



Volume 43, Number 2

THE DARNESTOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

June 2007

www.darnestowncivic.org

*Civic Association
News and Notes*

Notes from the President

by Lisa Patterson-Troike

Membership

I want to thank the 884 (and counting!) paid members of the DCA. We are coming to the close of our 2006/2007 fiscal year. Be on the look out for the 2007/2008 membership drive letter due out before September. Those of you who have contributed and participated are not just beneficial to the DCA's war chest and annual budget, but help strengthen our voice about issues that concern Darnestown and its residents. We hope those of you who are members continue to contribute and participate and those of you who haven't will help get our membership to that magical number...1,000 paid members!

Village

It has been such a treat to see our village start to take shape. The addition of Harris Teeter and the upcoming local park next to Harris Teeter have contributed greatly to the success of our town center. With the Shell station, 6-12 convenience store, Secco

**NEXT
DARNESTOWN CIVIC
ASSOCIATION
MEETING**

Thursday
June 21 at 7:30 p.m.
Darnestown Presbyterian Church
Route 28 at Turkey Foot Road

- **Election of Executive Board Officers**
- **Landscape Projects, Inc.**

Inside this edition . . .

- DCA Member List
- Landscape Projects Inc. Proposal for Darnestown Road Property
- DCA Slate of Officers for 2007/2008
- Berryville Road Litter Clean-Up

The Little Acorn Staff

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Trails: Marilee Giebel
Trees: Joyce McCarthy
Welcome: Jean Jurgena
Wildlife: Larry Zoeller
Zoning & Dev. Review: Pam Dubois, Steve Ellis

Inquiries concerning the Darnestown Civic Association should be directed to Lisa Patterson-Troike (301-548-0999) or mailed to DCA, 14100 Darnestown Road, Darnestown, MD 20874

The Little Acorn will accept letters to the editor for publication. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or the DCA. The editors reserve the right to decide if a letter will be published. All letters must be signed and have the author's phone number and address.



!!! DEADLINE !!!

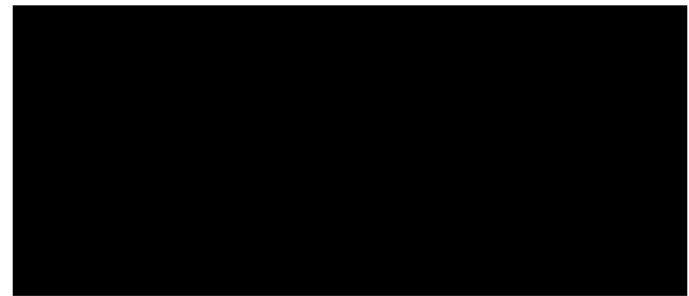
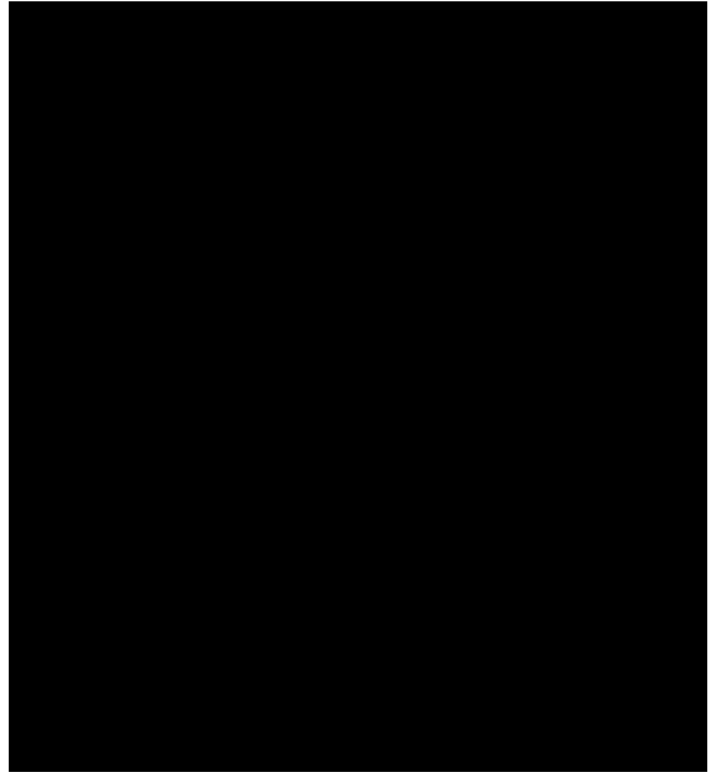
Deadline for the next issue of
The Little Acorn is

August 1, 2007

The deadlines will remain firm.

Articles for *The Little Acorn* may be mailed to
14100 Darnestown Road, Darnestown, MD 20874 OR
E-mail to **thelittleacorn@comcast.net**. The editor can be reached
at 301-869-8079.

ALL NEWS IS WELCOME!



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Frank Mielenz 301-987-7190

Drycleaners, and the new Dog Park; our residents have just about everything they need! The village will continue to take shape as the lot next to and west of the 6-12 becomes developed, the lot behind the Shell Station (future restaurant) is developed, and the MWOSH assisted living center is built. This is a very exciting time for Darnestown and I am thrilled to be a part of it!

Spring Social

A big thank you to Jim Sweet, the Sweet family, and their colleagues at Smokey Glen Farm for hosting the annual DCA Spring Social. The weatherman warned of rain and thunderstorms, but all we had were beautiful blue skies, puffy clouds and a breeze. We lucked out with the weather once again! Thanks again for the wonderful evening. We are already looking forward to seeing you on October 19th for the DCA's annual Hoe Down.

Volunteers

We have had some great volunteers come forward in the past 1-2 years and I would like to thank them for their efforts:

Chris Collins has partnered with MNCPPC (Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission) to get our Darnestown Park designed, slated to get on the books, and started within the next year (we hope).

Bob Thompson has stepped forward to be our recording secretary (a hard job, I did it for several years) and delivers us the minutes without missing anything. Bob also is our liaison with the Upcounty Advisory Board and keeps us abreast of issues that may be important to Darnestown, and, gives Darnestown a voice up there in Germantown so they don't forget about our interests and us!

Pam Dubois has worked with the County Council to help potential developments stay in keeping with our rural character, helped preserve equestrian trails and easements, and has testified on behalf of the DCA numerous times.

Guy Armantrout is our new treasurer. He is doing a magnificent job of explaining what all those numbers mean on his treasurer's report. The treasurer position requires dedication and detail unlike any other DCA position.

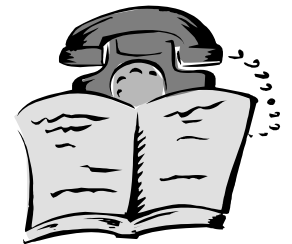
Kurt Karst has helped tremendously with compliance issues. If an issue comes up and is worthy of action, Kurt can give the appropriate advice and county/state numbers to be contacted.

Vicki Mostrom is organizing and documenting our membership database. A very time consuming, behind the scenes job, that is a must to keep us going.

I must also thank long time volunteers Mary Stefanelli, Bruce Deppa, Steve Ellis, Gerry Foley, Tim Wilson, Scott Mostrom, Marsha Crowley, Elizabeth Cookson, and Jean Jurgena for their contributions and countless hours in helping make our association one of, if not the most, respected civic associations in Montgomery County and the State of Maryland!

Darnestown Directory

by Sarah Scherer



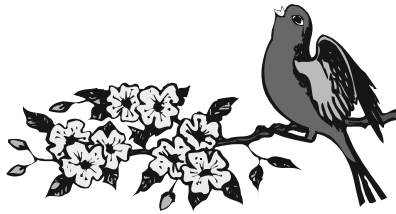
I am looking forward to continuing Marsha's good work in coordinating the publication of our next Directory. I still remember when we moved in and Jean Jurgena walked across the street with a Directory and an Acorn in hand to welcome us to the neighborhood. I hope you will give a similar warm welcome to your new neighbors and encourage them to contact us with their information so we can include them in the Directory and the great community of Darnestown.

Please contact me with any changes and new information at sarahscherer@comcast.net or 240-683-8533. Thank you!

Thank You Marsha Crowley

by Bruce Deppa

A long time ago in Darnestown, I asked Marsha Crowley if she would “volunteer” to produce the next edition of the Darnestown



Directory. From personal experience, I knew that the job was cumbersome and difficult. There was simply no good easy way to find out all the names and addresses and phone numbers of all of the people who had moved into town since the last directory was published two years earlier.

The process we were using involved more than a hundred volunteers! We had Street Captains and Block Captains and Typists and Proofreaders and Coordinators and Advertising Specialists and a centerfold Map Person. That was in 1976, and Marsha accepted the challenge, and I think she did it because she was sure there must be a better way!

Guess what? There wasn't a better way. And as Darnestown grew and more houses were built and more families moved into new addresses, the job just got more difficult. But Marsha stayed on, and we all have her to thank for the past 30 years of bi-annual Darnestown Directories! (And while she was doing this, she also was the inspiration and lead coordinator for the huge community effort that resulted in the Darnestown Swim and Racquet Club, and she served a stint as President of the Civic Association, too!)

Production of the Darnestown Directory has become easier, thanks to modern data processing, although there is still a lot of tedious hands-on labor involved in getting the data, making sure it is accurate, and making sure that what's going to be printed for each entry matches what the people living at that address want to be printed. We welcome our new volunteer Darnestown Directory publisher, Sarah Scherer, and we know that Marsha will be available if there are any questions during this transition. Thank you, Marsha!

Membership Update

by Mary Stefanelli

We close the 2006/2007 fiscal year with 884 members. Of those members we have 105 Friends and 92 Sponsors. Thank you for supporting the Darnestown Civic Association.

In the back of this edition of *The Little Acorn*, is a list of all Darnestown Civic Association Members, Friends and Sponsors.

Nomination Committee

by Gerry Foley

The DCA Nominating Committee, in accordance with the DCA By-laws, proposes the following slate of officers for the 2007/2008 election at the June Town Meeting:

President:	Lisa Patterson-Troike
Vice President/President Elect:	Tim Wilson
Treasurer:	Guy Armantrout
Corresponding Secretary:	Mary Stefanelli
Recording Secretary:	Bob Thomas
Three-Year Trustee:	Scott Mostrom

In addition, Dennis Rippeon and Steve Ellis will continue as Trustees for one year and two years, respectively and Bruce Deppa as Chairman.

Social Committee

by Lisa Patterson-Troike

Spring Social 2007

Skies were blue with puffy clouds,
Darnestown residents came in crowds,
Mini putt-putt and swings for fun,
All the children came one by one.
Firemen and their fire trucks were there to greet,
And they brought their moon bounce, what a treat!
The food and drink were divine,
Be sure to join us next time.
Thanks to Smokey Glen and you,
Everyone had a great time, it's true!

Smokey Glen Farm generously hosted the Spring Social, once again. Delicious BBQ chicken and roast beef with all the trimmings and a grand finale of homemade apple, blueberry and cherry pies for dessert. Consider hosting your next event at Smokey Glen Farm – contact Jim Sweet at 301-948-1518.

Village Committee

by Steve Ellis

After several months of waiting, a new 25 x 15 foot American flag has been placed atop the cell tower flagpole. Someone or a group cut the rope of the worn flag in March and it descended to the ground. It was retrieved and folded by Brian Lang. As a result of the rope being cut there was an additional unnecessary expense since Sprint had to hire a crane to replace the rope as well as the flag.

One of the requirements of any redevelopment on commercially zoned properties will be the addition of sidewalks along Seneca Road. This will include the property where the new building will be constructed by the 6-12, as well as, the other side of Seneca Road when the Alpha House home for the elderly is built.

Also, Harris Teeter has agreed to allow the Little Acorn softball league trophy to be displayed on the brick wall of the interior entrance way.

Zoning and Development Review Committee

by Pam DuBois and Steve Ellis

Butz Why Not?

The 257-acre Butz family farm located along the south side of Darnestown Road from Berryville Road to the Truland Farm received site plan approval early in May from Park and Planning. It is a beautiful property with great vistas from the higher sections and the zoning is RC or rural cluster five acres. The farm will become a 43-home subdivision known as Homeplace. Access to 39 planned homes will be directly across from Black Rock Road and there is a planned four home cul-de-

sac across from Bellingham Drive. There is no access from Berryville Road. The original plan called for 45 lots of which 19 were less than two acres. The DCA recommended maximizing the number of lots over two acres.

Aside: So why the emphasis on two acres? Two acres in our semi-rural western sections is a more compatible lot size. Also, two acres is the minimum lot size to raise a large animal (horse, cow, sheep, etc.) on a property. Since incorporation, the DCA and (we assume) most people in Darnestown have recognized how fortunate we are to live near the open space agricultural area of the county. We need to encourage and support the economic well being of our farm community and have consistently emphasized the semi-rural character of our community. As such, the DCA has recommended a change to the RC zone in two recent items before the Planning Board.

1) Our letter on the Butz farm stated: “the DCA has not to our knowledge ever objected to the number of lots in a subdivision in the RE-2 and RC zones. The DCA advocates a minimum lot size policy of approximately two acres in these zones. This is easily accomplished by statute in the RE-2 zone. Two acre or greater lots have usually been platted in other subdivisions in the RC zone in Darnestown because of terrain, water table and septic restrictions. This Preliminary plan advocates 45 residential lots with an average lot size that would be just over two acres, but **19 of these lots, representing 42%, are currently planned for less than two acres.**”

2) What follows is part of our testimony at the recent Kiplinger Farm child lot hearing; wherein, the two created lots were both less than two acres not because of Mr. Kiplinger, but because of county law:

“To live in the rural agricultural areas of the County, and be prohibited from having a horse, cow, sheep, hog or llama on your property is counterproductive to the intent of the rural/agricultural zones and agricultural policy. A lot smaller than two acres in these zones RC and RDT (Rural Density Transfer Zone/25 acre Ag. Reserve):

- Prevents the possible full enjoyment and experience of large animal ownership on ones' own property;
- Prevents or inhibits the potential establishment of a customer relationship between the animal owner and the local farmers who could provide straw and feed; and
- Prevents or inhibits the commercial and social relationships between potential large animal owners and vets, wholesalers and retailers of animal products, and other individuals and organizations in the rural/farming community.”

The rural cluster zone was created in 1980-81 as an option to the five-acre lots of the Rural zone. In the RC zone, the yield is one home per five acres. A developer can divide the lots into five-acre parcels or, if clustering, the minimum lot size is 40,000 sq. ft. and only 40% of the available land can be used for development. The other 60% is left in various open space arrangements. Our conjecture is that the 60-40 division of the cluster option was arbitrary. The DCA is advocating amending the RC zone so that the minimum lot size increases to two acre and the allowable developable area/open space ratio be changed to a 50 / 50 split. This would afford more area to accommodate the two-acre minimum and not penalize the property owner by a loss of yield.

Back to the Homeplace neighborhood. Two things happened during the site plan approval process: 1) MNCPPC reduced the number of developable lots from 45 to 43 by eliminating two larger lots within a predominantly wooded conservation area; and 2) the developers increased four lots to meet the preferred minimum two acre lot size (lots primarily fronting Darnestown Road across from Black Rock Hills Estate). The end result is that 15 of the 43 lots are less than two acres representing 38% of the subdivision.

The DCA, advocating three lots on the cul-de-sac, emphasized that the four lots planned across from Bellingham Drive were: 1) all less than two acres and were not consistent with lot size, width, shape

and orientation of adjacent lots per the Montgomery County Code Chapter 50, Article 29 on Lot Dimensions; and 2) could not accommodate horses/large livestock despite having practically direct access to equestrian trails in the Seneca State Park. The Planning Board Chairman Hanson did mention the possibility of eliminating one of these lots, but no other board member supported a further reduction in the total lot yield for this subdivision plan. As a result, four homes situated on less than eight acres will be adjacent to the Truland Farm and across the street from homes situated on 2 to 25 acres sites.

The good news is that the development should be very attractive and contains three larger farmettes and ample open space and conservation areas. There is a 50-foot scenic easement setback from Route 28 in keeping with the one provided across the street for the Black Rock Mill Estates. The easement prohibits structures such as sheds in the easement area along Darnestown Road. Finally, the subdivision's homeowner covenants will reinforce the priority of agricultural uses, i.e. animal ownership.

Landscape Projects Inc. on Darnestown Road

by Steve Ellis

Darnestown Civic Association members will need to decide in the next few months whether to oppose or approve the conditions of an application for special exception that is described below by the applicant. The applicant has met with members of the DCA board on at least two occasions prior to their presentation at the March town meeting.

The subject properties 13711 and 13721 Darnestown Road were zoned to Rural 5 acres around 1974 and came under the RC Rural cluster (5 acre) zone in 1981 and affirmed by the 1980 Potomac Sub-region Master Plan.

The property at 13721 (p303) is 3.22 acres. It was owned by Jack Doser until sold to another Darnestown family, the Booths, in 1987. The Booths received a special exception at the old house for a business called The Past Restored Antiques.

This was sold to Dr. Greenberg in 1993. The special exception was transferred with the sale. It was Dr. Greenberg who accepted a proposal from Verizon that started the great cell tower location hunt. The business closed and the property was sold to another Darnestown family, the Hobbs, in 1999. We understand that currently when a property that has a special exception is transferred/sold to another owner, the new owner has 6 months to actively pursue the special exception operation. If not pursued during this time frame, the special exception expires on the property.

The property at 13711 (p294) is approx. 41,800 sq. ft. It was sold to L. Marlin in 1996, and in 1997 transferred to Steven Marlin. The Hobbs purchased the property from Mr. Marlin in October 1998. Mr. Marlin has been renting the house at this location and part of the 13721 property until recently (so we are informed). He is a registered farmer. This status as a farmer and the rural zone has allowed him to pursue **some** of his horticultural and retail activities without a special exception. Since he is vacating the property these activities will, presumably, cease. The clean-up could be expensive.

The applicant has been diligent about informing us of their plans and hopes. They are in the process of negotiating a contract purchase contingent on receiving the special exception. The Board of Appeals decides a special exception after a recommendation from the Planning Board and a hearing conducted by a Hearing Examiner. The findings and recommendations of the Hearing Examiner usually determine the position of the Board. The good thing about a special exception is that requirements and restrictions can be written into the operation that will limit the activities that can happen on the property.

How would one special exception affect subsequent possible proposals? Contrary to the thought that one begets another and another, the Potomac Sub-region Master Plan (pp.35-6) states that the county should "Avoid an excessive concentration of special exceptions along major transportation corridors." We do have a significant concentration of special exception religious institutions on Darnestown

Road. The Master Plan prescribes other protective guidelines for special exceptions. Acceptance of this proposal does not portend others, perhaps the opposite.

The adjacent and nearby residents and any local civic association are given considerable status during this determination process, especially for non-religious cases. In this instance, it is highly likely, even certain, that if opposed by the adjacent residents and the DCA, the application will be denied. As of early May, the DCA board has not taken a position on this special exception proposal. There are board members who are strongly opposed, somewhat opposed, neutral and somewhat favorable. This issue is going to require voting by the membership to determine the position and course of action for the DCA. The nearby residents will have significant influence on the Association's position. This will be an agenda item for the June meeting.

(Please note that the retail portion of the business will not occur until one to two years after the purchase of the property.)

The following is from Landscape Projects, Inc.:

We at Landscape Projects, Inc. (LPI) would like to share our ideas for the properties located at 13711 & 13721 Darnestown Rd. The grounds of the two properties are currently being used as a farm market and landscape supply operation and the two houses are rented to families. LPI is a residential landscape design, installation, and maintenance company based in Bethesda, MD. We are interested in purchasing these properties to open a country garden store and boutique nursery. To support this operation, and satisfy our need for more space than our Bethesda office can provide, we would like to relocate our landscape installation crews to this location.

Our vision is to locate the country garden store in the white house, 13721, which is over a hundred years old and will provide a classic rural setting. A boutique nursery with display gardens will be located on the grounds. The store and nursery will specialize in garden accessories and furnishing

including benches and pottery, as well as custom orders for plants that are not in our stock. We plan to offer delivery and installation of all plants accessories. We will team up with local farmers to provide a farm market stand.

The store and nursery will also be a place in the community where residents can come and enjoy seasonal activities focused on families and kids. A resource center will be available for visitors to relax and take advantage of our landscape library and ask our staff questions. In this library, we plan to offer local artists the opportunity to display and sell their work. Outside, we will have separate “garden rooms” with water features and patios with benches so people can enjoy the different and beautiful garden settings. The brick house, 13711, will continue to be rented as a single family home and will also have its landscape enhanced.

The landscape installation operation will be located in the back, which is the lowest part of the property. We will have trucks to transport materials and crews to jobsites. There would also be a compact loader, also commonly referred to as a ‘Bobcat’, to load materials for customers and crews. With a proper visual buffer around this area, the trucks and related materials will be well screened. The crews and trucks will be off-site the majority of the day. Our main office, mechanic’s shop and maintenance division will remain in Bethesda.

We met with some immediate neighbors to discuss our ideas and presented our plan at the most recent DCA Meeting. The feedback we received has been incorporated into our operation and site plans. New landscaping will be installed to create layers of plantings to adequately screen and protect all neighbors, as well as create a residential feel to the properties. We are finalizing a contract with the current owner, and then we will need to present our plan to the community and county for a special exception. It is our desire to add to the character and quality of life of Darnestown and look forward to discussing our ideas with the community. Please visit our website for more company information www.landscapeprojects.com.

Montgomery County Upper County Citizens Advisory Board

by Bob Thompson

At their April 16th meeting, the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board (UCAB) met with Health and Human Services Director, Uma Ahluwalia, and Housing and Community Affairs Director Rick Nelson to discuss their plans for delivering county services as they both take the helm of their respective departments. Ms. Ahluwalia’s goals are threefold: a) to provide integrated services, b) review partnerships, and c) focus attention on staffing. As the caseloads increase with the growing population, transportation for many to actually get to those services seems to be a challenge. Finding opportunities to establish more affordable housing is the focus for Mr. Nelson and he looks forward to forming new relationships with the Park and Planning in order to include affordable housing as a consideration in proposed residential and commercial development plans and in updated master plans. The board is winding up its year by preparing the annual report that reflects its’ comments and positions on issues they have focused on during 2006-2007 which includes: the county’s land use planning process, fire and rescue services, gang activity, services for immigrant members of the community, “out-of-school” activities for youth, transportation, and the continued protected special future of the Agricultural Reserve. The report will be presented to County Executive Leggett at UCAB’s annual meeting on June 11th.

In the meantime, the UCAB continues to connect with other boards and committees with board member Joel Cockrell serving as an upcounty liaison to the Housing Opportunities Commission’s community relations advisory committee. Other board liaisons are as follows: Speed Camera Advisory Committee - Brad Davis; Permitting Services Advisory Committee – George Donovan; Dickerson Facilities Implementation Group – Heinz Bachmann; BlackRock Center for the Arts – Patsy Hackey; Shady Grove Implementation Advisory Committee – George Donovan.

UCAB has also invited Dr. Royce Hanson, Planning Board Chairman and Vice Chairman of M-NCPPC, to their next meeting on Monday, May 14 to discuss that question. As a community plan is reviewed for new infrastructure, housing and commercial development, what decisions are made to ensure that it connects to adjacent communities in a coordinated manner? This and other issues will be explored with Dr. Hanson and planners as the board follows the review of the Germantown and other Upcountry area master plans. The meeting begins at 7:00 pm at the Upcounty Regional Services Center, which is located at the corner of Rt. 118 and Middlebrook Road in Germantown. UCAB meetings are open to the public.

In March 2007, UCAB presented operating budget priority recommendations to County Executive Leggett. In looking first at our infrastructure needs, UCAB recommends funding an effective planning program and the related enforcement for smart growth development and the protection of the Agricultural Reserve. Adequate funding and qualified staff should be provided for the implementation and enforcement of approved site plans. Area master plans should be integrated for consistency in water and sewer infrastructure and to ensure complimentary road networks. Special planning efforts should be funded for the environment and energy functional plan, growth management (such as properly phasing the provision of public facilities), reformation of the zoning ordinance, and redesign of the MD 355 corridor. Transportation funding should be focused on controlling and reducing traffic congestion and improving safety. Traffic management should be funded adequately and provided with qualified staff, and the conversion to digital systems should be planned and funded. The Corridor Cities Transit Way should be the transportation priority for the county along with funding for improvements to the Ride On system, dedicated funding for Metro, and improvements for MARC stations and services. Better road maintenance is needed in the Upcounty region with specific attention given to repaving rough roads, improving road shoulders, and sidewalks for pedestrians and pruning trees that impede safe vision.

Our concerns with social issues in the county have focused this year on youth and public safety. UCAB recommends a strong policy of programmatic and financial support for “out-of-school-time” programs, including those in county recreation centers, in schools and in private venues. In particular, we encourage continued funding for the Sharp Suspension Program and expanding those initiatives coordinated by providers such as Identify, Inc. and GUIDE Youth Services. These efforts support one of your seven priority policy objectives aimed at preparing children to live and learn. Along with other out-of-school-time programs, these strategies can be critical not only to the health and development of our young people, but also to gang prevention efforts across the county.

Due to the large growth in population and the significant land area and development in the Upcounty, UCAB encourages the County government to ensure safer and more secure communities by increasing the number of career and volunteer fire and rescue personnel and police officers. Specifically, we want to stress the importance of full funding to staff and equip our fire and rescue facilities, especially as development continues and new stations are opened. We would also like to see the police department increase the number of full-time and part-time Educational Facilities Officers to cover all middle and high schools.

The Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board represents more than 300,000 residents in the Upcounty area, north of Shady Grove Road and including the communities of Boyds, Clarksburg, Damascus, Darnestown, Dickerson, Gaithersburg, Germantown, Laytonsville, Montgomery Village, North Potomac and Poolesville. The 20-member Board advises the Director of the Upcounty Government Services Center, the County Executive, elected officials, and government staff. It provides input on which services and programs should be provided and how they will be delivered. The Board reviews and comments on the County's capital and operating budgets and master plans; assists with strategies to tailor services to regional needs; and conducts workshops and forums. Some

members represent the Board on other ad hoc committees. Members serve three-year terms without compensation, meeting certain Monday evenings of every month and occasionally on Saturdays. Members are expected to serve on at least one subcommittee, which meets approximately one evening every month on its own schedule. We work with a wide range of social, land use, infrastructure, and public safety issues. We are committed to rational development planning and protection of the Agricultural preserve. As representing Darnestown, I am committed to communicating issues of importance to our community up to the County government, and carry news and information back to our community. Questions or comments are always welcome. Bob.Thompson@comcast.net or 240-683-0103.

Successful Litter Clean-Up On Berryville Road

by Charles Popenoe

Several residents of Berryville Road gathered together on April 28 to pick up roadside litter along Berryville Road. As many Darnestown residents know, Berryville Road is a beautiful, scenic road that borders along Seneca Creek State Park. Unfortunately, it is also a target for careless litterers.



The clean-up volunteers collected roadside litter from where Berryville Road joins Seneca Road all the way past the "Horsehole" to the end of the State Park. In just one morning of work, the volunteers were able to collect years of litter. All that was left to do was make one short trip to the Poolesville Beauty Spot to unload the collected trash. With the major clean up complete, keeping up with any new litter will be a simpler task. Take a drive along

Berryville Road and see the beauty of the State Park and the clean roadsides.

Darnestown residents are encouraged to perform similar clean-ups near your homes, especially on park or other non-residential land that does not get regular care. We cannot count on government or other services to clean up our roadsides. If each Darnestown resident makes an effort to pick up a little trash here and there, all of our roadsides will be beautiful and litter-free year-round. Carry a plastic bag in your car, or when you walk or ride your bike. When you see some unsightly litter, pull over safely and bag it. If you have your trash can out for collection you can drop the bag in the can for easy disposal. By taking responsibility for our roadways we can show our civic pride and keep Darnestown beautiful and litter-free.

Darnestown Swim Club

by Sean Cassidy

Darnestown Swim and Racquet Club (DSRC) is open for 2007 and looking great! After some substantial improvements to its swim and tennis facilities last year, Club members of all ages and interests are enjoying the results of those worthwhile efforts.

Those efforts were largely conceived, guided and implemented by the Club's President Ed Gubish, who unexpectedly passed away earlier this year. Ed worked tirelessly to improve every aspect of the Club and will be deeply missed by its members and the larger Darnestown community. A memorial service to honor Ed's life was held at Our Lady of Visitation Church on Friday, May 11th followed by a reception hosted by the Club. Jay Crowley was elected unanimously by the Club's Board to serve as President until at least the next Annual Meeting.

Last year, the Club's six tennis courts were resurfaced and remain smooth and fast. This year, the Club has added several windscreens surrounding the courts, plus a number of large, weighted backboards allowing players to practice on their own. The popular Women's Tennis program and Men's Tennis program are already underway and

looking for new players of all abilities (the only requirement is a willingness to have a good time!).

The Club's main pool, new baby pool and shaded deck area are definitely the coolest place to be this summer! Swim and tennis team registration took place in May with events scheduled to begin in June. DSRC wants to thank Harris Teeter, in particular, for its continued sponsorship of both teams.

The waiting time to get into the Club is as short as it has ever been – only 7 to 8 months! So if your family is interested in joining, but you have not applied, thinking the waiting list was too long, submit your application today! The application can be downloaded from the Club's website. Given all that it has to offer, DSRC is truly an exceptional value!

New items are added to the Club's schedule almost every week, so please visit www.dsclubb.com for swim and tennis team information, social events and other important announcements.

Darne Bloomers Garden Club

by Nettie Koepenick

If water gardening is done correctly it can you're your backyard into an aquatic paradise. Hours of rest and relaxation are in store for anyone who indulges in a water feature. Other than being a relaxing get-away, a pond offers enthusiasts the chance to experience a new kind of gardening, offering the opportunity to attract new kinds of wildlife and growing plants that will only grow in a watery environment.

Recently there has been a back-to-nature revolution in aquatic landscaping that has transformed how ponds are designed, built and maintained. Traditionally, water features of the past were more a headache than a pleasure. Many were not sustainable without constant maintenance and frequent repairs. But no more. Today's water features are based on creating an ecologically stable system utilizing 5 basic elements:

1. Mechanical and biological filtration

2. Bacteria
3. Fish
4. Plants
5. Rocks and pebbles

Gone are the days of visible pumps, plumbing or liner material. No more visible pots and bare bottom liners -- not only were they unsightly they were ineffective. Water quality and clarity were difficult to achieve and maintain without constant testing, often requiring chemicals. Then there was the organic waste build up and muck on the bottom requiring frequent draining and cleaning.

Organic water gardens are low-maintenance and should be nearly self-sustaining for years. Today, keeping a water garden involves no more than minimal routine maintenance and an annual cleanout; tasks on par with maintaining a perennial garden.

One of the keys to having a sustainable ecosystem is designing a pond that's big enough. For example an 8 ft. by 11 ft. waterscape can recycle organic waste more effectively and establish a more stable ecosystem faster than smaller ones. Experience has shown that the more water in the system, the lower the maintenance.

What size is best?

Location and size are the two most important factors. By some estimates, 90% of the original water gardens sold are replaced with larger ones.

First determine if you are going to build it yourself or hire a professional, but either way do your planning beforehand.

Consider where would be the best placement. Will it be viewed from inside? Can you hear it when outside? What kind of settings do you like the most in nature? Do you enjoy a waterfall, a gentle stream a large span of blue water? Whatever it may be, plan to recreate aspects of it on a smaller scale for your yard.

Try making the style appropriate to your style of house and garden. Or maybe you want a theme

pond, like a Japanese water garden. Other possibilities include the formal styles of Italy and France. Or the ever-popular English garden with its gentle curves. Perhaps a more natural pond is right for you. Whatever your style don't let size limit you. If all you have is a small area to work with, pay special attention to the details. Choose each aspect carefully.

Six steps to pick the right site:

1. Map out your existing landscape. Note where trees and shrubs are planted and where you will want to plant more. Can the pond be seen from inside of the house? Is it accessible from outdoor living spaces? Is there room to sit and enjoy your oasis?
2. You'll need access to water service and protected electrical power. Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) is a must. This should be completed by a professional.
3. Topographical features, such as a slope, will affect the planning of waterfalls and streams. Will runoff water from the lawn, garden or structures be a problem?
4. Sun or Shade? Most aquatic plants and fish require a minimum of 8 hours of sun, although there are some that can survive on less. Will debris from nearby plants be a problem?
5. Check for utility lines or pipes before digging. Get your local energy company to examine the site.
6. Do-it-yourselfers, plan where you will put excess dirt from site hole. If professionally done, plan for site accessibility for equipment to dig hole and bring in large rocks and boulders.

Don't believe the Myths

Myth: *You should never have algae in your pond.*

Fact: Green algae, in the right proportion, is beneficial to plant life. Fish eat it and lay their eggs

in it. It is an essential part of pond life. Too much algae has a simple cause: too much sunlight. Good design will include shade from landscaping and aquatic plants reducing this problem.

Myth: *To keep fish, water gardens need to be deep.*

Fact: Two feet is all you need. Fish, including koi, can hibernate in ponds just 24 inches deep through cold winters. A small breathing hole is all you need in the ice to let carbon monoxide escape.

Myth: *Small ponds are less work.*

Fact: Bigger is better. The larger they get the easier it is to achieve ecological balance. As water gardens become larger, they become more stable as plants grow, bacteria colonies develop and other vital life becomes more established.

Myth: *Predators will eat your fish.*

Fact: Predators are out there whether you have a pond or not. The biggest offender is the Blue Heron; he can be friend or foe to your pond. There are ways to keep him out. Raccoon only fish from the shore, they do not like to swim, so having a pond that deepens close to the bank will curtail this problem.

Myth: *Ponds attract mosquitoes.*

Fact: Mosquitoes breed in still, standing water. If well designed your pond will have lots of water flow, where mosquitoes don't breed. Also, ponds support fish, frogs, toads and other wildlife that are natural predators to mosquitoes.

Myth: *Water gardens involve a lot of hard work.*

Fact: If designed correctly no more than a perennial garden, minus the weeding and watering. An annual spring clean out and occasional emptying of the skimmer basket is all that is needed.

The mechanics of a successful pond:

Water circulates by means of a pump moving the water from the lowest point of the pond to the highest, known as "the head" by means of an underground hose and returning by gravity via a stream or waterfall. At the lowest point is where

the pump and skimmer are situated. Each time the water passes through the skimmer it filters out unwanted fish waste, particles that make the water murky and leaves. This turns it into beneficial bacterium that then gets pumped back to the head, ultimately ending up back in the pond where it will feed on algae. Also, keeping the water level consistent is important and most pond systems have an automatic refill valve.

Introducing plants:

The plants that grow in and around your water feature are known as greenscape or softscape. Like any successful design plan, create a focal point and plan for growth. Create a plan that includes both the pond and the land surrounding it. A pond and garden that receive sun and shade will allow for the widest variety of plant choices. Remember to include four seasons of interest. Limit the number of varieties; in this case less is more. This will keep the setting more tranquil. Pick plants that have movement in breezes, complementing and harmonizing with the water motion. Plant aggressive plants in pots submerged in the water and disguise the pots with gravel and stones, keeping them in check. In an informal plan, plant in gentle curves and clusters; much like nature would do, and in formal settings the key is to be symmetrical; form is the most important design aspect here. Reflection is also very important. Be careful when choosing plants that will be seen through the reflection -- cool colors will make the water look blue and also add depth.

There are three basic types of pond plants: floating, emergent (or marginal) and submerged (or underwater) plants. All three are essential to keeping the ecosystem balanced. Some add oxygen to the water, some filter it, others provide food and shelter for the fish, and many do all of these things.

Floating plants ride on the surface of the water with their roots hanging down below. They act as filters catching floating fish waste and turning it into nutrition to feed itself.

These are the ground covers of aquatic world. Some, like duckweed, water hyacinths and water lettuce can grow very quickly in one season. They are annuals in our zone 7 and if they get excessive, unwanted plants can easily be pulled out.

Emergent or marginals are found along the perimeter of ponds. They help soften the transition between land and water. Bog plants are in this category. These plants like having their feet wet, they can be on the very edge of the water or just outside the pond where soil moisture is constant. Some of the most unusual plants are found in the bog category, only growing in these conditions and nowhere else.

Further from the edge, in deeper water, are other emergent plants where their roots are on the bottom but their leaves float on the water's surface or above. Water lilies are in this category. This category of plants feed the fish, shelter and shade the water.

Submerged or underwater plants are the oxygenators, typically remaining beneath the water's surface. They help combat algae by consuming excess nutrients while providing cover for the fish and producing oxygen during daylight hours. Roots of these plants are not used for nutrient uptake, only for anchorage. These typically are potted to keep fish from eating their roots.

Cover approximately 50 - 70% of the water's surface with plants. This is important for three reasons: it provides shade to deter abundant growth of algae, provides shelter and keeps water temperatures cool. Fish and plants struggle to survive in water temperatures over 80 degrees.

Fish

Freshwater goldfish and Koi are available for water gardens; they come in a wide variety of sizes and colors.

Goldfish varieties include:

- Comets, Shubunkins, Fantails, Moors, Orandas to name a few. Grow 10"-12" in length.

- Koi, the American name for Nishikigoi, the large colorful carp from Japan. Butterfly, one of the most popular in our area. Grow in excess of 24" and can live 200 years or more.

Able to breed by the time they reach 5"-6" in length, goldfish and Koi grow in relation to their nutrition, water conditions and are also affected by their genetics. Jumbo fish will get large, regardless of the size of their environment.

Both goldfish and Koi thrive in temperate water conditions. Dormancy occurs during the winter, once water temperatures drop below 55 degrees. At this point they should stop being fed until spring.

Koi eat almost everything except other fish. Occasionally they will eat their own eggs, but once hatched, they do not eat the fry. Fish do not need to be fed in an ecologically balanced pond. The fish will have plenty to eat without being fed by you. They will eat mosquito and other insect eggs and algae. This is an important factor in the overall health and well being of the pond. BUT, it is fun to feed them because if fed in the same place each time they will become trained to come to that spot every time they see you. Only feed them once daily and only what can be consumed in 2 - 3 minutes. Otherwise, the excess food will become nutrients that feed the algae. Also, the more you feed them the more waste build up there will be.

Designing outdoor living rooms:

Now that you have your pond in, it is time to turn your attention to how you will be able to sit and enjoy it. Definitely plan for sitting around your urban oasis. Consider these important factors:

- Best placement for maximum viewing of water
- How many do you want to seat?
- Do you need it to be sheltered from sun and rain?
- Privacy, to be seen or not to be seen?
- Is this a focal point in your overall scheme?
- Does seating area match style of house and gardens?

Make it easily accessible, so you can get there quickly and start relaxing.

So, now you have the basics for designing your own backyard waterscape. Remember, planning it is 90% of the work, do your homework first, then start digging. And before you know it, you'll be digging up an oasis.

Montgomery Country Alliance

by Lauren Campbell

County leaders established the nationally renowned, 93,000-acre Agricultural Reserve 25 years ago to ensure that all Montgomery residents would have easy access to the benefits of the working farms and natural resources in the Agricultural Reserve. The Reserve, beginning only a few miles west of Darnestown, establishes a designated area for small farmers to thrive within a short distance of a major metropolitan center.

The Ag Reserve and rural wedge provide numerous critical benefits to Darnestown residents and citizens of our region, more generally: the provision of local produce; an area where families can hike, cycle, paddle, horseback ride and enjoy nature with their families; a cleansing effect on air and water quality throughout the region; and support for Montgomery County's long-standing and still vital agricultural heritage. Arguably, the quality of life for those of us who live in Darnestown would not be what it is today without the many benefits of the Ag Reserve.

The Montgomery Countryside Alliance, originally known as Solutions Not Sprawl, works to protect Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve and rural wedge and thereby enhance the quality of life, health and well-being of families and communities. We strive to support and celebrate Montgomery County's historic commitment to protecting the environment, open spaces, and rural and agricultural lands for current and future generations of Washington metropolitan residents.

The continuing protection of the Agricultural Reserve becomes more critical as Montgomery County continually considers where and how to

grow. We advocate for land use policies that protect rural and open spaces and working farms, while accommodating new growth in vibrant neighborhoods near transit centers and optimal use of current infrastructure. We envision a Montgomery County that reliably and permanently supports its rural economy, treasures its forests, fields and streams, and plans carefully for growth.

One of the Montgomery Countryside Alliance's key campaigns is opposing a ninth Potomac River bridge crossing, or "Truckway". Recent studies have shown the overwhelming majority of commuters travel to destinations adjacent to or inside the Beltway; not enough commuters make the "U-shaped commute" — going from Gaithersburg to the Dulles Corridor and vice versa — to justify construction of a new bridge. Pressure from Virginia continues to build, however, and if the Intercounty Connector (ICC) is constructed, demand for a new bridge will also increase. One only needs to "connect the dots" between a western ICC terminus at the 270/370 interchange and a connection to either Route 28 or the Fairfax Parkway in Virginia to see where a new bridge and corresponding road would be built. (A few years ago, the last route suggested for the Maryland side of the bridge was to cross the Potomac near Violette's Lock, proceed up Seneca Road and cut through the middle of Spring Meadows, connecting to 118 at 28!) Any Truckway would irreparably damage Darnestown and more than likely slice through Montgomery County's nationally-acclaimed Agricultural Reserve.

A Truckway becomes much less likely if the ICC is not built. Not only would the ICC be environmentally destructive and exorbitantly expensive for the entire state, but the state's own study shows that a new road would not relieve traffic on the Beltway. Spending \$3 billion of state money - taking it away from other general fund projects like public transit and schools - for a project that won't relieve traffic makes little sense.

For more information on why the ICC is a bad deal and not a done deal, visit www.savecommunities.org.

Contributions to the Montgomery Countryside Alliance are tax deductible. For more information on the Truckway and the Agricultural Reserve, visit www.montgomerycountrysidealliance.org.

A Determined Fight Against a Silent Killer

Teal Ribbon Night Raises Funds for Ovarian Cancer Research

by Michelle Weaverling



"I had no symptoms. My annual GYN appointment saved my life." This is how Kristen Varley describes the beginning of her journey with ovarian cancer, otherwise known as the Silent Killer.

Varley shared her story on March 1, 2007, at the Third Annual Teal Ribbon Night, sponsored by the Teal Ribbon Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation, Inc. (TROCRF). Varley co-founded this 501(c)(3) foundation in September 2005 with the intent to raise funds to advance ovarian cancer research, advocate for early diagnostic treatment programs, and improve the lives of ovarian cancer survivors.

Teal Ribbon Night is a fundraiser that also aims to educate women about the often vague and misdiagnosed symptoms of ovarian cancer. The evening features speakers from the medical and scientific communities, a silent auction, raffle drawings, and a game of dice called Bunco.

The Canary Foundation, which strives to bridge the gap between research and industry by demonstrating an effective ovarian cancer diagnostic test, is matching all fundraising efforts by TROCRF up to \$1 million. Contributions received through June 15 will qualify for the match.

Not the Same Person

Varley was diagnosed with Stage III ovarian cancer in August 2003, after her gynecologist felt a

lump on her right ovary during her yearly exam. Stunned by her diagnosis, she went into denial at first, thinking she was too young and physically fit with no family history. Indeed, Varley was only 38 and was an avid runner and Tae Kwon Do student.

Surgery to remove the lump revealed that it was indeed cancerous, and that the cancer had spread to her left ovary and abdomen. She underwent a radical hysterectomy and a debulking procedure, and then endured six chemotherapy treatments.

Varley is now in recovery and takes it one day at a time. "At one point, I said that I just wanted my life to return to the way it was prior to my diagnosis," she explains. "But I realize now that I am not the same person. Cancer has changed my life. I have learned a lot about myself and others, about fear and strength. Cancer is a full-time job. The idea is to remain positive and live life to its fullest while enduring all the medical procedures."

Since her diagnosis, Varley has taken an active role in the fight against ovarian cancer and is determined to make the future brighter for all women through awareness and education. "It is important for women to be their own best health care advocates," she emphasizes.

A Fun and Educational Evening

At Teal Ribbon Night, Varley and her sister Karlyn Kay, also a Teal Ribbon co-founder, were first to address the guests, many of whom have been attending since the event began three years ago. Patricia McCowan of the Canary Foundation also spoke.

Featured speakers from the medical and scientific fields were Dr. Michael Birrer from the Center for Cancer Research at the National Cancer Institute, Dr. George Coukos from the Leonard and Madlyn Abramson Family Cancer Research Institute of the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Albert J. Steren from Holy Cross Hospital.

Following the speakers, the attendees turned to Bunco. A teal iPod Shuffle was the Bunco grand prize. Doug Sandler, who emceed the event, kept

the evening activities flowing. "He was a huge hit," says Kay.

Many local businesses helped make the event possible through sponsorship: Montgomery Printing Solutions, ColorFile, Inc., Atrium Court Hotel (soon to be renamed The Crown Plaza Rockville), Travel Advantage Network, Exquisite Balloons, Lifetime Smile, The Washington Post, Darnestown Shell, Karen Michele Designs, MapApps Corporation, The Plamondon Companies, Thrive Yoga, and Whole Foods Market.

"We are so grateful for the generous support of our sponsors year after year," says Varley.

An Elusive Disease

Ovarian cancer is perhaps the most elusive and the most devastating disease suffered by women because the warning signs are vague, there are no early detection tests, and there is no cure. This is why it is often called the Silent Killer. Seventy-five percent of women are not diagnosed until after the disease has reached an advanced state.

Symptoms include bloating or discomfort, menstrual disorders, pain during intercourse, backaches, abdominal pressure, indigestion or gas, constipation or diarrhea, and fatigue.

There are, however, exciting breakthroughs on the horizon that hope to yield early detection and successful treatment. Which is why the fundraising energy generated by Teal Ribbon Night is so critical, and why the Canary Foundation's unprecedented \$1 million match of TROCRF funds raised through June 15 is truly special.

All News Welcomed!

Does your group or neighborhood have news it would like to share with the Darnestown Community? Please send your news to thelittleacorn@comcast.net by August 1st and it will be included in the September edition of The Little Acorn!

From Our Schools

Butler School

by Lisa Daly

Butler School Celebrates the Centenary

Montessori celebrates 2007 as its Centenary. It was 100 years ago that Dr. Maria Montessori opened her first school. Montessori education is the single largest pedagogy in the world, with over 22,000 schools spanning six continents. The Centenary of the Montessori Movement is a cause for celebration and a reason to be very proud. Schools around the globe are planning activities to honor the past, celebrate the present, and create the future. Montessori education has an ambitious goal in its hope to develop the child into a complete human being, comfortable with himself, with his society and with humanity as a whole. Montessori does not want the sole focus of education to be the conveying of knowledge or set curriculum to a child, but on giving support to the natural development of the human being.

Founded in 1970, Butler School has already been a part of this Centenary for one third of its existence. We are proud that our school holds on to the true meaning of Montessori and all the developmental philosophies to which it adheres. Butler School is celebrating the Centenary this spring by planting 100-bulb gardens around our campus to commemorate the passing of 100 years.

In addition to the gardens, three teachers attended the Montessori Centenary Celebration and Refresher Course in San Francisco in February. The teachers spent four days listening to wonderful speakers, attending workshops, discussing Montessori philosophies with fellow teachers, and sharing new ideas for their classrooms.

An evening event was dedicated to the Centenary Celebration. Guests were amazed at the wonderful presentations from children to commemorate the 100 years. One group of children made an amazing Hundred Square using beautiful golden lanterns, another group of children presented a play about

Maria Montessori's life, and other children sang and danced for the assembled group.

The presenters at the refresher courses offered wonderful suggestions and helped teachers see new ways to communicate materials to students. Teachers were thrilled to have the opportunity to share ideas, discuss the impact of Montessori education on their students' lives, and enjoy the chance to talk about their lives and their love of what they do each day.

To learn more about the Montessori philosophy please visit these websites: www.butlerschool.org, www.montessori-ami.org, www.montessori-namta.org, or call us at 301-977-6600. Butler School is located at 15951 Germantown Rd, Darnestown, MD 20874.

Darnestown Elementary

by Cathy Sharpe

DES raised thousands of dollars for the American Heart Association and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society during the recent "Jump Rope for Heart" and "Pennies for Patients" events at the school. The third annual book drive to support the Samaritan Children's Home in Sri Lanka was another big success as hundreds of books were collected.

"Darnestown Idols" was the theme of the annual DES talent show and based on audience enthusiasm, every performer was a winner! More than 85 students shared song and dance performances; vocal, piano and drum solos; gymnastics, martial arts, skateboarding and biking demonstrations and skits. Student emcees kept the program flowing with their introductions and jokes. Also, several staff members "brought the house down" with their special musical numbers.

Students and parents said a big thank you to Darnestown's staff during Appreciation Week last month. There were special breakfast and dessert parties, staff raffle contest and students also brought in notes and flowers for their teachers.

It was a great time for everyone who attended the annual DES spring picnic at the school. Young and

old alike enjoyed the inflatable obstacle course and all of the fun relays and field games. Families either brought their own picnic dinners or feasted on Uncle Charlie's Backyard BBQ specialties. The DJ spun current favorites and a few "oldies but goodies" that had lots of folks kicking up their heels.

Fourth graders stepped back in time during Darnestown History Day. Students visited the Darnestown Presbyterian Church and Cemetery, and learned about early farming techniques and doll making. The fifth graders experienced life as a colonial child during "Colonial Day" held in April. The students had an opportunity to write with quill pens on horn books, hand-dip candles, quilt a square, dance to colonial music and pound a design on a tin square. There were demonstrations on spinning and weaving wool and yarn, colonial games, rug hooking, shipbuilding, the hammering of hot iron by a blacksmith and medicine-making using dried snails, chalk and live worms. And their recent adventures in Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown are memories that they will carry with them for years to come.

The Spring Choral and Instrumental Concert proved once again that DES students have music in their hearts and souls! In just a few days, students will have the opportunity to show off all they have learned in art, music and physical education during "Field Days."

Best wishes to all of the fifth graders as they move up to middle school and new learning experiences. Their promotion ceremony will be held at the School on Tuesday evening, June 13.

It's been another terrific year at Darnestown Elementary!

Jones Lane Elementary

by Princina Drazan

This year has been truly rewarding! Jones Lane Elementary School (JLES) held its PTA Officers election in May and the following people were selected to serve on the 2007-2008 PTA Executive Board: President: Princina Drazan; 1st Vice

President: Martha Segreti; 2nd Vice President: Michelle Cornblatt; and, Secretary: Nan Ropelewski. The Treasurer's position is vacant at the time of this writing.

This year the PTA introduced a new Read-Aloud Day event to its list of programs. On April 20th, guests from the community were invited to JLES to read to the students for a day. Such notables as Montgomery County Executive, Ike Leggett, Montgomery County Board of Education Vice President At-Large, Shirley Brandman and The Frederick Keys' mascot, Keyote, were among those who read to our students. Read-Aloud was a huge success! We have already started thinking of the guests to invite to our school next year.

Students and their families geared up to help rid JLES' Outdoor Classroom of weeds and debris on Sunday, April 29th. The Outdoor Classroom was created approximately seven years ago to encourage students and teachers to explore and appreciate their outdoor environment. Children learn names of different cloud formations, check the day's temperature or visit the family of tadpoles and frogs that swim in the stream. It's a way to take the classroom experience outside of the traditional school walls.

A fifth grade student, Samantha McInnis, was chosen as the winner of our new JLES Jaguar logo design contest. Samantha's drawing of a stalking jaguar will be displayed on our new line of Jaguar Spirit clothing and accessories this spring. A few other contestants' drawings will be displayed on the cover of our JLES Yearbook due to be released this spring.

The JLES community continues to work hard to make JLES the special place that it has become. It has been a pleasure serving as JLES PTA President this year and I look forward to working with our students, teachers, and staff next year to help bring more exciting events to our school.



Mary of Nazareth School

by Christine Priznar

Fifth Grade Presents the Invention Museum

Do you know who invented the electric guitar? Mary of Nazareth School fifth grader, Leo Falcone can tell you and he can educate you about many other interesting facts about the electric guitar. On April 26 every fifth grader made a presentation to other students, parents and invited guests about an invention that interested them. The presentations were made in the school's art room where each student stood with the invention they selected or a replica or other visual aid. When a visitor stopped to view the invention the fifth grade student gave his or her presentation. The students were very creative with their presentations. The inventions they studied ranged from serious such as, the computer, the light bulb and the telescope, to fun, such as a rubber band ball, a swimming pool, bubble gum and chocolate chip cookies.

As a combination science and language arts project, the fifth grade students selected an invention to study, often using the Internet for ideas and research. They wrote a five-paragraph report with references and learned how to make an oral presentation. The presentations included an attention-getting introduction, who invented the item, when and where it was invented, how it was invented, what it was used for, how it impacts society why the student chose the invention and the students favorite fact about the invention. Students were graded on varied word choice, volume, speed, clarity, eye contact, and the use of note cards.

Northwest High School

by Madeline D'Alessio

Northwest HS has three National Merit Finalists this year including Matthew Romney from Darnestown. More Straight As for Darnestown kids - Alex Song, Hillary Siegall (for the third quarter in a row). The Citizenship Award went to Kara Peoples this quarter.

NWHS Chess team is National CHAMPIONS! The Chess Team traveled to Kansas City and played in

the US Scholastic Chess Championships. In this event most high schools play in one or two of the five sections. Northwest fielded teams in three sections. With only the top 25 teams receiving trophies it was amazing as the Jags team placed 24th out of 65 teams in one section. They received one 1st individual National Champion and team awards that include 8th out of 63 teams and a Team National Championship.

Bret Davis, a junior, is the #1 board for the chess team, the top player. He placed 25th in the nation in the top rated group last year as a sophomore, the highest placement of anyone at NW. At the State Championship, he was top #1 board in the state. Bret was also the backup Quarterback to Josh Volpe this past season.

Sean Gordon will be spending the summer at Interlochen Center for the Arts, in Interlochen, Michigan where he will continue his studies on the Bassoon. The band "Fishfood" - Justin Fakler (on bass), Josh Wheeler, TJ Callahan and David Tony - participated in The Battle of the Bands at Northwest. Hillary Siegall auditioned and was selected as a pianist for the Northwest Jazz band for the 2007/2008 academic year. Congratulations to the NWHS Orchestra! They received a 1 and Superior rating at County Festival to earn the right to compete at the state level. Symphonic Orchestra received straight One's at State Orchestra Festival. This is the highest rating a group can earn.

Spring Athletes:

Track & Field - Bobby Waffle (also on the Winter Swim & Dive Team), Cindy Beard, Shannon McGuire, Kate Allaway, Robert Allaway, Patrick McGuire, Hillary Seigall, Joshua Santangelo, Joseph Santangelo, Nick Gummo, Alyssa Henshaw, Anna D'Alessio, David D'Alessio, Kathy Aherne, Becca Stinner, Edward Krisnewiski, and Matthew Romney

Tennis - Bret Davis, John Keefer (Co-Captain), Matt Lichtenstein, and Bob Norr

Girls Lacrosse - Kristen Keefer, Kara Peoples, Stefanie Zaner, Tracy Roman, Haley Brightman Jackie Floyd, Maureen McAllister, Dona Motabar, and Victoria Graham.

Boys Lacrosse - Justin Fakler, Kyle Neumann and Paul Sabin.

Best wishes to the Class of 2007, who have chosen the following colleges:

- Robert Allaway - Dickinson College
- Christine Bertoncini - Montgomery College
- William Bond - Montgomery College
- Alex Booth - University of Maryland Honors Program. NWHS Top 25 Awardee.
- Haley Brightman - University of Delaware
- Brooke Cheripko - University of Louisville, where she will cheer on the all-girl competition team. She also became a member of the Science National Honor Society and was voted "most athletic" from the senior class.
- Daniel Clemmer - High Point University
- Jacob Cone - Colorado State University - Equine Sciences Division
- Brandon Cooper - Morehouse College
- David D'Alessio - Bucknell University
- Kelly Doheny - University of Virginia
- Erika Eskin - University of Kentucky
- Chad Hoggle - Susquehanna University
- Garrett Hudler - Miami University (Ohio)
- Michael Iafolla - University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He received a four-year Presidential Scholars award from the university.
- Jacob Lichtman - Goucher College
- Tom Martin - University of Maryland
- Kari Mason - San Diego State University
- Patrick McGuire - Towson University
- Amy Nwankwo - University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
- Rossanna Panara - Montgomery College
- Matthew Romney - Brigham Young University, National Merit Scholarship and Gordon B. Hinckley scholarship
- Paul Sabin - Brigham Young University
- Ian Sisson - Montgomery College
- Alex Song
- Travis Watts - Elon University
- Andrew White - Brigham Young University
- Eric Wisniewski - Brigham Young University



Alumni note:

Two Northwest grads and Darnestown women will be attending University of Maryland School of Medicine in the fall: Meghan Marmillion (NWHS 2002, UNC Chapel Hill December 2005) and Caitlin Iafolla (NWHS Class of 2003) is graduating from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, with honors in May 2007.

After three years of writing the news articles for Northwest, I am looking for someone new to volunteer to keep up this article of events and awards for Darnestown/Northwest High Schoolers. If you are interested in volunteering for the next issue of The Little Acorn, please contact me at dalessio@comcast.net

Ridgeview Middle School

by Teresa Kaczmarek

Ridgeview has had an excellent year of academics, volunteerism, student activities, field trips as well as PTSA events. Students especially enjoyed the Poetry Slam, Greek Day and China Day, SGA Spirit Week, SGA Valentine Dance, Geography Bee, Career Day, sporting events, music concerts and canned food drive. MSA testing went smoothly.

The spring play "Into The Woods" was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Ridgeview hosted an MCPS Study Circle group. Participants have a better understanding of racial and ethnic differences and know where to go for support.

Our school will be undergoing a renovation beginning summer 2008 and ending 2010. Funds have been approved and preliminary plans drawn.

PTSA events have included monthly restaurant nights, NAACP meetings, grounds beautification, Giant bulletin board updates, Cultural Arts programs for our students, Math Olympiad and Destination Imagination teams, Reflections participants with County winners, Staff Appreciation events and spring book fair.

Volunteer hours continue to be high and we thank all the parents who share their time and talent.

Our final PTSA meeting will be held May 8th. The nominating committee has submitted the following names for the 2007-2008 RMS PTSA Board positions with voting in May:

- President – Teresa Kaczmarek
- 1st Vice President – Holly Parker
- 2nd Vice President – Lisa Konecke
- Treasurer – Molly Hayward-Koert
- Secretary – Debra Strickman

Make it a great summer for you and your family!

Seneca Academy and The Circle School

by Jodi Thurmond

July 1st will mark a historic change for our school. Mrs. Jodi Thurmond, Founding Head of Seneca Academy and The Circle School at Seneca, will begin her role as President of the School and Dr. Brooke Carroll will assume the duties of Head of School. Mrs. Thurmond, who has served over twenty-three years as head of the school, is a long-time Darnestown resident and began the school with her partner, Mrs. Marty Long, using facilities at the Darnestown Presbyterian Church. She will continue at Seneca serving as a community liaison and consultant to the school.

Dr. Carroll, coming to Seneca from Sandy Spring Friends School, will be responsible for day-to-day operations of the Preschool-Grade 8 program. Our school family welcomes Dr. Carroll, her husband and their two children to the school.



Spring proved to be a busy time for students at the school. Grades 4-8 completed an off-site basketball unit at the Poolesville Family Life Center. Led by Susan Young, the physical education teacher, and Mrs. Hirabayashi, intermediate teacher and local

high school coach, the students worked toward mastery of the fundamentals of the game.

Students in kindergarten through grade 8 celebrated Earth Day by using an entire week to study ways to conserve energy, observe nature and spruce up our acclaimed schoolyard habitat. Seneca students are active all year in the maintenance of the habitat but are involved in special events during that particular week. Many preschool classes spent time in the spring learning about the changes that occur in the environment. Some classes included a trip to Black Hills Regional Park to extend their study of butterflies.

After school Soccer Club led by parent Ricardo Camargo was a big hit with the students as was Studio Art and golf lessons. Academics plus “specials” make Seneca a great place for students.

Parents and friends of Seneca enjoyed the annual adult social “Beach Party” in April. Excellent food, adult beverages and silent plus live auctions raised funds for expanding technology at the school. Chairperson Sherri Hall and her committee members deserve extra thanks for orchestrating a memorable event.

We are still conducting tours for fall openings in preschool as well as the elementary and intermediate program. Call the school at 301-869-3728 for dates and times.

Thomas Jefferson Preparatory

By Susie Gooch

Even though we haven’t moved into our new location at the Fairhaven United Methodist Church on Darnestown Road, the teachers and students of the Thomas Jefferson Preparatory School (TJP) are already planning some very interesting field trips for the 2007/08 school year.

This coming June, we will travel to the U.S. Capitol for a special “behind the scenes” tour! We are working to arrange a private meeting and a photo opportunity with one of our state senators and/or our regional congressional representative.

In October, we will visit the Library of Congress for a special tour of the Asian Children's Literature division with its director, Reme Grefalda, who has promised us a private tour of the Jefferson Room, too! We have already corresponded with Mrs. Jodi Thurmond of the Seneca Academy about this trip, and we are hopeful that, schedules permitting, some of Seneca Academy's students and teachers will be able to join us on this wonderful outing!

During Spring Break of 2008, the students will be off for their annual overseas excursion. In past years, we have visited Paris and the Normandy region of France, as well as, Rome, Venice, Florence, and Pompeii Italy. In 2008, we will visit the United Kingdom, spending particular time in Ireland and Wales. Probable future trips will include an excursion to beautiful Quebec. The students must travel with at least one parent, and this trip will be open to all Darnestown students as well. Stay tuned for details!

Additional information about TJP can be found at www.thomasjeffersonprep.org, or please feel free to contact the Director, Mrs. Susie Gooch, at wsgooch@comcast.net.

Graduation News

David Letarte graduated from Northeastern University in May, receiving his Bachelor of Science Degree in Behavioral Neuroscience.

Paul Letarte graduated from Worcester State College in May, receiving his Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban Studies.

Both David and Paul attended Darnestown Elementary. Their parents, Phil and Kim along with siblings, Alex and Nick reside in Darnestown.

Quince Orchard Library

by Elizabeth Cookson

In April, the Indian Community presented their annual festival, Utsav, which was a delightful event with adults and children in beautiful costumes, singing and dancing. The students were operating

the Penny Theatre. Food was provided by local Indian restaurants and funded by the Friends of the Library.

Students had the option to read for half an hour to erase their fines for overdue books.

Quince Orchard librarians have received so many promotions that there are a lot of new faces at the desks. As always, the Library offers many programs so keep going to the Library.

Places of Worship

Darnestown Presbyterian Church

Rt. 28 & Turkey Foot Road
Darnestown, MD 20878
301-948-9127
www.darnestownpc.org

Fairhaven United Methodist

12801 Darnestown Road
Darnestown, MD 20878
301-330-5433

Gaithersburg Chinese Alliance Church

13101 Darnestown Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
301-869-8343
www.gcacmd.org

Germantown Baptist Church

1740 Riffle Ford Road
Germantown, MD 20874
301-428-3622
www.germantownbaptist.org

Or Chadash

23 W. Diamond Ave., Suite 203
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
301-972-6426
www.cong-orchadashmd.org

Our Lady of the Visitation Parish

14139 Seneca Road
Darnestown, MD 20874
301-948-5536
www.olvp.org

Poplar Grove Baptist Church

14625 Jones Lane
North Potomac, MD 20878
301-330-5054
www.poplargrovebaptishchurch.org

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

11900 Darnestown Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
301-869-3666
www.poplutheran.org

St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

Worshipping at Darnestown Presbyterian
240-631-2800
www.saintnicks.com

Seneca Community Church

13900 Berryville Road
Germantown, MD 20874
301-869-9326

Temple Beth Ami

14330 Travilah Road
Rockville, MD 20852
301-340-6818
www.bethami.org

Darnestown District 39 Elected Officials

by Linda Smith

While most of the Darnestown area is in State Legislative District 15, some of us are in the part of the area that is now in District 39. Darnestown voters living on streets between Riffleford Road and the Pepco power lines to the west, between Darnestown Road and Great Seneca Creek are in District 39, as are Darnestown voters living east of Jones Lane and south of Darnestown Road. Put another way, Darnestown area residents whose polling place is either Ridgeview Middle School or Quince Orchard High School live in District 39. While most elected officials are the same for both Districts, as presented in the March 2007 issue of the *Little Acorn*, the State Senator and three representatives to the House of Delegates are different. Their contact information is shown below.

State Senate



Patrick J. Hogan
Democrat, District 39, Montgomery County

Miller Senate Office Building
3 West Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-3686, (301) 858-3686

1-800-492-7122, ext. 3686 (toll free)
e-mail: patrick.hogan@senate.state.md.us
fax: (410) 841-3670, (301) 858-3670

House of Delegates



Saqib Ali
Democrat, District 39, Montgomery County

House Office Building, Room 224
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-3021, (301) 858-3021
1-800-492-7122, ext. 3021 (toll free)

e-mail: saqib.ali@house.state.md.us
fax: (410) 841-3077, (301) 858-3077



Nancy J. King
Democrat, District 39, Montgomery County

House Office Building, Room 225
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-3037, (301) 858-3037

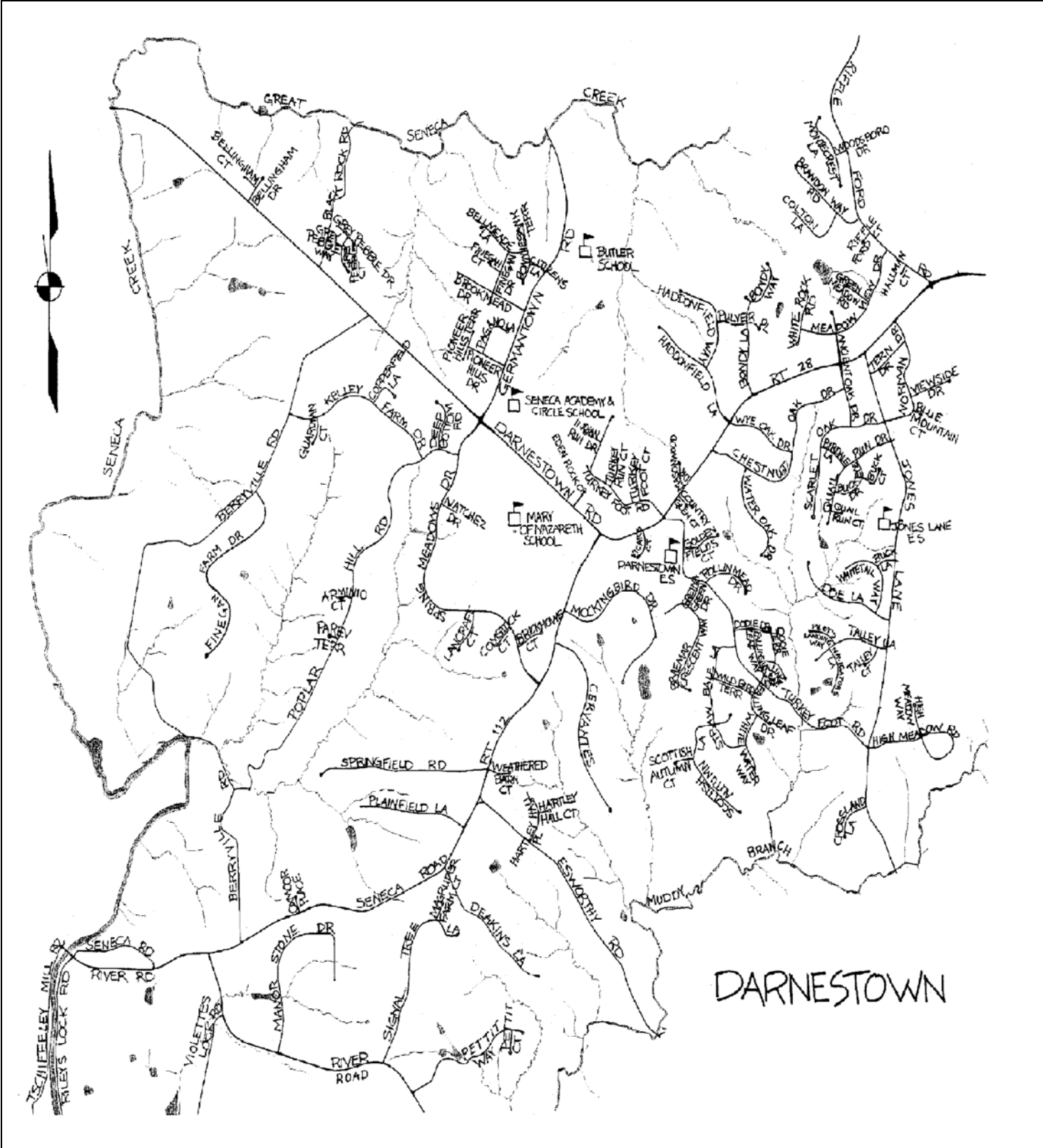
1-800-492-7122, ext. 3037 (toll free)
e-mail: nancy.king@house.state.md.us
fax: (410) 841-3003, (301) 858-3003



Charles E. Barkley
Democrat, District 39, Montgomery County

House Office Building, Room 413
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-3001, (301) 858-3001

1-800-492-7122, ext. 3001 (toll free)
e-mail: charles.barkley@house.state.md.us
fax: (410) 841-3009, (301) 858-3009



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 Terry & Linda Sweeney
 Rob & Janet Swisher
 Charles & Linda Szollosy
 Michael & Arlene Szwed
 John & Tammy Tabor
 Joe & Betty Tate
 Len & Martha Taylor
 Tom & Barbara Taylor
 The Church of Jesus Christ of
 Latter Day Saints
 Gary & Berenice Theurer
 Tom & Sandi Thompson Sr
 John & Covel Thornton
 Kaitlin Tillan
 Wyatt & Susan Tinsley
 Sonny & Sunita Tohon
 Clark Torell
 Gholam & EffieTorshizi
 Tom & Lisa Tracy
 Kha & Mai Tran

Randy & Barbara Tripp
 Michael & Nancy Tschiltz
 Scott & Jeannie Tucker
 William W. Tullner M.D.
 Peter & Veronica Tunon
 Brian & Deb Tupa
 Sheri Turnbow
 Russell & Laura Turner
 Neil & Noel Tyra
 Carl & Kelly Tyree
 Paul & Gina Tyshing
 Robin J. Uler
 Sydney & Jing Ulvick
 Michael & Viviana Urban
 Anna Van Rooy MD
 Jim & Karen Veirs
 Raul & Cristina Vera
 Alexander & Marcia Waddell
 Robert & Paige Waffle
 Steven & Ernette Wagner
 Bob & Stephanie Walker
 Steven & Maria War
 Michael & Christii Watkins
 Michael & Sue Watson
 Dean & Lisa Watts
 Thomas & Michele Weaverling
 Jeff & Cassie Weintraub
 Alberto & Joanna Weissmuller
 Susan Welsh
 Tom & Michelle Wentz
 James G. & Nea S. Wheeler
 Tom & Janet Wheeler

Todd & Theresa While
 Sandra Whipp
 Mark & Peggy White
 Mark & Sharon Whiting
 Bud & Jackie Wildman
 Ed & Ginny Willever
 Bill & Cindy Williams
 Steve Williams
 Jim & Margaret Wilson
 Fred & Felecia Wilson
 Charles & Daneec Wilson
 Karen Wilson
 Tim & Korin Wilson
 Joe & Jeannette Wisniewski
 Carl & Fe Wlotzko
 Rob & Diane Woods
 Ralph & Judy Wright
 Jenny Wu & Robert Lingfu
 Tom & Kathy Yarmas
 Steven & Carla Yegher
 Paul Yost
 Larry & Christine Youngblut
 Michael Zazanis
 Abe Zeitoun
 Christopher Zhao
 Terrence & Patricia Zic
 Walter & Deborah Ziffer
 Shawn & Shida Ziglari
 Juan & Donna Zumbado
 Robert & Linda Zweibel

Darnestown Flag Program

We need the community's assistance with our Flag Program. Flags are frequently ruined because tree branches tear them. We are asking those who have trees where the flag brackets are located to please prune them.



Also, if you find a flag or see a problems developing with a flag, like a bracket coming loose or a flag tangled in a tree,

please contact Jim Clifford at at 301-605-6464.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

Gaithersburg Area Newcomers Club

by Elizabeth Cookson

Gaithersburg Area Newcomers Club welcomes everyone from the Darnestown area. A welcome coffee is held the second Friday of every month at a private home. The Club offers bridge, book club, dining, Wednesday trips to explore places of interest in the area and many other activities. Activities go on all month, during the day and in the evening. For information, please call 301-253-9596.

NEWCOMERS

Are You a New Resident of Darnestown?

If you are a new resident of Darnestown, welcome to our neighborhood! The information on this page should be helpful and will introduce you to some things that give Darnestown a sense of community.

The Darnestown Civic Association, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation originally formed in 1967, which represents the interests of Darnestown area residents in all matters pertaining to the welfare of Darnestown and its residents. The general purposes of the DCA are explained in its bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. Payment of annual dues (\$25 per individual or family) enables you to vote on issues during Town Meetings.

The fiscal year of the DCA is July 1 through June 30, and annual dues billing statements are mailed out at the end of June each year, although dues may be paid any time during a given year. Current officers of the DCA are listed in *The Little Acorn*.

Mailing Address:

Darnestown Civic Association
14100 Darnestown Road
Darnestown, MD 20874

Boundaries: Since Darnestown is not incorporated, it has no official boundaries. The activities and focus of the DCA include an area of some 12 square miles, centered approximately at the intersection of Maryland Routes 28 and 112 (Darnestown Road and Seneca Road). Maps are available at Town Meetings.

The Little Acorn newsletter is published quarterly, in March, June, September and December. Its name derives from its origin as a tiny newsletter in the Ancient Oak subdivision more than 20 years ago. Now it is mailed (3rd class) to every residential address that we have in our DCA data base. Volunteers, based on information from membership remittance form and our Welcome Committee, maintain this name and address file. The newsletter should arrive in your mailbox early in each of the above months. If you don't receive an issue, please contact the editor or any DCA officer. Publication of *The Little Acorn* is entirely a volunteer effort except for the printing and mailing.

Town Meetings are held quarterly by the DCA, usually on the 2nd or 3rd Thursday of March, June, September and December in the Fellowship Hall of the Darnestown Presbyterian Church at the intersection of Route 28 and Turkey Foot Road. Meetings are scheduled for 7:30 p.m., but are not called to order until 7:45 to allow some time for meeting neighbors, etc. Each issue of *The Little Acorn* features an announcement about the upcoming Town Meeting.

Annual Meeting and Election of DCA Officers coincide with the Town Meeting in June. Nominations are announced in June edition of *The Little Acorn* in advance of the Annual Meeting in accordance with the bylaws of the GDCA.

Telephone Directory: Every two years, the DCA publishes a directory of residents' names, addresses and phone numbers and mails it to every residential address in our database. To obtain a copy of the Directory, call Marsha Crowley at 301-840-9428. They are only available while supplies last.

Organizations, Clubs, Groups, PTAs, etc. provide much of the social interaction that give any area a sense of community. Below are many of Darnestown's organizations:

Barnesville School

21830 Peach Tree Road
Barnesville, MD 20838
301-972-0341
Jaralyn Hough, Head of School

Boy Scout Troop 1094

Scoutmaster Bud Wildman (301-990-8318)

Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts

Cathy Sharpe (301-519-9520)

Butler School

15951 Germantown Road
Beckie Hardie, Academic Head (301-977-6600)

Circle School/Seneca Academy

15601 Germantown Road
Darnestown, MD 20874
Jodi Thurmond, Head of School (301-869-3728)

Darne Bloomers Garden Club

Louise Evans, President
Betsy Kingman, Membership (301-921-1988)

Darnestown Civic Association

14100 Darnestown Road
Darnestown, MD 20874
Lisa Patterson Troike, President (301-548-0999)

Darnestown Elementary School

15030 Turkey Foot Road
Darnestown, MD 20878
Laura Colgary, Principal (301-840-7157)

Darnestown Swim and Racquet Club

P. O. Box 3574
Darnestown, MD 20885
Alice Kimball, Membership (301-977-4785)

Friends of the Library-Quince Orchard Chapter

Membership, Elizabeth Cookson (301-869-6326)

Jones Lane Elementary School

15110 Jones Lane
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Carole Sample, Principal (301-840-8160)

Lakelands Park Middle School

1200 Main Street
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Joseph Sacco, Principal (301-670-1400)

Mary of Nazareth School

14131 Seneca Road
Darnestown, MD 20874
Michael J. Friel, Principal (301-869-0940)

Quince Orchard Community Library

Quince Orchard Road
240-777-0200

Northwest High School

12501 Richter Farm Road
Germantown, Maryland 20874
Sylvia Morrison, Principal (301-601-4660)

Quince Orchard High School

15800 Quince Orchard Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Mr. Daniel Shea, Principal (301-840-4686)

Ridgeview Middle School

16600 Raven Rock Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Dr. Carol Levine, Principal (301-840-4770)

Acardia Publishing Is Looking for Historical Darnestown Pictures

Arcadia Publishing would like to publish a pictorial history of Darnestown. Geri McCarthy and Bruce Deppa are coordinating the information for this publication. To complete this project more historical photos are needed.

If you have any photos that could be used in this publication, please contact Geri McCarthy at gerimccarthy@yahoo.com or Bruce Deppa at brucedeppa@comcast.net.

Darnestown Civic Association, Inc.
14100 Darnestown Road
Darnestown, MD 20874

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