



# ROLAND PARK NEWS

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## Serving the Customer: Schneider's Key to Success

By Sally Foster

Imagine picking up the telephone—back when there were party lines—and ordering a rib roast, a sack of potatoes and a bag of onions, and having them delivered to you in a horse-drawn wagon. You would have stored the potatoes in a pantry or cold cellar and you would have put the meat in an icebox, where large blocks of ice would have kept it cold.

Such was life in Roland Park and Tuxedo Park in the late 1890s, when Andrew Schneider opened his grocery store on Wyndhurst Avenue.

Jeff Pratt, who owns Schneider's Hardware store today, can tell you stories that have been passed down through his family. His great-grandfather, Andrew—the one with a handlebar mustache—came from Germany in 1896 to open a meat market. Apparently, another family member had started a grocery store in Baltimore and Andrew thought it sounded like a good idea. Andrew's specialty was meats, but he carried grocery provisions as well.

The store was on the second floor of a house at 700 Wyndhurst Avenue, with steps that led up from the street. The

house was large enough to accommodate family members, who lived on the third and fourth floors.

Jeff's grandfather, Jake, started working in the store when he was 13. Jeff said his grandfather never really liked the grocery business. He would go downtown to the fish market to stock up on supplies with two other grocers, Victor Cohen—the famous Mr. Victor—the founder of Eddie's of Roland Park on Roland Avenue, and John Heidelberg, the founder of Heidelberg's Grocery on West Cold Spring Lane.

There were a few things that bothered Jake. For one, World War II broke out and some foods were rationed. A lot of his regular customers asked for favors or more than their share. The second problem for Jake was the development of grocery chains, and the third was that produce, like lettuce, would spoil and he would have to throw things away.

In 1950, Jake opened up the first floor of the house as a hardware store. For a while, he leased the second floor to someone else who ran a grocery store, but this proved to be less than satisfactory and he didn't renew the lease.



In a photo of Schneider's Grocery from 1935, you can see hams hanging from large meat hooks, loaves of Schmidt's Old Home bread, fresh produce, cookies and tins of vegetables, as well as one of the Schneiders about to wield a cleaver on a large chunk of meat. Photo courtesy of Jeff Pratt



Jeff Pratt has used his corner sidewalk on Wyndhurst and Summit Avenues to display a beautiful array of flowers and plants since 2000. Photo: Sally Foster

Many people in Roland Park will remember Jeff's father, Paul Pratt, who married one of the Schneider

# Lake Roland and Robert E. Lee Memorial Park

By Nancy Worden Horst

The area encompassing Robert E. Lee Memorial Park was part of an 18th century land grant from Lord Baltimore to several Maryland families. Lake Roland, now the centerpiece of the park, was formed in the 1850s as a reservoir for the City of Baltimore. Long familiar to Roland Park residents, who could travel by trolley along Roland Avenue to Lakeside Park, Lake Roland was for many years the scene of picnics, boating, hiking and fishing.

It was not until the 1940s that the land surrounding the 54-acre lake was consolidated to form the Baltimore City-owned Robert E. Lee Memorial Park, with its nearly 500 acres of woodland, wetlands, serpentine barrens, rare plants



The 1876 G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Baltimore and its environs shows a mostly rural landscape with farming and industrial concerns paramount. Image courtesy Nancy Horst

and rocky plateaus. In 1992, most of the park was declared a National Historic District—the Lake Roland Historic District—in recognition of its historic elements, which are primarily the stone dam structure and valve house, old railroad tracks, retaining walls, and stone bridges, trestles and abutments.

## New Management

By the 1990s, Baltimore City could not adequately care for the Park. An effort by Baltimore County citizens and County elected officials, aided by the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association, led to an agreement whereby the park would be managed by Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks.

The County closed the park last year to allow major renovations

to be made, including replacing a bridge over the Jones Falls, repairing shoreline erosion, building a 1-acre dog park, providing pedestrian access from the nearby MTA parking lot, and upgrading roadways, trails and parking.

The new park will open in fall 2011, with County administrative and maintenance staff, seasonal naturalists and other support personnel to help educate park users and ensure safety and adherence to rules governing park use.

## The Nature Council

The Robert E. Lee Park Nature Council (RELPMC) is a volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to the stewardship of Robert E. Lee Park for recreation and educational purposes. The RELPMC works with the Department of Recreation and Parks to maintain, preserve and protect the natural environment and historic structures in the park, providing a legacy for future generations.

As part of its mission, the RELPMC's board and its volunteers, in cooperation with Department of Recreation and Parks, have organized committees to develop membership, prepare trail maps, promote recreational and educational activities, establish a website, and prepare other informational and promotional materials.

Planned recreational activities include flat-water boating on Lake Roland, scheduled swift-water canoeing and kayaking below the dam, and canoe and kayak classes on the lake. Bikers plan to repair trails and establish guidelines for biking, while hikers and runners are helping to identify, mark and stabilize trails. The dog park committee has named its area "Paw Point" and has designed a membership-only program for licensed off-leash dogs with an appropriate fee schedule and access controls.

Programs are intended to educate adults and school groups about the park's long and interesting history, as well as its unique natural resources. Lake Roland provides an opportunity to inform the public about water safety and improving water quality. Bird

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watching groups and nature experts are ready to lead nature walks. A children's committee is identifying areas suited to programs that focus on creativity and physical exercise, while educating youngsters about the natural environment and its preservation.

The RELPNC and its volunteers, in partnership with the County, hope to produce a Master Plan for the park, help maintain trails and historical and environmental assets, and inform park users about their role in the stewardship of this public legacy. Park and lake clean-up activities will be scheduled as part of these efforts.

Additional programs and events will encourage public involvement, inform people about the park and its resources, solicit volunteers



A marker designates the park as a project of the Baltimore Water Works. Photo courtesy Nancy Horst

and raise funds to help support park programs and improvements. Please look for our announcements as the summer progresses, and let us know how you can help us reach these goals.

The RELPNC board meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Jefferson Building at 105 Chesapeake Avenue in Towson. Board meetings are open to the public and we welcome volunteers.

RELPC is seeking members to support and underwrite its efforts. Joining the Council now shows your support of this undertaking



Lake Roland was formed in the 1850s as a reservoir for Baltimore. Photo: Neil Meyerhoff

and ensures the successful the start-up of park programs. Member benefits will include a newsletter with exclusive member offers and discounted rates for youth, family and adult programs (excluding dog park membership). Annual memberships will run from April 1st through March 31st. Join during 2011 and receive an annual membership bonus—your membership will extend until March 31st, 2013.

For more information, please contact Beatha Davis at [bdavis@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:bdavis@baltimorecountymd.gov) or 410-887-4156. ❖

## Welcome New Neighbors! (February through April)

Michael Abraham and Nicole Namour-Abraham,  
103 Hawthorn Road

Hames and Diana Matthews, 4824 Keswick Road

We'd like to thank the Crazy Man Restaurant Group for helping us welcome our new neighbors. We hope these new Roland Parkers enjoy the gift of one dozen bagels from Roland Park Bagel Co., one free large pizza from S'ghetti Eddie's and one free tall stack of pancakes from Miss Shirley's Café, Roland Park.

## New Summer menu items available!

Ask about our pancake of the month!  
All fresco dining available uptown & downtown.



Miss Shirley's  
CAFÉ

Voted best breakfast, lunch & restaurant for visitors!

- Baltimore Magazine's Readers' Poll 2011

### Roland Park

513 West Cold Spring Lane  
410-889-5272

### Inner Harbor

750 East Pratt Street  
410-528-5373

### Annapolis - Coming Soon!

Hours Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Sat. & Sun. 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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