

---

---

# The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association, Inc.

---

---

May 1999

## Land Trust Details to be Presented at May 25 Annual Meeting

For years, our extended neighborhood has sought to retain its unique, unspoiled qualities in the face of the pressures of land development. Nearly every issue that comes before the association's board is somehow entangled in land use issues. Usually, the neighborhood and the board are reacting to a matter. Seldom does the opportunity arise for the neighborhood at large and the Board to be proactive. But the opportunity to do so is now here.

This year's Annual Meeting marks the kickoff of RRLRAIA's official program to encourage the preservation of undeveloped land. As most of you know, there are very substantial tax benefits available to a landowner who chooses to restrict further development of a piece of property. To preserve our neighborhood's open qualities, the Board has recently joined forces with an organization called Land Preservation Trust to encourage landowners to avail themselves of these generous tax provisions.

Land Preservation Trust was formed in 1984; its goal then and now is the preservation of undeveloped land, with the trust's primary focus being land in Baltimore County. The members of its board include Skip Cochran, Ned Halle, Dorsey Brown, Mike Hankin, Nancy Martin, Charlie Fenwick, and Pedie Killebrew.

When our Board began searching for a partner in our goal of preserving open space in our neighborhood, LPT's size and focus made it immediately attractive. LPT has been instrumental in establishing conservation easements on many tracts of land, large and small. The main

thrust of its efforts has been to our north, but LPT has done properties within the RRLRAIA boundaries, and is in fact now in the process of establishing a conservation easement on a property in our Joppa Road corridor. Unlike some other land trust organizations, LPT is willing to work with landowners whose developable land is quite modest in size. So long as an unused development right exists, the property will be considered, whether it is your backyard, acres of woods, or anything in between.

The program that our Board is sponsoring through LPT is a conservation easement program. There are many ways to conserve open space. But for the needs of our community, the most attractive and flexible is the charitable donation of a conservation easement, particularly for landowners who wish to retain title to the land and to continue to use and enjoy it.

The basic premise of the conservation easement is this: open space is a public good, but even landowners who might like to preserve their open land find themselves tempted to develop it because of the profits to be made and because property taxes on developable land are so high. So, to encourage you to surrender your valuable development right on your open land, the government offers the same tax incentives that spur other charitable donations. You donate your development right and receive federal and state tax deductions for the value of the right you surrender. For a residential building lot in our area, that value can easily be \$100,000. Your donation is deducted from income. Any portion that cannot be deducted immedi-

ately because of IRS limits on annual donations can be carried over to succeeding years, like any other charitable donation.

### The Nuts and Bolts of our Program:

If you have a property with unused development potential, start by contacting the RRLRAIA Board. We will act as a liaison between you and the LPT so that your costs are kept to a minimum.

To streamline and standardize the process (and keep the donor's costs to a minimum) the Board has agreed to act as a liaison between the landowner and LPT. The landowner fills out an application; the terms of the donation and use restrictions are settled upon; the property is appraised (landowner's cost); a fee is paid to LPT to defray its legal costs (generally about \$1,000); a deed is executed and recorded. Upon completion of the transaction, the landowner's conservation easement donation has been made, and the tax deduction is available. At this stage a modest monetary donation to LPT by the landowner will be strongly encouraged by the Board.

More information about whom to contact and how to get started will be available at the annual meeting.

### Annual Meeting

**Tuesday, May 25, 1999**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**Church of the Good Shepherd**

## May Day Cleanup a Huge Success

May 1st was bright and sunny, a perfect day for many in the neighborhood to dispose of broken, useless and strange objects which were hiding during the winter months. Eight 30 foot dumpsters were overflowing by the 1 p. m. closing time. At times, a line of overstuffed wagons, SUVs and even a convertible waited patiently as the volunteer board members practiced the art of packing every nook and cranny of the dumpsters in order to conserve the rapidly used up space. Here's the summary of junk:

Close to 16,000 pounds or 8 tons of trash was deposited in the three locations.

The largest object—a worn Victorian sofa

The smallest—a pile of tiny stones from a crumbled sidewalk

The oldest—a stack of Sunpapers dating back to 1952

Objects recycled into board member automobiles—22 (to remain unnamed)

For those association members who showed up at the Riderwood School dumpster site only to be greeted by a "There's no more room," we apologize. We underestimated the enthusiastic response we would get in that location. We hope you didn't have to wait long for the next empty dumpster to appear.

Dumpsters at both the Ruxton Center and Falls Road, north of the Wawa at the entrance to the light rail lot, experienced slow but steady business. Sarah Lord, Bruce Boswell and Shirley Sussman were on hand to help with junk disposal, chat with neighbors and gobble coffee and donuts brought in by roving ambassador, Barry Truax.

The Lake Roland dumpster saw less business, but that just left a moment for Harry Lord to train his binoculars on the resident yellow crowned night heron and several visiting warblers.

### Second Annual Lake Roland Clean Up

This year the Lake Roland clean up began at 8 a.m. when Bryan Costa and Ricky Cohen, who have headed the St. Paul's School environmental awareness club for two years, showed up with fellow seniors Denny Anderson and Matt Widerman. Where debris naturally eddies up in the top lobe of the lake, along the path just west of the railroad tracks they set about getting soggy by removing soda cans and bottles, hypodermic needles and unending bits of styrofoam.

At 10:30 another band of volunteers rolled up its sleeves, including Dick and Helga Morrow, Ann Squitieri and Elizabeth Pool and RRLRAIA executive director Peggy Squitieri. The litter was surrounded at this point, since first Jonna and Fred Lazarus and later Katy Meacham and Brooke

Chrzan attacked from offshore in Sarah Lord's Mad River canoe.

At 2:20 p.m. the final assault of the day included Patrick Baron, Spencer Jamison, Peter Whitney and Bill, William, Katy and Thomas McConnell in several boats. Grabbing an overhanging tree branch while reaching for trash, Tom found himself hanging on for dear life as the boat moved on.

The association board extends thanks to everyone known and unknown who got into the spirit of the day and put trash in its place. These days Lake Roland sparkles.

We would ask those of you who took advantage of the day for comments, criticisms and suggestions. Just call or drop a note to the association office.

The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association  
P. O. Box 204  
Riderwood, Maryland 21139

Telephone/Fax: 410-377-4700  
email: ruxrider@bcpl.net

### Thanks To You, It's Going To Be An All-Way Stop

As we reported in our last newsletter, the State Highway Administration agreed to hold off on their planned removal of the Bellona Avenue stop signs at the Ruxton Road bridge intersection until we had an opportunity to ask if you would prefer an all-way stop. Along with the 196 who wrote in "all-way" on our initial survey, 76 of you either changed your opinion or added your vote for an all-way stop. We passed this information along to the SHA. Even though the SHA would still prefer to remove the stop signs from Bellona, in response to our request they have agreed to make the all-way stop permanent. As our president pointed out in our last newsletter, it is important to make the call—"they" do listen.

## Keeping Up Appearances

In our daily hustle and bustle, we often overlook things that might be offensive to our neighbors. Please take a look at your property and try to see it as others see it.

Do you have a pile of brush tucked in the far corner of your back yard? It may be out of your sight, but not your neighbor's.

Do you put your trash cans out early and neglect to put them away as soon as the trash is collected?

Do you make sure your trash can lids are secured?

Do you put your pool towels over the front porch railing to dry?

Do you leave your children's toys in the front or side yard?

Most garages are more attractive with the door closed. Do you make sure yours is?

Do you make sure your lawn is maintained?

Do you make sure that your trees and bushes do not obscure walkways and the view of signs?

When making improvements to your home, do you realize that your neighbors may not appreciate the sound of machinery all weekend or late into the evening?

Do you store unwanted/discarded items within view of your neighbors?

We receive many calls from residents who are concerned about the appearance of our neighborhoods. They are in an uncomfortable position because they want to maintain a good relationship with their neighbors and we are in an uncomfortable position because we want to maintain a good relationship with our members.

If you have a problem that you feel is a code violation, please call Baltimore

County Code Enforcement at 410-887-3351 or 410-887-8099. If you would prefer to remain anonymous, write a letter without signing your name and send it to:

Baltimore County  
Code Enforcement  
111 W. Chesapeake Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21204

Another thing you can do to help maintain the appearance of our area is to call 410-887-3351, extension 7304 when you see those unsightly signs on utility poles. This is a code violation and it helps the County remove them quickly when we identify their locations.

Of course, please feel free to call our association office at 410-377-4700 for information and guidance.

## Proposed 1999/2000 Board of Governors

Barry Truax, President  
Herbert Mittenenthal, 1st Vice President  
Biff Hearn, 2nd Vice President  
Harry Gormley, Treasurer  
Judith Wright, Secretary

Bruce Boswell  
Michael Chasney  
Lynn Clifford  
Joseph Coale, III  
Alan Edelman  
Roselyn Evans  
Liz Bowie Fesperman  
Gene Funk  
Thomas George  
Sophie Gerard  
Brett Goodrich  
William Heller  
Rick Huether  
Nancy Hill  
Sarah Lord  
Cecily Matthai  
Frederick Rasmussen  
Tate Showers  
David Whitman

**Q: What Equals 2,187?**

**A: The Number of Bikes Stolen in Baltimore County Last Year**

There are ways to help make sure your bike does not become a statistic. First, call the Towson Precinct (410-887-5933) to find out when you can have your bike engraved and registered (free). If your bike is stolen and recovered, you have documentation to help the police release your bike quicker. Another good idea is to have a photograph of your bike on hand. Finally, use a heavy duty lock to secure your bike. Be sure to lock sheds and garages.

If someone approaches you and tries to steal your bike (and please tell your children this), GIVE IT UP. Your life is much more valuable than your bike. If your bike is stolen, get a good description of the person. The police are more apt to catch the person if they have that description. It is illegal in Baltimore County for two people to ride on one bicycle--many times, two people ride into a neighborhood on one bicycle and leave with two. If you see *anything or anyone* suspicious, please call 911. The police really do appreciate our help and if the situation turns out to be innocent, it doesn't hurt to have a police car in the neighborhood occasionally.

## Zoning/Development Updates

- Manor Care settled with Baltimore County on the purchase of the property at 8101 Bellona Avenue. This site will be developed with an assisted living facility.
- Approval has been granted for an additional access road to Gilchrist Center for Hospice Care with limited access to GBMC. This road will be directly across from the west entrance of the Versailles Apartments. This will slightly relieve traffic on Charles Street.
- A 40+/- unit housing development is proposed near the intersection of Lake Avenue and Falls Road. The development is in the city, but access will be off Lake Avenue via Altamont.
- Boy's Latin is planning an addition to Williams Hall.
- A request for a zoning change has been filed for the Potts & Callahan property on the west side of Falls Road, 600' south of Hollins Road. This site is currently zoned DR 3.5 and MLR. The zoning change request is for DR 3.5, MLR, and ML (please call our office if you would like a more detailed explanation).

If you hear about a proposed development or see a zoning variance sign posted in our area, please let us know.

## Grasscycling Reduces Waste

Turf experts say leaving short clippings promotes a greener, healthier lawn and does not cause thatch. It also fertilizes your lawn naturally--good news for the Chesapeake Bay and Baltimore County taxpayers.

Last spring's grasscycling public education campaign in the Towson-Timonium area (21,000 households) produced impressive results. It saved an estimated 420 tons of grass from having to be collected and composted. The investment of about \$14,000 in grasscycling education avoided nearly \$24,000 in collection and processing costs --a net savings of \$10,000. If you are grasscycling, thank you. If you are not, please call 410-887-2000 and request a brochure entitled *Why Bag Your Grass? Your Complete Guide to Lawn Care.*

**The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland  
Area Improvement Association, Inc.  
P. O. Box 204  
Riderwood, Maryland 21139**

---

Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Riderwood, MD  
Permit No. 43

---

---

***Annual Meeting  
Tuesday, May 25  
7:30 p.m.  
Church of the Good Shepherd Hall***

---