

## **Help Wanted: Looking for a Few Good Neighbors**

**Conrad Poniatowski, President Emeritus**

Hopefully most of you who read the last newsletter got a full sense of President Townsend's frustrations. Aside from problems with our County Representatives and people within the community who think County Code does not apply to them, our Community is in really good shape. Testimony to that notion is the fact that numerous residents have opted to add-on or improve their properties rather than move out. Having said that, and in the interest of full disclosure, I'm sad to announce that my wife and I are building a retirement home in St. Augustine, FL, and will put our house on the market in the coming year. We've spent 28 years serving the community, the greater Towson and Lutherville areas, and it's time for us to move on.

Everyone has a major investment in our community – everyone. For almost all of our stay here, there has always been a small nucleus that has stepped up regardless of the severity of the situation. It should be reassuring to know that most of the more serious threats are behind us and we are in good financial shape (thanks to those of you who do pay your dues and provide us with donations). However, we are running out of willing volunteers. It's time for the younger generation to step up. If not, word of our decline will quickly spread and all forms of opportunists may seize on the opportunity.

If we had a dollar for every time someone has said "I'll be at the next meeting" or "I've got to get involved," we could hire a full time staff to address issues important to our community. Unfortunately, it's not the case. Now is the time. I will be here through April 2008 and am dedicated to mentoring the next group of community activists in matters of zoning, code enforcement, representation in the Greater Towson and Timonium oversight groups, and dealing with County Officials, elected and otherwise. These are truly not overwhelming tasks, and in learning, you'll gain useful insight that will benefit you and the community at large.

Over the years, I've become somewhat amused when something goes wrong, something ominous appears on the horizon, and an unusually large number of residents appear at our monthly meeting with the standard question, "What do you plan to do about this?" Make no mistake -- the "you" is us. Truly, we're all in this together. The only difference is that some decide to attend meetings regularly and take action, while others do not.

We all have obligations. From our jobs, to our families, to Boy and Girl Scouts, Church involvement, sports, homework – the list is endless. Some of us have medical conditions; others, some family problems. And any of us, if given the chance, could provide any number of "reasons" as to why there's no time to get involved.

Drive down Meadowvale, or Ridgefield, or Longbrook, or Greenridge, or any of the numerous streets in our community. Take a look at our trees, our yards, our houses, the people, us neighbors, and the state of our community. Is maintaining all of this something that's important to you? How much of a priority is it? Is a few hours a month really too much, or is it just not as much of a priority?

At present, we are in the four year cycle known as the Comprehensive Zoning Map Process (CZMP). Anyone can apply for a change in zoning: a Residential Office, Boarding House, or other individual with commercial intents. You, as a resident, need to know how to address these issues. In the past, we've had a remarkable success rate, both for ourselves and our neighboring communities. Changes are coming, however. We have seen great inconsistencies in code enforcement. We have a new County Planner. And next year, we'll have a new County Executive and the challenges that may possibly bring.

By the time you read this, the October meeting has taken place. Our annual Wine and Cheese meeting, November 17, at the Fire Museum is right around the corner. We can start you on the road to becoming a valued community leader. While the quality of your family life, or personal life may be in jeopardy, the quality of your life in this community may be in equal jeopardy, and is in your hands. Under normal circumstances, involvement is no more than 2-3 hours per month. There are 638 households in this community. Please don't wait for the other person to step forward.

I can't wait to see you in November.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Halloween Party 2007

The Halloween party will be held on Monday, October 22nd at 7pm in the Hampton Elementary Cafeteria for DVIA member's children and grandchildren 10 years and younger.

Wear your costume, make a craft, enjoy some cookies and cider and be amazed by a magician.

Please RSVP to Bebe Ferro at 410-821-8177 or [bebe.ferro@verizon.net](mailto:bebe.ferro@verizon.net).

Volunteers are needed to help set up, help with crafts, and clean up. Anyone interested in lending a hand should call or e-mail Bebe.



### Annual Wine and Cheese Party

The DVIA will hold its annual Wine and Cheese Party and November meeting on Saturday, November 17, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Fire Museum of Maryland.

This event will include various appetizers and hors d' oeuvres, soda and juice for children, as well as wine. The event is free to all members of the community.

Tours of the Fire Museum are also available during the course of the evening.

During the course of the evening, we will also be holding a brief meeting and elections for the upcoming 2008 year.

If you are interested in running for a position, please contact a member of the DVIA board.

Please make every effort to attend. We hope to see you there.

### There's No Place Like Our Community for the Holidays

During the Holiday season, we sponsor four Holiday activities to demonstrate our Holiday cheer.

We will be **decorating wreaths** to hang within our community on Friday, December 7 at 9:00 a.m. at 26 Greenridge Rd. We will then be **hanging wreaths** at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 8 throughout the community. Volunteers are needed for both of these fun events.

Everyone's favorite jolly old elf, **Santa Claus**, will be making a "dry-run" through our community on Sunday, December 16 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. in preparation for his official run on Christmas Eve. Listen for the fire engine and look for the man shown to the right. We will post the scheduled times for Saint Nick's journey on our web site ( <http://www.dvia.org> ).

Lastly, you have a chance to win fabulous prizes and bragging rights in our **Annual Holiday Decoration Contest**. Our judging committee will be driving through the community late in the afternoon of Sunday, December 23 to select its favorites. Winners will be notified and announced a few days afterwards.

Here's to a safe and happy Holiday season.



## Condolences

To Mrs. Doris Wettengel and family of Tenbury Rd., on the loss of her husband, Neal.

To Marilyn Barry, on the loss of her Mother, Alice Engelhardt.

To Mrs. Rosemary Downs & Family of Greenridge Rd., on the loss of her husband, Walter.

## News and Notes

The **Sewer Line expansion project continues**, and our residents continue to be frustrated, inconvenienced, and maltreated by its effects. Several residents have cited smells throughout the day, drilling and pounding earlier than 7:00 a.m. and late into the evening. Please refer all complaints to the office of Baltimore County Councilman Bryan McIntyre at 410-887-3387. Mr. McIntyre has also been invited to attend our annual wine and cheese meeting to address any concerns.

We've had a number of residents express frustration that, while walking their dogs or while driving their car, they have been struck by **low-hanging tree branches or limbs**. Additionally, we've heard complaints from motorists who are unable to make turns from some of our community streets because shrubs and bushes have not been adequately trimmed. According to Baltimore County Code and the State of Maryland Annotated Code, it is the responsibility of the homeowner to keep trees, shrubs, bushes or anything else that may obstruct either a motorist's view or a pedestrians' passage on a sidewalk out of the way. Regardless of whether or not the tree is on your property, if it is obstructing passage or the view on your property, it's your responsibility. Please be considerate and mindful of the law.

We've listened to a number of residents who've witnessed **pet owners walking their dogs without leashes**, and who have allowed their **pets to leave droppings** on neighbors lawns or on Hampton Elementary School property. Aside from being unsanitary and more than a nuisance, this act is a criminal offense punishable by law. We have it on good authority that Baltimore County Police and Animal Control have gotten more than their fair share of calls on our neighborhood and they're quite fed up. Please don't allow yourself to become an example. Clean up after your pet.

As the weather is turning colder (not that we weren't enjoying the warmer weather on into the later months of the year), the **outside tends to come inside**. All of the little critters that you see and don't see on a daily basis are now looking for places to live during the coming Winter months. If you'd prefer your residence not be a safe haven for mice, rats, or any other potential unlicensed pets, be sure to follow common sense:

- Put your trash in a trash bag
- Put that trash bag in a trash can with a lid
- Check for any holes or openings outside of your house
- Keep your yard clean and clear of any waste or food (this includes dog droppings)

Whether you believe it or not, it actually is a citable offense if you **park your car in the opposing direction on the street**. Baltimore County code enforcement has, from time to time, issued citations for this minor offense.

**Abandoned cars and broken-down vehicles** continue to be an issue in our community. Even if it's your car, and it has a flat tire or some other problem to it, it is incumbent upon the owner to get it fixed before it can be parked in any residential area anywhere in the county. If you see something, please, let the owner know that eyesores like broken down cars, trucks, and other vehicles are not only against the law to park, but also bring down the value of all our properties.

Lastly, if you or any resident of our community you know has ideas as to how to **make our community better**, we invite you to come speak your voice. Our annual Wine and Cheese meeting at the Fire Museum of Maryland is just one of several opportunities for you to gather with your neighbors and let them know where you see our community going.

As you have read, we are in critical need of a new generation of leaders to step up to the plate and continue the traditions of yesteryear, but also to chart a new course for our community and its residents. The commitment time is little, and the rewards are many. Please feel free to post your concerns on our web site in the community forums at <http://www.dvia.org>.



<b>UPCOMING EVENTS</b>
<p><b>Halloween Party</b> Monday, October 22, 7:00 p.m. Hampton Elementary School</p>
<p><b>Wine and Cheese Party (Annual Meeting)</b> Saturday, November 17, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Fire Museum of Maryland</p>
<p><b>Wreath Decorating</b> Friday, December 7, 9:00 a.m. 26 Greenridge Rd.</p>
<p><b>Wreath Hanging</b> Saturday, December 8, 9:00 a.m. – Noon</p>
<p><b>Holiday Decoration Judging</b> Sunday, December 23, Late Afternoon/Evening</p>
<p><b>Santa Claus' Visit</b> Sunday, December 16, 2:00-3:00 p.m. Throughout the Community</p>
<p><b>Easter Egg Hunt 2008</b> Saturday, March 15, 10:00 a.m. Behind Hampton Elementary School</p>
<p><b>Community Yard Sale 2008</b> Saturday, April 26 Throughout the Community</p>

<b>UPCOMING MEETINGS</b>
<p>Saturday November 17, 2007, 5 p.m. Fire Museum of Maryland</p>
<p>Monday December 10, 2007, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>
<p>Monday January 14, 2008, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>
<p>Monday February 11, 2008, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>
<p>Monday March 10, 2008, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>
<p>Monday April 14, 2008, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>
<p>Monday May 12, 2008, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>
<p>Monday Jun. 9, 2008, 7 p.m. Hampton Elementary School Library</p>

**Dulaney Valley Improvement Assoc., Inc.  
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