



# The Riverdale Park Town Crier

Official Newsletter, Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland

**April 2007**

Volume 36, Issue 3

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**Don't Forget the Easter Egg Hunt—March 31, 2007, grounds at Riversdale, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**CORRECTION:** last month the start time for the Easter Egg Hunt was incorrectly listed, the correct start time is 11:00 a.m.

**Income Tax Deadline—  
Tuesday, April 17, 2007, 12 midnight**

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## Town of Riverdale Park Election Notice

In compliance with the terms of the Charter of the Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland an election will be held:

**Monday, May 7, 2007**

**To elect Town Officials for Mayor & Council Seats  
Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the  
Riverdale Park Municipal Center, 5008 Queensbury Road.**

All citizens, eighteen years of age or older, who have resided in the Town of Riverdale Park for 45 days or more preceding Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> and who are registered to vote in the Town of Riverdale Park will be entitled to vote.

All residents who wish to qualify to vote in a town election must register on a Prince George's County form. To qualify to vote your registration form must be received at the Board of Elections in Upper Marlboro Friday, March 30, 2007, 4:30 p.m.

Candidates for office must file Petition and Financial Disclosure Affidavits with the Election Judges at the Town Hall no later than 5p.m., Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in order to have their name on the official ballot. (Financial Disclosure Affidavits and Petition forms are available at the Riverdale Park Town office.)

Joyce K. Marcos, Chief Judge  
Louis King, Deputy King Judge

## La Ciudad de Riverdale Park Aviso Electoral

Conforme al mandato de las reglas de la Ciudad de Riverdale Park, Maryland la elección se sostendrá:

**El día lunes 7 de mayo de 2007**

**Para elegir a funcionarios de la ciudad para Alcalde y Concilio  
Las urnas abrirán de 7 a.m. a 8 p.m. en la  
Municipalidad de Riverdale Park, 5008 Queensbury RD**

Todos los ciudadanos de dieciocho años de edad y mayores que han vivido en la Ciudad de Riverdale Park por 45 días o más precedente al día lunes 7 de mayo y que están registrados para votar en la ciudad de Riverdale Park tienen derecho a votar.

Todos los residentes que deseen calificar para votar en las elecciones de la ciudad deberán estar registrados en Prince George's Country. Para votar, su formulario de registro deberá ser recibido en el Consejo Electoral (Board of Elections) en Upper Marlboro el día viernes 30 de marzo de 2007 a las 4:30 p.m.

Candidatos electorales deberán llenar una petición y declaración financiera jurada ante los Jueces Electorales en la Municipalidad antes de las 5 p.m. el día jueves 12 de abril de 2007 para tener su nombre en la boleta electoral. (La petición y declaración financiera están disponibles en la municipalidad de Riverdale Park.)

Joyce K. Marcos, Chief Judge  
Louis King, Deputy Chief Judge

# Council Actions

By Waverly Politt

## Actions From Legislative Meeting, March 5, 2007

1. **Approved** – Minutes for November 6, 2007
2. **Approved** – Minutes for February 5, 2007
3. **Approved** – Atha Banners to be placed.
4. **Approved** – Ordinance Resolution 2007 - OR-03
5. **Approved** – Ordinance Resolution 2007- OR- 04
6. **Tabled** – Ordinance Resolution 2007-OR-05
7. **Approved** – Proposal for Sound System (**\$11,000.00**)
8. **Failed** – Resolution on Email list for Election policy and procedure.
9. **Read into record for action at next month meeting-** Proposal of Ordinance for Town Crier Candidate Forum.

## Code Corner

By Colleen Ferguson

The Code Enforcement Department has been actively enforcing parking violations through-out the Town of Riverdale Park and daily at the school zone during school dismissal. School zone parking enforcement was initiated due to the numerous complaints made by crossing-guards, residents, and pedestrian/parent pick-up. School Zone Parking Enforcement will continue until June. The Code Enforcement Department is requesting cooperation, consideration, and compliance from all motorists picking up their children. Compliance is our goal. It is the responsibility of all motorists to be cognizant of Parking Signs, Fire Lanes, Yellow Curbs, and indicated Handicap Parking in the Town of Riverdale Park.

Residents are reminded when walking their pet, **it is a code Violation not to pick up any dropping left by their animal.**

A strong community relationship with our residents is vital to the efficient operation of the Code Enforcement Department. Building a strong rapport with the residents is priority for the Code Department. Please do not hesitate to contact us with a comment, complaint, or concern. Your comment, complaint, or concern will be professionally and promptly addressed. Have a great Spring!

## Esquina de Codigo

Translation by Verence Garay

El Departamento de Codigo Legal ha estado activamente imponiendo violaciones de parqueo alrededor de la ciudad de Riverdale Park y diariamente en la zona escolar durante la salida de escuela. La aplicacion del parqueo en la zona escolar fue iniciado por el numero de quejas hechos por los guardias de cruce, residentes, y por lo padres peatones que recojen a sus hijos. La aplicacion del parqueo en la zona escolar continuara hasta Junio. El Departamento de Codigo Legal esta solicitando cumplimiento, consideracion y cooperacion de parte de todo los motoristas que recogen a sus hijos. Cumplir es nuestra meta. Es la responsabilidad de todos los motoristas de reconocer los signos de parqueo, linea de incendios, curvas amarillas de emergencia y parqueo indicado para incapasitados en la ciudad de Riverdale Park.

Residentes, recuerden que cuando salgan a caminar con sus mascotas. Que es una violacion del codigo legal el no recojer la defecacion de sus animales.

Una relación fuerte con nuestros residentes es vital para la operacion eficiente del Departamento del Codigo Legal. Construir una fuerte relación con los residentes es una prioridad del Departamento del Codigo Legal. Por Favor no tema en contactarnos con un comentario, queja o interes. Sus comentarios, quejas, o intereses seran profesionalmente y puntualmente dirigidas.

Tenga una Buena Primavera.

## Town of Riverdale Park

[www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us](http://www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us)

### Town Hall

5008 Queensbury Road  
Riverdale Park, MD 20737  
301-927-6381, Hablamos Espanol  
[RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net](mailto:RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net)

Mayor Vernon Archer  
240-832-2257  
[varcher@gmail.com](mailto:varcher@gmail.com)

### Council Members

Ward 1 Rob Oppenheim 301-779-1745  
[oppenheim@email.com](mailto:oppenheim@email.com)

Ward 2 Mary Donaldson 301-927-2954  
[msmarydon@yahoo.com](mailto:msmarydon@yahoo.com)

Ward 3 David Ligua 301-779-3849  
[djlingua@gmail.com](mailto:djlingua@gmail.com)

Ward 4 Lawrence Taylor 301-474-6868  
[taylor.lawrence@gmail.com](mailto:taylor.lawrence@gmail.com)

Ward 5 Gerard Kiernan 301-277-4554  
[gerardkiernan@earthlink.net](mailto:gerardkiernan@earthlink.net)

Ward 6 Alberto Morales 301-779-5934

Patrick J. Prangle, Town Administrator  
[riverdaleparkmd@comcast.net](mailto:riverdaleparkmd@comcast.net)

Public Works 301-864-1803  
L. Ron Goff, Public Works Director

Code Enforcement 301-209-1505  
[CodeRiverdalePk@comcast.net](mailto:CodeRiverdalePk@comcast.net)  
Colleen M. Ferguson

Police Department 301-927-4343  
[RivPD@comcast.net](mailto:RivPD@comcast.net)  
E. Thomas Parker, Chief

Fire Department Emergency 911  
Information 301-927-0356  
[info@riverdalevfd.com](mailto:info@riverdalevfd.com),  
[www.riverdalevfd.com](http://www.riverdalevfd.com)  
Vincent Harrison, Chief

It is the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park, pursuant to the provision of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, to prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in any aspect of employment within the government.

It is also the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park to disallow discrimination in fair housing based on race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disabilities, and/or age.

Some materials contained in *The Town Crier* represent the opinion of the authors and does not necessarily represent the view of the Town of Riverdale Park.

**Submission deadline: 15th of each month.**

# Mayor's Report

By Vernon Archer



Over the next month, I will be finalizing a budget proposal to present to the Council in May. Let me review the priorities for our police and public works department that I began when taking office in June, 2005. Keeping our town safe, clean, and beautiful is our main goal along with recruiting the highest quality staff. Government is first and foremost the people who make it up. I will make sure that staff has good equipment and tools to do their jobs.

**Police Department** --My goal is to have a town police department second to none. We have already made significant progress towards being the best trained, equipped, lead and motivated force. This cannot be achieved overnight. On taking office, I found a dwindling and increasingly demoralized force. This has changed.

Our goal is to have 21 sworn officers, with no more than one rookie officer. They will be divided into 4 squads of 4 officers, each with a minimum of one officer fluent in Spanish, with all officers knowing basic greetings and commands in Spanish. All officers are trained to the highest standards in the use of their vehicles, weapons, and interaction with the public. In addition, we will have two detectives and a command staff of three.

Dispatchers and administrative assistance complete the job of making a great department. Our dispatch department needs four full-time and one part-time people. It is critical to keep these people because if there is a vacancy we must fill it with a police officer, thereby taking that officer off the street where we need him.

When I took office in 2005, we had only 14 officers and two dispatchers. We had lost a number of quality officers over the previous years and were in real danger of losing even more. Moral problems brought on by lack of support were compounded by the aggressive hiring practices in our area. Currently, we have managed to rebuild the force to 18 officers and a fully-staffed dispatch office. Our equipment is much more modern, and we have placed a great deal more emphasis on training. We have two officers fluent in Spanish and are aggressively looking for more. All but one of our street cops has at least 2 years experience.

We have done a better job of retaining our quality officers. I instituted a pay scale that insures we are competitive with other departments and reassure our officers of equity in pay adjustments. Rapid turnover in officers is much more expensive than paying our officers competitive salaries! Over the next year, we will move to at least 19 officers; hopefully finances will allow us 20 officers. We will also continue to modernize our fleet of vehicles (which helps keep our officers on the street) and other equipment. Thus, we are 1-2 years from achieving our goal of having the highest quality police force obtainable.

**Public Works**--Like the police department, my goal is to produce the best public works department possible. By best I mean not just at picking up trash and plowing after a snow storm, but also at making all our public spaces beautiful, insuring the maintenance of all town infrastructure (from buildings and roads, to signs and street lights), keeping town trees properly trimmed, and replacing trees needing removed. To accomplish this requires a well-led, motivated, and trained staff with quality equipment. Staffing should be at 16 full-time employees. This will include: no more than 2 employees with less than a year experience with the town; 4 with Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL); 2 mechanics, 2 tree care experts; 5 certified flaggers; and, 5 qualified street-sweeper drivers. We also need to have quality equipment kept in good repair and appearance. In order to avoid costly down time, we need up-to-date vehicles, salt-spreaders, and safety and lighting equipment. It is a great waste of money to have staff stand around because an old truck breaks down.

After taking office I found a department that had been substantially under-funded and understaffed for several years, having been asked time and again to cut its spending with little regard for the long-term result. Then Director Jim Houser had become accustomed to saving money without regard for the result and never taking on any project beyond the very basics. The council followed my lead and provided money for two new positions, new equipment, and more supplies. However, for the next year most of the new resources were not utilized and much of the beautification work around town was either not done, or not maintained after completion. For this reason among others I determined that Public Works needed new leadership and fired the director. We now have L. Ron Goff in place and I am certain you will notice many new enhancements under his leadership. Riverdale Park is lucky to have found a superstar in the field. As I described in my February report, Director Ron Goff is a true innovator and is recognized by his colleagues as among the best directors anywhere in Maryland.

The Public Works has insured that the plantings and cleanup for town parks, facilities and right-of-ways will be done correctly. Our new street sweeper has been in use for several weeks with noticeable improvement to the cleanliness of town. A campaign to repair pot holes is underway with 17 filled prior to March 20. Town vehicles are washed and maintained on a frequent schedule to keep all concerned safe and working in a clean environment. What is also very noticeable is the increased team spirit and motivation among the staff.

Over the next year, we will create 1-2 more positions to get staffing to the optimum level based on work load. We will also update and expand our equipment to handle snow and ice and will provided funding for training and staff improvement.

**Conclusion**--Based on the solid start made over the past 20 months, we are well on the way to having truly exceptional police and public works departments. With yours and the council's continued support, our rebuilding program will soon make our town's services truly second to none!

## Ordinance Resolution 2007-OR-06

Whereas it has been argued that if a *Town Crier* Candidate Forum is to exist that the council should establish it, and

Whereas such a forum must be fair and equal to all qualified candidates, and

Whereas rules to govern such a forum should be clearly stated and available to all,

Therefore be it resolved to add the following section to Chapter 3 of the Town Code.

### § 3-10. Candidate Forum.

The *Town Crier* may include a Candidate Forum. Each candidate whose name will appear on the ballot may submit a campaign statement for the Candidate Forum. A write-in candidate may be included if a petition is submitted signed by at least 15 qualified voters requesting that the candidate be included in the Candidate Forum.

No candidate shall be allowed to see what other candidates have written until the *Crier* is released to the public. Any courtesy extended to a candidate (such as the opportunity to revise their submission past the original deadline) shall also be extended to that candidate's opponents.

Candidates running unopposed shall not use their space to support or oppose other candidates.

Each candidate shall be provided a template that includes the page heading, title line, a maximum sized text box with proper margins, and page footer.

The text in the text box is controlled by the candidate and shall only use Arial or Times New Roman fonts, but may contain any font sizes or other formatting that the candidate chooses including clip art and photos. 11 point is recommended for body text. The text will be printed exactly as submitted, unedited. The editor may remove border lines, may shorten the box to exclude unused space, may reposition the box on the page, and/or may resize the box if it exceeds the maximum allowed dimensions. A candidate may submit the text box electronically or as camera-ready hard copy. Each campaign statement must fit in a text box measuring 3.7" wide and up to 8.75" tall with 0.1 inch left and right margins (that is, the text is at most 3.5" wide). If submitted electronically, a candidate shall be given the opportunity to see a camera-ready hard copy of their statement (and only their statement) so that any unsuspected format changes can be corrected.

Each page of the Candidate Forum will have a page heading of "Candidate Forum" with a byline that reads: "As submitted by the candidates without change by the editor." Each candidate will have a title line that includes the position they are running for and their name, e.g. "Candidate for Ward 1—Joe Smith." The page heading and title lines appear outside of the candidate's text box and will be formatted by the editor and will be the same for all candidates.

[Introduced March 5, 2007 by Rob Oppenheim]



## Riverdale Park Police Department -- February 2007

### *Crime Report*

Crime	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Stolen Vehicle
Ward 1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ward 2	0	0	0	1	1	1
Ward 3	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ward 4	0	0	5	2	2	5
Ward 5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 6	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7**</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>9</b>

\*\* 3 citizen, 2 commercial, 2 carjacking

\*1 residential, 2 commercial

### **Officer Activity**

Activity	Total
Calls For Service	766
Routine Patrols	243
Traffic Stops	249*
Reported Traffic Accidents	56**
Parking Citations	74
Subjects Arrested	29

\* 240 Traffic Citations, \*\* 24 Written Accidents

# Public Works Report

## Spring Clean-Up Day

Riverdale Park's Spring Clean-up day will be Tuesday, May 29, 2007 for the whole town. Do not put out paints, metals, tires, or items with freon that day. Yard waste will be collected for areas A and B on Wednesday, May 30, 2007. See tire reminder below.

## Tires Reminder

Tires **are not** picked up free. There is a \$2.50 each (\$2.00 for seniors 60+) charge for tire pickup. Tires are a notorious breeding ground for all types of mosquitoes particularly the Asian Tiger Mosquito. In our efforts to remove and reduce these breeding grounds, your tires need to be removed as soon as possible.

## Mosquitoes

The Mosquito Control program for 2007 will begin with spring larviciding in April. The regular season will begin May 21 and continue into September. Our community's program consists of larviciding plus adult surveillance and possible spraying. Tuesday nights are our town's night for possible spraying. If residents have complaints about mosquitoes in their **front yards**, please contact Public Works (301-864-1803). When complaints are received they will be passed on to MDA who runs the Mosquito Control program. MDA will do a surveillance of mosquitoes in the problem areas and determine if spraying is needed. The insecticide used is a contact insecticide and must contact the mosquito to kill it. This spraying does **not** reach into back yards. If weather conditions are not suitable for spraying on our scheduled night or the sprayer operator encounters too many people outside in the spray area, spraying will not be done and there will not be a make-up night. They will try again the following week.

Mosquitoes can breed in any water-holding container including bird baths, wading pools, pet watering dishes, tin cans, old tires, clogged gutters, corrugated down spout drain pipes, and flower pots. To prevent mosquito breeding in these areas, water should be changed weekly in bird baths, wading pools, and pet dishes, gutters should be cleaned at least twice a year and all other water-holding containers should be disposed of or stored upside down. If you know of any large areas of stagnant water on or near your property, please report these areas to Public Works so they can be checked out.

## Yard Waste

Yard waste is leaves, weeds, grass cuttings, tree limbs, and anything biodegradable from your yard. Please **do not mix trash and yard waste** together, as it will not be picked up. Bamboo cannot be collected with yard waste. Please put bamboo out on bulky trash days for pick up. Tree limbs that are up to 6 inches diameter and up to 5 feet long will be picked up. Yard waste must

be bagged, bundled, or put in cans for pick up. Yard waste is collected on the first collection day of each week for each side.

## Plastic Bags For Sale

The town office is selling heavy-gauge clear plastic bags for \$2.50 for a roll of 25 bags. Placing yard waste in clear bags will save time as our collectors can immediately identify yard waste from other trash.

## Reporte de Trabajos Publicos

Translation by Claudia Umano and Verenice Garay

## Dia de Limpieza Primavera

El día de Limpieza Primavera para toda la Ciudad de Riverdale Park será el martes 29 de mayo de 2007. El día de Limpieza Primavera no ponga afuera pinturas, metales, llantas, o artículos con freón. Desechos de jardín serán recogidos para las áreas A y B el día miércoles 30 de Mayo de 2007. Vea el recordatorio de las llantas.

## Recordatorio de Llantas

Las llantas no se recogen gratuitamente. Hay un costo de \$2.50 por cada llanta (\$2.00 para adultos mayores de 60 años). Las llantas son un criadero para toda clase de mosquitos, particularmente la del mosquito tigre. En nuestro esfuerzo de remover y reducir la cría de esto mosquitos, sus llantas tienen que ser removidas lo más antes posible.

## Los Mosquitos

El mosquito tigre es un muy agresivo que pica durante el día o en la noche. Este mosquito puede transmitir enfermedades. Elimine las aguas estancadas donde se reproducen los mosquitos en su patio o vecindario.

- Bote baldes, botellas y otros utensilios donde el agua se puede acumular
- Ponga boca abajo la piscina de los niños, carretillas y otros recipientes
- Limpie las canaletas del techo para que el agua corra libremente
- Cambie el agua de la fuente de los pájaros y las piscinas de los niños al menos dos veces por semana
- Guarde dentro de la casa los platos de agua y comida de sus animales
- Ajuste las cubiertas (sobre piscinas, etc.) para eliminar aguas estancadas

## Desecho de Jardín

Los desechos de jardín son: las hojas, hierbas, césped cortado, ramas de árboles, y cualquier cosa biodegradable de su jardín. Por favor **no mezcle junto basura con desechos de jardín**, porque no será recogido. Bambú no será recogido con los desechos de jardín. Por favor ponga el bambú afuera el día de recogimiento de basura pesada. Ramas de árboles de 6 pulgadas de diámetro hasta 5 pies de largo serán

recogidas. El desecho de jardín deberá ser embolsado, amontonada o puesta en basureros. Desecho de jardín será coleccionado el primer día de recogimiento de basura cada semana.

### **Venta de Bolsas Plásticas**

La oficina de la ciudad esta vendiendo fuerte bolsas transparentes y plásticas por \$2.50 un rollo de 25 bolsas. Poniendo los desechos de jardín en bolsas transparentes les ahorrara tiempo a nuestros colectores porque inmediatamente identificaran la basura de la yarda de la otra.

### **Artículos de Trato Especial para recoger**

Hay algunas cosas de metal que necesitan un manejo especial debido al freón que contienen. Porque es ilegal tirar freón en la atmósfera, solamente alguien que tiene licencia puede hacer esto. Esto artículos específicos son refrigeradoras, congeladores, refrigerador de agua, aires acondicionados, y deshumidificadores. La Ciudad cobrara unos honorarios por la recolecta de estos artículos. Por favor llame a Trabajos Públicos para más detalles o para desecharlos.

## **IWIF recognizes Riverdale Park's Reduction in Claims**

### **"Best Performance of all Maryland Municipal League Accounts"**

Patrick J. Prangley, Town Administrator

The Town of Riverdale Park working in collaboration with IWIF, injured workers insurance fund, formed a partnership to reduce the number of employee injury claims and reduce the premiums being paid by the town. Through training and education over a 3 year period the Town of Riverdale Park dramatically reduced the premiums by \$100,000.00 as well as claims by 66.7%. The partnership included a risk management program which included three key components:

1. Commitment by top management for safety in the workplace which includes the Mayor, Council, and management.
2. Individual education and training to all staff on safety roles and responsibilities.
3. Hazard Assessment in all public facilities to identify hazards in the workplace and eliminate them.

Congratulations to everyone for outstanding performance!



### **Interested in a College Scholarship?**

You can apply for a senatorial scholarship by visiting [www.senatorpinsky.org](http://www.senatorpinsky.org) to download an application. The deadline is April 10, 2007. Act now.

## **Our Town**

Marita A. Novicky

It's a warm day in our little Town. Spring seems finally to be on its way and already many of our local trees are sprouting buds. The pollen count was way over 1,000 one day last week and many of us with allergies and/or asthma are suffering. Many of the neighbors have bronchitis or allergy-related sinus problems. The weather people are saying that the winter of 2006/07 is the warmest on record! It's hard to believe when our furnaces and/or heat pumps were working non-stop during February.

There's a lot happening in Riverdale Park as we celebrate the rites of spring. A community garden is underway that will engage our youth and citizens in planting and growing edible produce. If enough is produced, it will be sold at the Farmer's Market. And, the Farmer's Market is gearing up for another successful season—its 10<sup>th</sup> year in operation. Each year, the market has grown in its offerings and popularity with our local citizens. It's nice to see a home-grown effort succeed; we owe much thanks and praise to its long-time organizers and supporters including: Pat Gladdings, Rebecca Feldberg, Alice Walker, Jim Coleman, and others. Please, if I've failed to mention your name, it is not intentional; the folks I mention are the ones whose names are most often related to me in emails and other information I'm given.

Of course, there are a large number of farmers and other vendors that this crew brings back to the Market each year. We all have our favorites; mine is Mr. Musachio and his son. I first met them years ago at the Takoma Park Farmer's Market when three generations of Mussachio men participated—Mike, Mike, and Mike! Mike, the grandfather died several years ago, but I will always remember him in his young 90's selling produce at the Market. It's nice to have these great assets right here in our community. It will also be nice to see all the familiar faces and enjoy their fresh offerings once again. This year, Mike Foley of Green Uprising won't be returning, but we have a new vendor, Harvest Moons Or-

ganic. Be sure to join all the farmers on opening day,  
May 17, 2007, 3:00-7:00 p.m.

I look forward to the rites of spring and getting my own garden started. I will miss stopping by to say hi to Steve Schmidlin after the market. But, I'll stop by to see Ziggy and remember Steve with her. I'm sure he'd like that.



# Ward One and Community Affairs Reports

By Rob Oppenheim

## Maryland Day Festival



*“Open the mind, engage the senses and ignite your imagination”* at the Maryland Day Festival. It is free and open to everyone with activities and music for all ages. I go each year and I always come away amazed. Go early to have the most fun. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday,

April 28, 2007, on the College Park campus of the University of Maryland.

“Maryland Day is our way of sharing with the community everything that makes the university such a treasured resource for the state and region,” says University President Mote.

The beautiful campus buzzes as students, faculty, staff, and their families host hundreds of interactive activities offering something for everyone including: tours; exhibits; live performances; sporting events; demonstrations; workshops; petting zoos (including an insect petting zoo); lots of food; ice cream; dog shows; horse shows; fire extravaganza; F-16 pilot equipment; telescopes; physics lectures; dance and theatre workshops; classical; jazz; rock; pop and African music; health exhibits; and, lots, lots more.<sup>1</sup> It is truly amazing.

Admission and parking are free. Learn more at [www.marylandday.umd.edu](http://www.marylandday.umd.edu) with schedules, maps and interactive day planners.

(Above quotes and information from their web site.)

## Railroad Crossing Safety



The U.S. Department of Transportation identified our railroad crossing as one of the 10 most potentially dangerous in the state of Maryland. So far

we have been lucky—recent accidents at this crossing have not involved loss of life or horrendous derailments with hazardous materials. I am pushing hard to ensure that we do everything possible to improve the safety of this crossing—upgrading the gates; adding streetlights; asking CSX for special track lighting; curbs; and looking at simplifying traffic patterns on Lafayette and Natoli. On Tuesday, March 6, 2007, Pat Prangley and I testified in Annapolis before a committee of the Maryland House of Delegates about our Railroad crossing issues.

We will start to see some of these improvements this summer. If we can improve the safety enough, we can apply for a quiet zone so train horns do not have to blow as they pass thru our little town.

## Trolley Trail

I am pleased to report that the council approved the Trolley Trail title search, which is the first step in making this trail a reality. The vision is to create a **truly pedestrian friendly connection** between Hyattsville, Riverdale Park and College Park. It will:

- Provide quick and pleasant walking and biking access to the Metro and Marc stations.
- Stimulate Town center development by connecting people to the shops and restaurants in all 3 towns.

- Grow our sense of shared community to be friendlier, walk able, and connected.

The map shows the proposed mile-long stretch of the trail in Riverdale Park. The trail will continue south by the railroad tracks into Hyattsville and connect with the NW Branch Trail. To the north it will connect with the existing College Park Trolley Trail.

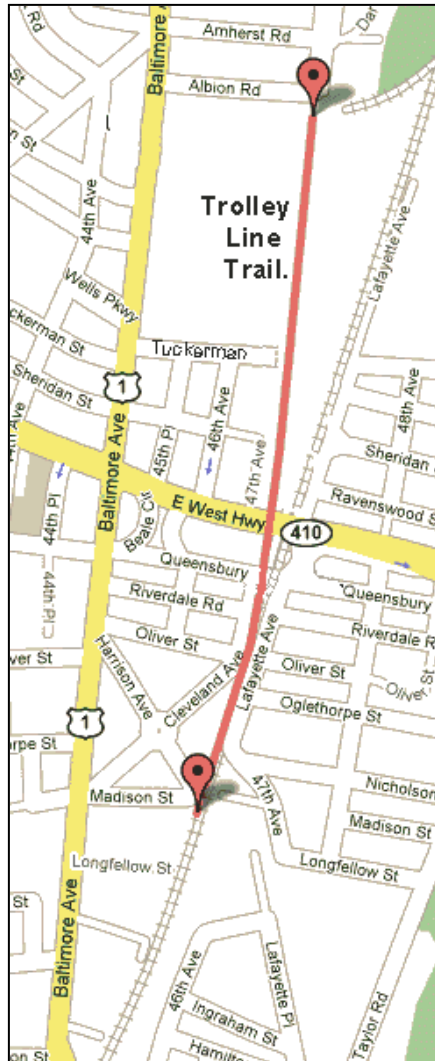
This trail will:

- Add to the safety of the area by transforming what is now a hidden dirt path into a well-lit path with routine police patrols.
- Be straight and level with only one grade-level crossing at Queensbury Road—making it easy and safe to use.
- Celebrate the historic trolley line and the adjacent WWII ERCO airplane factory.

College Park has completed most of their portion of the Trolley Trail. Both the City of Hyattsville and the Town of Riverdale Park are working with developers to build much of the trail with private funds.

If you missed the trolley video and walk at the S&J Restaurant on February 3, 2007, you can catch a short 6-minute video of the event. Go to [www.hyattsvilleh4x.com](http://www.hyattsvilleh4x.com) and scroll down to "Episode 33 - The Trolley Trail", then click on the big "Play" button.

As always, let me hear from you. The best way is e-mail: [oppenheim@email.com](mailto:oppenheim@email.com) or call 301-779-1745.





## Ward Three Report

David Lingua

How else to put it other than my ship has come in, for whatever the Irish in me has brought me luck. My on a whim Mega-millions quick-pick came up green on Saint Patrick's Day; very, very, very green. So green that I am currently in the final stages with MNCPPC to acquire Riversdale. I should be settled in by Labor Day.

April Fools....

Since last time we published, I have spoken with the neighbors adjacent and near the industrial park regarding the proposed parking lot. The consensus was to be rid of the tarp lot for a more permanent improvement. Thank you for your input. (I found out some other things as well to be brought up later.)

I met with Mr. Shoemaker on another matter pertaining to his business. An application for a communication tower is currently under review with the county to be erected on the property. Atop would be one thirteen square inch antennae so as to allow for direct communication with their Bladensburg office. The tower would be slender with a height of one hundred, twenty feet.

A second meeting was held with the Department of Environmental Resources on storm water management. Senior Engineer Godwin O. Madueke of the Capital Projects Section met this time with Mayor Archer, Town Administrator Prangley, Town Engineer Wu, and me. Mr. Madueke briefed us on several options and informed us a crew would be out to complete the planning phase. According to the Senior Engineer, we could see construction commence by year's end. On a related note, the storm drains on 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue at the Corner of Madison and to the south will be re-skirted...

The popular 20th Century philosopher, Popeye can sum up my thoughts on the following topic; "I can only stand so much until I can stand no more." This would concern the mayhem in the afternoon at Riverdale Elementary at 2:30 PM. I took the opportunity of a Friday afternoon to witness this firsthand. I'd like to thank Colleen Ferguson and Robert Biddle of Code Enforcement for keeping those thru lanes around the school clear. Even so, more needs to be done to address this issue even if it seems like tilting a windmill. The objective will be to make headway towards the end of this year and have a better plan in place come next school year. By working with the parents, the school, and the crossing guards, my hope is to allow everyone to breathe a little easier in the afternoons.

Now back to the topic alluded to in paragraph two. Speed humps: most despise them and as many want them. It's the NIMBY principle in reverse. Several more of our neighbors have requested speed humps or other speed deterrent options ("...so if they DON'T get to that

pothole right away that's ok with me..." true story). Rumble strips along with traffic calming islands are being considered as ways to mitigate traffic problems. Still, are we solving the problem or alleviating a symptom? How do we address a "Hurry up and wait" culture? By our own example, one Stop sign at a time? By putting ourselves in the other person's shoes? While this one may be best left to Don Alonzo, this is the windmill all of us face every day. Suggestions appreciated.

One a brighter note, a Barbaloot thanks to Danielle Glaros for corralling me into the Dr. Seuss's Birthday reading at Riverdale Elementary. While initially leaning towards Green Eggs and Ham going in, the availability of The Lorax became the last minute selection. The kids were Seussologists of the highest order. Also congratulations to Samuel and Benjamin Chicas for making the Honor Roll last grading period. Keep up the good work.

## Ward Five and Public Safety Reports

Gerard F. Kiernan

### Ward 5 needs a Council Member!

Because of my projected workload at my real job as an engineer over the next two years, I am not running for re-election as the Ward 5 Council Member.

I was brought up to give my best effort to any task that I take on. During the coming two years, I have to oversee the parts (microcircuits, resistors, etc) that will be proposed for use in three weather satellites and the six scientific instruments on each of the satellites. This will require numerous trips of various lengths or sitting in my office participating in web-based conferences that start in California at noon Eastern time and run until 8 or 9 p.m. With that kind of workload, I will not always be available to attend evening Council meetings.

So, if you have a desire to serve your fellow residents, please go to Town Hall and pick up the necessary paperwork to file to run for the Ward 5 seat. See the filing details elsewhere in this issue of The Crier.

### Public Safety Report Controlling Traffic at the Fire House

The Town's staff is working with the Riverdale Volunteer Fire Department to improve the traffic flow at the fire house. Cars traveling west on Queensbury Road often block the fire house when a train is passing through the town.

Along with extending the hours when entry into Queensbury westbound at 48th Avenue is forbidden, we are looking at adding traffic signals at each end of the fire house to stop traffic in both directions when an

alarm is received. This would be similar to the traffic signal outside the West Lanham Hills station on MD 450, Annapolis Road, between MD 410 and Finns Lane.

Hopefully, this project will be completed by summer. Also, we are looking at restoring the "No Parking" zones on 48th between Queensbury and Riverdale Roads to improve the turning for both the fire trucks and the Metro buses.

## A Community Garden



Over the past two months, a group of avid gardeners have been meeting to plan and implement a community garden. The garden, located at the corners

of 62nd place and 6200 Sheridan Street, is a third acre at the Center for Educational Partnership on 6200 Sheridan Street. Vinnie Bevivino\* explained that the garden is a wonderful opportunity to engage community members in developing a garden with edible produce. The Community Garden will also serve as an educational forum hosting cooking and gardening events. The planners are looking for citizens to apply for free space in the garden. As of March 21, 2007, 10 community garden plot applications have been received. If you are interested in reserving a plot in the community, go to the link below and complete an application.

During the week of March 19—23, 2006, a dozen University of Maryland were busy helping to get the garden started with the help of a local contractor. They were building the fence, rot tilling compost into the beds, and establishing the footpaths. This was all done in preparation for planting. The garden plans take into account the need to accommodate young people and disabled; the garden will include raised platform beds.

Some particulars about the Community Garden:

Save the Date of April 21, 2007—Opening day; an opening community event at the garden. Just one day before Earth Day, it will be the beginning Saturday workshops and events out in the garden. If you have a particular interest or knowledge about something and would like to volunteer your knowledge, you could run an informal workshop

The Community Garden will be selling its produce at the Riverdale Park Farmer's Market every Thursday from 3 - 7PM starting May 17th and ending Nov. 1st.

The fence around the community garden will be wooden 4"x4"x10' posts put into the ground 3 feet deep and 7 feet high, 8 feet apart. Attached will be reclaimed 2"x6" boards horizontally, and then chicken wire to the wooden fence to keep out deer and other small animals.

There will be two gates, a larger one in the front of the garden to accommodate a pickup truck, and another in the back of the garden to accommodate a wheelbarrow or wheelchair (3 feet wide).

The garden has two components, a community garden for neighborhood families, and a youth garden for students. Currently, youth from William Wirt will be working in an after school program during the school year and in a summer camp in the garden. In an effort to provide alternatives to youth violence, the youth garden is called the Master Peace Garden.

Go to:

<http://groups.google.com/group/riverdale-community-garden?lnk=iggc> for the community garden plot application and for the discussion group on this topic. Don't miss this excellent opportunity to participate in a great community opportunity, hone your gardening skills, and produce excellent produce!

*\*Vinnie Bevivino is a Community Garden Educator with The Engaged University, Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program.*

## The Riverdale Park Business Association

Carol Patsel

The Riverdale Park Business Association held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 7, 2007, at the Town Hall. A summary of that meeting follows:

- The RPBA Annual Dinner is scheduled for Thursday, April 26, 2007, 6:00 p.m. –10:00 p.m. at the Calvert House Inn. Eileen Circo, Senior Vice President of Lowes Enterprises Real Estate Group will speak on The Challenges of Condo Development. The annual dinner will feature a sit-down dinner, silent auction, and jazz band. Invitations are open to the public. Dinner tickets are \$40 per person.
- Bruce Wernick has leased his property at Town Center. A Pet and Pond Store will open for business by the end of March, early April.
- Patricia Gladding announced that the Farmers' Market is celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Their hours of operation will be from 3pm – 7pm every Thursday at the Marc Train Station, starting on May 17, 2007 and closing on November 1, 2007. Pat also announced the Anacostia River Earth Day & Prince George's County Livable Communities Initiative Cleanup and Celebration is scheduled for Saturday, April 21, 2007. Clean up will start at 8:30am and end at 12 noon. The Celebration Rally will start at 12 noon at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park.

The next RPBA meeting will be held at the Calvert House on Wednesday, April 4, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. After the meeting, they will show the DVD "The Secret". Everyone is invited to attend.

## Riverdale Park loses a Favorite Son

John Joseph Ferguson, former Riverdale Park councilman and husband of Ann Ferguson, former Mayor of Riverdale Park, died on Tuesday, March 6, 2007 at his home in Madison, Virginia. He was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on Thursday on March 22, 2007. Mr. Ferguson served in the U.S. Army in Frankfort, Germany and was awarded the World War II Victory Medal and the Army of Occupation Medal. Mr. Ferguson is noted for his successful financial turnaround of the Fort Myer Credit Union in the late 1960s. He and his wife Ann were well known to local politics; John Ferguson served on Council from 1966-1969, and was twice a candidate for Mayor. Mr. Ferguson was the father of five children, an accomplished player of piano, harmonica, organ, and accordion. He was a parishioner of St. Bernard's Catholic Church for 38 years.

During his retirement in Virginia, Mr. Ferguson worked part-time at Montpelier, the home of James Madison. He was a history buff and especially interested in the Civil War.

Many of us will remember John and the kind deeds he was known for. Our kindest thoughts and prayers go out to Ann Ferguson and her family in the loss of a genuinely kind and gentle person that John Ferguson was.

### Did You Know?

(the following is from Wikipedia.com).

**Patriots' Day** is a civic holiday in the U.S. state of Massachusetts and Maine (once part of MA). Traditionally it was observed on April 19, in honor of Lexington and Concord, the first battles of the American Revolutionary War, fought on that date in 1775. The Boston Marathon is run on this day every year, and traditionally the Boston Red Sox have played a home game at Fenway on this date every year since 1960. Occasionally, Tax Day falls on this day or the preceding weekend, causing the tax deadline to be extended by a day for the residents of Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and D.C. This is because the IRS processing center for these areas is located in Andover, MA, and is closed on Patriots' Day.

**Emancipation Day**—Washington, D.C. celebrates April 16 as Emancipation Day. On that day in 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Compensated Emancipation Act releasing certain persons held to service or labor in the District of Columbia. The Act freed about 3,100 enslaved persons in the District of Columbia nine months before President Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation

heralding the eventual end of slavery to the nation. In 2007, the observance of this holiday in Washington DC had the effect of nationally extending the 2006 income tax filing deadline from the 16th to the 17th of April; a delay again recurring in April of 2011.

## S & J Restaurant

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# Community Circles

## What to Watch For:

**Saturday, March 31, 2007**—Easter Egg Hunt, grounds of Riversdale, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Sunday, April 1, 2007**—April Fool's Day—Don't be fooled!

**Monday, April 2, 2007**—Legislative Meeting, Town Hall, 8:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 3, 2007**—Traffic Study Meeting, Town Hall, 7:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, April 4, 2007**—M-UTC meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 10, 2007**—Recreation Board Meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

**Thursday, April 12, 2007**—Last day to file election petition; Preservation meeting, 4707 Oliver, 7:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 17, 2007**—Tax Deadline; file by midnight!

**Sunday, April 22, 2007**—Earth Day; celebrate the earth and help save it!



**Thursday, April 26, 2007**—RPBA Annual Dinner, Calvert House Inn, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.

**Monday, April 30, 2007**—Last day for non-emergency absentee ballot application; Work Session, Town Hall, 8:00 p.m.

## Community Organizations

### **Northern County Soccer Alliance, Inc. (NCSA):**

For more information on NCSA and on travel, recreation, home school, and training programs, contact [www.ncsa-soccer.org](http://www.ncsa-soccer.org) or call 310-927-0560.

NCSA is the only year-round soccer club in the North/west Prince Georges County area. Tax deductible donations accepted at [www.justgive.org](http://www.justgive.org). Volunteers needed—this is an excellent opportunity to get involved with your child in fun and great physical activity.

### **Riverdale Park Business Association (RPBA)**

Contact Audrey Bragg at 301-277-7393 for date and place of next meeting.

### **Riverdale Park Girl Scouts**

Contact: Charmaine Wilson at 301-449-5690.

### **Riverdale Park Boys Scouts – Troop 252**

Contact: Scoutmaster Bob Killen at 202-282-8302.

The troop is selling citrus after masses at St. Bernard's until Easter. This is a service the troop offers to the community and makes a little money from. Support our Troop!

## CIVIC COMMITTEES

**Recreation Board** – Volunteers needed. This is a great opportunity to become involved with your children and the community. Contact Anissa Sunday at 301-277-2458 for more information.

### **Madison Hill Homeowners Association**

For information, call 301-513-9188 or email [MadisonHillHOA@aol.com](mailto:MadisonHillHOA@aol.com)

**Riverdale Park Farmer's Market**—Opening Day for the Market's 10<sup>th</sup> Year—May 17, 2007 from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. Contact Jim Coleman at 301-209-8529 for more information.

**Lion's Club**—Contact Guy Tiberio at 301-864-3545 for more information.

**Riverdale Park Tree Committee**--call Rebecca Feldberg at (301-864-2779) for more information.

**Riversdale Historical Society**—Contact Riversdale Mansion at 301-864-0420 for more information.

**Traffic Study Committee**—Contact Gerry Kiernan (301-277-4554) for more information.

## **URGENT REQUEST**

**The Christian Life Center Community Food and Clothing Distribution Center** is in need of clothing, especially men's and children's clothing. These can be dropped off at 5600 Taylor Road Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. Or, call (301) 277-5969 to make arrangements for drop off of items. Thank you for your contributions.

If you have information to share with the community, please submit it to the Editor, Town Crier, 5008 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, Maryland 20737 by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, or email: [RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net](mailto:RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net).