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# Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association Community News

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Fall 1997

## A Note from the President

Your Board has been busy addressing many topics reported on in this issue of the newsletter. Our goal is to continue publishing the newsletter in a timely fashion. To that end you are encouraged to contribute with articles, letters, etc. Remember, YOU are part of the community and your views and comments are important.

One specific area where you can help is calling the Association office (410-377-4700) to inform us of new families in your neighborhood. We will, in turn, formally welcome them and invite them to join the Association. We all get so busy that we sometimes forget to make new families feel at home.

We look forward to seeing you and your family at the holiday bon fire!

Barry Truax

Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland  
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Riderwood, MD 21139  
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## Speeding in our Neighborhoods

You are probably aware that speeding cars are a problem in our area. In response to complaints from residents, we asked Baltimore County to conduct a speeding survey. This survey revealed that on one particular road, 87% of the cars were travelling at 37 mph or more in a 25 mph zone.

If you feel speeding is a problem on your street, please call our office and we will ask that the speed limit be enforced.

## Annual Bon Fire

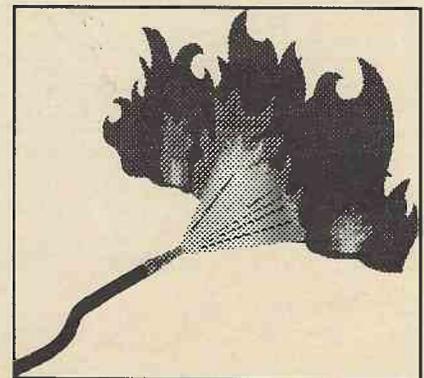
Bring your children, friends, and neighbors to the Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association's annual Yuletide Bon Fire which will light up the skies on December 21.

The festivities begin at 4 p.m. at the former rugby field off Club Road and will continue until whenever.

Dress warmly. Boots and rubbers highly recommended. Flashlights are also useful.

Warm cider, cookies and holiday cheer will be available in abundance.

Come prepared to "troll the ancient Yuletide carol," see old friends and meet new ones.



## Baltimore County Issues

### Pending Zoning Legislation

**Home-based offices** are increasing dramatically in number. Since Baltimore County's current zoning provisions affecting those who work at home do not take into account societal changes with regard to how people work today and how they are likely to work in the future, Councilmen Douglas Riley and Bryan McIntire asked the Planning Board to make recommendations for zoning amendments. Many individuals in neighborhoods throughout the County are concerned about the possible affect of home occupations in neighborhoods.

The home occupation legislation now on the books *does* need improvement. But our view, shared by other neighborhood associations which have become involved, is that Baltimore County homeowners need to be sure that the web of zoning regulations promotes security and residential integrity. It is our contention that the County must protect its neighborhoods as quiet havens—apart from business traffic. We are hard at work to see this happen.

*Contact us with your ideas.*

Another concern is the **Assisted Living Facilities** legislation poised to become law. The County Council will act soon on wording sent up from the County planners to allow as many as 15 people to be bedded in private homes on major streets like Charles and Falls. On smaller streets, 10 patients would be permitted. Many community associations feel these numbers are too high and that houses converted for such use could be a headache for neighboring homeowners unless the patient numbers are reduced. Along with other neighborhood associations, we are expressing our concerns to our elected officials and County planners.

### New Stricter Sign Laws

While we would like to summarize Baltimore County's new sign regulations—we don't have the space! But if you suspect a sign in your area is in violation, please give Peggy a call. We have all 55 pages available at the RRLRAIA office.

### Signs on Poles

Our office has received complaints about the unsightly signs placed on utilities poles. It is illegal to place signs in a right-of-way. If you see these signs in your area, please call our office and we will have them removed.

### Master Plan

Every ten years Baltimore County draws up its Master Plan, which amounts to a philosophical map to guide County development. We need your help as we draw up ideas for inclusion in the 2010 Master Plan. Preservation of historic properties, which are the County's character and texture, should be encouraged. Source water, which is the County's (and the City's) lifeblood, deserves stringent protection. The governor's proposed "smart growth" (which urges renewal and infill development in built-up areas so that open space is not bulldozed so rapaciously) has much merit. But this policy will increase pressure in urban areas for the granting of variances and exceptions to zoning regulations. These are granted too freely *now*. Preservation of the Robert E. Lee Park and Lake Roland should be assured. Should the County act to preserve the Park? Contact us with your ideas.

# Development Updates

## Woodvale School Site

Manor Care has contracted with Baltimore County to purchase the former Woodvale School located across from the Riderwood post office. Representatives from Manor Care met with our Board and interested neighbors in July to discuss their plans. The Board and several residents had concerns with their proposed plan. RRLRAIA communicated these concerns to Baltimore County. Subsequently, Manor Care's proposed facility was not approved by the County.

Manor Care has revised their plan and would like to meet with us again. If you would like to be notified when this meeting is scheduled, or if you have any comments you would like us to have addressed, please call our office.

## Bellona/Charles Proposed Assisted Living Facility

As we reported in our last newsletter, RRLRAIA has joined in an appeal with Murray Hill Association and several individuals from Rodgers Forge and Armagh Village to oppose the proposed assisted living facility at Bellona Avenue and Charles Street. Our concerns include traffic, storm water, and changing the residential character of the neighborhood.

The hearing will be scheduled after the first of the year. If you would like additional information about this project or have concerns you would like to express, please call our office.

## Addition Planned for Ruxton Center

Plans have been submitted for a new wing at the Ruxton Center. When completed, the children from Ridge School will be moved to this location. There will then be a total of 160 children at the Ruxton Center. Since the County has not yet received the financing for this project, it will not be completed for a couple of years.

Baltimore County school officials have offered to meet with interested residents to answer any questions. If you would like us to schedule such a meeting, please call our office.

## Newsletter

To keep RRLRAIA members up to date on issues of interest to our community, our goal is to publish this newsletter four times a year. We encourage you to contribute articles, suggestions, and ideas for topics you would like to see covered. Please include your name and telephone number with articles in case we need to contact you.

## Crime

While crime is not a major problem in our area, it is a concern of everyone. If you notice *any* suspicious person or activity, please call 911. The Baltimore County Police Department encourages and depends on calls from residents to assist them.

Please let us know, too. One resident called and told us of a suspicious person she saw in her driveway the previous day. We made a record of this. The following week, we noticed in the newspaper that three burglaries had occurred in her neighborhood within days of her seeing this person. We called this to the attention of the Police Department.

## A Community Thank You and a Job Well Done to

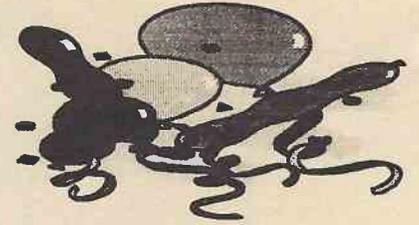
Mr. Tom Melito's fourth grade class at Riderwood Elementary School. This enterprising group focused a recent science project on environmental issues. Learning about possible funds available through The Chesapeake Bay Trust, the class researched grant writing, wrote and edited the grant, and was awarded \$300.

The money was used for four projects. Most apparent was the purchase of 10 native trees. On October 3, the fourth grade class, with a few parent volunteers, dug the holes, planted the trees, and spread the mulch. Seven of the trees are along Essex Farm Road and three are on Thornton near the new "Thornleigh" sign.

The other projects were:

- Purchasing gloves and bags to collect trash along Roland Run Stream. The class picked up over 55 pounds.
- Purchasing a water testing kit and testing the stream water. The class learned that the water has a healthy PH of 7. They found a good variety of insect life in and around the stream; another sign of a healthy stream.
- Purchasing stencils and paints for marking "Chesapeake Bay: Do Not Dump" on storm drains.

In the Spring, they plan to acquire seedlings to help reforest the school grounds and some other areas near the Essex Farm Road.



### Balloons

Balloons are so festive; we use them to celebrate birthday parties or to call attention to an open house. But, did you know that many balloons go up into our atmosphere, deflate, and end up in our bays, lakes, and streams where they are consumed by sea creatures?

If you do use balloons to celebrate an occasion, please make sure to retrieve them after the event, pop them, and put them in the trash can.

### Ruxton-Riderwood-Lake Roland Area Improvement Association

P. O. Box 204  
Riderwood, MD 21139

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#### *Inside This Issue*

*Annual Bon Fire Information  
Community Updates*

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