

The Berwyn News

Published by the Berwyn District Civic Association, Inc.



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www.myberwyn.org

February 2008

Community Garden Meeting Saturday, March 22

The Berwyn Community Gardening Committee will have a meeting of the committee in a public forum on Saturday, March 22nd at 9 am in Fealy Hall. Stop by to help get our new community garden going strong this year.

Annual Spring Pot Luck Saturday, March 29

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 29 for our annual Pot Luck, which will take the place of our March Membership Meeting. Come help plan this popular event at February Membership Meeting on February 21.

College Park Nursery School Open House Saturday, March 1

Come visit their open house from 10 am to 1 pm at 4512 College Avenue. There will be fun, food, games, face painting, raffles, and gently used toys and clothing. Meet the teachers and students, see programs for 2-5 year olds, and learn about their new half-day kindergarten. For more information, please call 301-864-5355.

City Offices Closed Monday, February 18

City Offices are closed for the President's Day Holiday on February 18th. Refuse collection and recycling on that Monday will be moved to Tuesday.

Berwyn District Civic Association

Thursday, February 21, 2008
THIRD THURSDAY, 8-10 pm, Fealy Hall

1. Introductions
2. Presentation and Question & Answer session with Mr. Steven McBride, who will discuss the projected development that he and Otis Warren are planning on building in front of the University Towers and in place of Koon's Quick Lube and the old Maryland Bank building.
3. Pot Luck Dinner planning
4. BDCA officer reports
5. Council member reports

BDCA 2007-2008 Officers

President	<i>Jerry Anzulovic</i>
Vice President	<i>Kevin Young</i>
Corresponding Secretary	<i>Timothy Triplett</i>
Recording Secretary	<i>Liesl Koch</i>
Treasurer	<i>Lori Young</i>
Board of Directors	<i>Harry Pitt, Jack Perry, & Patrick Hyousse</i>
Neighborhood Watch Director	<i>Gina Tomko</i>
Berwyn News Editor	<i>Bob Baca</i>

THE NEXT ISSUE of the *Berwyn News* will be distributed on the weekend of **March 10th**. The deadline for articles & ads is **March 14th**.

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

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Jerry Anzulovic, jvamgnc1@verizon.net

One of the problems with being an inhabitant of a small bluish/greenish planet revolving around a minor sun in a minor part of the great milky way is that you have to go through the process of coming to the end of something very, very special, i.e. our friendship and relationship with a much loved neighbor, the WASHINGTON POST. As all of you who have been in the Berwyn/Branchville community know, the Association worked very hard to get the Post to our community and in fact, the predecessors to the Post, James Clarke Enterprises/George Hyman always told us that it was the special relationship that they had with us that transferred to the Post was what made the Post decide to locate here in our little neck of the great woods.

As most of you know, we are not a bunch of hayseeds, since our moms and dads drilled into us that all things should be put down in black and white and witnessed and signed by all and to subject all heirs, successors and assigns. That is just what the Association did and as I write this column I am looking at a slightly yellowed copy of just such an agreement. Even though the world and we were notified in the Post of their intentions to move everything to Springfield, I have begun the process of writing on the neighborhoods behalf that we should be notified in writing of their plans and intentions. They told me verbally that they do not know what they are going to do with the building, but they will fulfill their end of the agreement. Naturally, everybody will know what is going on when it happens. What I will miss is that the rush hour for the Washington Post was when we were all sound asleep. If you did not know it was there you would have missed it except when the semis or the trains were delivering to or taking the loads from the plant itself.

On a happier note, the Community Gardening Committee of the Association is up and running and will have a meeting of the committee in a public forum on Saturday, March 22nd in Fealy Hall 9 a.m. Go to the web page at myberwyn.org for further information. It is an excellent idea, and for you gardening buffs out there it not only will be good for you but for the neighborhood as well.

The annual Spring PotLuck Dinner is scheduled for Saturday March the 29th in the Four Seasons room of Holy Redeemer Church. This activity will take the place of the March membership meeting. It is a good chance for everyone to meet their fellow neighbors in a less formal atmosphere and to just "chew the fat" as the old timers used to say.

This month, Steven McBride has promised to show us what they are planning to build in the 8400 block of Baltimore Boulevard. He and I are almost in constant

daily contact so that we don't mess up like we did last month. That presentation will be on the 21st at Fealy Hall at 8 p.m. as well as further updates on the PotLuck dinner. See you there and remember to pray for those in harms way overseas and watch out for the little ones.

THE BERWYN NEWS ADVERTISING AGREEMENT

<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 (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 2008! 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:

***Berwyn District Civic Association
PO Box 535
College Park, MD 20740***

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.

COUNCILMAN VIEWS AND COMMENTS

Bob Catlin

301-345-0742 or Catcprtc@aol.com

Greetings neighbors. Just over a decade ago the Washington Post announced plans to construct a printing plant and distribution center in Berwyn. Recently, the not so surprising announcement came that because of circulation declines the Washington Post would be closing its operations here, perhaps as early as the end of 2009. Certainly not the best news as the Washington Post is still our largest tax payer and whatever replaces it will likely not be as significant a tax payer. The Washington Post pays about \$280,000 a year in property tax to the City. However, about \$80,000 of that amount is the real property tax portion which should be little affected by the closing. The remaining personal property tax of about \$200,000 is largely based on the value of the printing presses, which will be removed. The City, for the upcoming budget cycle, had already contemplated a loss of \$100,000 in personal property tax for the plant.

Recently the City was notified of tentative plans for the construction of a restaurant on Greenbelt Road at a location between the Trolley Trail and the Washington Post. It appears the current property owner of 5001 and 5003 Greenbelt Road will be the applicant.

In other news, the County Council last month approved the Old Town Historic District after about a four year effort. We have only the second approved County Historic District in our County. Also late last month, the County Planning Board approved the City's plan for a 300 space downtown parking garage. This also was about a four year effort. The next step for the City Council is to authorize an agreement with Capstone (the developer of the parking garage) and to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance the construction.

Because the City will retain ownership of about 5,800 square feet of retail space in the garage building, the City Council will soon be discussing some parameters for the leasing of that space. I expect that lease income from the retail space could comprise as much as one-third of the annual cost of servicing the bond.

Last month I reported that the County's Board of Education has authorized detailed planning for its preK-8th grade initiative. Under the proposed plan our public school, Paint Branch Elementary, would become a school for children through the 8th grade, but not until at least the 2011-12 school year. More recently, the Superintendent of Schools recommended that such plans be put on hold for at least of year because of budget constraints.

I hope to see you at Fealy Hall on February 21st for the BDCA's monthly meeting.

CITY COUNCIL MUSINGS

Jack Perry, 301-345-7526

Wow – Here it is already February. The learning curve for the new council members is exciting to watch. My patience may be weaning – we will see. I guess that the latest thing that is exciting is that the council and mayor are calling a number of the adult beverage dispensing facilities in to explain to the city why we should support the renewing of their license granted to them by the liquor board of Prince George's County. Every license in the county expires once a year. Different months for different classes of a license. A review by the city staff posed some questions that only the owner of the 'bar' could answer. We had a public meeting on February 11th and you will get the results at the association meeting on Thursday. I will tell you that the staff did inform us that there were no violations of the underage drinking cited by the liquor inspectors at any facility in College Park during the last year. Imagine that!

Federal money is raining down on College Park. The 'ole earmark train has left the station and your congressional representatives will be telling us how much we need this federal dole and how lucky we are that they were successful in getting it for us. These monies, and the federal anti-recession monies that they want to give to all taxpayers to spend on whatever to save the country, are from us to us and we will pay it back with interest. Isn't economics fun?

The subcommittee of the council composed of the city manager and his appointees have been meeting with public safety folks in the county, talking about the police study recommendations. It now appears that the recommendation from the city manager and his group will be some type of hybrid program. This would involve a contract with the Prince George's County Police for officers to work full time in the city for an average cost of \$650,000 dollars annually. This approximate amount, along with keeping the part time program we currently have, would make our annual cost approximately \$1 million a year. We will pay the county twice for police protection and hire part time off-duty police to do the types of stuff they are now doing. This will result in an increase in city taxes. Even though 3 out of 4 districts voted not in favor of a police force, some on the council, led by the mayor, are insisting that we need one and are, I believe, using this as a back door to do it. Municipal police departments in the Prince George's County have a checkered past...I know we will be different. The ability of a local police department to compete with larger, better paying agencies is mind-boggling.

College Park has been notified that the Washington Post will move the printing plant out of our neighborhood. This will cause a drop in the personal property tax revenue that the city receives and Berwyn

will lose a good neighbor. We can only hope that the property and building attracts another quality user.

The warmish weather has had me outside doing some work around the house. During these times, I have had a number of sightings of police cars, city trucks, and parking and code enforcement vehicles in Berwyn. I have also had occasion to call the code department and ask them to look at 'X' property and see if it complies with the city code. I have been very pleased with their response. Even with that response, it is still evident that some houses are not occupied by the owner. Those folks who do live in these homes ignore how the house looks on the outside. Last fall's leaves are still on the yard. Trash carts and yellow recycling containers are in front of the house well before and after collection day. If it were not from Russell, there would be more litter in Berwyn. Thanks Russell (and you too Bob C.)

Your public works department does a terrific job of picking up your household trash. There are some simple rules and 'special' trash is just a phone call away at 301-474-4194. They will answer your questions and pick up almost all non-hazardous trash – if you call them.

New year, new budget. The city manager is getting together the numbers for the next fiscal year. If you have any ideas for how the city should spend your money, or don't spend it, please let me know or correspond directly with the city manager. I've been told not to submit my wish list for the public works projects as I have done in the past. I will submit it again. Items that I've proposed over the years have been bubbling to the top and eventually are done. I'm patient and unless I submit it, it wouldn't even be on the radar. I can give you a list of them if you would like. None of them are on Osage Street. They are throughout the community and the city, some small, some big. I think College Park is better for them.

Don't forget about the snow. Odd and even side of the street parking so the plows can get as much out of the street as possible. Remember that leaves and yard waste must be in paper bags or a city approved and labeled container. Call 301-474-4194 for questions. I may as well wrap this up with my usual. Thank God for modern medicine, may God continue to bless this great county. See you on Thursday.

Snow and Sidewalks

While the city does a great job at clearing the snow from the roads (just see how fast College Park clears the locals streets compared to other areas in MD or VA), it is your responsibility to clear the sidewalk in front of your house. Keep those sidewalks safe for all of the walkers in the neighborhood. The city requires that sidewalks be cleared within eight daylight hours after the end of the snowfall.

Holy Redeemer Parish and



This program is a simple and free service for communities to use for paper recycling. The Holy Redeemer Abitibi Paper Retriever bin is located at the second Berwyn Road parking lot entrance. There is no charge to Holy Redeemer, but the more we recycle, the more funds we raise for Holy Redeemer School and Holy Redeemer Youth Group.

By participating in the Abitibi Paper Retriever Recycling Program, Holy Redeemer will:

- Earn money for Holy Redeemer School and Holy Redeemer Youth Group,
- Save on the costs of solid waste disposal and divert paper from local landfills,
- Teach young people the importance of environmental stewardship.

We need ALL of your: Newspapers, magazines, catalogs, office & school papers, and mail

DO NOT include: Plastic, glass, metals, trash, or CARDBOARD

Please participate in this program, as the church supports the BDCA with meeting rooms, equipment, and much more each and every year.



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

Major Davis came through, as usual, with some **FREE** steering wheel locks for Berwyn. We have been given two dozen in total, so if you're interested in picking one up, please give one of us a call: Janeen 301-474-3123, Gina 240-994-7711.

We've been blessed with a fairly quiet month. Not much posted to the web site, so I figured I use this opportunity to touch upon the topic of **identity theft**. Have you ever wondered how it's done? Well, there are a number of ways:

Dumpster Diving: Rummaging through trash looking for bills or paper with your personal information on it.

Skimming: Stealing credit/debit card numbers by using a special storage device when processing your card.

Phishing: Pretending to be a financial institution or company and sending spam or pop-up messages through your e-mail to get you to reveal your personal information.

Changing Your Address: Diverting your billing statements to another location by completing a change of address form.

Old Fashioned Stealing: Stealing wallets, purses, or mail, including bank and credit card statements, pre-approved credit offers, new checks and even tax information.

Ways you can deter identity theft include:

- * Shred financial documents and paperwork with personal information before you discard them.
- * Protect your social security number. **Do not carry your social security card in your wallet or purse or write your social security number on a check.** Give it out only if absolutely necessary.
- * Don't give out personal information over the phone, through the mail, or over the internet unless you know who you are dealing with.
- * Never click on links sent in unsolicited emails; instead, type in a web address you know. Use firewalls, anti-spy ware, and anti-virus software to protect your home computer and keep them up-to-date.
- * Don't use an obvious password like your birth date, your mother's maiden name, or the last four digits of your social security number.
- * Keep your personal information in a secure place at home, especially if you have roommates, or if you are having work done in your house by unfamiliar people.

If you suspect identity theft, report it right away. This is a serious crime that has become more and more common.

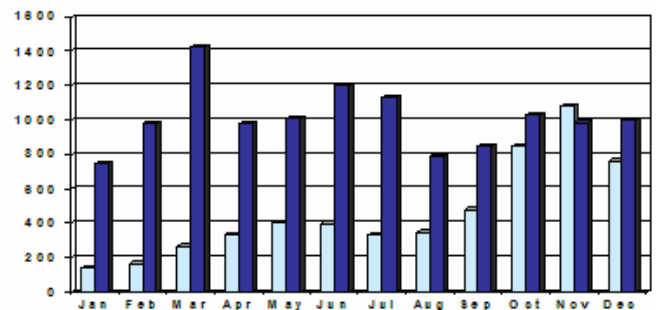
For those interested in joining the Berwyn watch online group, send an email to:

Berwyn_neighborhood_watch-
subscribe@yahoogroups.com

-Gina

myberwyn.org web site

This past year saw a huge increase in the number of people visiting the www.myberwyn.org website as the number of unique visits increased from 5,523 in 2006 to 12,111 in 2007. Website hits in 2007 were greater in each month except November. Not surprisingly, August and January are the months in which the website receives the least number of visitors. The comparison chart below summarizes multiple page views of an individual visitor into unique visits. A visitor is counted only when bringing up at least one page on our website and taking no longer than 30 minutes between individual pages. Keep in mind that approximately 20% of our visitors are search engines or robots that are categorizing our site. Even so, the web site is frequently visited and therefore our sponsorship page is a great place for local businesses to advertise. Our web site provides lots of community information, the latest information on community events, and includes all the Berwyn newsletters that have published in the last four years.



Unique myberwyn.org website visits in 2006 (light shading) and 2007 (dark shading).

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 2 of the newsletter for dues information.



Information Provided by
Jerry Anzulovic
of Bright and Associates

Properties Sold or Rented (Berwyn 1, Branchville 0)

4705 Tecumseh Street, #202, \$247,000, (\$264,900), Derris Owens, Owner occupant, 2 BR, 2 BA, 1052 sf, DOM 200, ss \$9967, SA Bill Highsmith, billhighsmith@jlc Realty.com, SB JLC Realty, Washington, DC 20009, 202-462-2646.

Properties under Contract (Berwyn 10, Branchville 1)

4705 Greenbelt Road, \$449,000, William & Ellen Roberts, Absentee owners since 06/22/2006.
8306 Potomac Avenue, \$399,000, Donald Kirsch, Absentee owner since 10/27/1992.
8403 Potomac Avenue, \$407,000, Deborah Vanadia-Mims, Owner occupant since 12/12/1997.
4907 Quebec Street, \$415,000, Joshua & Valerie Durrant, Owner occupants since 07/30/2002.
***5000 Quebec Street**, \$370,000, Richard Fahey, Owner occupant since 06/05/1991.
8708 Rhode Island Avenue, \$425,000, Frances Darling, Owner occupant since 08/20/1970
4718 Ruatan Street, \$375,000, Jarred & Sue Hester, Owner occupants since 03/02/2005.
4707 Tecumseh Street, #304, \$259,900, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005.
4709 Tecumseh Street, #104, \$267,000, Stephen Tennant, Absentee owner since 06/17/2005.
4914 Tecumseh Street, \$149,000, (Building lot), 9228 sf, Ilhame Sefiani, Absentee owner since 02/11/2004
9002 48th Place, \$360,000, Lori & Kevin Taylor, Absentee owners since 08/19/2005.

Properties for Sale or Rent (Berwyn 10, Branchville 2)

4707 Greenbelt Road, \$499,000, William & Ellen Roberts, Absentee owners since 06/23/2006.
8400 Potomac Avenue, \$369,900, Scott Roberts, Absentee owner since 11/23/1998.
8514 Potomac Avenue, \$424,900, Rudolph Schwartz, Absentee owner since 08/05/2003.
***8520 Potomac Avenue**, \$349,900, Robert & Stephen Ford, Owner occupants since 10/01/2004.
5007 Quebec Street, \$349,900, Russell Dickerson, Owner occupant since 03/24/1988.
4702 Tecumseh Street, \$350,000, Alfredo Orozco, Owner occupant since 05/02/2006.
***4707 Tecumseh Street, #103**, \$1,550/mo, 2 BR, Bruce Weneck, Absentee owner since 10/11/2006.
***4709 Tecumseh Street, #302**, \$1,400/mo or \$245,000, 2 BR, Renee Gray, Absentee owner since 04/02/07.
***4709 Tecumseh Street, #303**, \$259,000, 2 BR, Michael Wright, Owner occupant since 08/16/2006.
8901 48th Avenue, \$349,9000, Jose Zavala & Ana Aguilar, Absentee owners since 09/29/2005.
9008 48th Place, \$415,000, Ilhame Sefiani, Absentee owner since 08/02/2005.
***8702 49th Avenue**, \$1,150/mo, 2 BR, Karyn Keating-Volke, Absentee owner since 10/19/2005.

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.

Your Ad Here!

Have a business in the neighborhood, a home-based business, or some other ad that you need people to see? The *Berwyn News* has great rates for ads and over 500 copies are delivered throughout the Berwyn neighborhood each month (and is also available online). See page 2 for details and get your ad in the December newsletter.

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 them in the next issue of the *Berwyn News*.