran out at about 10:15 a.m. He broke into a house on Tecumseh Street in which a resident was in the basement of the home at the time and quickly called the police. The resident and a police officer waited in the backyard until the burglar came out with a bag of stolen property. By the time the burglar exited the house, there was more than one police officer on the scene waiting for him. Thanks to our prior phone calls to the police that morning (regarding separate incidents by the same suspect), the police were already present in the neighborhood and were able to respond quickly to the call and make the arrest.

I want to reiterate a message posted on the Neighborhood Watch site by Janeen Miller:

The burglar was counting on several things – apathetic residents, people who didn't know who their neighbors were, and people who didn't know to immediately call police at the first sign of suspicious activity. We know better - and now he does, too.

This guy's MO was to knock on doors to see if anyone was home. We had the same thing happen last year. I know that a lot of people peek outside to see who is at the door, then, just don't answer it if they don't know who's there. In effect, pretending not to be home. I don't recommend this approach. I'm not saying you should answer the door either - you should not open the door to anyone you don't know. But make sure the person knows someone is at home. You can call from a window and ask who's there. You can call through the closed door that you don't open the door to people you don't know. You don't have to be polite. But my recommendation is NOT to pretend no one is home, because then you might leave yourself vulnerable if the person is really a burglar just casing the joint.

REMINDER: With the warmer weather upon us, many people open up their windows. Remember to make sure that **ALL** windows - not just those on the first floor - are locked before you leave the house. Again, thanks to everyone for their observance and diligence in making our neighborhood safe. If you'd like to join the Neighborhood Watch group, send a message to Berwyn_neighborhood_watch-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Please continue to report all suspicious activity to the Prince George's

County Police non-emergency number at 301-333-4000, and to the Berwyn Neighborhood Watch at Berwyn_neighborhood_watch@yahoogroups.com. For items needing the attention of the Contract Police (non-immediate in nature), please contact the Department of Public Services at 301-864-8877.

Prince George's County Police District 1 Open House Celebration - Saturday, April 21, Noon to 4:00 p.m., 5000 Rhode Island Avenue, Hyattsville. Entertainment, Police Demonstrations, Family Activities, Child Safety Seat Inspections, Bike Rodeo (children 8 and under), Ident-A-Kid Photo IDs, and Station Tour. Ample Parking is available.

THE BERWYN NEWS ADVERTISING AGREEMENT 2007

<u>AD SIZE (width x height)</u>	<u>ONE ISSUE</u>	<u>10 ISSUES</u>
1/8 Page (Biz Card) (3.75"x2.5")	\$25	\$200
1/4 Page (3.75"x5")	\$35	\$275
1/2 Page (Horizontal) (7.5"x5")	\$50	\$350
1/2 Page (Vertical) (3.75"x10")	\$50	\$350
Full Page (7.5"x10")	\$75	\$500

Send your payment, business name, mailing address, phone, email, and contact person to:

Berwyn District Civic Association, PO Box 535, College Park, MD, 20740 with checks payable to "Berwyn District Civic Association, Inc."

Ad files, ad size, and number of dates to run should be sent via email to the editor at cookwithbob@hotmail.com. We prefer picture files (jpg, gif, etc), but can work with text or pdf files (although some formatting changes may be necessary).

Ads will not run until payment is received as instructed above! For further information, please contact Bob Baca (Berwyn News editor) at cookwithbob@hotmail.com.

Thank you for supporting our community!!!

**BERWYN DISTRICT CIVIC ASSOCIATION
Annual Membership Dues**

Membership dues are \$10 per person or \$15 per family, collected once a year. Paying your dues today will make you an active member through September 2007! Your dues support publication of this newsletter, community events, advocacy for Berwyn issues, and much more. Make checks payable to "Berwyn District Civic Association, Inc."

Please Print Clearly!

Send payment, family name, and street address to:
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Any individuals or businesses who contribute \$25 or more will be acknowledged on the BDCA website sponsorship page. If you want to contribute but prefer not to be acknowledged, please let us know with your payment. For those contributing \$50 or more, you may provide us with a link to your business or personal website which we'll add to the BDCA site.



Information Provided by
Jerry Anzulovic
of Bright and Associates

Properties Sold or Rented (Berwyn 3, Branchville 0)

- 4705 Tecumseh Street, 303**, \$202,900, (\$199,000) Alina M. Grant, Owner occupant, 1 bedroom, SS \$6087, DOM 257, SA Joan Singh joansingh@mris.com, SB Re/Max Specialists, Upper Marlboro, MD, 20774, 240-765-1300.
4709 Tecumseh Street, 304, \$254,900, (\$264,000), Jack Johnson, Jr., Absentee owner, 2 bedroom, SS \$15,000, DOM 228, SA Melanie Gamble melaniegamble@remax.net, SB RE/MAX One, Bowie, MD, 20716, 301-464-0044.
8402 48th Avenue, \$1,975, (\$1,975), DOM 68, SA Mark Altobelli, theAteam@Realtor.com, SB RE/MAX Advantage Realty, Columbia, MD, 410-740-1200.

Properties under Contract (Berwyn 25, Branchville 0)

- 5053 Berwyn Road**, \$347,000, Damjan Jevtic, Absentee owner since 02/24/2005.
4903 Osage Street, \$509,999, Charles & Donald & Jean Hall, Absentee owners since 03/18/1993.
8503 Rhode Island Avenue, \$384,900, Robert & Christine Moss, Owner occupants since 01/27/1999.
5016 Roanoke Place, \$315,000, Francosco & Aura Lau, Owner occupants since 06/30/2004.
4702 Tecumseh Street, \$499,000, Ellen Roberts, Absentee owner since 11/08/2005.
***4705 Tecumseh Street**, 6 units, \$207,900-\$262,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005.
4707 Tecumseh Street, 5 units, \$199,000-\$267,000, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005.
***4709 Tecumseh Street**, 8 units, \$-264,000-\$277,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005.
9002 48th Place, \$360,000, Lori & Kevin Taylor, Absentee owners since 08/19/2005.

Properties for Sale or Rent (Berwyn 8, Branchville 0)

- 4703 Berwyn Road**, \$1,500,000, Quality Enterprises, Absentee owners since 06/28/2001
5031 Berwyn Road, \$320,000, Jeffrey & Lesa Kline, Absentee owners since 12/21/1995.
4705 Greenbelt Road, \$449,000, William & Ellen Roberts, Absentee owners since 06/22/2006.
4817 Osage Street, \$419,000, Scott Dell & Kirsten Gurka, Owner occupants 03/23/2006.
5004 Roanoke Place, \$430,000, Jose & Aurelia Cruz, Owner occupant since 02/17/2006.
5102 Roanoke Place, \$530,996, Santos Landeverde, Absentee owner since 01/22/2007.
4718 Ruatan Street, \$375,000, Jarred & Sue Hester, Owner occupants since 03/02/2005.
8414 48th Avenue, \$140,000, (Building lot), 10,000 sf, 48th Ave. Conservation Trust, Owner since 06/18/2004.

DOM means day on the market from listing to filing of deed at courthouse. Underline means a new listing.
Means a change in offered price, LA means living area only (NOT the basement or lower level).

Visit the Berwyn online MESSAGE BOARD!

Post your questions, items for sale, announcements, and more at www.myberwyn.org.
Click "BDCA Message Board" at the top-center of the page and post your message.

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