



## Wyndhurst Improvement Association

# WIA News

SPRING • APRIL 6, 2014

BALTIMORE, MD

### WIA BOARD

President

*Jim Determan*

Vice President

*Helen deClercq*

Secretary

*Becky Hornbeck*

Treasurer

*Henry Kay*

### BLOCK CAPTAINS

*John Bishop*

*Dave Champney*

*Helen DeClercq*

*Richard Gross*

*Henry Kay*

*Laura Kinsey*

*Beth Lesser*

*Robert Robinson*

*Brooks Nobel*

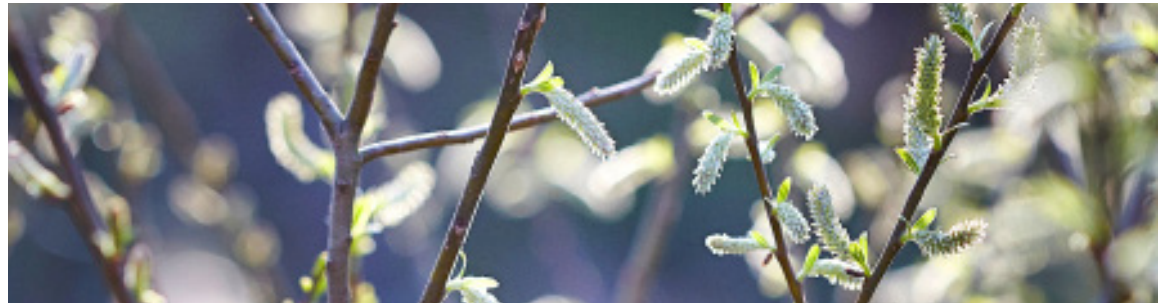
*Diana Schramm*

*Eric Thompson*

*Louise Toby*

*Peter Wayner*

*Betsy Winship*



### GWIA ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Greater Wyndhurst Neighborhood Association was held at the Three Arts Club on January 6. In spite of the freezing, blowing cold, 30 or so people gathered to hear presentations by our Councilwoman, Sharon Greene Middleton and State Representative Sandy Rosenberg, as well as by local firefighters. All of the above were open to questions and the discussion was lively and helpful. The firefighters reminded us to buy or replace carbon monoxide detectors, which are only good for about 5 years. They will bring smoke detectors to residents who call and ask for them.

Updates were provided on various important neighborhood issues by those who have been working on them.

Helen deClercq described progress in all areas of the effort to make pertinent changes in our zoning status, with only one area still to be reckoned with. Councilwoman Middleton assured us that a council committee is re-viewing the issues and will continue to be mindful of our needs.

Caroline Wayner reported on traffic control: an official study will be done and a petition circulated in the neighborhood regarding prohibiting turns into certain streets (e.g., Summit. Church Lane) during beginning and end of school hours.

David Champney announced that the neighborhood directory has been revised and distributed to those whose email addresses are on the listserv. Revisions are ongoing, and all are encouraged to be part of the directory, which can help us communicate with each other (for example, in emergency situations) and to become a more cohesive community.

Libby Champney explained the City's new tree policy: If you have a stump you want removed, the Forestry Department will remove it IF you also want a new tree planted at the same time. If it is only stump removal that is being requested, the process becomes murkier.

Jim Determan discussed after-hours construction issues at RPMS, as well as the improvements to Roland Avenue under the GRP Master Plan, which should begin in February. He encouraged

those who haven't already done so to contribute to the Greater Roland Park Open Space Campaign.

John Bishop reported on the work of the Maintenance Committee, noting that residents are doing an excellent job of maintaining their properties.

Beth Ratrie reported on Social Committee events, announcing that the annual Progressive Dinner is scheduled for MARCH 8.

Henry Kay reported that the treasury is in good shape and that he accepts dues payments (\$20) throughout the year.

Jim Determan presented the annual Good Neighbor Award to Helen deClercq for her amazing work on the zoning issue. The awards for Best Home Improvement and Best Landscaping Improvement went to John and Lynn Schwartz and John Fitzpatrick, respectively.

Finally, the slate of officers for 2014 was presented and approved by all in attendance.

They are as follows:

Jim Determan, president  
Helen deClercq, vice-president  
Becky Hornbeck, secretary  
Henry Kay, treasurer

**A SPECIAL THANKS** to Coldwell Banker's Roland Park Office at Cross Keys for printing color copies of WIA's spring newsletter

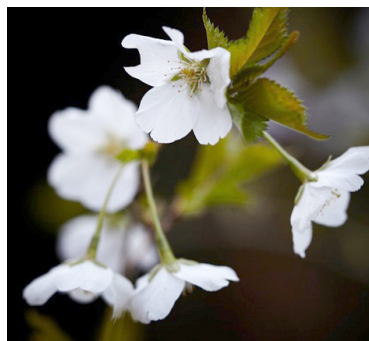
### GREATER WYNDHURST LISTSERV & DIRECTORY

Most residents know that our neighborhood maintains a listserv of residents' email addresses which is used to announce events and distribute other information of interest to the whole community. We encourage everyone to share their email addresses with the listserv at [Wyndhurst@gmail.com](mailto:Wyndhurst@gmail.com).

We are also compiling a more comprehensive directory of names, addresses (both street and email), and phone numbers (both cell and landline). The directory will be shared only with other community members, and you may limit the information you share. To be added to the directory, send an email to [Wyndhurst@gmail.com](mailto:Wyndhurst@gmail.com), providing whatever information you would like to appear there. Electronic copies of the directory will be distributed quarterly via the Listserv.

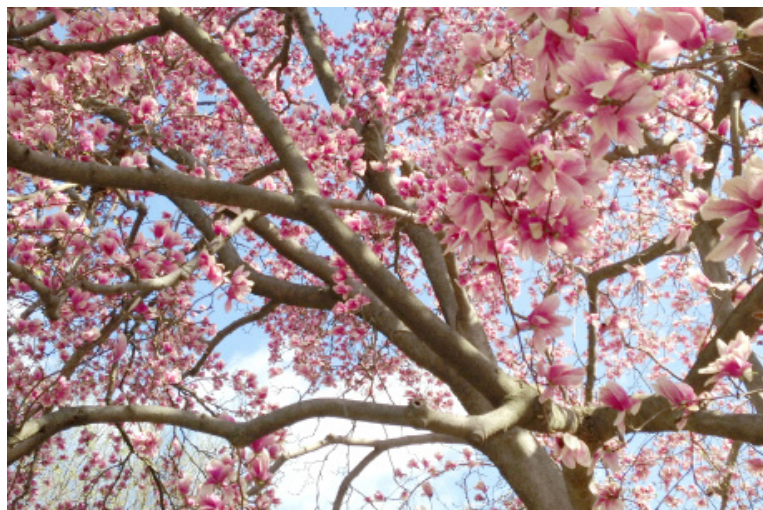
—David Champney, Listserv Keeper

### EARLY SPRING GARDENING IS ON



Spring comes quickly around here, followed swiftly by Baltimore's hot weather. Now is the time to plan for your garden. A few questions to get your planning started are: What do you want your garden to look like? How do you want it to function in the rest of your life? Here are some thoughts to get you started.

**Plan It Out:** Consider planning now, both for what you want your



garden to be as well as for what type of garden you already have. If you have mature trees that shade your landscape, a rose or vegetable garden may prove challenging because they need as much sun as possible. Think about what your landscape does in the summer especially when all the leaves have grown in. Early spring allows you to really analyze your garden with little greenery obscuring your view. Maybe you can envision what pruning you would need to do to let in more sun. Think about what you want to do in your garden: attract wildlife like butterflies, create a relaxing retreat or a have a lush backdrop for your barbecue.

Now is also the time to decide if or when you will do any permanent additions, also called hard scapes, to your garden — fences, gates, walkways, etc. You can then begin to implement your plan by taking out shrubs in the way or at least resist planting in the same area, saving yourself unnecessary effort.

**Prepare the groundwork:** The next order of business is preparing the soil. This winter we had a lot of snow and ice, adding to the usual runoff. Now is the time to repair your soil. Augment it with compost matter or bring in good soil from an outside source. One article I read recently recommended fertilizing

your garden with coffee grounds and ground-up egg shells. The first is a natural soil enhancer (but beware of adding too much acid) and the second can help prevent plant diseases like blossom-end rot from calcium deficiencies (see <http://beekman1802.com/7-great-tips-early-spring-gardening/>).

**Remove unnecessary debris:** Take away any plant or tree litter accumulated over the winter and add organic matter and fertilizer. Weeding is a great task to do early on because weeds multiply so fast. Reducing them in the first place saves time and energy. Early spring is also the time to prune bushes with multiple stems like forsythias. If you plan your garden and augment your planting areas soon, you will be way ahead of the game and soon be enjoying the beautiful and bountiful sights, smells and tastes that backyard gardening has to offer.

—Eva Khoury

*Eva Khoury received her Master Garden Certificate in 2001. She is available for landscaping assistance in Roland Park after and between chasing her active 20 month old. Please contact her for any gardening tasks you may need: spring cleaning, preparing flower beds or fixing those sore spot areas. Email: [earthalley@gmail.com](mailto:earthalley@gmail.com) or 410-905-6274.*



## WYNDHURST PROGRESSIVE DINNER 2014

Our annual Progressive Dinner was held on the blessedly balmy night of March 8. There were six host homes (Hornbecks, Swartzes, Wayners, Masseys, Champneys and Browns), and around 80 neighbors who enjoyed being hosted. During the appetizer course, the fabulous a cappella group *Out Too Late* sang and even did a bit of very cool dancing. All reports were that both the food and the company were excellent throughout the evening. Neighbors who were attending for the first time were heard to remark that

they'd "had no idea this was such fun!"

Thanks go to the host families, but most of all to Beth Rattie, Social Committee Chair, and to Judy DePauw, who pitched in to help Beth at more or less the last minute. Further thanks to those who volunteered to pitch in at the last minute: Susan Carroll, John Bishop, Elizabeth Gething, Luke Brackett and Eva Khoury. They were beautifully organized "powers behind the scene", and it was due to their hard work and organizational skills that the dinner ran so smoothly. If you missed it, be sure you make the next one!

*\*\*\*Beth is looking for helpers for next year's dinner, so please let her know now if you are interested. It really takes 3-4 people to make the dinner work well.*

Email Beth Rattie, [brattie@yahoo.com](mailto:brattie@yahoo.com), if you are interested in helping with WIA event organization in the coming months.



PHOTOS: DAVID CHAMPNEY 2014

**BIG THANKS** to **Brandon Middleton** who was recently spotted shoveling snow and cleaning cars in the 700 block of St. Johns, and to all the other good Samaritans this winter who have done likewise on their streets and walks in this winter of 1,000 snows!

### PLANS FOR TRAFFIC-CALMING PROCEED

For the past several years the cut-through traffic in Tuxedo Park has increased and become a safety problem. As you are probably aware, traffic is worst during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up as parents escape the heavy traffic on Wyndhurst and Roland on their way to and from the adjacent schools. Neighborhood children must cross traffic on Summit Avenue and Church Lane on their walk to school. There have been accidents, traffic jams, honking, arguments and lots of near misses. It is unsafe. We can only expect the situation to get worse when lanes are closed on Roland Avenue for the repaving project starting this spring.

To alleviate the problem, Caroline Wayner has led an effort to have signs posted preventing traffic from entering our neighborhood. We met with, and filed an application with the Baltimore City Traffic Department requesting the signs. They performed a traffic study and on March 6th the Department of Transportation met with us to report they agree and will provide the signs. However, we must show that the majority of neighbors do not object. In the next couple of weeks your block captain, or other representative, will come to your door with a petition. If we have 70% in agreement, the signs could be installed by May.

#### The proposed signs are as follows:

1. NO TURNS 7am-9am M-F from Wyndhurst onto Summit Ave.
2. NO TURNS 7am-9am M-F from Wyndhurst onto Church Lane
3. NO LEFT TURN into the alley at the north end of Summit Avenue behind Deepdene Road
4. DO NOT ENTER at south-bound Church Lane at Colorado Avenue



Above: George Hyde and George Swope, childhood friends of Frank Thomsen, life-long Wyndhurst resident, make orange crate racers with hardware purchased at Schneiders, c. 1957.

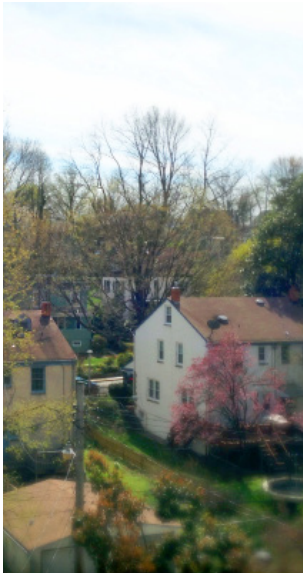
These signs have been carefully considered and designed to prevent the majority of the cut-through traffic related to school drop-off/pick-up, as well as retail customers. While the signs may be an occasional inconvenience for neighbors, they will improve safety for our student walkers and reduce the number of strangers speeding through our streets. I will meet with Northern District Police to request enforcement during the first week the signs are installed. Please help us restore the peace, quiet and safety of the neighborhood by signing these petitions.

Thanks to Caroline Wayner, Amy Bonitz, Libby Champney and Becky Hornbeck for their efforts. Also special thanks to Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton and her Community Liaison, Robert Ginyard, who were influential in expediting the process and making sure we got the help we needed to make our neighborhood safe. If you have any questions or comments please contact Jim Determan, [jdeterman@bcm2.com](mailto:jdeterman@bcm2.com).

### HISTORIC TUXEDO PARK: FUN IN THE FIFTIES

From all accounts, Tuxedo Park in the late 40's and early 50's was an idyllic spot — especially if you were part of the large group of kids (mostly boys) who roamed the neighborhood and played in and around Stony Run and the Ma and Pa railroad. Recent conversations with Frank Thomsen of the 700 block of St. Johns and his brother Chris (now living in the county), and with George Swope, who grew up here and now lives just “over the line” in Hampden, reveal a community where the fun never stopped for its younger residents. The men reminisced about playing in the swamps and woodlands which have now been replaced by Friends School's lower athletic fields. They filled the dense woods with tree forts, some of them as high as the neighborhood roofs. One fort, built by a young man named Curt Andrews, was especially big and actually boasted its own wood stove. One night this fort caught on fire, but simply “fell into the creek”, a happy ending befitting a children's paradise. The boys played





BRION MCARDHY 2014


happily with bows and arrows, knives, peashooters, slingshots, and tomahawks. (No one could remember any injuries!) They strung up hammocks made from tennis nets. The stream yielded wonders such as frog eggs, which George collected in a tennis ball can and “grew” at home in a fish bowl. A scary feature of the woods was a huge rock on the Gilman School property known as Tramp Rock. All three men remembered tramps building fires there and taking shelter in a cave in the rock while they waited for trains. George remembers spying on some tramps one day, then falling into a patch of poison ivy when he tried to run away.

The trains themselves were a source of fun as they bounced along the tracks. The boys collected flattened coins they’d put on the track for the trains to run over. They played in the coal bins near where the cleaner’s is on Lawndale, and they went home black with dust. Once an empty freight car came rolling along the tracks all by itself, crossing Wyndhurst and then Coldspring (where there were no gates) before it was apprehended.

Other activities included roller skating, playing kick the can, and hiding in the basement, or on the roof of the apartment building at the corner of Colorado and Summit. A favorite memory is of making “cars” out of roller skates and orange crates, as shown in the accompanying picture. All the hardware came from Schneider’s, where Paul Pratt was reputed to know all the gossip there was to know. Equally happy is Frank and Chris’s memory of their grandfather dumping a whole truckload of white sand every summer in the empty lot at the bottom of Colorado. This became a playground for the whole neighborhood; everyone was sad that the “mountain” got worn down as fast as it did. Other marvels were the donkey owned by a family on Deepdene and the palomino owned by a man on Wilmslow, who liked to ride him in the park.

As for the business district, the men reminisced about the garage on Deepdene where cars were repaired, Tuxedo Pharmacy (then tiny), which sold liquor in addition to pharmaceuticals, and an old A&P with splintery wood floors on

the corner of Roland and Colorado. George remembers making big money from a KoolAid stand he set up in front of it. There was a laundromat too, where Starbuck’s is now, and certain mischievous boys would try to get into a dryer there and “spin”. Northern Parkway did not exist in its present form until around 1966. Before that it was a 2-lane road known as Belvedere and looked similar to Falls Road as it meanders north into the county. The trolley tracks were still in the middle of Roland Avenue, and George remembers his mother riding the trolley to Lexington Market to buy baby lima beans.

All three men agree that Tuxedo Park was an unusually close community in those days. Frank and Chris remember men on Colorado shoveling the entire street after a blizzard so that their father could get to work at Black & Decker. And George spoke of his mother and other women helping a neighbor with 10 children who was suddenly widowed one Christmas eve. “This neighborhood was tight-knit then,” Frank says — “and it still is.” 

## DID YOU KNOW . . .

- \* that the remaining three community dumpsters are scheduled for **May 10, September 13, and December 6?**
- \* that you can still contribute to the Greater Roland Park Open Space Campaign? (Checks can be sent to the Roland Park Community Foundation at P.O. Box 16214, Baltimore 21210.) Contributions will help provide funds for shared amenities like the Stony Run trail, the water tower, and the Baltimore Country Club open space.
- \* that by clearing your gutters and the storm drain(s) nearest you, you can prevent nasty stuff from fouling the Harbor and the Bay?
- \* that the re-paving and other improvements to Roland Avenue will begin in April?!

A sure sign of spring: the ducks' arrival in Stony Run between Deepdene and Colorado, often followed by the arrival of ducklings



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FLOATING FRIDAYS

As the snow gives way to rain, it's time to start organizing our summer Floating Fridays. We are open to scheduling them any Friday evening between June 6 and August 29, from 6-8 pm. If you would like to help organize or host any of these gatherings, please contact Beth before the end of April. [\\_bratvie@yahoo.com](mailto:_bratvie@yahoo.com)

#### Here's how they work:

\*Neighbors sign up to host a happy hour/potluck in their front or back yard, alley, or street — any place that allows kids to play. Hosts allow access to their houses for water, restrooms, etc.

\*Hosts provide cups, plates, utensils, ice, a table a few chairs, water or lemonade. A grill is optional.

\*Guests bring their own drinks (alcoholic or non) and a dish to share.

Frisbees, guitars, chairs or blankets, sidewalk chalk, etc., are always welcome.

\*There is no need for guests to RSVP. All WIA residents are welcome.

### FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

Roland Park's annual parade down Roland Avenue will be held as usual. After a few preliminary remarks, the assembled crowd (on bikes, scooters, strollers, feet, etc.) moves from the library to near the fire station, led by one of our exciting fire engines, which will then graciously soak whoever wishes to stand in front of their hoses. Dogs welcome too!

### BLOCK PARTY

Seems like the 2013 party just ended, but don't forget the save the second Saturday in September (September 13th this year). Great food and fellowship on the 700 block of St. Johns.

### WIA NEWS

#### EDITOR

Libby Champney

#### DESIGNER

Elizabeth Gething

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS

David Champney

Brion McCarthy

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Libby Champney

Helen DeClercq

Eva Koury

Beth Ratrie

*Have a story for us?  
Want to learn more  
about the history of  
a particular house  
in the neighborhood?  
Email Libby Champney,  
[libbycc@aol.com](mailto:libbycc@aol.com)*

### WIA LISTSERV

Neighbors who are on WIA's Listserv will also receive an electronic copy of this newsletter, as well as important information regarding neighborhood events, meetings, crime, and Baltimore City notices. If you are *not* on the Listserv and would like to be, please contact **David Champney** at [wyndhurst@gmail.com](mailto:wyndhurst@gmail.com).