

# The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association

P. O. BOX 204      RIDERWOOD, MARYLAND 21139      410-377-4700

With spring right around the corner, we're all starting to get outside and move about our community more and more. Which leads to a reminder of several happenings the Association is undertaking.

Second Annual "Dumpster Day" is tentatively scheduled for April 29. A huge success last year, this year we must restrict it to RRLRAIA members due to limited Dumpster availability. Send your check now or be sure to bring your card and check with you.

Lake Roland and surrounds "Cleanup" on Saturday, April 15. An opportunity to be environmentally responsible and, at the same time, clean up our "backyard". We're looking for volunteers not only for the lake, but also to police roads and streets. Think about organizing your block and spend an hour or two. And, this is a GREAT opportunity for the high school kids to accumulate those "community service" hours needed for graduation. Remind them we use a "generous" reporting system!

Finally, the most important effort of the year—our Community Plan for inclusion in the County Master Plan. One of the initial efforts you have already been exposed to—the community survey. You may request a copy of the 16-page summary by calling our office, but a couple of highlights based on a response of almost 300 questionnaires:

"What do we love about the community?" Its rural beauty, a quiet and safe environment and the convenience of its location. The plan will be focusing on preserving this environment.

"What annoys us most?" Ever-growing traffic volume coupled with excessive speed. Lack of sidewalks and trails. Continuing commercial encroachment.

Again, the plan will look for creative solutions to each issue. Matter of fact, there will be a meeting on March 21st with County and State officials to specifically voice concern regarding the traffic issue. Your presence will only make our voice louder!

You will also have an opportunity to review the progress of the plan at the *Community Expo* planned for April 13, 14 and 15.

Read all about these activities in detail throughout this issue of the newsletter.

Barry Truax, President

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## MTA Schedules Meeting to Discuss Double Tracking

A Public Information Workshop sponsored by the MTA will be held:

**Wednesday, April 12, 2000  
6:30 p.m.**

**Ruxton Center  
6916 N. Charles Street (6/10 miles south of 695)  
Multi-purpose Room**

At this meeting, the MTA will display plans and discuss the proposal to double track the existing single track of the light rail from Warren Road to North Avenue. A similar meeting is being planned for the Mt. Washington area, however, it has not yet been scheduled. If you have any questions or need additional information, please call Helen German at 410-728-2900. Ms. German is with the firm of Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP, consultants to the MTA.

<b>Calendar of Events</b> (details inside)	
•	March 21 Traffic Meeting
•	April 12 MTA Double Tracking Public Information Workshop
•	April 13, 14, 15 <i>Community Expo</i>
•	April 15 Lake Roland Cleanup
•	April 29 Dumpster Day (tentative date)
•	May 23 RRLRAIA Annual Meeting

## New Feature: Looking Back

Beginning with this issue, "Looking Back", a new feature focusing on local history, has been added and hopefully will become a permanent feature of the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association newsletter.

Written by Joseph M. Coale, III, RRLRAIA board member and well-known historian, "Looking Back" will take a look at the history, events, and people who through the years have shaped and contributed to the development of our community.

## The Lake That Almost Wasn't

By the 1830's and 40's Baltimore's growth was dramatic and established sources for supplying water were becoming inadequate to meet its needs. In 1853 the State Legislature authorized the Mayor and City Council to purchase all necessary land and water rights so as to introduce a permanent, long-term source of supply into the city. After the consideration of many surveys, plans, and estimates, the choice of sites rested on the Jones Falls valley or the longer distanced Gunpowder River. T. E. Sickels, a highly respected civil engineer, was contracted to survey both options and make a recommendation to the Mayor. A year of study followed during which a highly complicated mathematical formula ( $Q = 5.3485 \times \text{coeff.}651H \times VH + .03495W^2$ ) was used to measure the water flows of both streams. The Jones Falls was measured where the light rail now crosses the lake using a flume 45 feet in length and 25 in width through which all the water passed and was measured twice a day for the summer. The results showed an average flow of 8,297,238 gallons during a 24-hour period against a projected need of 13,000,000 gallons that the city would require by 1880. Thus in his 1854 report, Sickels stated:

*No practical method of securing this amount of storage could be seen, having reference to security and reasonable cost and... regarding this stream as therefore wholly inadequate to furnish an abundant supply of water to the city of Baltimore, it was deemed unnecessary to present estimates of the cost of introduction.*

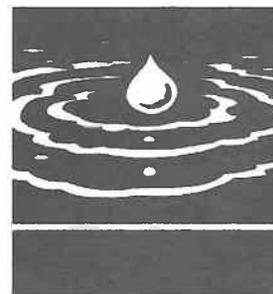
Mr. Sickels went on to recommend that the cost of procuring seventy millions of gallons of water from the Great Falls of the Gunpowder as the best plan and would satisfy the city's needs for the indefinite future. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on how you look at it, Mr. Sickels' recommendation was dismissed as a little too visionary and expensive for

the City to embrace at one time as the cost was considerably more than the Jones Falls option which was then undertaken. Our community has benefited greatly as a result. However, soon after Lake Roland was completed, a Gunpowder River supply was authorized in 1874. In the meantime, a 36-inch pipe was laid for 3-1/2 miles between Meredith's Ford on the Gunpowder and Roland Run at Lutherville to augment Lake Roland's supply and is shown on the Hopkins' map of 1876 so it would be adequate until the new source was available. How's that for compromise?

The results showed an average flow of 8,297,238 gallons during a 24-hour period against a projected need of 13,000,000 gallons that the city would require by 1880.

The Lake Roland project was a short-term solution to a long-term challenge the City faced. But logic and confidence in the future prevailed and the Gunpowder system put in place just a few years later has served us well for well over a century. Wisdom delayed, is wisdom none the less.

J. M. Coale 3/3/00



## Community Plan Theme Teams

The theme team volunteers and responsible areas to date are as follows:

► **Outreach (Public Relations)** is facilitated by Barry Truax who is also president of RRLRAIA. Outreach will insure that the community knows about this planning process and has multi-opportunities to participate and/or comment on the plan as it develops. Members include: Nancy Wilson, Janet Reynolds.

► **Development Control** is headed by Skip Steuart and will identify development threats and strategies to control or prevent undesirable development. Members include: Maris Baker, Skip Miller, Anne Dunne, Rick Huether, Sarah Lord, Fran Anderson.

► **Historic, Architectural, & Landscape Preservation** under Joe Coale will identify historic resources and develop and/or enhance strategies for preserving those resources. Members include: Janet Reynolds, Betsey Jiranek, Carolyn Boykin, Francis Hawks.

► **Traffic and Light Rail** facilitated by John Clemson will study traffic problems and trends and make recommendations to improve traffic and pedestrian safety. Also, the impact of the proposed light rail double tracking. Members include Mike Regan, Steve Showers, Nelson Wareheim, Jr., Liz Bowie, Chuck Connolly, Nancy Horst, Fred Rasmussen, Jane Buxton Brown, Evan A. Chriss, Tom George, Dick Watts, Louise Hildreth, Bill Mangles.

► **Open Space & Environmental Protection** led by George Grose will map existing open space and protect natural resources. This team will also explore the possibilities for developing trails in those open spaces and along the major community roads to enhance pedestrian safety. Members include: Paul Ganzenmuller, Sandy Hargrave, Robert Macht, Marsha Ramsay, Judy Frye Jones.

► **Community Enhancement** led by Sophie Gerard will consider what features are lacking and propose strategies for bringing those features into the community. Members include: Sheila Childs, Kim Coale, Chrissy Diffenderffer, Elaine Foard, Ann Muhvich, Tate Shower, Ande Williams.



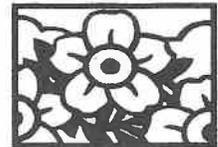
## Traffic Meeting Scheduled

Calls to our office and responses to our Community Plan survey confirm that traffic--congestion and speeding--is a top concern of our residents. Therefore, we have scheduled a meeting where you can communicate your concerns directly to county and state officials. On Tuesday, March 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Councilman Wayne Skinner along with representatives from the State Highway Administration and Baltimore County's Traffic Engineering and Police (speed enforcement) Departments will be on hand to hear--and respond to--these problems.

In addition, Baltimore County traffic engineers have studied the intersection at Joppa and Thornton Roads and will present their findings at this at this meeting.

For planning purposes it would be helpful to know approximately how many people will attend this meeting. Therefore, a call (410-377-4700) or an e-mail (ruxrider@bcpl.net) would be appreciated.

## Towson Garden Day



The 14th annual Towson Garden Day will be held on Thursday, April 27, 2000 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Towson Courthouse Fountain Plaza and West Pennsylvania and Baltimore Avenues in Towson. This free event is sponsored by the Towson Development Corporation. Rain date is Friday, April 28.

The Flower Mart will feature 100 exhibitors or vendors of flowers, plants, crafts, and foods. The azalea, Towson's official flower, will be the focus of the festival.

Tours of the Courthouse gardens and of Towson's Secret Garden will highlight the day. The walled Secret Garden is available for viewing by the public only on Towson Garden Day.

Other special features will be free garden seeds, free tree seedlings from Tree-Mendous Maryland, the raffling of garden books, and booths offering information on gardening topics.

## Community Planning Committee Moves Forward

In November, the Board of Directors of RRLRAIA approved the development of the community plan concept and authorized the retention of a professional planner to guide us in the ten-month-long process. After one snow delay, the initial RRLRAIA community planning committee (CPC) meeting got underway on Thursday evening, January 27, 2000, when 60 of your most highly motivated and dedicated fellow citizens met at the Church of the Good Shepherd.

We were also pleased to have several important guests and allies who furnished the group with insight on the process about to be undertaken. Pat Keller, Director, Baltimore County Office of Planning spoke about what a community plan is and how county government is really dependent on this type of grass roots planning process as a way of determining citizen priorities. Councilman Wayne Skinner emphasized the importance of a community plan and pledged his support. Neville Jacobs of the East Pikesville-Greenspring Association spoke about his association's recent experience in completing and submitting their plan to the Council for approval and inclusion in the County Master Plan. These folks are good allies to have and we greatly appreciate their interest and support. The planner retained by your association, Chris Batten and his associate Jim Paddock, then discussed the specifics of our community plan process and the timetable for completion and submission.

Our plan will consist of six areas of study or themes that include outreach, development control, historic preservation, traffic and light rail, open space and environmental protection, and community enhancement. Each volunteer made their choice as to the theme they wished to work on. These six groups each received a suggested work outline from the consultants, had a short meeting and selected a theme leader who will call meetings as required. The focus of the community plan will be how best to save our existing assets, how best to add to or improve on our assets, and how best to prevent them from deterioration (Save-Add-Prevent or SAP). It will also be the intent for the RRLRAIA plan to interface to the degree possible with the

Baltimore County Master Plan recently adopted by the County Council.

Two additional work meetings of the CPC were held on Tuesday, February 22, and Thursday, March 16. The theme teams reported on their initial meetings and the progress they had made on their topic areas. The consultants kept the spirited discussions focused. These work meetings are scheduled primarily for the theme team leaders, and members of their team if they wish to attend, to report on their progress and to coordinate with each other under the guidance of the consultants. Maps of all types were shown which will be a key resource tool in developing the community plan and its recommendations.

If all goes according to schedule and the committee members do the homework assignments punctually, the plan should be ready for review by the County Planning Department in the fall. Following their comment, the plan will be submitted to the County Council for approval and inclusion in the county Master Plan 2010.

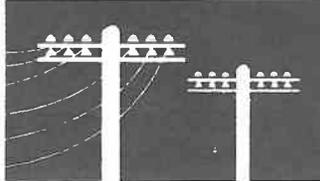


Be sure to attend the *Community Expo*—an open house which will be held at the Church from April 13—15 to allow for citizen input, review, questions and discussion with the planners and members of the CPC. As an added incentive, on Saturday, April 15, you can receive a customized map showing your property. It is hoped that all residents, business and property owners will take part in this process and attend the expedition whenever most convenient. While this process is underway, please feel free to contact any of the theme leaders directly with suggestions or inquiries. Written comments to the association office are of course welcome and will be forwarded as appropriate.

Please don't despair if you missed the first meetings but would still like to participate. If you have interest or special knowledge in an area covered by one of the theme topics, please call or e-mail the volunteer coordinator Sophie Gerard (410-296-1063 or Sgerard2@aol.com).

## BGE Tree Trimming To Begin

Riderwood, Ruxton, and Lake Roland area residents may begin seeing Penn Line Service, Inc. crews trimming trees in the neighborhood soon as BGE begins taking down limbs it considers dangerous to people and equipment. The electric company hopes to reduce the number of power outages in the area as a result.



trees are a safe enough distance away from the lines. While acknowledging that the end result may not be "aesthetically pleasing," the company said its goal is to keep the tree health while removing the limbs and branches that get in the way of the tree. The branches will be trimmed far enough back to last three years.

Last year there were 48 tree related power interruptions which totaled 15,617 hours in RRLRAIA communities, a number BGE hopes to cut in half after the trimming is done.

The company will also trim trees it believes might allow children to get too close to hazardous lines.

BGE reported to the association board that it will try to make the best possible pruning cuts while it still making sure the

Anyone with questions about the trimming may call Penn Line Service Supervisor Steve Roebuck at 410-281-0046.

## Membership Renewal

If you have mailed your 2000 dues, thank you. If you have not, a card and return envelope are included with this newsletter. Please verify the information printed on the card—this is how you will be listed in the 2000 Membership Directory which will be mailed shortly after the May Annual Meeting.

issues that may affect our neighborhoods. In addition, you will receive our membership directory and our newsletter which will keep you up to date on community events such as the upcoming Dumpster Day for RRLRAIA members, our community plan progress, and zoning/development issues. This is a particularly important year to be a member of RRLRAIA.

It is our strong dues paying membership which enable us to maintain an office and retain the services of an executive director who monitors zoning, development, and legislative

**"This is a particularly important year to be a member of RRLRAIA."**

## Litter



Few things detract more from a community than streets lined with litter. Please take some time to check the perimeter of your property for papers and debris. When you take a walk, consider taking a plastic bag to fill with litter you find along the way. Although it is not fair that you are asked to pick up other people's trash, unfortunately this has become a fact of life in our hurried, fast food world. Thank you.

## Mailbox Vandalism

We receive calls from time to time about mailboxes being destroyed by vandals. To assess how much of a problem this is in our area, we would appreciate your calling our office (410-377-4700) if this has happened to your mailbox within the past year or if it happens in the future. It is also important that you file a police report. Please call 911 to report this—or any other vandalism.



**The Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland  
Area Improvement Association, Inc.**

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**Community Expo  
April 13, 14, 15**

## Lake Roland Cleanup — Saturday, April 15 — 9 a.m. to noon

For the past two years, the stars of the annual Lake Roland Clean-Up have been Lake-loving neighbors, upper classmen from St. Paul's School, and middle schoolers from Friends, Gilman, St. Paul's School for Girls, and others. Usually we schedule the soggy Clean-Up for the first weekend in May when the water is warm enough to up-end in.

But the legendary Dr. Michael Beer (of the Jones Falls Watershed campaign) is leading the standard this year, so we are joining his crusade **April 15th**, celebrating Earth Day's 30th anniversary.

This Association hereby issues a formal invitation to all environmentally active Ruxton-Riderwooders: we'd love to have you join us, to pull the litter out of the Lake and make her shimmer!

Yes, this is great family fun! You bet, this counts as community service.

Call Sarah Lord at 410-828-4355 (fax 410-828-4740) for Lake Clean-up info.

- Meet at the dam at 9:00 am Saturday, April 15. (Press & media likely will be on hand.)
- Wear rubber wading boots or fishermen's waders. (The better the job you do, the wetter you get.)
- Wear gloves to help your hands stay warm in the water.
- Wear layers of warm clothes and rain gear if the weather warrants.
- Bring a rake.
- Bring a knapsack with dry clothes and some snacks.
- We will walk & paddle out to various Lake-wide locations where we know litter eddies up.
- Trash bags and treats will be provided by various sponsors.
- There will be a dumpster near the dam, which Lake yuck will be lugged to.

Lake Roland and Robert E. Lee Park thank you.