

SUMMER 2005

# Neighborhood News

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Kimberly Warren

We held our annual meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> at Church of the Good Shepherd. The membership elected four new board members. We welcome Martha Bishai, Ridervale Road (Area 4), Kris Culp, Charles Ridge Road (Area 1), David Meese, Rolandvue Avenue (Area 2) and Beth Purvis, Army Road (Area 6). The Board elected the following officers: Kimberly Warren, President; Jamie Cahn, First Vice President; Fran Anderson, Second Vice President; Sibley Classen, Treasurer; and Judith Wright, Secretary.

Many members turned out to hear Nancy Pentz, project manager for the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management. She detailed Baltimore County's new environmental initiative, the Small Watershed Action Plan, that will address how to protect and improve the streams in our neighborhoods, particularly Roland Run, Towson Run and Lake Roland. Jeffrey Budnitz, a RRLRAIA board member, spoke about the deteriorating state of Robert E. Lee Park and what we can do to ensure its future. Baltimore County Police Sergeant Steve Moffett reported on crime in our neighborhoods. Overall, he reported that statistics indicate crime is lower in the county this year, but he emphasized the importance of the collaboration between his office and citizens in apprehending criminals and preventing crimes.

I look forward to working with our new and current board members in the coming year to address some of the issues that were raised at our annual meeting. ■

## CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

Neighborhoods in the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland area are fortunate to have a relatively low crime rate. That is not to say that there are no crimes – you may remember armed robberies at Royal Farms on Joppa Road and Wilmington Country Store, and, more recently, thefts from homes in Riderwood in which the thief gained access through unlocked doors. There have been auto thefts and vandalism as well. In this issue we offer tips on specific crimes that police say blossom during the warm weather months and what precautions to take to protect yourself.

The Association sends out email alerts to our members notifying them of recent crimes and what to look for. If you do not receive these alerts and wish to be on the email chain, please notify the office at [ruxrider@bcpl.net](mailto:ruxrider@bcpl.net).

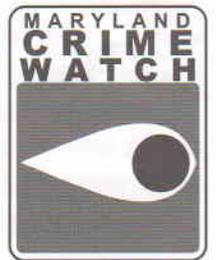
**REMEMBER** If you see anyone suspicious lurking around, call 911, and alert the police. An officer can cruise through the area to check things out, and you don't need to provide your name – the call can remain confidential. Community residents can ask for a free home security survey by calling the Towson Precinct's Community Outreach Team at 410-887-5933.

**DECEPTIVE THIEFS** Stay alert to anyone offering to perform home repair or asking to gain entry into your home for any reason. Deception burglars work in pairs. One member approaches the victim, pretending to be a contractor looking for work or a utility worker out to test a system. The criminal may also pose as a family friend of a relative or the friend of a neighbor. The criminal distracts the victim, while another moves through the house, seeking valuables. The elderly are the most probable targets of these criminals, and they may not realize that they have victimized for hours or days.

### TO PREVENT THE CHANCES OF BEING VICTIMIZED, FOLLOW THESE PRECAUTIONS

- Request identification from utility representatives - true representatives carry it and will gladly show it to you. Call their company for verification.
- Only rarely will legitimate home improvement companies solicit door-to-door. They usually distribute fliers or make phone calls - it's more cost-effective for them.
- Never pay in cash. Using a check keeps a record of the transaction and often provides identification of the person cashing the check.
- Beware of excuses such as "We just finished a job around the corner and had extra materials that we could offer you at a discounted price." Professional companies do not operate in that manner.
- Call police immediately if you notice someone unfamiliar or acting suspiciously.

**LOCK UP WHILE YOU SPRUCE UP** Keep doors and windows locked - even if you'll be outside for a short time. In years past, victims working in their yard discovered that thieves



Crime, continued on page 2

## ANIMAL CONTROL

RRRAIA receives complaints about dogs running loose and owners not cleaning up after their pets. Remember the law states you must clean up after your pet and not let any domesticated animals run loose.

We have received reports about rabid raccoons attacking humans and pets in Robert E. Lee Park, a city-owned park. Call Animal Control, Baltimore City at 410-396-4694 and call Baltimore County police at 911 to report suspicious animals.

*Animal Control depends on your close cooperation to solve animal problems in the community. If the neighbor's pet runs loose, deposits anything on your lawn or barks and howls, attempt to work the problem out with the neighbor before filing a formal complaint. If your neighbor complains about your pet, make every effort to cooperate. Once you make a formal complaint, Animal Control will visit or send out a warning letter, along with laws about responsible pet ownership. If the problem persists a few weeks after the letter or visit, call Animal Control to complete a sworn Affidavit of Complaint. Nuisance Animal violations may be written at that time.*---from the Animal Control Division website.



*This doggie enjoys running in the park, on a leash.*

**ANIMAL CONTROL DIVISION** 13800 Manor Road, Baldwin, MD 21013, 410-887-5961.

**RABIES VACCINATIONS** All dogs and cats must have rabies vaccinations and boosters. Call your vet or, to find out more about low-cost rabies vaccinations, call (410) 887-5961.

**SPAYING AND NEUTERING** Thousands of unwanted animals are born in Baltimore County each year. Most live short, homeless lives. We urge pet owners to have their pets spayed or neutered. Call (410) 885-5783 for a referral.

### ANIMAL LAWS BALTIMORE COUNTY CODE TITLE 6

- When off the owner's property, all dogs and cats must be walked on a leash. If chained outside, chains must have swivels. Chain collars may not be used, except when training.
- All dogs and cats over three months of age must be vaccinated against rabies.
- All dogs and cats must be licensed at four months of age. New pets and all animals moving into Baltimore County must be licensed within thirty days.
- All animals must be provided shelter for protection from wind, snow, rain, cold and the sun; plus daily food and water, in untippable bowls.
- Owners of female cats and dogs "in heat" must not leave their pets outside unattended. (Spaying female or neutering male animals is not required, it is recommended.)
- It is a violation of the law to allow dogs to bark excessively.
- If an animal bites someone, the owner and the bite victim must report the injury to the Police Department. You are responsible if your pet bites or injures another person or animal, or menaces people in the community.
- Owners are responsible for the removal of pet waste on public and private property.
- Do not abandon or neglect pets you cannot keep. Call Animal Control for assistance.
- Maryland law requires that any puppy or kitten sold or given away be at least eight weeks old. Baltimore County law requires anyone selling or giving away a puppy, kitten, dog or cat to provide a health certificate, signed by a licensed veterinarian, along with a statement indicating the animal's date of sale or transfer, description, and

immunizations record.

- Inadequate provision of food or water, unsanitary conditions, animal combat, cruelty and neglect are all considered animal abuse. ■

### BALTIMORE COUNTY ANIMAL INFORMATION

Animal Bites: Communicable Disease	410-887-2724
Animal Control Division	410-887-5961
Animal Shelter	410-887-5961
Animal Licensing, Towson	410-887-3630

entered through unlocked doors while they were outside. When you've finished yard work and are putting tools away, don't forget to lock the doors to garages, basements and sheds.

**NEIGHBORHOOD AWARENESS —THE KEY TO CRIME PREVENTION** Baltimore County police remind us that being a good neighbor is one of the best crime prevention tools. This is particularly true at this time of the year when criminals and con artists use the warm weather to take advantage of the elderly.

If you have elderly neighbors, consider checking on them, and keep an eye on their houses. If you see strangers sizing up your neighbors' home, something might be wrong. Watchful eyes in the neighborhood can spot criminals and alert police and the community. ■

### RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Want to construct a rain barrel that can save you up to 1,300 gallons of water during the summer months? Using rain barrels to gather water also reduces runoff on a homeowner's yard, to area watersheds and the Chesapeake Bay! Rain barrels:

- Conserve water during dry summer months
  - Reduce storm runoff into local streams
  - Lower your water bills
  - Rainwater is chlorine-free = greener gardens
  - Rain barrel water can be used to water plants and lawns
- RRRAIA can host a *rain barrel workshop* under the auspices of the Jones Falls Watershed Association. If we have interest from five to fifteen residents, a volunteer will show you how to construct rain barrels. The program is free and only takes a couple of hours. At the end, participants take home their own 55-gallon rain barrel. Help with installation is also available, if needed. Call **410-494-7757** if you are interested in attending a rain barrel workshop. ■

## A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CLOISTERS

Have you ever wandered into a deeply wooded area off Falls Road just south of Joppa Road – 0440 to be precise – to find yourself staring at a medieval structure that looks like it was built in another country and in another time? You have found The Cloisters, an estate completed in 1932 and bequeathed to the City of Baltimore by its original owners, Sumner and Dudrea Parker.

Baltimore's Office of Promotion and the Arts maintains the Cloisters for public rentals and special events. The cloistered garden and structure are designed around late medieval French and English architectural principles. Approximately 28,000 people visit each year, and several open houses make it easy for the curious to get up close and personal to take a look at one of the area's most unusual structures.

Sumner Parker (1881-1946) and Dudrea Parker (1883-1972), were Baltimore natives and graduates of The Johns Hopkins University. After their marriage in 1905, the Parkers traveled extensively throughout Europe and the United States collecting art works and artifacts, which they placed in the Cloisters and in another home at 913 St. Paul Street. The Parkers frequently opened both homes as museums for the public.

Mr. Parker was president of Armstrong and Parker Company, an ornamental ironwork concern that specialized in balconies and gates. Some of the company's ironwork can still be seen at the Cloisters and around the city.

Taking its name from the cloistered, or covered, walkway surrounding the garden, the Cloisters blends several architectural elements and styles. The massive walls and stones of the roof are all composed of native Butler stone, some of which was quarried right on the estate. The interior beams are oak, walnut and chestnut, selected from trees grown on the estate and hand-hewn by Wylie Ingram, a woodworker and craftsman originally from North Carolina.

Most of the decorative ironwork was designed by Mr. Parker and was executed in his ironworks, including the railing of the four-story spiral stair tower. The carved stone doorways in the gallery and the chapel are Italian Renaissance. An elaborate door leading to the cloistered garden is from a 16th century Veronese house and features an antique stained glass window. The gallery garden doors and the windows in the chapel and the solarium, on the other hand, are from the renowned Baltimore Gothic Revival mansion, Glen Ellen, once located near the Loch Raven reservoir.

The original estate windmill was a studio for Mr. Parker. After

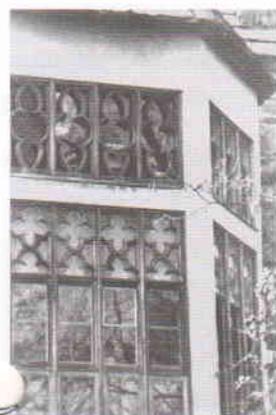


Photo: BCPL - Legacy web site.

View of one of the many spectacularly detailed windows of the home. Photographer: Frederick J. Hoffman, 1983.



Photo: The Cloisters web site.

An example of the fine stained glass details found throughout the house.



Photo: The Cloisters web site.

A gargoyle is patiently waiting for your visit.

adapted by Candice Dalrymple



Photo: Phil Bilzor

The Cloisters was originally the home of Sumner and Dudrea Parker.

it was destroyed by fire in 1940, it was replaced by the one now standing. This served as quarters for the groundskeeper and pumped water for the swimming pool.

These days, the Cloisters provides a dramatic setting for weddings, receptions, wine tastings, and other social events under the leadership of The Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts. Several summer events are planned – in July, three, week-long acting workshops for children 8–12 and live theatre performances featuring the Baltimore Shakespeare Festival's talented actors on Wednesday evenings.

For more information on these activities, visit [www.promotionandarts.com](http://www.promotionandarts.com), or call 410-752-8632. Also, check out <http://www.cloisterscastle.com>. You will find a list of open house dates when you can stroll the grounds and see the details. (The information in this article was adapted from the Cloisters web site.) ■

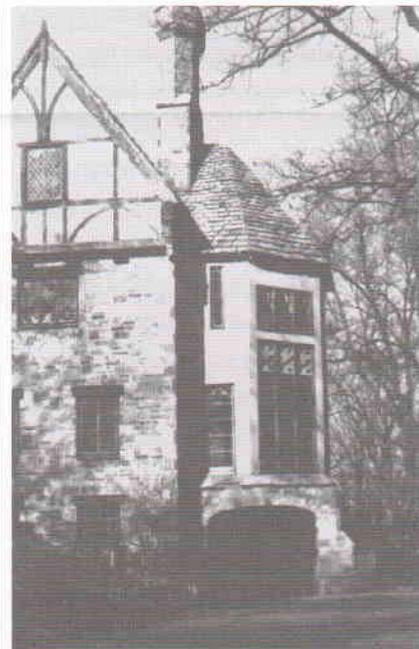


Photo: BCPL - Legacy web site

An example of Gothic Revival architecture. Photo credit: Ottenheimer, 1940s, photographer, Frederick J. Hoffman.

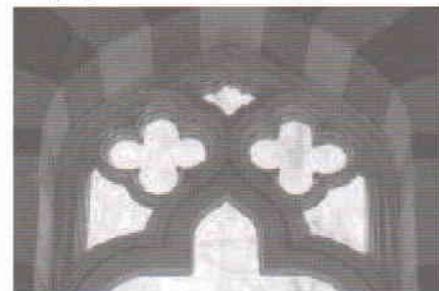


Photo: The Cloisters web site.

A wood detail of one of the many windows in the house.

## ZONING/DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

You may have noticed a proliferation of houses at the intersection of Bellona Avenue at Dunlora Road. These houses are a direct result of Baltimore County's efforts to advance a policy of 'infill development' – building on small parcels in established neighborhoods or, in some cases, tearing down older homes on large lots to construct several houses in their place.

By concentrating residential development in the older, established areas rather than 'sprawling' outward into the valleys and farmlands, the county is building on strict rural land-preservation efforts begun in the early 1970s when it established the Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL), to set limits on the extension of sewer and water.

Infill can be a good thing – building homes where there is existing infrastructure such as roads, sewer and water connections lessens the pressure for suburban and rural sprawl. Problems arise when new homes are built in existing neighborhoods without consideration for existing housing styles or without regard for suitable siting.

Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association believes the future of our community depends on taking small, but positive, steps to restrict inappropriate infill. One step was the establishment of a Design Review Panel created legislatively by Councilman Kevin Kamenetz for neighborhoods within the boundaries of Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association. The legislation, applicable to new building, seeks to remedy this situation by ensuring that infill housing contributes to, not detracts from, the fabric of our older neighborhoods.

Homes built on vacant land with 'unused density' are a concern. But neighborhood residents also have questions about homes being built on environmentally constrained land – parcels with wetlands, steep slopes or woods.

RRLRAIA is working with our elected officials and county agencies to institute a process for neighborhood notification or input as the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management considers whether or not to grant waivers to build on such parcels. RRLRAIA is advocating for a change in the process to include comment from those people who already live in the neighborhood and are familiar with problems such as flooding, siltation and stream erosion. DEPRM could then be alerted to conditions that may

not be readily apparent, and, in the long run, everyone would have a better product.

As the cost of raw land in our inner suburban community has risen dramatically, we continue to see more and more infill development. To counter inappropriate building we must continue to work with Baltimore County to ensure that neighborhood residents are informed, aware and involved in new development and redevelopment of our community. ■

## WORKING WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Your community association maintains constructive ties and ongoing communications with our elected representatives at the state and local level. We routinely advise our County Council representatives and State Delegates of matters that affect our member communities. Our representatives, in turn, have advocated for us on issues ranging from zoning to traffic problems.

RRLRAIA is happy to act as liaison between members and elected officials, but there is no substitute for personal communications. Individuals are the first to recognize a problem that will affect their private property, and the community at large. When you become aware of a problem, or need information, your elected representatives are able and willing to help find answers. Follow these guidelines to be more effective:

- Some problems fall under the management of a specific agency or department, such as Public Works or the Health Department. Contact the managing organization first. If you're not sure how to direct your questions, our neighborhood association or elected officials can direct you. Attempt to "work through channels" before appealing to an elected representative.
- Have facts ready when you call, write, or email. Make notes of dates, times, locations, and individuals involved so your question can be accurately researched. Photographs are often helpful.
- Be businesslike and polite. Identify yourself by name, address and reason for your call. Present your question or problem first, not what you assume should be the solution. Perhaps your concern can be addressed in a variety of acceptable ways.
- Be prepared to wait for answers. This may be the first time your contact has heard about the situation. Don't assume he or she already has the information you're seeking.
- Be persistent and civil at the same time. Follow-up phone calls, letters or emails should include a reference to your previous communications, such as subject matter and dates. Include a polite reminder that you are anxious for an answer.
- Use your contacts to educate yourself, not simply advance your agenda. Ask "Do you have any suggestions?"; "Who else might be able to help me?"; "What else can I do?"
- Save copies of correspondence, and notes of phone calls.
- Don't burn your bridges, even if you get frustrated. The person you believe is an impediment may turn out to be someone you'll have to work with to get the problem solved.
- When you have made a good faith effort to "work through channels" but you're still stalled, call, write or email your elected representative. Include a summary of the issue, copies of previous correspondence or a record of your calls, and a request to discuss the matter with them personally.

*Working With, continued on page 7.....*

## CHARLES STREET — A NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY?

*This 12-mile-long boulevard could be a model for new type of national urban byway.*

*by Chris Nufer*

Imagine historic Charles Street, from the roundabout at Lutherville to South Baltimore, linked by a series of unifying signs and landscaping improvements to the venerable old lady that told her story, which is, in some ways, the story of Baltimore.

This is just what residents of various communities, businesses, institutions and governmental agencies did at a recent public meeting hosted by the Charles Street Byway Management Plan Advisory Group.

"The goal of the National Byways Program is to provide economic development through heritage tourism," said Terry Maxwell, the Maryland State Highway Administration's Scenic Byways Coordinator. "The idea is to get travelers off the interstate and invite them to experience the local scenery the older roads have to offer."

The designation is being sought to help the City and County in their efforts to both preserve and promote the rich historic and cultural heritage of Charles Street – home to many of Baltimore's most important institutions and memories. A Byway Management Plan is needed to gain National Scenic Byway designation for Charles Street through the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Scenic Byway Program.

Baltimore City and Baltimore County have partnered to elicit ideas about developing a byway management plan. The City hired the team of Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, an engineering firm from Sparks, Maryland, and Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, an Alexandria, Virginia firm, with expertise in byway management planning.

"The reason communities around America have been doing this is to gain some recognition of their scenic routes through this Federal Highway Administration program and gain access to funding," said Jim Klein of Lardner/Klein. "To get this recognition at the federal level ('All-American Road' designation), at least two regionally intrinsic qualities must be demonstrated. These could be historic, archeological, cultural, natural, recreational or scenic. I think Charles Street includes up to four of those qualifications. It could be a model for new type of national urban byway."

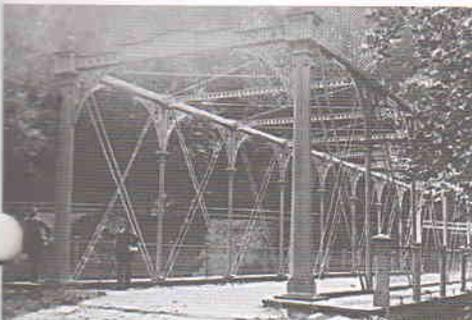
Charles Street is already designated as a state scenic byway. It is one of two roadways in our immediate area with such a designation, Falls Road being the other. A scenic byway is defined as including not simply the street itself, but also the views from the road and places to visit along the way.

Long-term funding provided by the new designation could add a unique texture to the visitor experience in Greater Baltimore. If managed properly, it would lead tourists to a collection of Baltimore treasures beyond the Inner Harbor.

However, the specific benefits for our neighborhoods in the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland area would be improvements to develop more of a "scenic parkway" feel in areas such as beltway intersections and make the area between Stevenson and Bellona more pedestrian-friendly. The designation would give Baltimore County additional funds to keep

the roadway in peak condition. National Byway status would also lock in more careful planning provisions for future development along our section of the corridor in order to preserve its scenic nature.

Neighbors, businesses, institutions and interested individuals are encouraged to attend future sessions, which are held on the third Wednesday evening of each month, except July. Call 410-494-7757 for the schedule. ■



*A bridge in the Robert E Lee Park circa 1930s.  
Photographer: C.W.E. Treadwell*

Photo: BCDPL - Legacy Web

## SPRING STREAM CLEAN UP

*by Helga Morrow and Susan Nestler*

On a very rainy April 2<sup>ND</sup>, 15 brave souls met in the Princeton Sports parking lot on Falls Road to tackle the clean up of the Jones Falls and its small tributaries that run along Falls Road, north of the Light Rail bridge and south of the Brooklandville Fire Station. The rain had momentarily ceased as we were about to start our work, but it wasn't dry for long.



*Enthusiastic volunteers at the end of the day display some of the items that were collected.*

Before we were able to fill up our first large black garbage bags with trash that passersby so callously toss out of their cars, the rain came down in sheets. In spite of the horrible weather, the volunteers continued and by noontime this section of Falls Road looked pristine, with more than 75 bags of trash lining the road. Not included in this count were the toilet bowl, tires, garden hose, buckets, road signs, parts of cars and other debris that make this historic road look more like a dump than a Scenic Byway, which is its official designation.

Another group of 15 people, adults and children, worked on both sides of the Joppa Road bridge over Roland Run to Royal Farms and then the banks of the stream near Riderwood Elementary School. Six huge bags of trash, including plastic bags, food containers, cans, bottles, car muffler, hubcap, license plate, metal objects, balls, other unidentified objects and an 8-foot long guardrail.

It is no small task to collect more than a ton of trash. Unless removed, it will end up in the Chesapeake Bay where it will

*Spring, continued on page 6.....*

.....*Spring, continued from page 5*

further destroy the delicate ecosystem that has been so compromised. Protecting our fragile environment should be everyone's concern, yet so few businesses and homeowners take time to clean up the streets in their neighborhood. If everyone would do that, volunteers could concentrate more directly on the stream and thus have a greater impact on the Bay. RRLRAIA will do its share to encourage greater community participation and asks its members and businesses to do the same. ■

### **FISHING FOR A SOLUTION TO STORM WATER RUN-OFF**

*by Chris Nufer*

Jim Gracie is a native Marylander who has fished the state's waters from east to west for more than 50 years. As an active member of Maryland Trout Unlimited (MDTU), he participates in coldwater conservation efforts throughout Baltimore

County, Harford County, and the surrounding areas.

Recently, Mr. Gracie shared his thoughts about the health of the streams that run through our neighborhoods, why trout are a good barometer of water quality and why storm water run-off is getting the trout population in hot water.

"First of all," he explained, "you have to understand that trout need cold, oxygenated water to thrive. So anything that heats the water or depletes the oxygen will kill them. They're sensitive to a lot of other pollutants, too. So we think of trout as the equivalent of a 'canary in coal mine.' When the trout are gone, you know the water quality is not as good as it could be."

We asked him for a trout fisherman's evaluation of two streams in our area – Jones Falls and Roland Run. "The Jones Falls is the most productive trout stream in the state of Maryland," he said. "The reason is that it flows from a limestone formation

in the Greenspring Valley. The spring provides a steady, constant, cold-water flow during the summer. This increases the fertility of the stream. The most important thing for trout is that it produces water coming out of the ground at 52 degrees in very large quantities."

The state fisheries service does population studies in streams each year. The highest standing crop of fish measured by the pounds per unit area of water ever found, is in the Jones Falls beyond Greenspring Valley Road. As it flows downstream that number goes down, which is normal for a trout stream. Mr. Gracie went on to explain that as the Jones Falls flows toward Brooklandville and Ruxton Hills, it widens and it's not as habitable for cold-water fish.

"It's about six and one-half miles from the headwaters to where the Jones Falls enters Robert E. Lee Park. The stream runs another couple of miles through the park to Lake Roland. Trout live all the way down the stream to just above where it enters Lake Roland."

About forty years ago, he told us, "Roland Run used to have a trout population. Unfortunately, it no longer does. If the water quality and temperature were suitable for trout they'd be there, too."

When asked what he thought caused the most significant loss of trout habitat in our area, he replied that high summer water temperature was the main culprit. Water that's too hot for trout comes about in several ways. If you remove shade from the stream, then the water heats up from the sunlight. If you have development in the watershed, and have a thunderstorm in July or August, the rain lands on surfaces that are over one hundred degrees. Flowing over asphalt or other impervious surfaces such as rooftops or sidewalks, the water heats up very quickly. So the first flush of water coming into the stream is extremely hot. Brown trout will die if the water temperature gets to 82 degrees. Brook trout can only tolerate tempera-

*Fishing for a Solution continued on page 7.....*

### **LIGHT RAIL UPDATE**

*by Kathy Lumsden*

Maryland Transit Administration reports that construction on the north end of the light rail line is on schedule. Contractors are working from north to south, through Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland towards Mount Washington, ending at North Avenue. Contractors work six days a week.

In our area, ties and rails for the second track are in position. Installation of electrical components for the second track, including overhead wires (catenary) that provide power to the train, lights and substations, comprises the next phase of construction. The fence contractor has completed work along the MTA right-of-way. Landscaping should be completed soon.

The goal is to have the Light Rail line open from North Avenue to Timonium in the fall of 2005. Service to Hunt Valley would be resumed by the end of 2005. The MTA appreciates residents' patience, input, and willingness to work with the agency through the construction disruptions.

During the past 18 months, members of the community and the association have advocated for changes to the MTA's original plans, such as fencing in lieu of plantings where more appropriate. Constant communication and support from our State Delegates - John Trueschler, Susan Aumann, and Bill Frank - produced repairs to private property damaged by workers. Once construction is complete, the Association will work with the MTA to repair roads damaged by heavy equipment.

While the process has been frustrating at times, and not all neighbors are completely satisfied with the results, with the help of our delegates, we will continue to lobby for modifications that reflect the needs of the various neighborhoods. ■

.....*Fishing for a Solution, continued from page 6*  
tures up to about 72 degrees.”

He explained that more than two and a half inches of rain must fall before there is any run-off in forest areas. That rainwater soaks into the ground and eventually percolates back into the stream. When there's a road, parking lot or other impervious surface near the stream, that first two and a half inches of rainfall will run off instead of soaking in.

As a result, there's more flow into the stream channel, which causes the banks to erode and the stream to become wider and shallower. So between rain showers, there isn't as much water soaking into the ground. That means less water is flowing into the stream. He said that it's a double whammy – wide channels, more surface area and less flow all adds up to hotter water.

“The only solution that solves the temperature problem that I know of,” he continued, “is to create situations that help the water get into the ground.” He suggested that one way to reduce the temperature of water entering the streams in our neighborhoods is to build “rain gardens.” These are rock-lined holes covered with soil, then planted with shrubs and trees. When water runs into a rain garden, it filters into the ground to recharge the base flow instead of running off as hot water. Any water that seeps below the frost line, 36-38 inches below the surface, will maintain a temperature of 52 degrees.

“An ideal situation would be for every driveway and house to have a 20 by 30-foot rain garden with the capacity to accommodate the first inch of run-off,” he said. “After the first inch, the hot surfaces cool off. The water that couldn't be absorbed would still run into the stream, but wouldn't be hot anymore.” If every home installed a rain garden, it would help, incrementally, to reduce the temperature of our nearby streams.

Thirty years ago, storm water manage-

ment consisted of a rainspout running to a curb and gutter system with storm drain inlets. The run-off accumulates quickly because it's flowing on smooth surfaces into a collection system designed to get water away from buildings and into the nearest stream as quickly as possible.

“To make a system like that more stream-friendly, you have to find a way to intercept the water so it can filter through soil and cool down. When you start digging up infrastructure and putting in intercepting pipe systems, it's obviously much more expensive than just digging a hole in the ground, lining it with rock and putting in trees and shrubs as you would with a rain garden.”

Mr. Gracie says the issue of water temperature is not addressed in storm water management planning. “You can put in a new development today, comply fully with the storm water management law and still discharge hot water into a stream. We don't have a regulatory program that will solve that problem,” he says.

One new approach to storm water management is to design a system that lets the first half-inch of run-off soak into the ground, then collect the rest in ponds. The theory for this pond-based system is that if you collect the run off from a development, you size the pipe that runs from the pond to the stream to make the run-off rate the same as it was before the development was built. Theoretically, the system doesn't encourage flooding and channel erosion. Unfortunately, in summer during the forty-eight hours it takes for the pond to drain, sunlight is heating the water up even more.

Storm water management laws in effect are for a statewide system. They're not really designed to solve the thermal problem and protect individual streams. Homeowners who live in a delicate watershed, as we do, have to find ways to augment the existing storm water management system.

Look around your property for ways to divert rain water from impervious surfaces (driveways and sidewalks) into areas that can filter into the ground. Rain gardens can

be designed into your landscape plan. Find more information about stream-friendly landscaping in **A Homeowners Guide to Designing Your Property** (free) by calling The Alliance For The Chesapeake Bay at 1-800-662-CRIS or visit their website at [www.acb-online.org](http://www.acb-online.org).

For information about water quality and how you can improve it, contact the County Department of Environmental Protection, at 410-887-3733 or [www.baltimorecountyonline.info](http://www.baltimorecountyonline.info). agencies.environmental. ■

.....*Working With, continued from page 4*

- Be prepared to negotiate or compromise. Your needs may conflict with others in the community. There may be legal or financial constraints to be considered. Elected officials have an obligation to serve the best interests of their constituents. Your representatives will take the bigger picture into account.
- Whom to call first? The blue “Government Listings” pages of the phone books is a good place to start. These are arranged alphabetically within each Local, County, State and the United States sections. While it's not always obvious which department or agency to contact, try the one that seems like a good fit. Be prepared to give a brief explanation of your problem to each person. That person may not be able to assist you, but should guide you to the right place.

A listing of your county, state and federal officials is available in the RRLRAIA directory which is distributed to all members-of-record as of July 10<sup>th</sup>. ■



Going, going.



Gone.

## HOUSE DEMOLITION

This wonderful old 1880s house was at the corner of Ellenham Avenue and Joppa Road. These photographs document the demolition. Just another example of teardowns in the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area. ■

## GRECIAN SHRIMP SALAD

*Kate Poffenberger, Grauls Market*

An easy summer meal without heating up the kitchen. The olive oil-based salad dressing adds a little monounsaturated fat to your diet. Add a loaf of bread with the salad, fresh fruit for your dessert and you have a fresh and tasty supper! Serves 4.

### Ingredients

- 1 lb. shrimp
- 10 oz. bag of mixed salad greens
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, cut in small wedges
- 1 medium red onion, sliced thinly
- 1/3 cup feta cheese

### Dressing

- 3 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. dijon mustard
- salt to taste (optional)

### Instructions

- Cook shrimp in boiling water until the shrimp starts to curl (or cook according to package instructions).
- Remove from heat, drain, rinse in cold water and peel shrimp shells.
- Refrigerate.
- Mix dressing ingredients well.
- In a large bowl, toss the lettuce, basil, tomatoes, onion and feta cheese.
- Just before serving, add shrimp and toss entire mixture with the dressing. ■

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