

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY NEWS



Westerlee: A Proud Covenant Controlled Community

www.westerleenews.com



Editor: John Moore

September 2013

President's Letter



Dear Neighbors,

Even in the early sixties when the last streetcars made their rounds in Baltimore, Westerlee residents discussed traffic on Cedar Circle. Back then there was no Woodbridge Valley yet, there was barely a Westview and Rolling Road was hardly more than a narrow country lane. The beltway was still incomplete and the segments around the Baltimore National Pike had only recently been opened.

Westerlee residents became downright combative when it was time to connect Nuwood Road from Route 40 to Woodbridge Valley as originally planned. Older residents recall how they sat in front of bulldozers to maintain the tranquility and serenity of Westerlee, conceived as a quiet enclave behind woods, not a place to drive through to get to other places. Nuwood never got connected, but the topic of traffic has been with us ever since.

Hardly a board meeting passes without complaints about cars racing down Cedar Circle blissfully ignoring the stop signs, about Russell Automotive employees testing repaired cars on our streets, about cut-through traffic avoiding the back ups at the Double T Diner by going through our community. Accidents are rare, although they happened. On an icy day two cars slid head-on into each other on the hill east of Fernglen Way, some years ago a juvenile on a dirt bike was injured when he darted into the path of an oncoming car at the Nuwood dead-end and one neighbor's dog was killed in front of their house. The most drastic incident may have been when a "loaded" patron headed home from the Loafers Lounge at US 40, drove down Dlong and straight into the house of a Westerlee board member, the falling brick wall barely missing the unsuspecting resident in his chair.

With Nuwood Road taken out as the connector, Chantilla via Dlong and the southern end of Nuwood became the connection for a good part of Woodbridge Valley. Our residents along the western part of Chantilla took matters into their own hands and petitioned traffic calming from Baltimore County. The County came, counted, measured and the community won an instant victory: Speed "humps" went up along Chantilla and a "speed table" was added at the intersection with Dlong.

Why not on Cedar Circle, too, asked board members then and requests were made to count and measure speeds. Two times the roadway couldn't muster the needed volume of cars or the needed speeds above the limit of 25mph to meet the County required thresholds.

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Klaus Philipsen

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This year, we finally got the green light from the County that we would qualify for traffic calming measures. Traffic calming tools include a variety of built features intended to slow cars, among them medians, traffic circles, bump-outs and speed humps. For our narrow Cedar Circle, speed humps seem to be the only realistic option. The county drew up a concept plan showing design and location of humps and tables. With it also came to light, that the County currently eliminates 3-way stop signs at T intersections because current law already requires that the ending street would yield to the one going through, without any signs. The County, always intent on saving money, will remove the stop signs since they are not supposed to be a traffic calming tool, only one to tell people who have the right of way. Speed tables that cover the entire intersection (like at Dlong) will be placed at the upper end of Fernglen and where Dlong ends at Cedar Circle. A hump will be placed at the lower end of Fernglen. Board members went around and collected signatures. 75% of all households along the street have to agree to the proposed measures, before they can be placed. At the time of this writing just a couple more signatures were needed to get us over the hump to get the humps.

So, we likely will have the humps. But as anybody can guess, they won't be a guarantee that people will behave responsibly. There will always be those who will prove to us with cut-off mufflers, racing, loud booming music or in any other way that pops into their minds that they really don't care about the rest of us. All of us who think that the world is going to hell in a hand basket should be reminded, though, that this behavior is as old as the world. As my report from the past shows, in Westerlee, too, it has been around for a long time. As long as all of us who do care about community will continue to be good and caring neighbors, we will be fine.

Klaus Philipsen, President Westerlee Community Inc.

EDITORIAL

Hello to all my new neighbors. I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself and my family... My wife Susan, our son Ian, and I moved in to our new home on Cedar Circle Drive at the end of March this year, and we couldn't be happier- both with our home and the Westerlee neighborhood! We've only been in Maryland for a little over two years, relocating here from Boise, Idaho when my wife was offered a position at Pandora Jewelry's Distribution Center in Columbia.

I have to admit to a certain amount of trepidation when she first asked me if I wanted to move to the East Coast, being West Coaster's all of our lives, but I can say that I have been won over by the friendly folks we've met- especially in Catonsville, and by the beauty of Maryland. We're hoping this is our last move until it's time to shuffle off this mortal coil.

I do have one request of you: if you have any words of wisdom, or humor, or stories about Westerlee or Catonsville- please send them to me. I'd like to continue the excellent work done by Bob Proper and make this newsletter something you look forward to every time it is delivered.

John Moore, Editor

How to Submit Material to Our Newsletter

PLEASE do not submit text in Adobe Acrobat .pdf format or in any other file format except .doc files. You may also include your article in an email if you prefer. All photos must be JPEG or PNG files. You can send the files as attachments to your email. Send to jlmoore3rd@verizon.net

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CELESTIAL SIGHTS

By Fred Hickok

Director, Benjamin Banneker Planetarium
CCBC Catonsville Campus

November 16, 17 - Leonids Meteor Shower.

The Leonids is an average shower, producing an average of up to 15 meteors per hour at its peak. The Leonids is produced by dust grains left behind by comet Tempel-Tuttle, which was discovered in 1865. The shower runs annually from November 6-30. It peaks this year on the night of the 16th and morning of the 17th. Unfortunately the glare from the full moon will block many of the meteors this year, but if you are patient you should still be able to catch quite a few good ones. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Leo, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

November 28 - Comet ISON Closest Approach to the Sun.

Newly discovered comet ISON will make its closest approach to the Sun on November 28. If the comet survives its encounter with the Sun, it could be one of the brightest comets in recent memory. Some astronomers estimate that it could even be bright enough to be seen during daylight hours. In August and September, the comet will begin to be visible in the morning sky in dark locations with telescopes. In October it will start to be visible to the naked eye and will continue to get brighter until November 28. If the comet survives, it will be visible in the early morning and early evening sky and could be nearly as bright as the full Moon.

December 13, 14 - Geminids Meteor Shower.

The Geminids are the king of the meteor showers. They are considered by many to be the best shower in the heavens, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. They are produced by debris left behind by an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon, which was discovered in 1982. The shower runs annually from December 7-17. It peaks this year on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th. The waxing gibbous moon will block out some of the meteors this year, but the Geminids are so bright and numerous that it should still be a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Gemini, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

Source: http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy_calendar_current.html

Free Planetarium Shows:

Saturday 10 a.m. CCBC Catonsville, Room LABB-003

October 26	Space Witch
November 9	Endless Horizons
December 7	Christmas Traveler

Heads of Westerlee Committees

Social Committee: Karen Straughn

Architectural Review Committee: Klaus Philipsen

Code Violations Committee: Klaus Philipsen

Block Captains Committee: Karen Straughn & Wanda Richardson

CY 2013 - Q2 Treasurer's Report

Period Beginning April 1, 2013 and Ending July 31, 2013

Beginning Balance: \$5175.71

Income:

Dues Received: \$3750.00

Other Income (Interest): \$0.19

Total Income: \$3750.19

Expenditures:

Newsletter: \$259.47

Office Supplies: \$135.90

Annual Meeting: \$40.56

Yard Sale: \$36.50

American Flags: \$93.50

Total Expenses: \$565.93

Ending Balance: \$8359.97

(Beginning Balance + Total Income - Total Expenditures)

AN OPEN LETTER TO MY NEIGHBORS

When I moved to Westerlee 13 years ago, I was ecstatic to find a quiet reprieve which allowed me let go of the stress of a long workday. My husband and I had an opportunity to live anywhere, but... Westerlee provided a bit of the country, in close proximity to the city. It was Westerlee that provided us with all the conveniences of rural America. We found Westerlee to be an area that offered and rendered a place in nature where I could witness nature's eternal cycle of birth, growth, death and rebirth. Westerlee was the place that was able to feed my body, mind, spirit and soul. It was a place where everything we previously borrowed in nature, could be given back. So...My goat is not to offend anyone with what I am about to say... but truth must be told. I believe we shame the devil when we tell the truth. It was with great pride that we moved from the "Village" that's Edmondson Village (to those that don't know) to Westerlee. The beautiful stone homes, the lush shade of wonderful mature trees, landscape and perfectly manicured lawns mesmerize me. I was in Awe.

So, to all those who work so hard to maintain the aesthetic beauty of our neighborhood, I say "Kudo's" and "Up High". I would however be remised, if I failed to address and point out the inconsideration I observe in some of our neighbors. In our zeal maintain our property values, some have become very cynical to what we do to others. Speeding through the neighborhood, placing recyclables out filled to brim, allowing paper and trash to blow on to other neighbor(s) lawn, mowing grass at 6:50AM on Saturday mornings and Power washing items all day long on Sundays. Our weekends are not our own anymore. All these acts show disrespect for each other, and cause resentment in our relationships. All of the above mentioned items, were issues I never experienced- even in Edmondson Village. I therefore felt a compelling need to address all the above. I am therefore requesting and proposing that we open a dialogue on how we can become "better" neighbors.

Ms. Hardy Avens

Westerlee Community Association, Inc.

July 18, 2013

The board meeting was called to order at 6:53 p.m.

Present were officers Klaus Philipsen (President), Wanda Richardson (Vice President), and Fred Hickok (Secretary) and board members Bob Hoffman, Joe Reid, Chuck Sprague and Karen Straughn. Missing were Chris Goatee (Treasurer) and board members Joan Goudy and Fred Kirk.

Web Site: Karen reported that the material is ready for migrating to the new site.

Code Enforcement: Klaus reported that the lawn at the house on the corner of Rolling Road has been mowed. He said that the torn up sidewalk on Rolling Road has been reported to the County. He noted that the Russel parking lot has been paved and that BGE has been trimming limbs and attaching surge deflectors.

Social: Wanda reported that 7 households participated in the yard sale. Karen said that she will send out plans for the community party. Klaus said that he will look into reserving dumpsters for sometime in October or November.

Traffic: Klaus stated that the County has generally been removing stop signs at T stops and would like to do that at the intersections of Cedar Circle Drive with Dlong and lower Fernglan. There would also be 5 speed humps along Cedar Circle and a speed table at the Cedar Circle/Dlong intersection. The board members agreed that another speed table should be installed at the intersection of Cedar Circle and upper Fernglan with a removal of the stop signs there. Klaus said that we need written approval of 75% of the Cedar Circle Drive residents and approval of residents at the locations of the speed humps and tables. Karen suggested that board members canvass the residents for signatures.

Newsletter: Karen said that Bob Propper has offered to help the next editor. Karen said that Bob has sent advertising material to Chris. Klaus noted that the Microsoft program is fairly simple to use. Fred remarked that the new resident John Moore had talked with Bob at the annual meeting about his experience with newsletters. Klaus said that he would contact John but could do the September one himself. Joe offered to help Klaus.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Hickok

Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m. October 17 at Chuck's house.

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