

NORTHWOOD NEWS

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'Natural' Playground a New Trend

By Carole A. Barth

Communities around the country are moving away from equipment playgrounds in favor of natural playgrounds. A natural playground is a miniature landscape where kids can climb, dig, crawl, build, play house, and use all their senses. Instead of play equipment purpose-built for a single function, children interact with natural elements creatively, in ways only limited by their imaginations.

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Natural playground styles vary considerably. Some look like a conventional park, except that the play "equipment" is created from natural materials such as logs and playhouses made from trained vines. Others create the illusion of a totally wild area. Most fall somewhere in between. Some even have water features, such as a small "stream" that can change course as kids manipulate rocks and sticks.

In addition to encouraging imaginative play, natural playgrounds invite youngsters to interact with nature. Too few of today's children have the opportunity to experience nature through self-directed play, and that lack has been dubbed "nature deficit disorder." The disassociation of children and nature has been linked to a wide range of behavioral and health issues, including childhood obesity, attention deficit disorder, and depression.

Indeed, there is a growing body of research on the *benefits* of unstructured play and time spent in natural surroundings. For example, academic performance improves measurably after time

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Next Meeting on 14th December

The next meeting of the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association will be held on Wednesday, 14 December 2011, at 7:30 p.m. at Forest Knolls Elementary School. The school is located at 10830 Eastwood Avenue, just off Caddington Avenue (there's no access from other sections of Eastwood).

Special guests scheduled include:

■ Brandon Stewart, customer service rep. from WSSC, who is supposed to bring one of their subcontractors, and

■ Erin Johnson of Sandy Spring CSA (see page 6).

All residents of the Northwood-Four Corners-Forest Knolls area are invited to attend and express their views. Please note that only paid members of the NFCCA are eligible to vote. (Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at the meeting.)■

DECEMBER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Neighbors!

We are now well into the holiday season. Halloween, Veteran's Day, and Thanksgiving are behind us. Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Year's Day are rapidly approaching. Often I am reminded how fortunate I am to live in this neighborhood. As I walk my dogs through the neighborhood, North Four Corners Park, or Rachel Carson Meadow, I am frequently engaged in conversations concerning health, happiness, and (in this season) holiday plans. I am so happy to live in a community where a little neighborly outreach is reciprocated so generously.

The Civic Association is working on ways to: better communicate with the community, focus the agenda during NFCCA meetings, and increase participation of individual neighbors. We'll post Board meeting minutes on the listserve. Also, we'll solicit ideas for the meetings on the listserve (thanks to Jennifer Cox for the suggestion). Another idea is to have the MoCo Police Department post crime updates to the listserve (thanks to Astrid Diaz for that one). We are also coordinating with the group on Snowy Owl/Mountain Quail as they start up a Crime Watch which we hope to expand to larger sections (if not all) of the neighborhood (special thanks to Anthony Marcavage and Greg Daniel).

I would like to thank Ted Daniels and Dee Wilner, our outgoing Civic Association Board members, for their help in the past. Also, I sincerely welcome Greg Daniel and Carol Van Dyck, who are stepping up to fill the open positions.

—Brian Morrissey

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- Post a Message (you must subscribe first): nfcca@yahoogroups.com

Northwood Parents List Serve

- Subscribe (send an email to): northwoodparents-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
- Post a Message (you must subscribe first): northwoodparents@yahoogroups.com ■

NORTHWOOD NEWS

Northwood News is published by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. The NFCCA represents the ~1,485 households in the area bounded by Colesville Rd. (Rte. 29), University Blvd. (Rte. 193), Caddington Ave., and the Northwest Branch.

Any resident of this area is eligible to join the NFCCA. Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at any Association meeting or mailed to the treasurer.

Northwood News is published five times a year—in October, December, February, April, and June. To place an ad or discuss a story, please contact the editor.

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Visit Our Website
www.nfcca.org

'Natural' Playground a New Trend

(continued from page 1)
spent in nature. As these benefits have become better recognized, pediatricians have actually begun to write "prescriptions" for nature play.

Natural playgrounds are also cost-effective. Because they take advantage of existing terrain and "found" materials, construction costs are low. In contrast, conventional playgrounds feature very expensive equipment that is often replaced after only

a few years to comply with evolving safety standards.

Still, natural playgrounds *do* need to be designed. In addition to safety concerns, natural playgrounds need to be appropriately designed for the level of use. Thus, a high-use playground in a heavily populated urban neighborhood would need a different design than a lightly used playground on the grounds of a small daycare center. Having specially designated play

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'Natural' Playground a New Trend

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areas also protects sensitive natural areas like wetlands from the impacts of too much foot traffic.

The State of Maryland has recognized the importance of natural play in its *Partnership for Children in Nature* and Governor O'Malley's Proclamation, *Maryland Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights* (see page 4). As part of the Partnership, the Department of Natural Resources has helped create a number of natural playgrounds.

Right here in our neighborhood, we were ahead of the natural playground curve without knowing it. Eight years ago, our community-generated conceptual plan for Rachel Carson Meadow in North Four Corners Park called for a nature trail, story circle, and other interactive features made from natural and recycled materials.

We also requested a playground for older kids (since the park's existing playground is a tot lot) and a seating area with chess boards and other features for the Seniors. Finally, our plan included managing the exotic invasive vines in the park to improve safety and visibility. We hired Dr. Marc Imlay to assess the property and devise a control program. His report indicated that, simply by controlling the invasive vines, we could go from only 20 percent visibility through the tree canopy to 80 percent visibility.

This year the facility plan-

ning process for the park resumes. So far, MoCo Parks is still determined to spend five to six million dollars to remove our existing soccer field, cut down the meadow's rolling hills, and fill the valley with more than 20 feet of fill dirt to create a new soccer field and 50-car lot.

This is despite the fact that the same money could renovate 12+ existing fields, thus actually increasing the number of playable fields. Parks wants to build this field even though there are flat park parcels in the area where existing fields could be expanded or new fields built for a fraction of the money they plan to spend in North Four Corners Park. And for the final irony, there is another group (less than three
(continued on page 4)



Too few of today's children have the opportunity to experience nature through self-directed play, and that lack has been dubbed "nature deficit disorder," which has been linked to a wide range of behavioral and health issues, including childhood obesity, attention deficit disorder, and depression.

NECCA BOARD

The Board of Directors for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association meets five times a year, in October, December, February, April, and June. Current officers for 2011-2012 are:

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Nature's Playground a Natural Trend for North 4C

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miles away) that is trying to get a park with a field on the old site of the School of Art and Design at Montgomery College on Georgia Avenue.

The group, called "Green Space on Georgia" includes residents from the communi-

ties of Plyers Mill Crossing, Plyers Mill Estates, Carroll Knolls, and McKenney Hills, who have joined together to advocate for a park with active recreation since there are no such resources on that side of Georgia Avenue. They've been at it for several

years, and are equally frustrated with MoCo Parks.

But there is hope. Eight years ago, we struggled to communicate our vision of a park with a sustainability theme. We tried to explain that there is a middle ground between leaving the meadow the way it is and obliterating it. We felt sure there was a way to design a landscape that feels like a natural area. We were convinced that the park could be improved without losing its essential character.

We also believed it was possible to create a space that encourages and nurtures what Rachel Carson called "The Sense of Wonder." We believed that having such a space in an accessible, densely populated location like North Four Corners Park would benefit families with young kids and seniors alike.

Today, we can point to the natural playground movement and say, "that's what we're talking about." Today, we can work with the Partnership for Children in Nature and the No Child Left Inside Coalition to pursue our vision.

But we need your help. If you are willing to lend a hand, call me at 301.593.7863 or email cbarth@mindspring.com. There is lots to be done, from lobbying the County Council to cutting invasive vines. We also need volunteers for our Rachel Carson Meadow Festival in May. This great event showcases how the landscape "rooms" in the meadow create a multi-functional space. ■



Governor Martin O'Malley unveiled the Maryland Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights—with its 10 components—at Earth Day celebrations in 2009 to recognize the value of outdoor play.

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While We May Live in Unsettling Times

My Team has Settled \$18 Million in Sales

Northwood Settled Transactions: Sept-Oct 2011		
 <p align="center">4 BR Cape Cod 320 Pinewood Ave Sold Price: \$487,500</p>	 <p align="center">5 BR Rambler 230 Thistle Dr Sold Price: \$405,000</p>	 <p align="center">4 BR Split Foyer 807 Caddington Ave Sold Price: \$339,900</p>
 <p align="center">4 BR Cape Cod 422 Kerwin Rd Sold Price: \$295,000</p>	 <p align="center">4 BR Split Level 1008 Playford Ln Sold Price: \$275,000</p>	 <p align="center">3 BR Split Level 11108 Foxglove Ln Sold Price: \$269,000</p>

Buying Fresh Produce Directly from the CSA Farmer

More people want to eat healthier; reduce their carbon footprint; support independent, small farmers; and introduce their families to eating real (not processed) food. CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture) is one of the best ways to connect people directly to their food and the farmers who grow it. We have an opportunity to start a CSA site here in our community by working with Sandy Spring CSA.

Unlike farmers markets, CSA commits the participant to eating fresh produce (called a “share”) every week throughout the growing season. Because participants pay the farmer upfront in Dec.-Jan.-Feb., the independent family farms fare better financially and in terms of planning what and how much to grow.

Sandy Spring CSA serves as a metro-area marketing coordinator for Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative (LFFC).



“Swap” boxes let you replace one item you don’t want with something else. Empty share boxes are returned, either the following week or on the spot.

They have operated since 2002, helping metro-area eaters connect with local, organic farmers. All produce is certified organic, grown by a non-profit cooperative of 75 Amish farmers in Lancaster County, Pa. You can read about them at www.lancasterfarmfresh.com.

Getting Started

The first step is for someone in the community to volunteer his/her garage or porch or other covered area as a “site.” A site host offers his/her space—from mid-May through October—for CSA members to drop by and pick up their share boxes. In return, the site host receives a free organic veggie and fruit share. Thirty paid shares are required to start a site.

Here are the basics.

- Vegetable shares include 7-10 items, including some fruit.
- In addition, fruit, flower, and herb shares are available.
- Spring/Summer season runs mid-May through October (25 weeks, or an estimated \$750).
- Fall season runs November up through Christmas week (8 weeks).
- Weekly share price is \$30/week and you are pro-rated based on the week you start.
- Shares are offered for a season, not weekly.
- Payment in full is due upon signing up.
- Hours run until 7:00 p.m. to accommodate commuters.
- Shares can be split with neighbors or family members (Sandy Spring will help make matches).

All SSCSA members are automatically enrolled in LFFC’s online buying club at no added cost. Through this program, members have the option to purchase local meat, cheese, yogurt, milk, eggs, honey, etc., from LFFC farmers, to be delivered with their

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A “share” box at the Kemp Mill site the day before Thanksgiving contained a multitude of fresh-picked, organic veggies.

Consider Joining a Local CSA

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CSA shares each week. These orders are delivered in separate coolers and labeled by customer name.

Sandy Spring CSA has been operating for 10 years, bringing weekly veggies directly from local farmers to conveniently located sites in MoCo (churches, schools, homes). You can learn more

accessible, and with ample parking on the street or in the parking lot to allow members 5-10 minutes each to pick up.

If interested in hosting a site, contact Erin Johnson, 301.438.3927 or erin@sandy.springcsa.com. Complete information about participating is located at www.sandy.springcsa.com.

Hear More at the Dec. Mtg.

Erin will be at the NFCCA 14 December meeting to talk more about the CSA experience and having a site in our community. However, it is important to try to identify a volunteer to host before that time to allow members to take advantage of an early-bird discount that ends 15 January for the Spring/Summer 2012 season. So contact Erin ASAP if you're interested. ■



These share boxes, stacked under cover in a Kemp Mill carport, await pickup by Sandy Spring CSA participants.

about them at www.sandy.springcsa.com.

If you're interested in hosting, you need a covered area (e.g., garage, porch, or overhang) where share boxes can be stacked completely out of the sun and rain. It may also be inside a building, as long as doors are unlocked. For a home site, the ideal capacity is to hold up to 75 boxes stacked. For a non-residential site, there is no limit to the number of boxes. The location needs to be clean,

THE ENERGY GUY

Saving Money on Holiday Lights

Can LED holiday lights save you money? To answer this question, I compared the power used by a strand of regular incandescent Christmas lights with LED Christmas lights using a Kill-A-Watt meter. The Kill-A-Watt meter is a tool used to calculate the power used by any plug-in electronic device.

You can use a Kill-a-Watt meter to calculate the cost to run that device over the length of a day, week, or month.

My testing revealed that LEDs use 80 percent less power than your standard incandescent bulb and offer even greater savings when compared to a strand of large incandescent bulbs. Although a strand of LED bulbs can cost up to four times as much as a strand of standard incandescent bulbs, they last much longer than their incandescent counterparts and they don't break easily! This can add up to sig-

nificant savings over several years or even for a single season if you use a large number of lights.

The reduced energy cost of LED Christmas lights and the durability of the lights, more than make up for the LED's premium price over several years of use. If you add a tim-

er to your light array, you can even save more!

Kill-A-Watt meters are a great tool to help you to reduce electricity consumption from appliances and devices plugged into your outlets. Stay posted for a future article on ways to use this handy tool

in your home.

[Reuven Walder, who lives on Lombardy Road, is Founder/Vice President of Home Services for Ecobeco LLC, 2009 Maryland Home Performance Contractor of the Year. Contact him at 301.802.7038 or reuven@ecobeco.com.] ■



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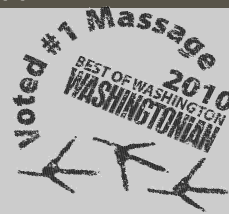
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New Regulations on Posted Signs Take Effect 1 Jan.

By Jacquie Bokow

Warnings started being issued on 1 October but, starting 1 January 2012, fines up to \$25 *per sign* will be issued by the Md. State Highway Administration (SHA) for illegal commercial signs.

The law allows SHA and local governments to recover the costs of removing illegal signs from state-maintained highways. This affects any road with a number, like University Boulevard (Route 193) and Colesville Road (Route 29).

In November, I saw a man on a ladder cutting down

signs that had been posted about 10 feet off the ground on telephone poles on Colesville Road just off Southwood Avenue, so the SHA is definitely working on it.

SHA is responsible for more than 17,000 miles of roadway statewide, including the maintenance and regulation of outdoor advertising. Crews pick up illegal signs throughout the year, which costs taxpayers \$600,000 annually.

Along state highways—including interstates and U.S. and Maryland numbered routes—private signs are pro-

hibited in the medians and along the sides on the public property or right-of-way. The illegal signs are often found attached to utility poles or stacked together on wooden posts littering medians.

Illegal signs distract drivers and can impede the sight distance for drivers and block legal signs from view. These signs also “affect maintenance operations, interfere with the work of utility crews, and mar the landscape along Maryland’s scenic routes,” said the SHA.

To learn more, visit www.roads.maryland.gov. ■

4 Corners Safeway Substitutes Shiny for Shabby

By Iris Peabody

Safeway has finally found a solution to its declining clientele and has decided to make big changes to its scruffy Four Corners store at 116 University

Boulevard West. According to staff, we can anticipate a floral shop, a deli counter, and a more adequate produce arrangement—amenities previously lacking from the store.

The new manager, Tu-



The produce section has been remodeled, with new flooring.

meka Watkins, is keeping her crew busy putting the aisles in attractive and efficient “well-signed” order and the variety of selections has greatly improved.

Watkins never would take the time to speak to me, so I couldn’t find out the dates for completion. A “grand reopening” was scheduled for 3 December, but staff weren’t sure if everything would be done by then. At the very least, we can all look forward to a better store, one that many of us can walk to, too.

Halloween Parade in the Park is Fun for Families

If you happened to be walking by North Four Corners Park on a sunny October afternoon, you would have spotted Peter Pan sliding down the slides, Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse running, fairies flitting, and many action figures zipping through the playground.

That's because you would have stumbled on the North Four Corners' Halloween parade and trick-or-treating held on Sunday afternoon, 30 Oct., which was organized by Kristen Mastroianni, Rachel Palmaira, and Chi Nguyen.



The Kohlenstein family donned some creative do-it-yourself costumes: father

Brad was Bert the chimney sweeper, partnering with daughter Violet, who was dressed as Mary Poppins. Mother Jane donned children's book favorite character Llama Mama, while son Henry was her sidekick "Llama Llama Red Pajama."

Fellow young resident Danny Phi Holberton donned a large home-made Chicago style pizza, which his mother Priscillia made with a handy glue gun and multiple trips to a fabric store.

A few activities kept the children entertained, such as a mummy-making contest where children raced each other to cover themselves in toilet paper.



Young participants immersed themselves in Palm-
(continued on page 11)



FITNESS FUN

Feel Great in 2012: New Year's Resolution Must-Do Tips!

Have you made your 2012 health and fitness goals yet? Start your New Year off right by using the **BALANCE** acrostic developed by fitness expert Valerie C. Merriweather, MHA.

B – Begin. Begin your program! As obvious as that sounds, starting an exercise program is half the battle. Remember, there's always a reason to put it off; don't do it!

A – Accept. Accept the fact that your life is different. If you have increased work responsibilities, family demands, and long commutes, you'll have to do a workout that fits your life and gets you moving on a regular basis. This may mean working out early in the morning or during your lunch break at work.

L – Learn. Learn creative ways to incorporate more activity into your day. Learn proper form to improve your workouts and enrich your daily life. Proper form will prevent future injury—a necessity as you age!

A – Adjust. Adjust your workouts so you're not doing the same thing over and over. Your body needs a new challenge every 4-12 weeks depending on your

fitness goals and schedule.

N – Non-negotiable. Exercise has to be non-negotiable. Studies show that regular exercise reduces stress, prevents insomnia, and increases your metabolism. Look for creative ways to exercise—play with the kids for 30 minutes, jump rope for 15 minutes. Everything you do makes a difference!

C – Challenge. Challenge yourself on a regular basis. Start a new class or an activity that you've always wanted to try. Challenge yourself physically and you'll benefit mentally; studies prove that exercise is a great brain workout!

E – Expectation. Expect great things! If you start off by thinking of the rewards of a healthier lifestyle, your motivation will improve and you'll see the results in your clothes, the scale, and your overall attitude.

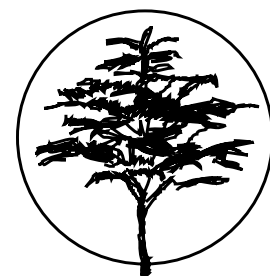
[Valerie Merriweather, MHA, ACE, NASM is Chief Executive Officer of Fitwell Training Solutions, a personal training and wellness company specializing in the health and fitness needs of families. She lives on Playford Lane in the Forest Knolls community. Valerie can be reached at www.fitwellsolutions.com.]

Halloween in North 4C Park



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aira's craft activity, decorating paper pumpkins with stickers and glitter.

The organizers thank all families for participating and a special honorable mention to Heather Foley and Erik Berlin ("Chef Egg") of Downtown Silver Spring's Whole Foods for generously contributing recyclable trick-or-treat bags for the event. ■



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New MoCo 5¢ Carryout Bag Law Effective 1 January

By Jacquie Bokow and
Linda Perlman

Under the new Carryout Bag Law, all retail establishments in the county that sell goods and provide their customers with bags (either paper or plastic) to carry purchases will be required to charge 5¢ per bag beginning 1 January 2012. “Retail establishments” include all stores, permanent booths, service stations, grocery stores, department stores, specialty goods sellers, convenience stores, restaurants, and others.

The 5¢ charge also applies to purchases made over the phone or Internet or via fax, or at a self-checkout counter, if you are using store-provided carryout bags. Retailers get to keep 1¢ of each 5¢ for the bags they sell a customer and may not provide a store credit to cover the bag tax amount. Cash credit for bags that customers voluntarily bring to carry their purchases is not required under the law, so if you’ve been getting 5¢ back for taking your own bags to the grocery store, that may stop. A service rep. at Giant, however, claims the store will continue to credit 5¢ per bag supplied by the consumer.

The following bags are exempt under the law:

- Bags used to hold prescription drug(s);
- Bags sold for *initial use* as yard waste bags, pet waste bags, garbage bags, dry cleaning bags, or newspaper bags;
- Bags provided by a seasonal stand or street fair

stall, such as a farmer’s market, yard sale, or “occasional retailer” (defined in the law as “...a retail establishment that engages in the retail sale of goods no more than six days in any calendar year”);

- Bags used to package a bulk item or to contain or wrap a perishable item; and



© Tyler Olson | Dreamstime.com

- A paper bag that a restaurant gives a customer to take prepared or leftover food or drink from the restaurant.

A retail establishment must record on the customer’s transaction receipt the number of carryout bags that

were provided to the customer and the total charge levied.

The legislation, similar to Washington, D.C.’s Bag Law, was designed to create an incentive for the public to reduce the use of disposable bags by bringing our own reusable bags. The District Bag Law, which went into effect two years ago, was in response to a trash study which found that disposable plastic bags were one of the largest sources of litter in the Anacostia River. Since D.C.’s law went into effect, it has reduced plastic bag litter in rivers and streams by an estimated 65 percent.

The law is designed to improve our environment by cutting down on the number of plastic bags—a significant source of litter—which pollute our streets, streams, and playgrounds, and harm property values. The money collected from the carryout bag law will go exclusively into the county’s Water Quality Protection Charge fund, which finances county watershed protection activities, including litter control and stormwater pollution control.

The revenues will effectively shift the burden of litter clean-up costs from all public taxpayers to only those consumers who choose to use store bags. Avoiding the fee is simple: whenever you go shopping, bring your own bags to carry your purchases out of the store. Keep them in your vehicle and you won’t forget them. ■



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Maryland Begins 511 Service for Traffic Information

The Maryland Department of Transportation has launched a new official travel information service called Maryland 511. Travel information is provided through the internet at www.md511.org, by phone at 511 (for those in Maryland or key roads in the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia), or by smartphone. Those outside Maryland can call 1.855.GOMD511 (466.3511).

Maryland 511 provides users with real-time traffic information, transportation alternatives, and links to tourism spots across the State. Travelers will be able to access information on:

- Traffic conditions,
- Live traffic camera feeds,



- Highway construction updates,
- Weather conditions and forecasts,
- Transit and airport information, and
- Toll facility information.

Travelers can also follow the latest information from Maryland 511 on Twitter, which can be accessed from the Maryland 511 website.

Personalize Your Travel Information

You can now quickly access traffic conditions for your

commute and other frequent trips you make. The service is free and easy to use. Just set up your profile online to use My Maryland 511:

- Click on the "Register Now" button and create your user profile.
- Set up your traffic and travel time preferences.
- Verify your account upon receiving confirmation via email. ■

Upcoming NFCCA Meetings

14 December 2011

8 February 2012

11 April 2012

13 June 2012

'Washington Ear' Needs Volunteers to Read Aloud

Established in 1974 by Dr. Margaret Rockwell Pfanstiehl, The Metropolitan Washington Ear is the only local nonprofit radio reading/information service in the metropolitan Washington area serving visually impaired and print handicapped residents. The listeners, who are of all ages but primarily seniors and from all walks of life, are unable to read print either because of blindness, visual impairment, or physical disability. The reading service enables the listeners to be well-informed members of their families, communities, and workplaces.

Listeners can choose from more than 100 national and local newspapers and magazines as well as books on tape. The complete newspaper and magazine articles, which are read by 300 volunteers, provide in-depth information not available on TV or radio. In addition to current national and international news, The Ear also provides local news, local election guides, daily TV schedules, local movie theatre and audio-described movie schedules, food and shopping ads, community news, etc., which are not available from any other local service for the blind.

The Ear's programs are broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week, free of charge to over 4,500 listeners. Listeners may access the programs using any of the following:

■ **Radio Reading Service**, which airs programs over a donated sub-carrier channel of WETA-FM to listeners within a 50-mile radius of WETA's

Arlington, Va., transmitter. They access the broadcasts in their homes and/or institutional facilities via special radio receivers lent by The Ear.

■ **Dial-In Service**, which allows listeners in D.C., Md., and Va. to access news and other information using touch-tone phones. This service enables callers to sample and browse through a newspaper in much the same way as sighted people do.

■ **The Internet** at www.washear.org for current and archived radio broadcasts.

Other services include:

■ **Audio Description (AD)**, which enhances theater and film productions by providing, during non-dialogue pauses, verbal descriptions of characters, sets, costumes, action, lighting, dancing, etc. The commentary of specially trained audio describers is transmitted over a closed circuit FM system to

the listeners' earphones. AD is available for at least one performance for each production at most major live theaters in the metropolitan Washington area.

■ **Look-Up**. Volunteers at The Ear look up requested information from a variety of sources, including the *Yellow Pages* and *The Washington Post Classifieds*.

A Bit of 'Ear' History

With 60 volunteers ready, The Ear debuted on Thursday, 7 November 1974, in the Woodmoor Shopping Center studio with the live reading of *The Washington Post* to at least 63 listeners. Within six months, weekday airtime was extended and weekend airtime hours were added.

In October 1979, The Ear moved to Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church at 35 University Boulevard East.

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Bonnie Dickman (in foreground) and Marge Szawlewicz read articles for Washington Ear listeners from cozy sound booths.

To Curfew or Not to Curfew, That's Not the Question

By Jim Zepp

For the last five months, a hotly debated topic across the County has been whether a proposed curfew law (County Council Bill 25-11)—that would prohibit teenagers under 18 years old from gathering and remaining in public places between 11 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and between midnight and 5:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday—should be adopted.

There are 10 exceptions for various permitted reasons related to job, school, or religious activities. Another exception being considered is for attendance at entertainment events. Violators would be detained by police until reclaimed by their parents and could be charged with either a criminal or civil offense. If a parent does not respond, then the officer would contact the Department of Juvenile Services.

This legislation was in response to a crime incident that was described in the Montgomery County Police Department's (MCPD) Third District Weekly Crime Report in the following manner:

3rd District: 6/27/2011 to 7/5/2011 Crime Updates

An aggravated assault occurred on Saturday, 7/2 at 12:16 a.m. in front of the Silver Spring Metro station. The suspect assaulted the victim. Suspect: B/M, wearing a white head turban. Police Chief Tom Manger subsequently characterized this same event at a County

Council hearing on 26 July 2011: "On Friday, July 1, a large group of about 70 youth congregated in the Central Business District. As police sought to gain control of the situation, the large group broke into smaller groups and began moving around the area, avoiding police but alternatively fighting with each other, and ultimately resulting in a serious stabbing."

On 13 Sept., the County Executive sent a letter to the County Council amending his original bill, which reduced its penalties to simply a Class B civil fine of \$100 for a first offense. The ability to require violators to perform community service and their parents to attend parenting classes were also removed. These changes were made due to an opinion by the County Attorney that the original set of penalties was illegal. Consequently, even with the adoption of the curfew law, the police would not be able to arrest anyone for a curfew violation. The letter states that any arrests would use an existing law that forbids disobeying a police order preventing a public disturbance. From this, it is evident that the police already have the authority to arrest any individuals who would be the targets of curfew violations if they choose to exercise it. More details about aspects of this proposed law and subsequent proposed amendments can be accessed at the County Executive's online FAQ at

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/pdf/curfew.pdf.

In response to these concerns, Council Member Phil Andrews, who chairs the Council's Public Safety Committee, introduced a bill (35-11) that would establish a loitering/prowling offense which, unlike the proposed curfew, would apply to all age groups at all times and would provide the police with arrest authority. It is based on a national model law that has passed court challenges in Georgia, Florida, and Wisconsin. The County Council is expected to decide on both bills in early December.

The County PTA, civil rights, students, and various community groups have been arguing the issues of effectiveness of these measures in controlling or preventing crime as well as the potential for abuse or unnecessary restriction of citizen rights. Although the MCPD has officially supported the curfew bill, the police union—the Fraternal Order of Police—has opposed it.

Research studies on curfews have generally found them to be ineffective in controlling crime, especially when other support services—such as having curfew centers to take violators—are not provided. The county has no plans to provide any such support services or personnel beyond those currently available to deal with youth who are on the streets late at night.

A finding from the evaluation
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Curfew or Not?

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ation of the Prince George's County curfew and some other studies are that curfews are rarely enforced because police officers often believe that their time is more productively spent on dealing with more serious crimes. This has led to some jurisdictions to assign personnel to only curfew enforcement, such as Dallas, Texas, which has 30 officers on curfew duty.

Unfortunately, all of this debate on curfews and loitering enforcement has largely served to distract attention and resources from the underlying causes of the concerns for safety in Downtown Silver Spring and the surrounding communities.

Jurisdictions in the U.S., England, and Australia have recognized that the creation of successful night-time entertainment districts will engender problems of late-night crowd control; needs for adequate transportation, dining, and sanitation facilities; public drunkenness; and public safety concerns. Those which have chosen to take a proactive approach have developed Night-Time Economy Management Plans, which include policies and practices to assure adequate public and private services and facilities as well as anticipating potential conflicts caused by overcrowding.

With Downtown Silver Spring's revitalization, a similar plan should be developed to maintain this success and keep the area enjoyable for residents. ■

Woodmoor Reminiscences

Remembering Larry's 5&10 Store

[Second in a series. —Ed.]

Annette Vaughan, who lived in the farmhouse on the corner of Royalton Road and University Blvd., still has vivid images of Larry's 5&10 from the early to mid-1960s on. "My two best friends (who lived on Royalton Rd.) and I would walk up to Larry's 5&10 to look at the interesting things the store had to offer. We almost always came back with a jigsaw puzzle to work, penny candy, or a comic book (*Archie*, *Betty and Veronica*, *Ritchie Rich*, *Casper*).

"I also remember seeing Breyer horses on the top shelves which were too expensive for my budget, but I loved looking at them. I was always intrigued by the bins with small green plastic army men, which I never actually bought. But I did buy marbles (choosing the most interesting ones I could find to add to my collection), gimp [an ornamental trim used in sewing and embroidery], potholder-making loops, paint-by-number kits, water colors, and, of course,

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Read for the Washington Ear

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A number of volunteers carried the main control board, with wiring dangling, across University Boulevard to its new home. Broadcast service was not interrupted.

In 1981, Dr. Pfanstiehl pioneered the development of and training for audio description for live theater. In 1984, five area theaters offered audio description. For her persistence and leadership in implementing AD for television, she received an Emmy in 1990. Now, AD is available at many live theaters and in many movie theaters throughout the U.S. and even in other countries.

On 1 November 1989, the radio reading service became an around-the-clock seven-day operation, enabled by WETA's move to 24-hour programming.

The Dial-In Service be-

came available in September 1991. In September 2008, The Ear moved to its present location on Tech Road in Silver Spring.

What You Can Do

It is impossible to know how many additional people are eligible for and could benefit from The Ear's services. The Ear seeks to serve as many of these as possible.

Also, The Ear is looking for volunteers. The minimum commitment is two hours per week. An audition is required. It takes approximately 35 hours of total time by many volunteers just to read one entire issue of the *Sunday Washington Post* for the Dial-In service.

If you are interested in using the services of The Ear or in volunteering, please call 301.681.6636, and Debbie Fitch will help you get started. ■



For All Your
Real Estate Needs, Call

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**Serving Northwood, Forest Knolls, &
Kinsman Residents For 15 Years**

**Active & Under Contract Listings in Northwood/Forest Knolls/Kinsman
As of 11/15/2011**

<u>ACTIVE</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Bedrms</u>	<u>Full Baths</u>	<u>Half Bath</u>
10312 Colesville Road	\$349,900	Colonial	3	2	1
314 Dennis Ave	\$499,990	Colonial	3	3	1
10405 Eastwood Ave	\$329,900	Cape Cod	3	2	1
10710 Eastwood Ave	\$339,000	Split Level	3	2	0
10409 Edgewood Ave*	\$440,000	Colonial	4	2	0
506 Eisner St	\$299,950	Split Level	3	2	1
502 Kerwin Rd*	\$280,000	Cape Cod	4	3	0
112 Kinsman View Circle	\$309,000	Townhouse	4	3	1
11017 Lombardy Road	\$324,900	Rancher	4	2	0
311 Ladson Road	\$349,900	Cape Cod	4	2	0
10308 Lorain Ave	\$495,000	To Be Built	4	2	1
10709 Lockridge Dr	\$385,000	Raised Rancher	3	2	1
806 Malta Lane	\$399,000	Split Level	5	2	1
308 Pinewood Avenue	\$410,500	Colonial	3	1	1
510 Royalton Road*	\$234,900	Rambler	5	2	0
140 Southwood Ave*	\$257,000	Colonial	4	2	1

CONTRACTS on the following properties:

10516 Edgewood Ave	\$369,000	Cape Cod	3	2	0
10901 Cavalier Dr**	\$319,000	Split Level	4	4	0
1016 Chiswell Lane**	\$305,500	Colonial	6	3	1
102 Hannes Street*	\$205,000	Rancher	5	2	0
10609 Glenwild Rd*	\$312,000	Bilevel	5	3	0
18 Kinsman View Cir	\$329,000	Townhouse	3	2	2
10708 Margate Rd*	\$399,000	Rambler	5	2	1
10805 Margate Rd	\$417,900	Split Level	4	3	1

*Short Sale **Foreclosure



•• Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed ••

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Update on Brunett Ave. Proposed Child Care Facility

By Jim Zepp

The saga of the large child care facility continues. Less than a week before the 10 Nov. hearing before the Zoning Appeals examiner, the MNCPPC Planning staff suddenly reversed its position denying this special exception request which had been previously refused *twice* by both the staff and Planning Commission, even though the developer had still failed to satisfy the two objections to this project.

The proposed building had greatly exceeded the maximum number of 75 children under the state standard for space per child and violated the Four Corners Master Plan recommendation that special exception requests for large businesses should not be approved in residential lots around the existing commercial area.

Over the last year, the developer has incrementally reduced the size of the structure while still exceeding the state child-space standard. The Planning Commission in its last decision had suggested a capacity of 55 children and a building size of 2,200 sq. ft. as more compatible with the nearby homes. Despite this guidance, the last proposed design revisions have the facility at a 76 child capacity and 4,400 sq. ft. building size.

Inexplicably, the MNCPPC planning staff issued a new opinion indicating that, even with the developer's non-responsiveness to the agency's directives on building size and capacity and continued

noncompliance with the Four Corners Master Plan's objectives and recommendations, the special exception request should be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Requests by citizens for a meeting to explain their sudden change of mind were not granted by the planning staff.

The 10 Nov. hearing before the Zoning Appeals examiner was largely occupied by the developer's attorney's questioning of her expert witnesses from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The citizens began their testimony following this, but were unable to finish within the remaining time. Consequently, the hearing will be continued on Friday, 9 Dec., at 1:30 p.m. I will be testifying at that session for the NFCCA as its representative on the Four Corners Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee.

Why is this special exception request so important? The Four Corners Master Plan's main concern is to maintain the stability and integrity of the area's communities. This means keeping the existing commercial area healthy and revitalizing those businesses that need it. But the boundaries between the commercial and residential areas should be maintained so that incremental land use conversion creep does not occur as developers seek less expensive land for businesses.

This trend can create a slide towards a reduced quality in the adjacent homes as they become less desirable as residences. Eventually a tipping point can be

reached where a community loses its stability as long-time residents leave and an area changes from being predominantly homeowner-occupied to largely renter. Ironically, this can be when government agencies and planners become concerned and seek to revitalize a community. The Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee sought to avoid having this happen by reinforcing the community's strengths, while accommodating change. ■

Larry's 5&10

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jacks! I remember contentedly browsing through the crowded aisles. It was not a clean-feeling store, but intensely engaging. It had a unique odor of oldness and having always been there. We could "get lost" in it for hours.

"After looking around the store, we would then, perhaps, stop by Woodmoor Pastry Shop to look at all the beautiful cakes and cookies under the counter glass—a wonderland of sweets (not to mention being intrigued from the outside with the curved shop glass and dark marble below)—but never buying. We would then progress to People's Drug Store to have my favorite: hot fudge sundaes at the counter.

"Back then, a walk with friends to Larry's 5&10, followed by a visit to People's for a sundae, was, at the same time, adventurous, satisfying, and the epitome of my happiness." ■

Current Real Estate Snap Shot
Northwood and Forest Knolls
(September 1, 2011 – November 17, 2011)

Active Listings (16)

Address	Type	BR	Baths	List Price	Type of Sale
510 Royalton	SF	5	2	\$235,000	Short Sale
140 Southwood	SF	4	2.5	\$257,000	Short Sale
1104 Caddington	SF	4	2.5	\$280,000	Short Sale
502 Kerwin	SF	4	3	\$280,000	Short Sale
506 Eisner	SF	3	2.5	\$290,000	Normal Resale
112 Kinsman View	TH	4	3.5	\$309,000	Normal Resale
11017 Lombardy	SF	4	2	\$325,000	Normal Resale
10405 Eastwood	SF	3	2.5	\$330,000	Normal Resale
10710 Eastwood	SF	3	2	\$339,000	Normal Resale
311 Ladson	SF	4	2	\$350,000	Normal Resale
10312 Colesville	SF	3	2.5	\$350,000	Normal Resale
10709 Lockridge	SF	3	2.5	\$385,000	Normal Resale
806 Malta	SF	5	2.5	\$399,000	Normal Resale
308 Pinewood	SF	3	1.5	\$411,000	Normal Resale
10409 Edgewood	SF	4	2	\$440,000	Short Sale
314 Dennis	SF	3	3.5	\$500,000	Normal Resale

Homes Currently Under Contract (8)

Address	Type	BR	Bath	List Price	Type of Sale
10901 Cavalier	SF	4	4	\$319,000	Foreclosure
10516 Edgewood	SF	3	2	\$369,000	Normal Resale
10708 Margate	SF	5	2.5	\$399,000	Short Sale
102 Hannes	SF	5	2	\$205,000	Short Sale
1016 Chiswell	SF	6	3.5	\$306,000	Foreclosure
10609 Glenwild	SF	5	3	\$312,000	Short Sale
18 Kinsman View	TH	3	2 + 2	\$329,000	Normal Resale
10805 Margate	SF	4	3.5	\$418,000	Normal Resale

Sold Homes (7)

Address	Type	BR	Bath	Net Sales Price*	Type of Sale
11108 Foxglove	SF	3	1.5	\$269,000	Short Sale
1008 Playford	SF	4	1.5	\$271,000	Normal Resale
422 Kerwin	SF	4	2	\$284,000	Estate Sale
807 Caddington	SF	4	2.5	\$330,000	Normal Resale
1109 Caddington	SF	4	2.5	\$339,000	Normal Resale
Normal Resale					
230 Thistle	SF	5	3	\$395,000	Normal Resale
320 Pinewood	SF	4	2	\$478,000	Normal Resale

* Net Sales Price reflects any seller subsidy involved (buyers' closing costs paid by seller).
All information is taken from MRIS and is deemed to accurate but not guaranteed.

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