

Harwood Park Neighborhood Improvement Association March 2004 Notes

A meeting was held on Thursday, March 11, 2004, at the Harwood Park United Methodist Church Hall, from 7-7:45 pm. Gail Sigel chaired this month's meeting.

Thank You: Mike Barnett and Kathy Kemp-Abrams for posting our neighborhood meeting signs; Ron Godfrey, Linda Grimes, Karen Keller, M. Pauline Lisle, John & Leo Neault, Dave Theilman and the **One Stop Shop** for allowing us to post community signs on their properties; George Bowers for making reminder phone calls about our meeting; Tracy Lowe for baking, bringing & selling cookies and beverages to raise funds; Gwenn Bowers for helping everyone sign in; Jill Lloyd for securing the hall for us; Timmy Raines for picking up litter at our neighborhood park; Tracy Lowe & Jill Lloyd for helping with set up and clean up of these meetings; **members of the Harwood Park United Methodist Church** for their generosity in letting us use their hall for our community meeting, and especially those who distribute community news to other neighbors.

Guest speaker: Sara Jacobson-Hartman, Jeanne's Gourmet Foods

Bay Wise Maryland Yardstick pamphlet, trash/recycling and other county brochures available in back with Gwenn

Updates:

Free samples of cookies were shared with meeting attendees to give samples of Jeanne's Gourmet products, which we will be using for our first official fund-raiser. Proceeds from sales of these products will go to purchase community signs and recreation activities or flowers at the park. Fund-raiser sheets and booklets were distributed to all attendees, asking them to please consider buying some of the products.

A special thank you and acknowledgment of appreciation was given to our long-time neighbor and activist for Harwood Park and Elkridge, Mike Barnett. Mike and his family have purchased their parents' property off of Montgomery Road and will be moving out of Harwood Park.

One of our neighbors has a baby (Baby Jordan) who is in need of monetary donations to help him with his journey back to wellness. A flier was distributed on the back of agenda, which stated Jordan's Journey and listed future fund-raisers to help support this cause.

No GECA update was available from Dave Grabowski in his absence.

Plans for a new traffic light at US Route 1 have been delayed due to additional right of way needed by the State Highway administration. They are currently waiting to receive paperwork authorizing the use of the additional property needed to install power lines from the owner of the Capital Mobile Home Park.

The Loudon Avenue sidewalk reconstruction is underway. If you have problems or concerns, contact John Schultz, Howard County inspector, for this project at 410-313-1853.

A ribbon cutting ceremony for the new park arboretum will be held on Thursday, April 7. A copy of the Arboretum layout was available for neighbors to view at the meeting.

The first park clean up of this year has been **rescheduled** for first Saturday in April (April 3).

A copy of the capital budget worksheet which explains the plans for Troy Hill Regional Park located off of US Route 1 and Route 100 was available for neighbors to view at the meeting.

Most of the major Internet search engines (except Google) are now picking up our community's web site. Thank you Tracy Lowe for sharing your web site expertise and advice for us.

Last year, based on a strong recommendation from the Bill Malone, former Howard County Traffic Engineering Division Chief (who worked closely with this group over the past few years), the Harwood Park Traffic Action Committee planned to request for grant funding for the installation of a sidewalk on one side of Athol Avenue, from Loudon Avenue up to the Bascom Creek Bridge, over top of the existing drainage ditch. GECA, a separate community organization, working with Howard County put in a grant request to install a sidewalk on Athol Avenue. However, it was discovered by our association that the amount of the actual GECA grant request was for the installation of a new sidewalk on one side of Athol Avenue (closest to the railroad tracks), from Loudon Avenue to Woodburn Avenue. Although this new sidewalk would be in the county's "right of way," the sidewalk would cut into the Athol Avenue neighbors' existing property, taking away front yard space, leaving the drainage ditch in place. This was not the plan recommended by the traffic action committee and neighbors were not polled for this new option. As a result, a meeting was held with the county engineer explaining that this was not a viable option. New options that were proposed by county engineers in order to enhance children, walker and bike safety include:

(1) sidewalk over existing drainage ditch with new "drainage system" installed from Loudon Ave. to the bridge (very expensive and highly unlikely you will get funding); (2) sidewalk installed next to ditch; or (3) paint striping for a new bike/walk lane.

A consensus for the sidewalk issue was to put down lines on Melrose and Athol Avenues, but a survey of owners on both streets should be contacted prior to making any recommendation to Howard County.

A sign up sheet was passed around for neighbors interested in getting involved in some new "Harwood Park's "FUN" activities.

A new 2004 Crime Watch Committee is being revised and led by Linda Grimes.

A volunteer is needed to lead the spring community clean up weekend.

It was suggested by Dave Grabowski, representative for Harwood Park for the Greater Elkridge Community Association and current President of GECA, that our association needed officers in order to be considered an official "community organization" that was recognizable by others. In keeping with that suggestion, an election was held. By majority vote, the following neighbors were elected as official 2004 Harwood Park Neighborhood Improvement Association officers:

President – Betsy McMillion; Vice President – Gail Sigel; Secretary/Treasurer – Tracy Lowe

In addition, it was noted that Dave Grabowski was the GECA 2004 Representative for Harwood Park.

New elections will be held in December for 2005 officers.

Sat., April 3- Park Clean Up – 9 am
Wed., April 7 – ceremony for new Arboretum in Harwood Community Park – time to be announced
Thurs., April 8 – Community Meeting
Sat., June 12 – Park Clean Up off Woodburn Ave. - 9 am
Sat., Sept. 11 – Park Clean Up off Woodburn Ave. - 9 am
Sat., Nov. 13 – Park Clean Up off Woodburn Ave. - 9 am

Next meeting will be on 2nd Thursday of the month, on April 8, 2004, at 7 pm, at the Harwood Park Methodist Church hall.

Web site: <http://www.geocities.com/harwoodparkelkridge>

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