

Our Architectural Heritage – Eclectic Houses

Installment 1 of 3

by Patrick Jarosinski

The Victorian Period from 1860-1900 was the focus of the spring 2016 *Neighborhood NEWS* article about architectural styles in our neighborhoods. I will now begin my review of Eclectic houses, dating between 1880-1940, which feature traditional details and relatively pure copies of houses built in different European countries as well as in the Americas. There are many design styles during this period, so I will divide my article into multiple installments so as not to cause architectural fatigue.

Recall that I am relying on the main architectural categories listed in “A Field Guide to American Houses” by Virginia & Lee McAlester. The book describes the different styles and provides clear diagrams of the designs and design elements as well as photographs. The categories include: Folk houses (the earliest houses ca. 1920), Colonial houses (1600-1820), Romantic houses (1820-1880), Victorian houses (1860-1900), Eclectic houses (1880-1940) and Post-1940 houses.

The Eclectic Period includes Anglo-American, English, French and Mediterranean styles. The English, Anglo-American and French houses include Colonial Revival, Neoclassical, Tudor, Chateausque, Beaux Arts and French Eclectic. The Mediterranean and Spanish houses include Italian Renaissance, Mission, Spanish Eclectic, Monterey and Pueblo Revival. These fashionable designs gained momentum in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Both frame and masonry construction methods were used. Inexpensive techniques were developed for creating thin veneer brick or stone, allowing these materials to be added to frame construction, imitating some of the most elegant and elaborate façades of Europe.

The Colonial Revival house is one of the most common within our neighborhoods. Colonial Revival



Photo #1

Colonial Revival home



Photo #2



Photo #3

refers to the rebirth of interest in early English and Dutch houses of the Atlantic seaboard, focusing on Georgian and Adam styles. Details of each are typically combined, hence the term ‘eclectic.’ A great example is the house in Photo #1, ca.1927, showcasing some of the most common identifying features: a symmetrical façade with a centered front door accentuated with a pediment supported by slender columns or pilasters, as seen in Photo #2, and double hung window sashes with multi-paned glazing balanced on either side, as seen in Photo #3. The gambrel roof, one of the most distinguishable roof types, has a rebirth (see page 9 of “Our Architectural Heritage — The Colonial Style” in the spring 2014 issue of *Neighborhood NEWS*). It is viewed as both an attractive and efficient design, using the full footprint of the second story.

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President's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

It is truly a privilege to have been elected president of our Association. The position is not unlike the captain of a ship: he (or she) has some authority, yes...but he didn't build the ship or outfit it, and he does not decide its ultimate destination. It doesn't turn on a dime and sometimes faces rough seas and strong winds, but if the captain is lucky it still makes headway. I promise to try and avoid the rocks.

If I can steer the ship at least half as well as our previous President, Clark Parriott (to whom we wish all the best in his future endeavors), I will be content. And as always, the Board and our members owe kudos to our Newsletter Committee and chair/editor Courtney Middleton for putting out the wonderful local publication you are reading right now.

Our typical recurring events and efforts continue. Friday Night Lights was a hoot, thanks to Shannon Putman and our Events Committee. Our ongoing Street and Stream Clean-ups, led by Board member Carlton Sexton, are effective. Please join us to help keep our roads and waterways clean. Volunteers are always welcome, needed and much appreciated. Dumpster Day was, as always, oddly satisfying. We plan to host a Shredder Day in the spring.

I enjoyed helping Jeffrey Budnitz and our Bare Hills/Lake Roland Committee build a bridge in the Park, which continues to expand its offerings of nature studies and activities. Their push to eradicate invasive plant species

in the Park has been impressive. We have also responded to requests for assistance with road repairs and curtailing traffic dangers.

At our annual meeting I enjoyed giving a presentation on restoring and replacing historically significant architectural elements of older homes.

But, beyond all that, we are now tasked for the foreseeable future with responding to the sort of acute non-recurring issues every community faces in the areas of proposed development and infrastructure challenges. I can assure you that our Board has

been firmly dedicated to advancing our quality of life as a community by establishing a dialogue with Vanguard Development, the developer of the planned Village of Lake Roland, and the Towson Run sewer project officials. Representatives from Vanguard and from the County Department of Public Works have been generously available to answer our questions and we will keep our members apprised of any related developments.

In the meantime, we get back to the serious business of enjoying living in one of the most beautiful and enjoyable spots in the land. This time of year we look forward to December's Holiday Party in the Woods. There will be refreshments, a bonfire and a visit from Santa...a delight for the young and the eternally young as well. Hope to see you there!

Have a lovely holiday season, one and all.

Best Regards,



Thomas Brown



Village of Lake Roland Update

We expect the developers of the proposed Village of Lake Roland project to submit their concept plan to Baltimore County within the next month. Please check our website for further updates which we will post as they become available. There is a link to Village of Lake Roland information at rrlraia.org.

Neighborhood NEWS is published three times a year by The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association, Inc., P.O. Box 204, Riderwood, MD 21139, tel: 410-494-7757.

Deadlines for copy, including announcements and calendar items, are February 15 for Spring issue, July 15 for Fall issue and October 15 for Winter issue. Advertisers contact: office@rrlraia.org.

The masthead photo on the front page, courtesy of Nettie Washburn, offers an angled view of Rider House's architectural detail.

Newsletter Committee:

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Annual Membership Meeting

The RRLRAIA annual membership meeting was held on September 27 at The Church of the Good Shepherd and provided attendees with an overview of the past year's events along with updates about ongoing projects and community-related efforts. Distinguished guests included State Senator Jim Brochin, Delegate Chris West, Delegate Shelly Hettleman, Councilwoman Vicki Almond and representatives from Delegate Dana Stein's and County Executive Kevin Kamenetz's offices.

The annual meeting provided a forum in which to thank our outgoing Board members for their volunteer service and to elect/re-elect Board members to new terms. We bid a fond farewell to outgoing President Clark Parriott, Shannon Brown, Elise Butler, Mary Brown McKenna and Patrick Jarosinski. Each of these Board members dedicated countless hours on all area residents' behalf. A hearty thank you to them for jobs well done!



Board member Gina Adams presenting outgoing President Clark Parriott with a parting gift Photo courtesy Courtney Middleton



An array of 'show-and-tell' items that pertain to historic home preservation — part of incoming Board President Tom Brown's presentation Photo courtesy Courtney Middleton

Board members who were up for re-election to additional three-year terms included Gina Adams, Susan Law, Courtney Middleton and Tom Brown. New Board members elected to their first term (some after having served on the Board in the past) included Harry Bond (District 9), Ward Classen (District 5), Debbie Codd (District 1) and Tom George (District 2). Learn more about our new Board members below. Welcome, Harry, Ward, Debbie and Tom!

Incoming RRLRAIA President Tom Brown presented an informative and interesting lecture, 'Repairing and Restoring Your Historic Home.' Not only was his presentation informative — he brought a table full of 'show-and-tell' items that represent many of the challenging restoration-worthy items many of us have in our historic homes.

Thank you to our members who attended the meeting. We hope to see everyone at the 2018 meeting next fall.

Welcome, New RRLRAIA Board Members!

by Courtney Middleton

Our Community Association is pleased to announce the following Board members who were elected at the annual membership meeting on September 27:

Debbie Codd (District 1) has lived in the Four Winds neighborhood of Ruxton for 20 years. She is currently a research study coordinator for a medical consulting company and serves as co-director of Boots for Baltimore, a local non-profit. In the recent past, Debbie has been active in the Four Winds neighborhood association and is pleased to share her love of the community by becoming an active Board member of the RRLRAIA.

Tom George (District 2) is a lifelong resident of the Towson/Ruxton area. He and his wife, Cely, built a house on Overbrook Road where they raised a son and daughter. After 25 years, they downsized to their current home off of Malvern Avenue. Tom served on the Board in the mid-90s and has always loved our unique Ruxton community. He believes that, as a Board member once again, he can make a positive impact.



Tom George, Debbie Codd, and Ward Classen

Photos courtesy Courtney Middleton



Harry Bond

Ward Classen (District 5) has lived within the RRLRAIA boundaries for 53 years in several districts. He is a long-time member of the Association and has previously volunteered for various RRLRAIA-organized events. Ward and his wife, Sibley, live in District 5 where they raised their two children.

Harry Bond (District 9) grew up on Circle Road where he and his wife Allison live now. He is a big Ravens fan, likes golf and tennis, but mostly enjoys spending time with his family. Harry currently serves on the board of the Odyssey School. He looks forward to his involvement with the Board to serve the community and protect this wonderful part of Baltimore.

Village at Home

by Roger Mecca

As baby boomers get older, they're choosing to do something previous generations haven't elected to do with such determination: continue to live in their homes. A recent survey by real estate website Trulia found that people 55 and older own 53 percent of U.S. owner-occupied houses, the largest share since the federal government began to collect data nearly 120 years ago. 10 years ago, the number was just 43 percent. As we continue to increase our life spans, the percentage of ownership will likely continue to grow.

But as we continue to age, the daily homeowner tasks that were seemingly automatic become major obstacles. Changing a light bulb, taking out the trash, opening a stuck window or even going to the grocery store turn into daunting challenges. And when it's time for repairs, upgrades or even lawn care, finding a reputable and trustworthy vendor turns into another problem.



Photo courtesy Village at Home

As cold weather and the holidays approach, a laundry list of tasks will arrive as well. Trips to the grocery store for family gatherings and buying gifts for grandchildren and friends become additional items on an already packed to-do list. But for some homeowners, what was once manageable is suddenly insurmountable. As these frustrations add up, many people see retirement communities as the only solution and they're forced to give up the independence of home ownership.

But Village At Home, a local non-profit in North Baltimore, is helping those with physical limitations overcome obstacles and live vibrant and fulfilling lives.

Village At Home is actually one of the hundreds of local "villages" across the country that are part of the Village To Village Network, started in Boston in 2002. For a nominal fee, Village At Home offers members assistance with the daily tasks that can become too burdensome to overcome. For volunteers,

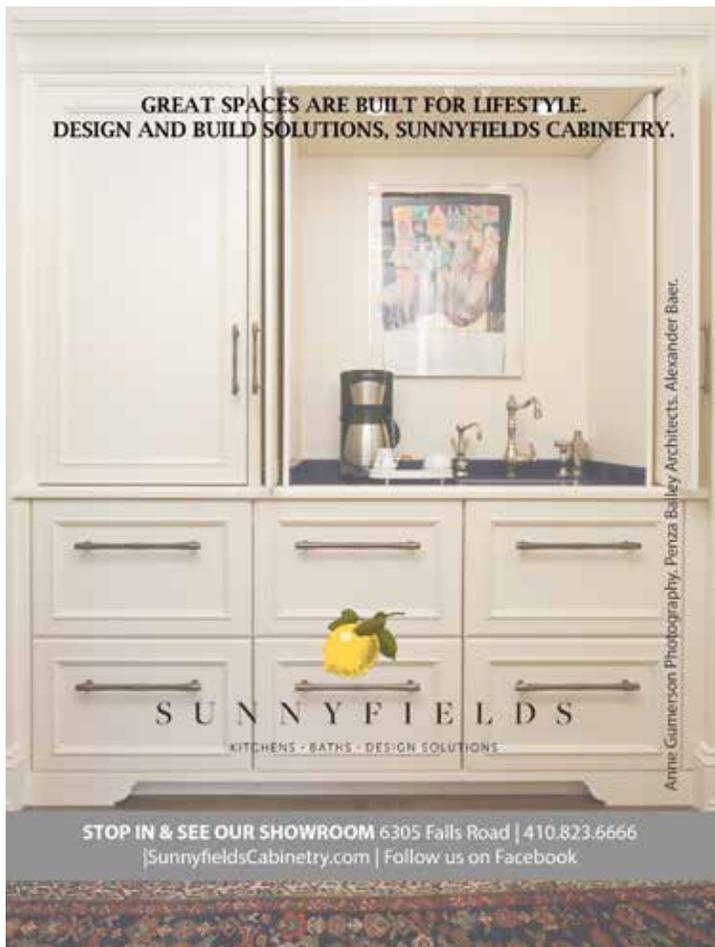
it's a rewarding and stress-free opportunity to create a supportive, tightly knit community that turns neighbors into friends.



"This was the perfect opportunity for me after I'd retired and wanted to give back to the community," says Pete Partridge, a Ruxton resident since 2013. A member of the Village At Home board told him about the organization several years ago and the structure and freedom appealed to him. "I've done everything from hang family pictures or bring boxes down from the attic to provide rides to Graul's and the dentist. But it's so much more than just volunteering. The members have become my friends and I look forward to seeing them every week."

With a simple phone call or email to Village At Home's central office, members can request assistance. That request is then immediately sent to a list of dedicated volunteers, any of whom can accept the opportunity to help. The member is notified of exactly who'll be coming and when they'll be there. Volunteers help with a wide variety of chores like replacing weather stripping, decorating a tree or hanging holiday lights, mailing Christmas cards, and even setting up a social media or Skype account. Perhaps most importantly, volunteers provide transportation; rides to the store, pharmacy, salon, or a doctor's office are what Partridge does most often.

For more complex tasks, Village At Home's list of vetted and ap-



Village at Home

proved vendors can assist with professional services like lawn care and home repairs. And to make sure everyone understands the scope of work and contract terms, vendors often meet with the homeowner while a volunteer is present.

Members also enjoy organized outings to concerts, movies, brunch and theatre performances, helping to increase social interaction as well — a big part of what it means to age vibrantly.



Photo courtesy Village at Home

Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland is just one of 22 neighborhoods where Village At Home operates. Without Village At Home, many of the residents Pete helps would no longer be able to live so independently. It's a big reason Susan Newhouse started Village at Home in 2008 after reading about the innovative movement in *The New York Times*.

"The support system that people had 30, 40, 50 years ago, just isn't there anymore," says Newhouse, Village At Home's Executive Director. "Children aren't living close to home when they grow up, neighbors aren't as involved as they used to be and our interaction as a society isn't as personal as it once was." She adds that this lack of a strong organic support system leaves gaps and leaves the most vulnerable residents open to disadvantages.

A former social worker, Newhouse recognized the increased needs older homeowners had as they chose to age in place, versus a retirement community. Gerontologists who study aging say most seniors want to stay in their homes as long as possible. Village At Home helps make those wishes a reality.

"We've all heard the saying 'It takes a village' as it relates to how a community can best operate, says Newhouse. "But what happens when the village isn't there? Where can people find that extra help to guarantee their independence? That's what Village At Home provides. Just that little extra reassurance that if you need some help, it's there."

If you or someone you know would like to become a member or volunteer, visit villageathome.com or email them at info@villageathome.org. You can also find them on Facebook at facebook.com/VillageAtHomeBaltimore.



Photo courtesy Village at Home

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Service with a Smile

by Gay Wagner

I admit that until writing this story, I had only walked into Ruxton Pharmacy once to fill a prescription. I'm guilty of driving by several times in a single day without realizing what a gem of a pharmacy is quietly tucked between Mt. Washington Dry Cleaners and J. McLaughlin along Bellona Avenue. It is a step back in time, to a place when life was simpler — when being a pharmacy was about serving the wellness and prescription needs of the local community. Hopefully, after this newsletter is published, anyone who's had their blinders on (guilty as charged) will open their



Steve Talbott, Chris Scarbath and Tyler Dalton in front of Ruxton Pharmacy

Photo courtesy Gay Wagner

eyes and fill their next prescription here instead.

Ruxton Pharmacy has been around since the early 1900s in almost the same spot where it originated. Tom Parrish has owned and operated it for over 50 years. His stepson, Steve Talbott, now manages the pharmacy's daily operations. Steve, who has been working there for 24 years, is supported by Chris Scarbath, a 45-year employee, and new pharmacist, Tyler Dalton. Ruxton Pharmacy also employs a part-time pharmacist and two other part-time employees.

Steve, Chris and Tyler were kind enough to spend part

of their day answering my questions about the history and services offered to their very loyal customers. Thanks to all for a very enjoyable visit. I promise, I'll be back soon.

Tell me a little about the history of the pharmacy.

Steve: Well, Tom has been working here for close to 70 years and bought the pharmacy from his father. The original store was right on the street, like the picture from 1940 (see next page). The house Tom grew up in was located directly behind the store. Later, the original building was torn down (along with the house) and the store was moved to the lot where the house used to stand. The parking lot was then added.

*Editor's Note: A pharmacy operated in the original building as early as the 1920s according to an article published in the winter 2010-2011 edition of **Neighborhood NEWS**.*

How long does it take you to fill a prescription?

Steve: Most prescriptions can be filled on the same day and in about five minutes. Most people drop off their prescription and say, "I'll be back in 30 minutes to pick it up." Before they get to the door, I say, "I can have it for you before you get to the car." It's that fast. There are some prescriptions we have to order and can have within 24 hours, but most can be filled very quickly.

How do you compete with the large box pharmacies like Walgreens, Rite Aid and CVS?

Chris: We are and have always been about customer service. Most of the products in our store are medical related, although we do have a greeting card collection and a few gift items. We know our customers well and have a strong and long history with them. They like coming into the store and being greeted by a friendly face they have come to know and trust.

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Has your clientele changed much over the years?

Chris: Our client base is very local to the general area and incredibly loyal. Once a customer, we keep them for life. Many of our older customers who have relocated to local retirement communities continue to fill their prescriptions here. They like the comfort of working with a local pharmacist who they know and who has known their prescription needs for several years.

What is next for Ruxton Pharmacy?

Steve: Well, we are looking to make some much-needed repairs and interior updates. I know we need a face lift and to attend to some work on the entryway. I'd really like to take down the current sign and bring back the old sign, or something a little retro, just like it is in the picture. We need to give the façade a face lift.

We are also looking to change the layout of the interior and

modernize it. It has been a long time since anything has changed. We are changing things slowly, as we can get to them. Our customers are our greatest resource for ideas for what to change. They give us some great ideas. (I put in my vote for bringing back the old soda fountain counter with real syrup and good candy).

But the one thing that will never change is our devotion to our customers and the care we take with each and every prescription. We hope to keep serving the prescription and general wellness needs of our Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland community and beyond for years to come.

How would you summarize Ruxton Pharmacy?

Tyler: A local community pharmacy that offers fast, friendly service with a smile!



Ruxton Pharmacy ca. 1940 Photo courtesy Ruxton Pharmacy

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Brown Memorial Woodbrook Presbyterian Church

Brown Memorial, located at 6200 N. Charles Street, has been a fixture in our community since the 1960s. For several reasons, the leadership of the Church has decided to merge with Govans Presbyterian Church on York Road. Pending approval by Baltimore Presbytery, the merger is set to take effect in December 2017. The combined congregation will meet at the York Road location.

What will become of the buildings and land the Church currently occupies on Charles Street? Members of the RRLRAIA Board recently met with the leadership of the Church to begin a dialogue and learned that Brown Memorial Weekday School plans to relocate to St. Thomas Church in Owings Mills for the next school

year. Leases with tenants are in effect through June 2018. The seven-acre property will then be sold. The property could continue to be used as a religious institution or it could be developed in accordance with its current zoning (DR1) which permits one house per acre.

The Association will offer assistance in communicating the Church's decisions regarding the Charles Street property and dispelling any rumors. We plan to continue conversations with the Church leadership and look forward to participating in a positive outcome for our community.

*An article about Brown Memorial was published in the fall 2010 issue of **Neighborhood NEWS** (page 8).*



The award-winning sanctuary of Brown Memorial Woodbrook Presbyterian Church was designed by Ziger/Snead and completed in 1995 Photo courtesy Zniger/Snead LLP

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Local Winter Celebrations

Towson's month-long WinterFest, sponsored by the Towson Chamber of Commerce, has something for everyone. For more details go to towsonchamber.com or call 410-825-1144.

Baltimore County Tree Lighting

When: Friday, December 1, 6–8 p.m.

Location: 1 West Joppa Road (near Towson Circle)

Festivities include Santa's arrival by fire truck, dance and music performances, and hot chocolate and cookies.

Breakfast with Anna, Elsa and Olaf

When: Saturday, December 2, 8–10 a.m.

Location: Souris' Saloon, 537 York Road (Towson Circle)

Come out and meet the famous snowman! Enjoy breakfast with Frosty and your family. Ages 2-9 \$7; ages 10+ \$14. Reservation recommended.

Fire & Ice Family Night and Christmas Tree Judging

When: Friday, December 8, 6–9 p.m.

Rain date: December 15

Location: Downtown Towson

View ice sculptures located and decorated around Downtown Towson. There will also be street performers, Christmas tree judging and free s'mores. Locations will be listed at towsonchamber.com.

Breakfast with Grinch and Buddy the Elf

When: Saturday, December 9, 8–1 p.m.

Location: Charles Village Pub, 19 W. Pennsylvania Avenue

For a memorable holiday breakfast, bring your kids to eat along with their favorite holiday characters. Ages 2-9 \$7; ages 10+ \$14. Reservation recommended. 410-821-8155



Ho Ho Ho Happy Hours

When: Thursdays December 7, 14 and 21, from 5–7 p.m.

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Old Bags Take on New Life

by **Barbara Guarnieri**

Sometimes winter tree profiles look a bit like Baltimore schooners with full sails of plastic bags. The bags are everywhere, adding an apocalyptic edge to our landscape. But they needn't become ugly street trash. Most of you know they can be recycled locally at Gaul's, Eddie's and other nearby venues. A convenient list of drop-off locations accompanies this article.

Of course you want to keep plastic bags out of trees. But other reasons to recycle include the following:

- Plastic bags can suffocate a wild animal living in the woods.
- Plastic bags might end up in streams or the Chesapeake Bay where they can trap marine creatures and stop up drainage.
- Plastic bags can end up in a landfill.



■ Plastic bags can be repurposed to supply materials for a number of American industries. Old, low-density polyethylene bags can become new composite lumber for decking and railings.

Trex®, MoistureShield®, TimberTech®, and Fiberon® websites all state that a significant percentage of their decking boards are made from recycled plastic bags. Trex's and MoistureShield's websites state that their products contain as much as 95% recycled content, but this is not all recycled consumer plastic bags. More than half of their content is recycled waste that comes from industrial or manufacturing processes. Both types of content are green in that they divert resources from landfill and landscapes. Reuseit.com suggests



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that these bags take over a thousand years to degrade in a landfill and even then they break down into tiny contaminated particles in soil and water.

While plastic shopping bags became the focus of our attention during the 'paper or plastic?' controversy, there are many other polyethylene packaging and wrapping options that are also recyclable. In general, most plastic film that stretches when you pull it is recyclable. This includes reasonably clean and dry newspaper bags, bread bags, dry cleaning bags, produce bags and other bags labeled #2 or #4 such as sandwich bags and Ziploc® bags. Also on the list are all outer wrappings from napkins, toilet tissue, paper towels, diapers and bulk beverages. Unpadded mailing bags can also be included as long as the paper labeling has been removed. Recyclers don't care about the integrity of the bag; they are only interested in the plastic film. All of these items can add up to a significant amount of plastic film per year per person. If not recycled, this becomes a whole lot of trash. Various estimates on the BlueWater Baltimore website maintain these low density plastics make up as much as 10% of total trash and 50% of all plastic trash.

Sadly, plastic wrap used to preserve food is not recyclable nor are pre-packaged food bags (those used for frozen meats, sauces and salads). We are also asked to not include any plastic that has painted wording or excessive glue residue.

While we can shop with reusable bags, it is difficult to avoid all the other sources of polyethylene packaging in our lives. It is quite possible that some day, the County will find a way to include low

density polyethylene plastics in curbside recycling pickup. Baltimore City tried to impose a five cent fee on the use of plastic bags at city grocery stores but retailers balked. Then the City Council tried to ban the bags entirely but Mayor Rawlings-Blake vetoed that effort. Sooner or later, law makers and policy makers will find a way to lessen the environmental impact of these plastic 'sails.' For now, we alone can make that happen as long as we commit to voluntarily recycling them.

Here is a list of some local places to recycle plastic bags:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Eddie's of Roland Park | Mom's Organic Market (MOM's) |
| Food Lion | Safeway |
| Fresh Market | Target |
| Graul's Market | Walmart Supercenter |
| Home Depot | Wegmans |
| Lowe's | Whole Foods |

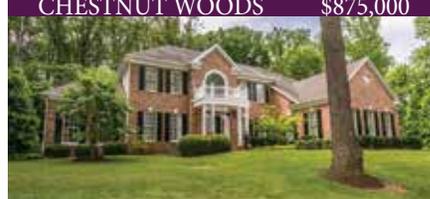
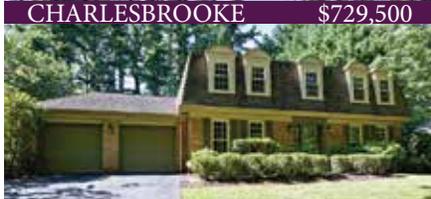


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RRLRAIA Updated Single Stream Recycling 2017

OK for Single Stream Recycling

GLASS: Beverage bottles (soda, milk, etc.), canning, sauce, condiment and jelly jars — all colors

METAL: Aluminum, steel and tin cans; aluminum foil; single-use baking pans, empty aerosol cans (hair spray, tanning solutions and other cosmetics)

PAPER: Junk and regular mail, ad fliers, catalogues, copy and computer paper, colored paper, cardstock, corrugated cardboard, envelopes, non-metallic gift-wrap, magazines, newspapers, paperboard (cereal, tissue, shoe boxes, etc.), gable-top containers (milk and juice), frozen food boxes, and food boxes not tainted by food

PLASTIC: All narrow food and beverage containers (#1-7) including soda, juice and milk bottles; wide-mouthed containers like yogurt, margarine and sour cream; all rigid plastics such as buckets, crates and totes (with or without handles); drinking cups and food trays when labeled; rigid nursery flower pots and flower labels; fully plastic lawn, baby and children's furniture, coolers, playground equipment and toys; garbage cans, waste and laundry baskets

Not OK for Single Stream Recycling

GLASS: Baking and cooking dishes*; plates and drinking glasses* including crystal, mirror and window glass, ceramics, light bulbs

METAL: Aerosol cans (paint, pesticides); gasoline, oil, pesticide and herbicide cans; lose metal clothes hangers*, building hardware*, metal scraps, strips and straps, paper clips and staples; pots and pans; eating and cooking utensils

PAPER: Carbon copy and thermal fax papers; laminated paper; metallic gift wrap; soiled food wrappings, plates, cups, napkins, tissues and towels; photographs and photo paper; wax paper; foil-lined paper pet food bags

PLASTIC: Hinged/clamshell containers (take-out, salad, herb, fruit containers, etc.); bubble wrap*; chip bags, candy and gum wrappers, cutlery and utensils; Styrofoam* cups, plates, containers and trays; packing peanuts*; other packing hard plastics; pesticide, herbicide, motor oil and other toxic material containers; loose cling wrap; plastic bags* (vegetable, newspaper, grocery, dry cleaning, etc.); six-pack rings

**Check the RRLRAIA online Alternate Recycle and Reuse Reference for options*



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Lake Roland – How Far We’ve Come!

Lake Roland is a shining gem in the heart of the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland area, but that it is such a treasure is not by luck or accident. The Lake Roland Nature Council, a dedicated group of volunteers comprising neighbors, boaters, birders, Master Naturalists, members of the Paw Point dog park and those interested in the betterment of the Park, has worked tirelessly to rejuvenate the Park following decades of neglect. From helping plan, in partnership with Baltimore County, such capital improvements as a new nature center, new pavilion and a children’s nature-themed playground to Saturday trail projects, the Nature Council’s ongoing efforts to strengthen and maintain the Park have made Lake Roland the vibrant, safe and ecologically sensitive resource we all can enjoy.



Clearing the serpentine
Photo courtesy Lake Roland Nature Council

Led by President Kurt Davis, the Nature Council is funded by its many programs for children and adults, such as yoga, art projects, canoe/kayak trips, camps, other educational projects, Paw Point memberships and, of course, donations. Other important funding sources include public/private partnerships to address key capital improvements needed in the Park.

Major improvements since Baltimore County assumed management of Lake Roland in 2009 include a new vehicular bridge, a boardwalk built over wetlands which connects the light rail parking lot with the heart of the Park near the dam, the Paw Point dog park, Acorn Hill natural children’s play area, a new pavilion, restoration of the trestle bridge, part of the former railroad bed now used as the main trail through the Park (the Red Trail), the Lake Roland Nature Center and acquisition of 18 acres north of the Park along a former railroad bed and bordering the Jones Falls along Falls Road (along with reclaimed land adjacent to the Falls Road light rail stop). This 2013 expansion increased the Park’s footprint. After these land acquisitions, the Council undertook a gargantuan environmental remediation project to remove eight abandoned cars, 340 tires, two trailers and 40 tons of debris from the wetlands.

The Park’s system of trails connects its various parts and offers visitors easy access to the Park from many points. This extensive system requires weekly maintenance to keep the Park a vibrant and usable space. However, Baltimore County alone is not able to provide the ongoing grooming that the trail system requires. Fallen trees or limbs frequently block the pathways while poison ivy and other nasty weeds and invasive plants impinge on the trails with alarming frequency.

Jeffrey Budnitz, chair of the Council’s Trails Committee, says his volunteers have laid in excess of 800,000 pounds of stone for trail rehabilitation, restoration and construction. In addition to spreading stone, on any given Saturday you might find trail maintenance crews removing fallen trees or dangerous overhanging limbs. On occasion, trail maintenance involves a larger project, such as in 2012 when the original trestle bridge on the old rail bed along the Red Trail had fallen into disrepair. Since this is the main trail through the Park and the only way to cross the stream, the Council, in collaboration with the County, undertook the restoration of this bridge. This spot is now a wonderful place not only to cross the Jones Falls tributary, but also



serves as a terrific overlook to stop and take in the scenery. The restored trestle bridge also allows for transport of heavy pieces of equipment in trail restoration efforts, therefore allowing restoration efforts deeper in the Park.

While it is a treat to have such a resource in our back yards, many use the Park as a place to walk their dogs. Prior to Baltimore County’s



Paw Point dog park Photo courtesy Lake Roland Nature Council

stewardship of the Park, it was used by many as an unofficial off-leash dog park. This popular use created both a significant health hazard due to animal waste not being picked up and a risk to walkers and joggers from dog bites. As a result, the Nature Council worked with the County to designate a 1.5 acre fenced dog park with water access, a first in the County, for dogs and their owners to safely enjoy the Park off-leash. A positive side effect of dogs being put back on their leashes has been the safe return to the Park of animals that had previously harassed or killed by off-leash dogs including ground-nesting birds, river otters and others.

The Nature Council’s role in making and keeping Lake Roland such a vibrant resource is no accident. The strong volunteer ethic and unparalleled relationship of the Council with Baltimore County and Maryland state government and our own neighborhood association make the Nature Council a national model in collaboration and park management. Based on the unwavering and regular support of a committed volunteer corps and the deep relationship with Baltimore County, the Park is able to provide thousands of Baltimore area residents with a wonderful and unique outdoor space that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. To learn more about Lake Roland please visit lakeroland.org.

Home Sales in Ruxton / Riderwood / Lake Roland

Properties sold from July – October 2017

Courtesy of the Whit Harvey Group of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage and the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation

ADDRESS	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
1628 Alston Road	375,000	367,500
904 Applewood Lane		875,000
7812 Ballston Road	898,000	862,000
7817 Ballston Road	395,000	365,000
2 Barrow Court	509,900	500,000
6 Barrow Court	409,995	409,995
7111 Bellona Avenue	599,900	600,000
7211 Bellona Avenue	3,975,000	3,400,000
8203 Bellona Avenue	464,900	462,500
8209 Bellona Avenue	525,000	500,000
1201 Berwick Road	1,750,000	1,750,000
101 Brightwood Club Drive	310,000	290,000
605 Brightwood Club Drive		1,100,000
6102 Buckingham Manor Drive	385,000	385,000
8202 Burnley Road		485,000

ADDRESS	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
8316 Carrbridge Circle	520,000	520,000
501 Charles Street Avenue	550,000	540,000
616 Charles Street Avenue	599,995	579,650
642 Charles Street Avenue	469,000	467,000
644 Charles Street Avenue	554,000	535,000
417 Chestnut Avenue	419,000	415,000
803 Chestnut Glen Garth	525,000	510,000
1717 Circle Road	549,000	529,000
1729 Circle Road	1,150,000	1,000,000
13 Coldwater Court	552,400	532,500
14 Dembeigh Hill Circle	750,000	740,000
11 Devon Hill Road	599,000	575,000
508 Greenwood Road		600,000
1805 Indian Head Road		732,500
6 Jack Frost Lane		533,280
1412 Jeffers Road	279,900	279,900
1805 W. Joppa Road	230,205	230,205
9 Lacosta Court	310,000	295,000
1099A W. Lake Avenue	775,000	755,000
1207 W. Lake Avenue	329,900	325,000
1402 Locust Avenue	1,975,000	1,685,422
1411 Locust Avenue	519,000	500,000
607 Meadowridge Road	485,000	470,000
6717 Newstead Lane	819,000	790,000
8203 Robin Hood Court	429,900	424,000
1710 Roland Avenue	374,900	374,000
1811 Roland Avenue	479,000	455,000
919 Rolandvue Road	1,295,000	1,230,000
8231 Ruxton Crossing Court	289,900	280,000
8233 Ruxton Crossing Court	304,990	290,000
7 Ruxton Green Court	1,399,999	1,270,000
4 Ruxton Ridge Garth	430,000	415,000
1818 Ruxton Road	1,500,000	1,350,000
1917 Ruxton Road	675,000	675,000
7816 Ruxwood Road		2,900,000
8007 Strauff Road	425,000	425,000
8206 Thornton Road	350,000	335,000
8308 Thornton Road	649,900	570,000
1009 Wagner Road	850,000	815,000
1416 Walnut Avenue	397,900	410,000
1404 Wiltwyck Road	340,000	340,000
1308 Wine Spring Lane	1,595,000	1,500,000
208 Woodbrook Lane		1,350,000



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Towson U. Students Lend GRAF a Helping Hand

Towson University's annual Town & Gown service event pairs student volunteers with local homeowners, businesses and other organizations in an effort to maintain and beautify surrounding communities. On Saturday, October 21, six students helped GRAF board member Dan Middleton and his daughter Hadley collect trash along Bellona Avenue between Joppa and Ruxton Roads. The crew also tackled much-needed pruning and weeding along the hedge adjacent to the light rail tracks. Thank you, Towson U. students!



Towson University volunteers Lauren, Elle, Kate, Erin, Rose and Lauren readying for a morning of community service, aka Weed Whacking 101

Photo courtesy Courtney Middleton

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Recycling Redux

by Barbara Guarnieri

Online and in this newsletter, RRL-RAIA continues to publish information we hope will facilitate members' home-based efforts to 'reduce, reuse and recycle.' (Please tear off the one-page recycling quick reference on page 12.)

Now that Baltimore County has seven years of experience with the single stream recycling program, we feel the time is ripe for another look at some of the issues surrounding the County's waste management program. That program, indeed the recycling industry, has evolved and changed in many ways since its inception. Single stream programs were introduced to make recycling easier on the homeowner, to reduce the fill rates of landfills and to lower the costs of waste management for local governments. Have those goals been achieved? Before answering that question, we should prob-



A glimpse into the recycling facility before items are sorted
Photo courtesy Jessica Paffenbarger

ably review the local recycling landscape.

The County entered the single stream market in 2010 with a program for single family homes, then multi-unit residential properties later that year. Prior to 2010, home owners sorted their own recyclables and alternated materials on a two-week curbside pickup schedule. The recycling trucks brought the presorted items to a County-owned materials recovery facility. Baling, storing and selling the presorted items for resale required the County to hire and train appropriate personnel. Overall, the County made a substantial financial commitment to curbside pickup. At the time, the recyclables market

was booming.

However, difficulties ensued when the County, with help from the Maryland Environmental Service, became an open market player. In short, governments are not structured to respond swiftly to the demands of changing markets. So when the County instituted the single stream program, it opted instead to contract out for those services. It entered into an agreement with Waste Management, Inc. (WM) to allow County curbside haulers to drop off recyclables at WM's materials recovery facility in Elkridge at no charge. This also allowed the same haulers that picked up our trash to be able to haul the recycling. WM sorted, baled and sold the recycled materials and WM alone reaped the market profits.

This arrangement worked well for the County. The loss of revenue from sales of recyclables was balanced by an increase in savings. The County waste program needed fewer employees, had lower disposal costs and diverted more trash from landfills. A targeted education program and motivated, compliant homeowners quickly combined to make the program highly successful. As a result, compliance grew and the amount of clean recyclables for sale by WM increased.

In early 2009, the County signed a new contract with WM through which it entered into a revenue sharing arrangement. That may have worked well for a long time if the recycling industry had been immune to the worldwide economic downturn that began in late 2008. But it was not. As oil prices fell and the value of the U.S. dollar dipped at home but grew stronger overseas (making our exports more expensive), the major purchasers of U.S. recyclables stopped buying. The end result was an increased supply of American recyclables whose price was plummeting.

On top of this, the single stream recycling market was changing. WM's Elkridge facility had entered into contracts with several large municipalities where motivation was high but knowledge of acceptable recycling materials was low. This led to a high rate of waste being put in the recycling stream and a high rate of non-



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recyclables in the compressed bales that went for sale. WM also began to appreciate that single stream waste often contained small bits of glass, plastic and metal from all the jostling in waste bins and transportation vehicles. These shards not only damaged sorting machinery but also lowered the purity of the baled recycling. The result was a contaminated, lower quality recyclables stock which buyers stopped buying.



Recycling trucks arrive and unload their haul
Photo courtesy Jessica Paffenbarger

These concerns had the County continually re-assessing its waste management plans. By 2012, the time had arrived to change gears. County planners were able to capitalize on the long learning curve of single stream processing nationwide and create a state of the art facility and program. In November of 2013, the County went back into the business of sorting, compressing, baling and marketing County recyclables in an improved \$12.6M recycling facility in Cockeysville. Several RRLRAIA Board members toured this fascinating place a few years ago (see the winter 2015 issue of *Neighborhood NEWS*). At that time the facility processed about 35 tons of recycling an hour and provided jobs to 13 employees. At the opening of the facility, County Executive Kevin Kamenetz stated that it would allow the County "...to earn up to \$2M a year in profits...turning our trash into cash." Has that projection been met?

Of course the hope of being profitable is dependent on unpredictable market conditions. Recyclable goods prices fluctuate as all commodities do — and who could have predicted the oil or housing crisis? In the first four months of operation, however, the facility earned more than \$750K, on track to exceed Mr. Kamenetz's projection. In 2014 and 2015, revenues held steady at the \$2M projection. Solid Waste Bureau Chief Michael Beichler likes to frame the issue this way: your tax dollars pay \$65 per ton to manage landfill waste whereas we receive revenue of \$28 per ton for recycling. The program is good for the environment and your wallet.

So let's return to the question posed at the start of this article — has the County achieved the goals of diverting waste, saving the costs of waste management and reducing the amount of landfill? The answer is yes, indeed it has! But should we be satisfied? The County's current rate of recycling versus waste stands at 35%. Some municipal programs currently divert more than 75% of their waste. They achieve this through strict measures like banning plastic bags and re-instituting curbside organic waste pick up. Incentives have been introduced like beverage container deposit programs that help to eliminate bottle litter from streets and streams. Experiments in converting solid waste to energy have been championed. Any number of these programs may be in our future.

States across the nation are grappling with two major waste issues: the disappearance of landfills and the emission of green-

house gas from these landfills. Waste in landfills makes up about 15% of all greenhouse gases emitted in the United States. In 2013, Marylanders threw away an average of almost six pounds of waste per person a day, an alarmingly higher rate than the EPA's national rate of 4.4 pounds. At this pace, Maryland's existing gaseous landfills will be entirely filled in 30 years. Baltimore County is well positioned to take a leading role in this plan and RRLR area residents can surely get behind the whole stinky business. Before using paper to clean up or plastic to wrap up, think about using something you can clean and reuse for the job. And always think twice before putting anything in the can. If you recycle or reuse, you will surely reduce.

Keep an eye out for an updated recycling schedule, which will be mailed to you in December.


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September Street Clean



Volunteers Hadley Middleton and Piers Hansen pose with the growing pile of trash bags. The find of the day was a cow bell! A very loud one!

At 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 16, 13 volunteers gathered for the first of two fall clean-up efforts along Falls and Old Court Roads. Over 20 bags of trash were collected and reported to the Ocean Conservancy national data bank.

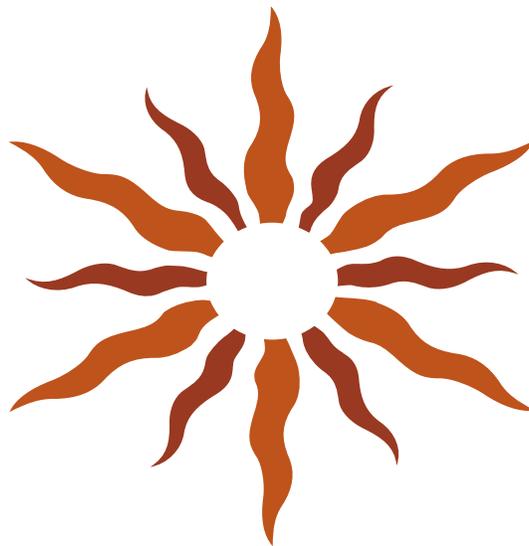


Chuck Morton, Board members Paddy Morton, Carlton Sexton and Joe Derr prepare for some street cleaning

Photos courtesy Courtney Middleton

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Ancient Oceans, Rare Plants – Secrets of Lake Roland’s Serpentine

by Lauren Madsen

Do you know that you can stroll across the relic of an ancient ocean floor and observe rare and endangered plant species without ever leaving the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland community? All it takes is a short walk to one of our neighborhood’s best-kept secrets: the Bare Hills serpentine barrens in Lake Roland.

This area, nestled between the Bare Hills commercial corridor on Falls Road and the west side of Lake Roland, is unusual for both its geological origins under the sea and the rich biodiversity of plants and animals that are now abundant there. It’s a prairie-like landscape that accounts for roughly a quarter of the Park’s overall 500 acres but seems out of place nestled amidst the native woodland trees.



Outcrop of exposed serpentine rock
Photo courtesy Lauren Madsen

Its uniqueness is captured by its equally unusual moniker. ‘Serpentine barrens’ describes the greenish, flaky outcrop of stone, which resembles the scales of a snake, and its scrubby, grassy vegetation, which is barren of large trees. If the geology and ecology of this site aren’t enough to attract your attention, the Bare Hills serpentine barrens also tell a vivid tale of Maryland’s changing landscapes and a once-prosperous mining industry. “It’s a very rare area,” according to Jonathan Wood, one of the lead rangers at Lake Roland. “This is one of the few areas of serpentine open to the public and easily accessible. It’s also an area of great natural and historical importance.”

The Bare Hills serpentine barrens provide a prime example of a landscape that was once abundant in Maryland but has now all but disappeared. At the time Europeans settled in Maryland 400 years ago, more than 100,000 acres in the central portion of the state were covered in a grassland and oak savanna known as ‘The Great Maryland Barrens.’ This landscape, however, was not naturally occurring as it is in Bare Hills; it was man-made. Native American tribes used fire as a flushing and hunting technique, and that kept native forests at bay and allowed grasslands to flourish. As the area was developed by European settlers and burning was curtailed, ecological succession turned the Maryland grasslands into the vast swaths of woodlands that are more familiar today. As the landscape evolved, however, some prairie survived in dry, rocky areas where soils were too poor to support large trees. In the early 19th century, local Bare Hills resident Isaac Tyson Jr. discovered that these areas, now known to be serpentine outcrops, were a good source of heavy metals, particularly chromite, a valuable mineral used in the production of a dark-yellow ‘ocher’ paint, a color later used on taxicabs and school buses and in appliances

and chrome-plated auto parts such as chrome bumpers and stainless steel.

Led by Tyson, decades of mining ensued, which further degraded the remaining serpentine barrens in this area. Eventually, when the mineral deposits were depleted, most of Maryland’s serpentine



Area of serpentine restored to its natural prairie-like state Photo courtesy Lauren Madsen

barrens were forgotten and destroyed by either development or invasive species. Over the past 50 years, conservation efforts have helped to restore remaining serpentine outcrops to their natural grassland state and preserve the vast biodiversity found in this unique ecosystem. Today, the largest and best-preserved serpentine barrens

in the U.S. are located in Maryland and southern Pennsylvania,

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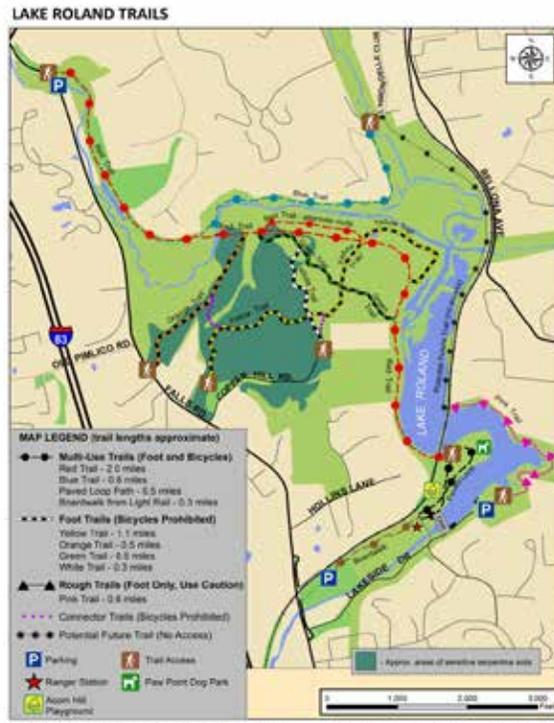
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hosting 39 rare, threatened and endangered plant species, along with an array of butterflies, birds and insects. This includes the serpentine barrens located in Bare Hills, the 1,900-acre Soldiers Delight Natural Environmental Area in Owings Mills and the 60-square-mile State Line Serpentine Barrens scattered across the Maryland-Pennsylvania border.

Today, serpentine barrens are a globally rare phenomenon, but they were once prevalent throughout eastern North America, ranging from Alabama in the south to Canada in the north. Serpentine is an ultramafic rock that is created on the sea floor as magma from the mantle of the earth oozes upwards through underwater rift zones and cools in the presence of water. Millions of years ago, as tectonic plates shifted, landmasses collided and slabs of the Earth's crust were forced under one another. Pieces of this serpentine



Map of Lake Roland with serpentine outcrops highlighted in dark green. Courtesy Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks

rock were scraped off the ocean floor and emplaced on top of the continental crust that now makes up the North American continent. It's exposed and visible in small outcrops such as the serpentine barrens at Bare Hills.

This serpentine rock, known as serpentinite, varies significantly in composition from the other rocks typically found here. It's high in magnesium and iron and contains pockets of heavy metals like chromium and nickel, but it lacks the calcium and other minerals typical of continental rock and soil. As a result, serpentine erodes into a nutrient-poor, toxic soil that is inhospitable to most native plants. In addition, serpentine erodes easily but lacks the organic material and clay necessary to retain water, producing very dry and acidic soil conditions near the surface. As a result, serpentine outcrops host unusual flora, mainly rare wildflowers, grasses and stunted oak trees, that have evolved to survive the harsh soil conditions. This includes flowering plants, such as the fameflower (*Phemeranthus*



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—Aidan, 7th Grade



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teretifolius) and serpen-tine aster (*Symphotrichum depauperatum*); prairie grasses such as little bluestem and scrubby trees, such as blackjack oak (*Quercus marilandica*) and post oak (*Quercus stellata*). At the Bare Hills serpentine barrens, the most prevalent rare plant is the fameflower, a wildflower that has the unique habit of blooming throughout the summer but for only a few hours a day.

Park Ranger Kyle Bricknell says the Bare Hills serpentine barrens are his favorite part of Lake Roland but laments that it's such an under-utilized area. Many Park visitors never leave the highly-trafficked Red Trail or the peninsula area, where the Nature Center is located, to venture off the beaten track. The dramatic shift in vegetation as you come out of the forest and enter the prairie-like barrens combined with the magnificent, unobstructed views of the surrounding Park provide visitors with a sense of seclusion that is revered in a community so close to a major metropolitan area. "When you are in the serpentine, there are no signs of modern life except maybe a single telephone line in your view," Kyle explains. In the serpentine, which is easily accessed from the Orange, Yellow and White Trails, visitors may also be lucky enough to see animals hard to spot elsewhere in Lake Roland, such as the eastern hog-nose snake (*Heterodon nasicus*) or the bobwhite quail (*Colinus virginianus*).

Unfortunately, the serpentine barrens preserved in Lake Roland face constant threats from invasive species. Most notable is the Virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*), a quick-growing tree that adapts to the poor soil conditions, easily takes over available space and



Serpentine aster
Photo courtesy Lauren Madsen

shades the rare grasses. Other invasive plants posing a threat at Bare Hills are Chinese silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*), which spreads from local landscaping, and greenbrier (*Smitelax*), a fast-growing vine easily propagated by birds. Due to the close proximity to the Bare Hills commercial district and residential housing along the Falls Road corridor, intentional burning to control invasives is not feasible.

Most recently, the environmental committee of the Nature Council, led by Elise Butler, began an ongoing three-pronged restoration project of this serpentine ecological area of the Park. First, the invasive species were removed allowing native plants to recover. A forestry mower was used to groom the restoration area, allowing native grasses to regenerate — restoring the area to its original grassland ecosystem. Finally, a maintenance access road was built to support these activities and to aid the fire department in the event of an errant fire in the restoration area. This restoration is ongoing and is projected to be completed in 2027, thanks to the Lake Roland Nature Council and armies of volunteers. "Eventually, the main goal is to expand and restore the serpentine area to what it would have been," Jonathan Wood said.

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Our Architectural Heritage — Eclectic Houses

Continued from page 1



Photo #4

Other details of Colonial Revival houses include multiple hipped roof lines with exaggerated details, as seen on the house in Photos #4 and #5, ca.1927, and ganged or grouped windows (paired, tripled or bay-type). Ganged windows are seen in many, if not all, of the Eclectic design styles. Continuous roof dormers are also popular, as seen in Photo #6, as they serve to maximize the usable footprint on the second floor of a structure.



Photo #7



Photo #5



Photo #6

Four other Eclectic architectural styles (more commonly found in Guilford or Roland Park) are Chateausque 1880-1910, Beaux Arts 1885-1930, Tudor 1890-1940 and Neoclassical 1895-1950. The Chateausque house has steeply pitched roofs with many vertical elements such as spires and tur-



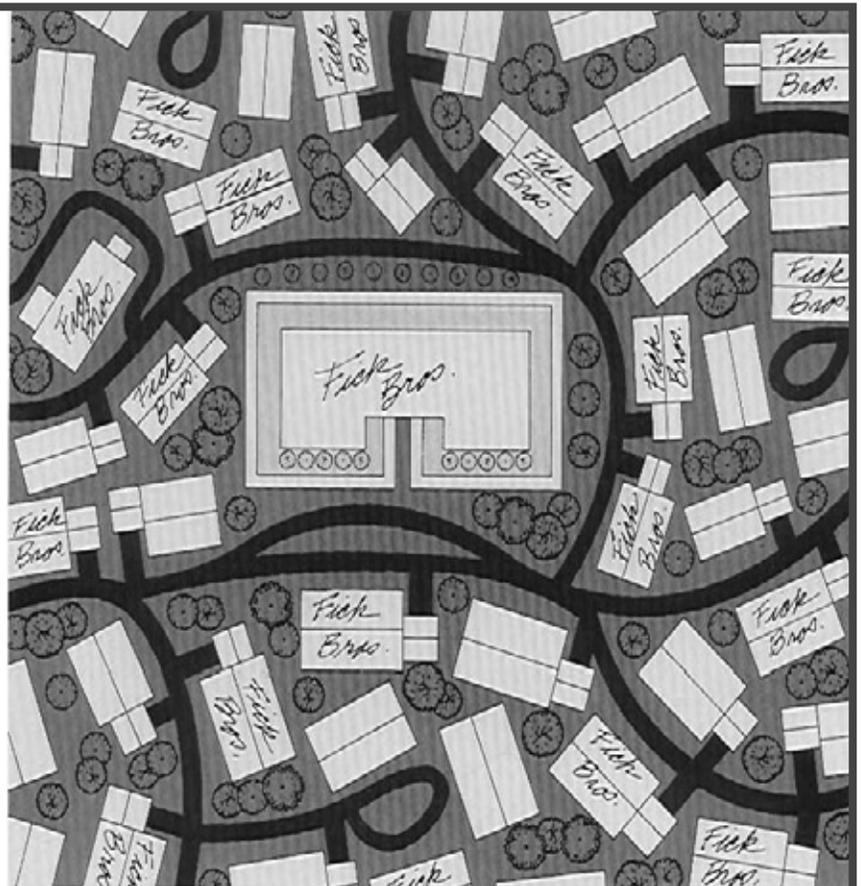
Photo #9

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Photo #8



Photo #10

rets and intricately shaped chimneys. The Beaux Arts house has a shallow pitched or flat roof, masonry walls, full symmetry and fanciful decorations,

typically in light-colored stone. The Neoclassical house has a full-height two-story porch with a roof supported by classical columns and full symmetry of door and windows on the façade. The Tudor house has steeply pitched roofs, gables on both the front and sides and decorative timber ornamentation, its most notable distinguishing feature. Although stucco, brick and stone cladding were prevalent in all of these houses, earlier structures were also built with wooden cladding.

The next style I will discuss in detail is the French Eclectic style, dating between 1915-1945. The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland area has some great examples as seen in the article's photographs. Like some of the other Eclectic styles, French Eclectic homes typically have tall, steeply-pitched roofs, but always hip-shaped without a dominant front-facing cross gable (a gable roof perpendicular to the main roof) as seen in Photo #7, ca.1923. The façade of this style, as seen in Photo #10, ca. 1933, can either be symmetrical (with or without wings on either side) or asymmetrical. These homes are always stone, brick, stucco or a combination. Please notice that the eaves (or roof overhangs) flare up as seen in Photo #12. This is very indicative of a French Eclectic house. You may also find, less frequently, this style featuring a tower at the intersection of two wings of the house.

The stately French Eclectic house boasts formal detailing such as the front door set in a simple but decorative limestone arched opening, as seen in Photo #8. Windows are typically casement style and constructed of metal, called leaded windows. You will at times find double hung windows resembling the English Georgian. The windows are either double wide (or in pairs 'French' style) as seen in Photo #12 or ganged in sets of three as seen in Photo #9. Full length casement windows (French doors) are often used as seen in Photo #10. These have become popular in all types of architecture today. The dormer window can either be circular, hipped, gabled or arched, as seen in Photo #12. This dormer is called a 'through-the-cornice' type, which creates a break of the roof line. What a great example of mixing two masonry types (stone and brick). Fanciful chimneys are also an identifying element. Notice the quoining detail (masonry blocks at the corner of a wall) at different intervals on the chimney as seen in Photo #11.



Photo #11



Photo #12

I hope you enjoyed this installment of our tour of Eclectic houses in our neighborhoods. We thank our members who have allowed us to showcase their houses. You can see most of these styles in the RRLR neighborhoods and surrounding areas. The next installment in this series will feature Mediterranean and Spanish houses from this period.

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