



Westerlee Community News



A Covenant Controlled Community

May, 2004

<http://home.comcast.net~westerleenews>

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbor,

On March 16 the Westerlee Community Association, in its annual meeting, approved a new set of bylaws for the Association which added the election of the board members by the general membership. Elections for the Association's Board were held at the same meeting. The new Board convened on April 6 and elected a new slate of officers as shown on the cover of this newsletter.

At the 2003 Annual Meeting the Associations Board was criticized for not being active enough. Subsequently new Board members were appointed and Marilyn Maxwell assumed the presidency in September of 2003. New committees were formed and the Board implemented new procedures to insure that the covenants for the community would be enforced. It is my intention to continue this new course of Board activism with the goal of providing you, the residents, a well run Community Association and a community environment where residents feel safe and know that their interests are being protected from actions that would decrease property values or the desirability of living in this community.

Our objectives include:

- Review and approve all significant changes that homeowners undertake for compliance with the character and quality of the architecture and landscaping in the community.
- Review zoning changes and project proposals for the surrounding areas to make sure that the entry points into Westerlee become more attractive- Review proposed projects adjacent to Westerlee such as infill projects on the open spaces south of Westerlee, for their impact on the community
- Consider options for traffic calming and enforcement of speed limits and stop signs to make life in Westerlee safer for pedestrians, children and all residents
- Ensure that purchasers of homes in Westerlee know that this is a covenant controlled community and that they are welcomed by and informed about the association
- Create a better sense of the values of our homes to avoid that homes are sold under value as has been the case in several past instances.
- Have an organizational structure that allows good communication among members of the Association (such a regular newsletter and a more complete Westerlee Directory to help you know your neighbors) and a support system in case of emergencies and situations of personal need.
- Create a greater sense of community through community sponsored events and activities to help promote neighborly relationships among members. (We are also looking into the option of placing welcoming signs at the entrypoints of the community).
- Maintain continuing liason with police and county officials to insure that our residents are made aware of conditions affecting their quality of life as members of this community.

Obviously, none of those goals can be accomplished without a spirit of cooperation and your support. I appeal to you to provide this support and share your ideas and goals for the community with the Board and committee members who are seeking to implement these objectives. Please remember that our Board and committee members are fellow residents who have volunteered to give some of their free time for helping make this a better place to live. If you are called upon to assist in some small way (or would like to volunteer) we hope you will respond favorably and we look forward to working with you towards our common goals.

THEY'RE BA-A-ACK!!

... the dreaded cicadas, that is!

After 17 years underground, millions of periodical cicadas (Brood X) will emerge throughout the eastern United States in late spring 2004. Periodical cicadas, which are unrelated to, but often confused with locusts, are harmless to humans or animals, but their egg-laying may cause some plant damage.

Many millions of periodical cicadas are expected in Maryland from the end of May into July, 2004, though numbers will vary widely by location. In 1987, some woodlots held up to 100,000 per acre, while numbers in our area were moderate.

These cicadas usually emerge by the end of May in Maryland. At that time, the nymphs crawl out of the soil after 17 years of feeding on small subterranean roots and climb up tree trunks or other vertical objects, where they shed their nymphal skin and emerge as adults. Adults live about four to six weeks with the sole purpose to mate and lay eggs. Cicadas feed only as nymphs underground, on tree roots. Adult cicadas die soon after they have mated and laid their eggs.

Only the males produce sound – a loud mating call of “song”, which can be heard from early morning to late evening as long as adults are present, usually until July. After mating, the female cicada cuts deep slits in small twigs where she lays her rows of 24-48 eggs. After six weeks, the eggs hatch and the tiny nymphs fall to the ground where they burrow into the soil and spend the next 17 years below ground, starting the whole cycle again.

Cicadas will not significantly affect most large, healthy trees. Small trees, however, can be more seriously damaged by the female egg-laying, which can cause browning, breakage, and scarring on affected branches. Property owners and managers can reduce damage to smaller trees by pruning them lightly or not at all the season before emergence. Damaged twigs may be pruned out following cicada activity. Small shade and ornamental trees can be protected by covering them with cheesecloth or finely woven netting to prevent females from laying eggs in the twigs. To avoid potential damage, consider delaying this winter's pruning of



landscape materials until after egg-laying stops in June.

Periodical cicadas only occur in the eastern United States. Their red eyes distinguish them from all other cicadas, and their bodies measure slightly over 1 ½ inches long. They do not bite or sting. They pose no health threat to people or pets. Adult Cicada “songs,” the characteristic, almost deafening male mating cacophony which will be heard from Periodical Cicadas, are different from Dog Day cicadas, which are larger in size, mostly green with black eyes, and appear each August in small numbers.

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The preceding article on Periodical Cicadas was taken from the Maryland Department of Agriculture Web site and edited for our newsletter by Jim Holman. If you are interested in reading the entire article, it may be found at

<http://www.mda.state.md.us/press/cicada.htm>

The photo is from the Duke University web site:

<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook/pix/index.html>

WESTERLEE WEB SITE

We're on the Web!! Our brand new web site will give you lots of information, some of which we don't have room to publish here. It'll be a very good way to keep up with what's going on between newsletters. Check it out – and often!

Go to:

<http://home.comcast.net/~westerleenews>

When you type the URL into your browser's address line, be sure to include the tilde (~) (on the keyboard, press Shift and the key above the Tab key) before “westerleenews”. After you've been to our web site, bookmark the page so you can return often!

COMMUNITY NEWS

We grieve with the family of Edward Senanayake of 2112 Fernglen Way. Edward died very suddenly recently. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to his wife, Padmini.

WESTERLEE: A COMMUNITY OF ATTRACTIVE YARDS AND A PARK-LIKE ATMOSPHERE

As many American subdivisions designed in the 20th century, Westerlee's design is based on the "buildings in the park idea" where the greenspaces are flowing freely between the houses and property lines are not or only vaguely marked. In that spirit fences were banned from front yards. This provision of the original builder is anchored in our covenants. The two main ingredients for the lush impression that our neighborhood makes compared to many other neighborhoods are the relatively large lawns and the area's many trees.

With increasing awareness of environmental issues such as air pollution, pollution of the water in the Chesapeake Bay, and unabated sprawl which devours hundreds of acres of farmland every day in Maryland alone, we need to look at our yards not only as esthetic enhancements of our community but as part of the environment as well. What can we do to make our properties and yards contributors to a great community and to a healthy environment?

Keep mature trees and plant new trees wherever possible. Trees not only add value to your property ("Healthy, mature trees add an average of 10 percent to a property's value." -USDA Forest Service) but they produce oxygen, filter dust, store water, reduce summer heat and, combined with shading your house, reduce the need for air conditioning. ("Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30 percent and can save 20 - 50 percent in energy used for heating." -USDA Forest Service.)

Removal of large trees, especially in front yards, constitutes a major change in the appearance as defined in the covenants and, therefore, needs approval from the neighborhood association. (For more information on trees: See the following websites:

<http://www.sftreecouncil.org/benefits.htm>
http://www.treesaregood.com/treecare/tree_benefits.asp
<http://www.treesaregood.com/>
<http://www.treelink.org/linx/?navSubCatRef=56>

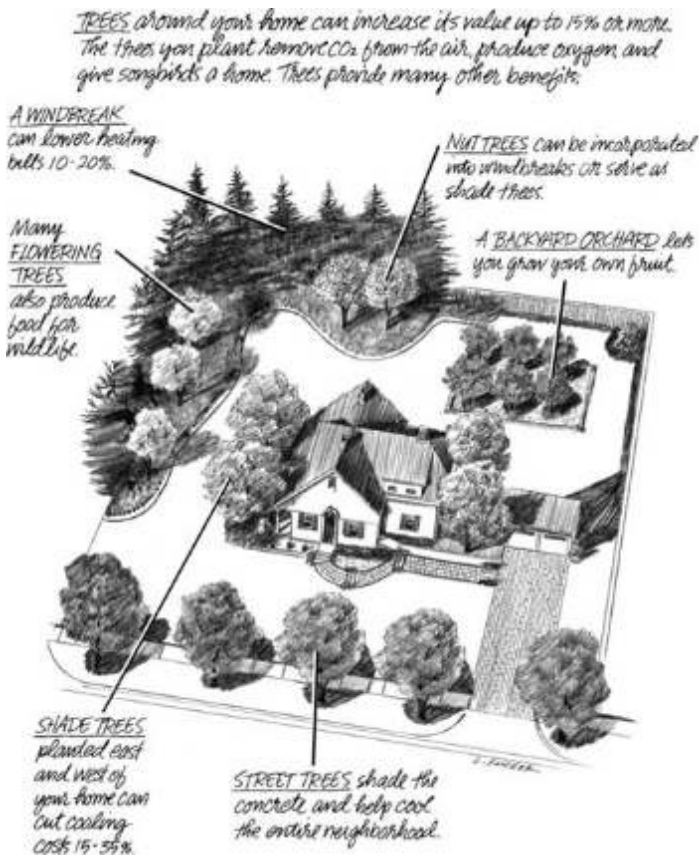
1. Reduce the amount of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers on your lawn. Chemicals applied to the surface will run partially off during the next rainstorm and reach the Chesapeake Bay via storm sewers and creeks. One of the biggest Bay problems is over-fertilization from farms and yards (Nitrogen). Keep your grass clippings on the yard and they will provide most of the nutrients that the grass needs. This practice saves you money and helps the environment. (See "Why Bag Your Grass, a Baltimore County leaflet, available on this website: http://resources.co.ba.md.us/Documents/Imported_Documents/g/guide.pdf)

2. Add planting beds where possible. Planting areas (flowers, shrubs, groundcover) make the yard attractive and provide much better water absorption in a rain than the grassy areas. Only water that can percolate on pervious surfaces and does not run off into the streams and sewers will replenish the groundwater.

3. Reduce the amount of two-stroke power equipment as found on many smaller mowers, chain saws and other power tools. These oil burning motors pollute the air many times more than even big cars. (Did you know that a conventional gasoline lawnmower pollutes as much in an hour as 40 new cars? Source: City of Toronto Website, see http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/cleanairguide/transporation/two_stroke.htm). Remember that most power equipment is quite noisy and avoid its use during Sundays or holidays when your neighbors might sleep late or are outside to enjoy themselves and their outdoor space.

4. Make your own compost. Removal of leaves and grass clippings stored in plastic bags via dump truck is a wasteful and expensive practice now eliminated in many counties. Leaves and grass clippings shrink to very small piles in a very short time and will make excellent soil within a year or less. Your own compost pile or bin not only saves you the expense of bagged topsoil it saves the County hauling expenses. (See Baltimore County website on waste prevention: <http://www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/publicworks/recycling/wasteprevent.html>)

from:
<http://www.arborday.org/trees/aerialbenefits.cfm>



Note that the links from this article are on our web page:

<http://home.comcast.net/~westerleenews>

WESTERLEE BOOK CLUB

Do you enjoy reading? Do you want to become better acquainted with your neighbors? Join the first ever Westerlee Book Club!

We will rotate responsibilities for the choice of the book, the location of the discussion/ meeting, and the leadership of the discussion. Let's try a monthly schedule and see if it works.

For the first meeting, read Another Country by James Baldwin. The back cover of the book describes it in this way:

Set in Greenwich Village, Harlem, and France, among other locales, Another Country is a novel of passions - sexual, racial, political, artistic - that is stunning for its emotional intensity and haunting sensuality, depicting men and women, blacks and

whites, stripped of their masks of gender and race by love and hatred at their most elemental and sublime.

Come to the first book club meeting to:

- * Discuss Another Country.
- * Sign up to be a book club convener. Pick a month, a book and a location for the discussion.
- * Meet neighbors. See what other Westerlee residents think about things that interest you, as revealed through the books that we read together.

The first meeting will be held on Thursday, June 17th, from 7:30 to 9:00 PM at 1201 Nuwood Drive, the home of Nancy Wagner. Light refreshments will be provided. Please phone Nancy @ 410-719-7510 if you're interested in attending. Or e-mail to nancyjean@aol.com.

MOVING INTO SPRING

Finally, winter is over and spring is here! Spring is a time when some of our neighbors will decide to make a change, whether it's to downsize, to reduce living expenses, or there is just a desire or need to make other changes to their living arrangements. If you are putting your home on the market, you should interview several realtors to compare how they will market your home and bring you the best price. Do not choose someone because you know them or they live nearby. After all, they will be working for you. Find out what they will do for you.

A lower price for a faster sale may not be to your benefit financially. The market is so hot right now that there is no reason to sacrifice the price, just to sell fast. Everything is selling fast. If you keep up with the articles in the paper, homes are selling in a matter of days (or even a week) in higher priced communities than ours. Why should the property values in our wonderful community be compromised?

The best advice I could give anyone considering selling a home is to have the home appraised by an appraiser. Appraisers use other resources, that most realtors do not use, for doing the price comparisons on homes. Having an appraisal is a good selling tool, because the buyer knows up front that the home is worth the asking price, and they know that it will help the mortgage process. Also, after you've sold your home, the appraisal fees can

be listed as an expense in selling your home on your income taxes. It will be the best money you could spend! An appraisal can also be beneficial in making sure your home is adequately insured.

Your home is probably your biggest asset. Therefore, you want to get the maximum out of it. To maintain property values, the selling prices of homes in Westerlee should be higher than they have been.

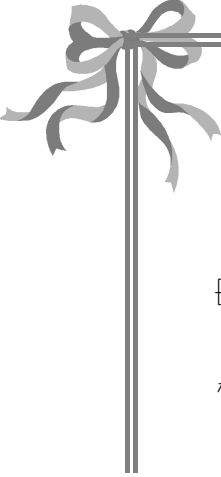
On a personal note, recently my homeowners insurance was update and increased to over \$100,000 more than the recent selling prices in Westerlee.

Insurance only covers the dwelling; it does not include the land. Think of what our homes are really worth, because market value should be more than insured value. Please, neighbors, if you're thinking of selling, take time to do your homework. Have your home appraised, and then find a realtor who will appreciate the value of our wonderful custom-built homes in our covenant controlled community.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy spring.

Sue Haines

Board of Directors --Property Sales Liaison



Treasure Houses

Partial and Full
Estate Liquidations

Buying and Selling Antiques
and Collectibles
Attic, Basement, Garage
Clean Outs

Ona Cavey
410-788-9533
ocavey@aol.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FROM THE ZONING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE...

Thank you to all the neighbors who have cooperated fully by complying with State and County Zoning ordinances, and Westerlee Community Association covenants applicable to our community. Please accept our sincere appreciation for your help in our efforts to maintain our beautiful neighborhood.

Unfortunately, we still have a few neighbors in violation, and the association continues to work with them toward full compliance.

On Wednesday, April 14, 2004, Marilyn and I attended the Regional Neighborhood meeting held at the Woodlawn Police Precinct of Baltimore County. The meeting was well attended by community representatives throughout the area.

It was very informative, and provided valuable information affecting all communities in the region, including Westerlee.

Captain Lisa Hannon gave an overview of what is happening throughout the area:

First of all, she asked that we not make ourselves targets of crime, e.g., exit from our cars only in well-lit areas.

★ She asked that we always be aware of our surroundings.

And, on the law enforcement side, she indicated that:

★ Burglaries are down by 44% from the same time last year;

★ Street robberies are up a little (13 more cases than last year);

★ Seat belt laws are being strictly enforced.

The meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., and are open to everyone: members and non-members alike. The next meeting will be May 12, 2004.

We also learned that Baltimore County now has a mediator to help resolve conflicts between neighbors. The trained mediator works with the parties involved to negotiate a solution acceptable to all parties.

The Baltimore County Police offer a training program (one evening a week for ten weeks) for citizens to get a better understanding and appreciation for the duties of our police officers.

The main speaker for the evening was from the Code Inspections and Enforcement Division, which has increased its force to 30 officers who are on the street every day, and which responds to complaints about code violations within 24 hours. They are

responsible for the following areas of enforcement:

residential zoning violations – unlicensed motor vehicles, open dump conditions, inoperable motor vehicles, etc.

building code violations – vacant buildings, permits, etc.

housing code violations – improperly stored trash, unsafe premises, etc.

Here's how to lodge a complaint with Code Enforcement:

1. In Person at:

Permits & Development GMT

County Office Building Room 119

111 West Chesapeake Avenue

Towson, Maryland 21204

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*Looking to Move? Upgrade?
Downsizing? Moving to a Retirement Community?*

Let me help you decide by providing:

Market Data—Free

Value Assessment of Your Home—Free

*I have lived in Westerlee for 40 years and am a full time realtor. No matter
where you decide to move, I can help you every step along the way.*

Bettye Gray

410-744-4100 (office)

401-744-1188 (home)

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage



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2. By letter to:

Timothy M. Kotroco, Director
Dept. of PDM Management
111 West Chesapeake Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

3. By Calling

410-887-3352 or 410-887-8099

4. By contacting your local elected official

5. Through your Community Association

6. By E-mail to pdmenforce@col.ba.md.us

7. By fax to 410-887-2824

We thank Shirley Smith, a director of the Association, for writing the preceding article, and for her untiring efforts to make Westerlee a more beautiful place to live.

The following article on Identity theft is reprinted with permission from the Westview Park newsletter. It is timely. It may be found on their website. There is a link to the Westview Park website on our website: <http://home.comcast.net~westerleenews>

IDENTITY THEFT ON THE RISE

Identity Theft is the fastest growing crime in America, and it could happen to you more easily than you might think. Here are some steps to take to keep from becoming a victim.

★ Don't leave mail in your mailbox. That red flag is a green light for criminals. Instead, deposit mail

in U.S. Postal Service collection boxes. Shred unwanted documents with personal information.

★ Review a copy of your credit report annually for accuracy. You may obtain a copy from any one or all three of the credit reporting agencies:

Equifax (800) 685-1111 Experian (888) 379-3742
TransUnion (800) 888-4213

★ Report lost or stolen credit cards to the issuer immediately.

★ Sign your new credit cards...before someone else does. OR you may wish to write "SEE ID" instead of your signature,

★ Memorize your Social Security number and passwords, and do NOT carry them around with you.

★ Never leave receipts at ATMs, gas pumps, etc.

★ Check expiration dates on credit cards and contact the issuer if you do not receive replacements before they expire. Also, make sure you are receiving your financial statements, bills, etc. on time.

★ Review your credit card and other financial statements for accuracy as soon as you receive them.

★ If you wish to apply for any new credit cards, contact the company by phone instead of sending completed applications through the mail.

If you believe you are the victim of Identity Theft, take action:

★ Contact one of the credit reporting agencies immediately to place a fraud alert on your file. That

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HACKLEY & ASSOCIATES

Nancy L. Hackley, President
Appraisal Services
MD, DE, VA



1023 Ingleside Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

Telephone: 410-719-1484
Fax: 410-719-0485
Mobile: 410-733-0288

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agency will notify the other two agencies automatically. Contact them by phone or on the web.

Equifax (800) 525-6285 -- www.equifax.com

Experian (888) 397-3742 -- www.experian.com

TransUnion (800) 680-7289 -- www.transunion.com

Report ID Theft by calling 877-IDTHEFT, or visit their website at www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

Counselors will help you resolve financial and other problems resulting from this crime.

★ Report crimes involving counterfeit, credit cards, or computer hacking to the U.S. Secret Service.

★ If the crime involved the U.S. Mail, report it to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service office nearest you.

★ Keep a record of all the names and phone numbers of people with whom you discuss your case, and of all reports and supporting documents. Visit one of the following websites if you would like more

information about ID Theft:

U.S. Secret Service -- www.secretservice.gov

U.S. Department of Justice --
www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fraud

U.S. Postal Inspection Service --
www.usps.com/postalinspectors

RECYCLING IN WESTERLEE

Please – place your recyclables and/or trash curbside at YOUR OWN property. It is UNFAIR to your neighbors to place them on their property. Since there is no limit as to how much can be put out, there isn't any reason to place your recyclables or trash on the property of others. Be considerate!

We have all recently received new recycling schedules from Baltimore County. Please read the brochure carefully and COMPLY WITH THE REGULATIONS!! Note that glass, cans and plastic jugs and bottles should be placed only in BLUE plastic bags (or in recycling bins). No other color, even white or clear, is acceptable or recyclable in the Baltimore County recycling program.

For more information, go to:

www.baltimorecountyonline.info/recycling

or call the Baltimore County customer service line if you have any questions (410-887-2000).

GREENSIDE UP LAWN SERVICE

FRED KIRK
2125 FERNGLLEN WAY
CATONSVILLE, MD 21228

410-744-6102 - HOME PH
443-794-5181 - CELL PH

CUT , TRIM AND EDGE, also SEEDING, FERTILIZING, MULCHING
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FREE ESTIMATES



“YOU GROW IT—I’LL MOW IT”