

The Riverdale Park *Town Crier*

Official Newsletter, Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland

April 2008

Volume 37, Issue 3

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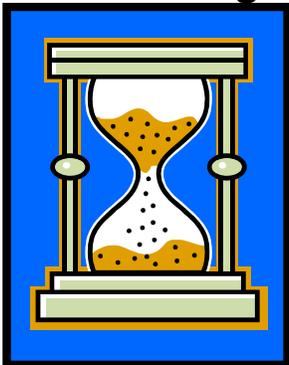
DON'T FORGET!

Income Tax

Deadline

**Tuesday, April 15,
2008,**

12:00 midnight



Riverdale Park Arts Council Prepares for ArtsFest 2008



Artists Needed!

The Riverdale Park Arts Council (RPAC) is moving forward in preparation for its' May 4th ArtsFest to be held at Town Center from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Riversdale Mansion will hold a Children's Day the same date (May 4, 2008) from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. RPAC and Riversdale Mansion are coordinating the two events and transportation will be available between the two events. In order to facilitate attendance at both events, Prince George's Councilman Eric Olson has generously provided support for a shuttle bus that will transport the public and artists from the ERCO parking lot (where the public is encouraged to park), to the ArtsFest, to Riversdale, and back to the ERCO parking lot.

The RPAC is calling on all Riverdale Park artists to register for ArtsFest 2008 and will consider all forms of art including: painting; sculpture; quilting; metal-work; plant art such as bonsai; weaving; etc. The RPAC's mission is to develop a love and appreciation of all art among residents in Riverdale Park. ArtsFest 2008 will be a non-juried festival that is open to all artists in Riverdale Park and other vicinities who want to participate, and is free and open to the public. It will feature artists showing and selling their wares, live music and stage performances, food, and hands on experience for children and adults. Contact Marc Molino mmolino54@hotmail.com or Emily Fanning at ourdollmom@aol.com to register to show your art.

The RPAC elected its first Board of Directors and officers of the organization, is in the process of developing By-Laws, and in establishing itself as a 501 C3 (a non-profit association). The following officers were elected at a recent meeting: Emily Fanning, President; Marc Molino, Vice President; Dwight Holmes, Treasurer; and, Marita Novicky, Secretary.

A recent fund-raising effort is successfully eliciting contributions from a broad section of the business and charitable community. RPAC members have been busy building display boards to be used in the Street Art Gallery that will be displayed in Douglas Jemal's storefront windows in Town Center. Numerous exciting art and art activities will be featured at the ArtsFest including fun and exciting activities for children. Michelle Burns is busy creating paper-mache piñatas for children which children will be able to decorate at the ArtsFest. Watch for more information about the 1st Annual RPAC ArtsFest. And, if you would like to be involved, contact Emily at ourdollmom@aol.com. Don't miss this opportunity to become involved!



Council Actions

By Waverly Politt

Actions from Legislative Meeting, March 3, 2008

1. **Approved W/ Corrections** – Minutes for regular legislative meeting February 4, 2008.
2. **Approved-** Permit for 6ft. fence located on 4800 Sheridan Street. (Ward 2).
3. **Approved-** Funds from CDBG, Economic Development Committee. Request for Code Enforcement resources focused in the Kenilworth area.
4. **Approved-** Carnival permit to be sponsored by Riverdale Lions Club held from Wednesday, April 2, 2008 thru Sunday, April 13, 2008.
5. **Approved-** Creation of temporary advisory committee not to exceed 1 year to advise town on creation of RFP to implement pilot project to utilize native plants in one or more town owned space, and to advise town on review of proposals.
6. **Approved-** Request for a grant application from the State of Maryland safe routes to school program for a traffic study.
7. **Introduced under new business-** Resolution 2008- OR-01 Organizational and Supervisory Responsibility for Code Enforcement Activities.
8. **Introduced under new business-** Resolution 2008-R- 04 Liquor Store applications and other matters.

Code Corner

By Colleen Ferguson

Building Code, Chapter 15, Permit Applications

Every applicant for a building permit from the town shall make application therefore to the town, in writing, upon forms to be furnished by the town, accompanied by a duplicate copy of the specifications and of plans drawn to scale with sufficient clarity and detail dimensions as to show the nature and character of work to be performed which has been approved by the Building Inspector of Prince George's County, together with the fee for the issuance of the permit as herein provided. The town may waive the requirement for filing plans if the work involved is of minor nature.

Other Town Codes to remember:

Proper Vessel or Container must be used for Garbage pickup --Town Code Chapter 36

Maintain grass & weeds to a height of 10 inches or less--Town Code Chapter 68

Have all vehicles properly registered -- Town Code Chapter 64

Trim all/any hedges that might be hanging over the sidewalks -- Town Code Chapter 66

Obtain a License for Single Family Rental Property -- Town Code Chapter 55
Commercial Activity- public garage, automobile repair shop, machine shop in a residence is unlawful -- Town Code Chapter 50-4

Compliance is the ultimate goal of the Code Enforcement Department. If you have any questions, comments or concerns please call: 301-927-6381, 240-508-8460 or email: coderiverdalepk@comcast.net

Código de Construcción, Capitulo 15, Aplicaciones para Permiso de Construcción

Todos los aplicantes para un permiso de construcción del pueblo deberán

Continuad on page 9

Town of Riverdale Park

www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us

Town Hall

5008 Queensbury Road
Riverdale Park, MD 20737
301-927-6381, Hablamos Espanol
RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net

Mayor Vernon Archer, 240-832-2257
varcher@gmail.com

Council Members

Ward 1–Alice Ewen-Walker,
Chair, Econ Development, 301-379-5303
alice@ewenwalker.com

Ward 2 – Kate Sharpe
Chair, Finance Committee, 301-779-2169
katherinesharpe@yahoo.com

Ward 3 - David Lingua
Chair, Public Works, 301-779-3849
djlingua@gmail.com

Ward 4 - Christopher Henry
Chair, Public Safety, 301-910-9855
chenry3240@comcast.net

Ward 5 - Timothy Kimbrough
Chair, Leg Committee, 301-864-1997
timkim@rcn.com

Ward 6 - Keelah Allen-Smith
Chair, Community Affairs, 240-751-6688,
Keelahd@yahoo.com.

Patrick J. Prangley, Town Administrator
riverdaleparkmd@comcast.net

Penelope Mendoza, Deputy Town
Administrator, 301-209-1505

Public Works 301-864-1803

VACANT Public Works Director

John Benjamin, Acting Director

Code Enforcement 301-927-6381

CodeRiverdalePk@comcast.net

Colleen M. Ferguson

Police Department 301-927-4343

RivPD@comcast.net

Teresa Chambers Chief of Police

Fire Department Emergency 911

Information 301-927-0356

Vincent Harrison, Chief,

info@riverdalevfd.com, www.riverdalevfd.com

It is the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park, pursuant to the provision of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, to prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in any aspect of employment within the government.

It is also the policy of the Town of Riverdale Park to disallow discrimination in fair housing based on race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disabilities, and/or age.

Some materials contained in *The Town Crier* represent the opinion of the authors and does not necessarily represent the view of the Town of Riverdale Park.

Submission deadline: 15th of each month.

Please submit all copy to editor
rptowncrier@comcast.net



Riverdale Park Police Department Report

The Town of Riverdale Park Signs on with CrimeReports.com to Share Neighborhood Crime Information with Residents

On March 19, 2008, Mayor Vernon Archer and Riverdale Park Police Chief Teresa Chambers announced a new partnership with Public Engines, a software development company, to provide neighborhood crime incident information via the Internet.

Under the terms of the partnership, *CrimeReports.com*, a Public Engines service, will make it possible for the Riverdale Park Police Department to publish local crime incident information (update daily) to the Internet in near real-time, making raw crime data easily accessible and user-friendly for the community.

CrimeReports.com is free to members of the public and allows users to receive alerts automatically via email if a crime occurs in their immediate neighborhood. It also allows people to view reported crime activity on an easy-to-use map for any location within each partner agency's boundaries.

Mayor Archer said, during the press conference, "This beneficial service is a tangible example of our commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of open government, and we are pleased to be the first municipal government in the State of Maryland to make use of this valuable crime fighting tool. It will be a key component in our goal of keeping Riverdale Park safe, clean, and beautiful."

Riverdale Park's Town Administrator, Pat Prangley, echoed Mayor Archer's enthusiasm: "This is another great management tool that we can use to fight crime. By identifying areas where crime is occurring, we can take affirmative crime prevention steps."

"The ability to track crime patterns and almost instantaneously share this information is an important step in engaging the community in helping us prevent and abate crime and improve the quality of life throughout the Town of Riverdale Park," said Teresa Chambers, Riverdale Park's Chief of Police.

The basic information that *CrimeReports.com* provides is:

- Type of incident.
- Date and time of incident.
- Hundred block and street of incident.
- Other pertinent information as deemed necessary by the reporting law enforcement agency.

"We are pleased to be working with Chief Chambers and the Town of Riverdale Park to help open dialogue

between the police and the public," said Greg Whisenant, President and CEO of Public Engines. "The Mayor and Chief Chambers are demonstrating a level of commitment to the public that goes far beyond most cities and towns" he said. "It's a valuable service to the public, and helps engage members of the community in a whole new way."

A direct link to *CrimeReports.com* will be available on the new website for the Town of Riverdale Park, which will be launched soon, or the service can be accessed at www.CrimeReports.com. Additional information regarding *CrimeReports.com* is available under a "Frequently Asked Questions" link at Crime Reports web site www.crimereports.com

About the Town of Riverdale Park

Incorporated in 1920, the Town of Riverdale Park sits just outside of Washington, D.C. The small-town atmosphere of Riverdale Park makes it an ideal town in which to live and work. Its full-service Police Department is committed to providing top-notch police service while maintaining respect for individual rights and respect for human dignity.

About Public Engines

Public Engines is helping government agencies manage the sharing of data directly with local communities. Through its first product, *CrimeReports.com*, Public Engines provides law-enforcement agencies with an affordable and easy-to-use web-based service for sharing crime data with the public in near real-time. Community members can then access this information for free, empowering them to make informed decisions to help improve the safety of their families, friends, property, and the community at large.

For more information, visit www.PublicEngines.com or www.CrimeReports.com.

Mark Your Calendars for a Walking Town Meeting With Councilman Eric Olson

Please join Prince George's County Councilman Eric Olson and his staff on Saturday, May 17, 2008 at Riverdale Park Town Hall at 10:00am for a discussion about issues of interest to you. The Councilman will then be taking a walking tour of the Town to hear from you more about specific concerns. The event will take approximately 2 hours. It would be great if community members could walk the neighborhood with the Councilman – but if you cannot stay for the whole walk, please join him at the start of the event for light refreshments.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Thomas Mayah, constituent services assistant, for Councilman Olson at tsmayah@co.pg.md.us, or at 301-952-3060.

COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK RESOLUTION 2008-OR-01

Introduced By: Council woman Alice Ewen-Walker,
March 3, 2008

An Ordinance concerning: Organizational and Supervisory Responsibility for Code Enforcement Activities **FOR** the purpose of reassigning from the General Government to the Police Department the responsibility for overseeing and supervising all code enforcement activities of the Town; providing that all Town code enforcement personnel shall be assigned to the Riverdale Park Police Department; providing that the non-sworn staff of the Riverdale Park Police Department includes Town personnel responsible for code enforcement; removing from General Government certain duties and responsibilities with respect to administering code enforcement in the Town of Riverdale Park.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments
Chapter 53 – POLICE DEPARTMENT
Sections 53-2(a), 53-3 and 53-12
Code of the Town of Riverdale Park
(January 2008 Revision)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments
Chapter 67 – HOUSING STANDARDS
Sections 67-1(b), and 67-7(a)
Code of the Town of Riverdale Park
(January 2008 Revision)

SECTION 1: BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK, That Sections 53-2(a), 53-3 and 53-12 of the Code of the Town of Riverdale Park, (Revised January 2008), is repealed and reenacted, with amendments, to read as follows:

Chapter 53 – POLICE DEPARTMENT

§ 53-2 Functions of Department; coordination of functions.

- (a) Police Department functions:
(8) THE ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION OF TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.

§ 53-3 Composition of Department.

- (A) The police force shall consist of a Chief of Police and such members or officers as the appropriate town officials see fit to appoint from time to time.
(B) THE POLICE DEPARTMENT SHALL

CONSIST OF THE POLICE FORCE AND SUCH CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES AS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE DEPARTMENT.

§ 53-12 Civilian employees.

(A) Civilian employees of the Police Department shall include all employees who have not been sworn in as peace officers, such as clerks, radio dispatchers and any other employee who may be hired, INCLUDING THOSE DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION. The conduct of these employees shall be governed by the rules and regulations adopted for the administration and discipline of the Department as prescribed in the Riverdale Park Police Manual and the town's personnel procedures.

(B) ALL TOWN CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, CODE ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISORS, CODE OFFICIALS, AND OTHER EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWN, REGARDLESS OF TITLE, WHOSE PRIMARY DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY IS PERFORMING CODE ENFORCEMENT FUNCTIONS FOR THE TOWN SHALL BE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE RIVERDALE PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT.

SECTION 2: AND BE IT FURTHER

ENACTED, That Sections 67-1(b), and 67-7(a) of the Code of the Town of Riverdale Park, (Revised January 2008), are repealed and reenacted, with amendments, to read as follows:

Chapter 67 – HOUSING STANDARDS

§ 67-1 Adoption of standards by reference.

(b) The Code Official shall be the ((Town Administrator, his or her designee or)) any code enforcement officer or building inspector of the Town.

§ 67-7 Stop Orders.

(a) Whenever any work is being done without a permit, when such is required by this Code, or in violation of the provisions of this Chapter or in exception with the term of any permit issued for such work, the Town Administrator or his or her duly authorized representative, or ANY Code Officer, or Building Inspector or Police Officer may order all or part of the work on the job stopped until such violation or exception is eliminated and the work or installation made in violation of this ((subtitle)) CHAPTER is corrected. Such stop order, if oral, shall be followed by a written stop order within twenty-four (24) hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday or holidays).

SECTION 3: AND BE IT FURTHER EN-

ACTED That this Ordinance shall become effective twenty (20) days after its passage by the Council.

Mayor's Report



By Vernon Archer

In the past month we have truly seen both the challenges and opportunities open for us to make our Town safe, clean, and beautiful. Everything from a heightened sense of concern about graffiti, highly visible fires, and new tools to aid the police and public in fighting crime have made the news. In addition, the Council is considering making changes in the organizational structure of the government in the hope of improving the effectiveness of code enforcement.

Graffiti

While graffiti has been a rather constant problem in parts of Town, there seems to have been an escalation of the problem. In particular, we have seen a number of "tagging" in places that have rarely been hit before. This is a concern for several obvious reasons ranging from the frequent connection of graffiti to gang activities, the unsightliness of the vandalism, and expense to both property owners and the Town for clean up.

The Town is determined to require quick and quality cleanup of graffiti in order to both deter those who are doing it, and to make sure that all of the rest of us don't have to see our property values and quality of life deteriorate because of this. We are also concerned that other types of criminal activity will follow the graffiti if it is left unchecked.

I was truly inspired this month when Councilman David Lingua was so moved to clean up the graffiti that appeared on the outbuilding at Riverside Park over a Saturday night that he decided to prime the building himself so that the graffiti would not stay out until Park and Planning could take care of it on Monday. Yes, Sunday morning he painted the building himself! Thanks Councilman!

Fires

There were two very visible fires recently; one in a residence on the 4500 block of Queensbury Road and another in the long vacant "mansion" at the 5500 block of Riverdale Road. Both our Fire Company Number 7 and companies from surrounding Firehouses demonstrated the quick and professional responses we all count on and I thank them for that.

Both fires present lingering problems for the community. Cleanup afterwards on these very visible locations presents the need for coordination between our Code Enforcement and County Code and Zoning officials. Just like we cannot allow graffiti to mar our Town, we cannot allow burned out buildings and refuse from the aftermath of fires to stand at the entrances to our Town. Our Code Enforcement and other Town staff

have worked diligently to make sure these sites are promptly picked up.

In particular, the long vacant house on the 5500 block of Riverdale Road has been condemned as structurally unfit and the owners have agreed to demolish the building and remove all refuse from the site. There is a charity carnival scheduled for the adjoining lot, so the demolition will not be able to proceed until mid April. Once commenced, the work will take about a week.

Crime Mapping and Reporting to the Community

Our Police Department instituted the use of an internet based crime mapping and reporting system this month. Anyone can go to www.crimereports.com and conduct a search of crime in our Town and get a concise and current look at what is going on. This tool will show you what is being reported right in your neighborhood.

This tool is equally useful to police and the public alike. It provides the kind of information that the public often wants, but is difficult for police to generate in a cost-effective manner. Likewise the system provides graphic representations of crime and public safety information for police to better identify and understand trends in the community.

Code Enforcement and Its Place in Town Government

Central to maintaining a safe, clean, and beautiful Town is code enforcement. This impacts everything from how our neighborhoods look, whether apartment buildings are safe and sanitary, to licensing and registering vehicles and building projects. In a time of much social and economic change such as we have seen over the last few years, it is not surprising that there has been rising concern about how our code is enforced and whether the outcome of such enforcement is adequate.

Currently before the Council is a proposal to move code enforcement responsibility from the Office of General Government to the Police Department. This is a move I myself considered and almost made by Executive Order when I entered office 3 years ago, and is certainly worth considering again in a broader public context.

However, at the time of this writing, there is no clear explanation coming from the Council as to: (1) what is currently wrong with the way code enforcement is done and/or managed; (2) what code is doing well and how the change will not effect that; and (3) what a successful code effort within the Police Department would look like. It is my hope and expectation that a clear answer to these questions will be a part of any mandated change in management for enforcement of code.

Ward and Committee Reports

Ward 1 Report

By Council Member Alice Ewen Walker
Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee

Alice.ewen.walker@gmail.com

Thanks to citizen involvement from an outstanding resident, Riverdale Park and Hyattsville Police conducted a coordinated operation on a house that was operating a gambling business on the border between our two Towns. Our resident was observant and persistent with his concerns, with good reason. After the police operation, the residents moved immediately, solving the problem so far as Riverdale Park is concerned. Do keep a look out for unusual activity and do call it in. Our thanks go to Hyattsville and Riverdale Park Police for their immediate and pro-active response.

Last month the Town Council approved the purchase and installation of a new streetlight in the 4700 block of Ravenswood Road. We are awaiting scheduling installation with Pepco. I want to note that the approval of the light took many months, and that Town staff were diligent about following up with Pepco during that process. Residents requested the streetlight, and it is hoped the light will improve safety in the area near the apartments.

On April 26th, all handymen and handywomen are called to volunteer for the annual Christmas in April project. Sponsored by the Riverdale Park Business Association, the project will help fix up the home of a lifelong Town resident who needs a hand. To volunteer, please contact Bruce Wernek at 301-779-6273. There are volunteer tasks for all skill levels, including light gardening.

On the economic development front, the Town is going to receive new revenue of \$89,000 this fiscal year as a result of the completion of the new office building located next to FDA on River Road. The University of Maryland is the first tenant and is moving in now, leasing roughly ¼ of the 120,000 s.f. building.

As a result of our meeting with the Prince George's County Housing and Community Development Office, the Town Council approved my resolution to apply for \$50,000 in supplemental CDBG funds toward additional code enforcement resources in support of Kenilworth Avenue revitalization efforts. The Town is also requesting to redirect the balance of unused CDBG funds from a previous grant to apply toward the effort. I will continue to look for opportunities for grants and other supplemental resources to help the Riverdale Park's code compliance, anti-litter, and anti-graffiti efforts.

In addition to seeking grant money for additional code enforcement, I am putting forward a proposal this

month to move code enforcement staff under the management of our Police Department. I think this will be a great way for code enforcement get the managerial support that it needs to be as effective. I also believe our code enforcement team can leverage police resources to get more done. Coordination is essential between the two enforcement entities of our Town government.

The chance of being able to add more code enforcement staff in next year's budget is not great. I am looking for organizational solutions that could expand our impact using the team of two full-time staff that we have in place. This organizational change is also a step toward encouraging our Police Department to take a greater strategic role in improving quality of life in our Town. Code will always be a major part of that picture.

I participated in the Town's Easter Egg Hunt for kids on March 15 and had a great time. We are actively recruiting volunteers to join the Recreation Board. Please call Anissa Sunday at (301) 277-2458 if you are interested. The Recreation Board is hands-down the most fun way to volunteer in our Town.

The Farmer's Market opening day is May 1st – put it on your calendars! This season promises great entertainment and new vendors, including a cheese vendor, oyster vendor, and new meat vendor that will sell farm-raised poultry, lamb, and beef. All products are made or grown here in the Chesapeake Bay region.

The ArtsFest is moving ahead with great success. Thanks to all the volunteers who are making this event a reality. If you would like to help volunteer or sponsor the event, please contact Emily Fanning at *ourdollmom@aol.com*. The ArtsFest will take place on May 4th in Town Center. I'm looking forward to it!

Correction: in last month's Ward Report, I made the error of reporting on a meeting with the Prince George's County Economic Development Commission before it occurred, expecting that the meeting would have taken place before the Town Crier was delivered. Unfortunately, the meeting was canceled and we are currently trying to reschedule.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
RIVERDALE PARK'S
2008 FARMERS' MARKET
OPENS
MAY 1, 2008
3:00 PM – 7:00 PM
TOWN CENTER**

Ward Two Report

By Council Member Kate Sharpe
Chairperson Finance Committee
katherinesharpe@yahoo.com

I strongly support the proposed ordinance resolution to move our Code Enforcement Department to the Police Department, under the supervision of our new Police Chief, Teresa Chambers. Many Ward Two residents have been vocal about the need to dedicate more resources to code enforcement. And while springtime does bring out the beauty of our Town, I certainly agree that code issues need greater emphasis. Placing code enforcement within our Police Department will allow for better coordination between code and police officers, and will help us extend our existing resources further.

“Extending our existing resources” will likely be the theme of this year’s upcoming budget planning process. As the Mayor mentioned last month, our revenue is not likely to increase substantially in 2008-09. To accomplish our goals in the face of flat revenue, I will continue to emphasize technological upgrades to improve our staff efficiency, and increased utilization of county/state resources and grant funding. Grant opportunities have been a focus of discussion for both the Finance and Economic Development committees this month. The Town is currently applying for additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to use for code enforcement, and a Safe Routes to School grant for a Town-wide traffic study. Because of our staff’s excellent track record in obtaining grants, I expect success in both applications.

Mark your calendars for April 26th because two excellent volunteer opportunities are occurring on the same day - Christmas in April (sponsored by the Riverdale Park Business Association) and the Anacostia Watershed Society trash clean-up. For all of you who recreate in the Riverdale Community Park and feel frustrated by the trash along the riverbank, this is your chance to take action.

Our Public Works department is currently in a period of transition. I encourage Ward Two residents to contact me with any Public Works-related concerns. I am anxious that residents do not experience a decreased level of service as we transition the Department to new leadership.

Ward Five Report

By Council Member Timothy Kimbrough
Chairperson Legislative Committee
timkim@rcn.com

It seems like there’s not enough time in the day. There’s indeed much work to be done to make Ward 5 and the Town of Riverdale Park Maryland an even better place to live. As I stated in last month’s Ward 5 Report,

“gang graffiti” is a concern in Ward 5. I met with Chief Chambers to discuss “Gang” activity in Ward 5. I also attended the “Making the Difference 2008 Crime Workshop” hosted by Prince Georges County Police Chief Melvin C. High, and District 1 Commander Major Kevin Davis. Major Kevin Davis is leading efforts in the fight against criminal gangs and graffiti in local Prince Georges County neighborhoods. As a result of the meeting with Chief Chambers (coupled with Code Enforcement), action was taken on the graffiti issue and more will follow.

There’s victory to report. The business that was attempting to open an establishment on the corner of Kenilworth Avenue and Riverdale Road with the intent to sell liquor has withdrawn their application. I gave my pledge to be physically present (on behalf of Ward 5) at the County Liquor Board hearing to oppose such liquor sales. Because of overwhelming opposition from Riverdale Park Maryland citizens-including Mayor and Council, the applicant withdrew their application.

Two (Ward 5) nuisance properties located in the 5000 block of Riverdale Road were served citations by Code Enforcement, County Zoning, and other Agencies. The horrific (just across the street from my apartment) abandoned house fire on 54th place was swiftly contained by our local Fire Department with aid from a number of other municipalities. My wife and I watched the swift, life-saving action from our Riverdale Park Fire Department. May God Bless and protect all fire men and women and keep them safe from danger at all times. Thanks to Mayor Vernon Archer for coming out to the scene when I called him; and for the follow up to the Shihs (property owners) through our Town Administrator Mr. Patrick Prangley. Thanks to Colleen Ferguson (Code Enforcement)-for properly citing and seeing that this structural disaster was properly fenced.

The Gypsy Moth and Riverdale Elementary

By Dannielle Glaros
dmglaros@gmail.com

Gypsy Moth Arrives—April 15th

Last year, several neighborhoods in College Heights Estates, University Park, and College Park saw the arrival of a devastating pest—the Gypsy Moth. This year, these communities—as well as the Cafritz property in Riverdale Park—will be spraying to prevent further infestation and loss of trees. So don’t be too surprised, if you see a low flying plane toward the end of April or early May. Because the infestation is so close to us, there is a good chance that more neighborhoods in Riverdale Park may see this pest this spring and summer, so please keep an eye out.

Gypsy Moths arrive in the middle of April. Initially, the caterpillars have 11 pairs of red spots; later, the caterpillars have 5 pairs of blue spots and 6 pairs of red spots. The caterpillars will later turn into moths and develop brown egg sacks. Each egg sack holds 500-1000 eggs. Although they like a variety of tree species, Gypsy Moths have a strong preference for oak leaves and dark, shaded spots.

If spotted, the following steps are recommended:

(1) The caterpillar should be killed.

(2) Egg sacks should be scraped off carefully and destroyed in soapy water. Please use gloves since they can provoke an allergic reaction. Also, do not squash the eggs on the ground because some of the eggs could survive.

(3) If the trees are small, place duct tape tightly around the tree to prevent the caterpillars from climbing to the high branches.

More details can be found at

www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/pest_al/gm/gm.htm
Riverdale Park Parents

At the end of February, parents of prospective Riverdale Elementary school students met with Principal Carol Cantu and Heather Iliff, School Board Member to hear more about the school and take a tour. If you were not able to join us, please do not hesitate to stop by the school and meet the principal on your own and take a tour. The school is very willing to accommodate such a request. Please note the following contacts:

Principal Cantu, 301-985-1850,
carol.cantu@pgcps.org

Heather Iliff, 301-952-6117,
heather.iliff@pgcps.org

Neftali Ortiz 301-985-1850,
neftali.ortiz@pgcps.org

Also, please visit RP Parents at the Riverdale Park Community Wiki

<http://rpwiki.wetpaint.com/page/RP+Parents>.

This community site is a great place to share information and contacts. And, each of us can help add helpful information on day care, schools, kid's classes and activities, and more to the site.

Master Peace Garden

By Vinnie Bevivino, bevivino@umd.edu and
Christian Melendez, cmm8622@gmail.com

We wanted to confirm with everyone the upcoming events in the garden. These diverse events will answer your questions about our garden, get your hands dirty preparing for the upcoming growing season, and be fun for your whole family too. Please mark your calendar, we'd love to see you out here!

March 22nd - 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Neighborhood work day. Come out for a fun day of volunteering in the

garden. Clean up for the upcoming growing season, prepare beds, and plant a few transplants too! A group of University students in the Alternative Spring Break program will be working in the garden that day, and we'd love to show our appreciation with some neighborhood volunteers too.

March 27th - 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - Community meeting #3

March 29th - 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Neighborhood work day - A second work day geared for those that couldn't make the first because it was during both the public schools' and the University's spring break.

April 5th - 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Community meeting #4

April 19th 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Spring Festival - Come celebrate the beginning of our second growing season with a fun day of food and games for the whole family.

We have a PDF of a flyer for the four-community meetings, that you can download from our website (http://engagedu.umd.edu/documents/0000/0040/spring08_meeting_flyer.pdf). Please help spread the word!

Thanks so much, we hope to see you out in the garden this spring! Contact: Vinnie Bevivino bevivino@umd.edu or Christian Melendez cmm8622@gmail.com, 301 405 0660.

The Riverdale Park Business Association

The Riverdale Park Business Association is planning the 5th Annual Dinner with a Casino Night Theme. The event will be held at the Calvert House Restaurant in Riverdale Park on April 16, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are \$40 and include buffet dinner, entertainment, and Casino Night. All residents of the Town are invited to attend. Contact Audrey Bragg 301-277-7393 for reservations.

New Business Brochures are being produced and will be available at member businesses and Riverdale Town Hall shortly.

Christmas in April will be held on April 26, 2008. The home we will be working on is at 4604 Tuckerman Street in Riverdale Park. Volunteers are welcome. Show up at 10:00 a.m.

Crescent Cities has 4 rooms open in their facility. They have just finished renovation on the 3rd floor.

The Dental Group is again offering a scholarship to Town students who are patients of The Dental Group. Call Carol Patsel for more information--301-864-5200.

A Letter from Berwyn's Mayor Regarding the Seed School

Dear Fellow Mayors-

I think that all of us know young people with all the ability to succeed but who face key environmental factors that limit or work against them. To address the needs of these underserved children, this fall, the state of Maryland will open The SEED School of Maryland, a public, college-prep boarding school for at-risk students. Located in Baltimore, this innovative educational opportunity is available to all Maryland students who enter the sixth grade this fall and who meet certain eligibility requirements. The school was initiated by Governor Martin O'Malley while he was still Mayor of Baltimore. The General Assembly passed legislation in 2006 (championed, among others, by the late Senator Gwendolyn Britt) to open the school and provide state funding.

Modeled on a similar school that opened in 1998 in Washington, D.C., and has seen 97 percent of its graduates accepted to four-year colleges, The SEED School of Maryland offers students and their families another pathway to success. As a public school, tuition is free. The program integrates a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum into a nurturing boarding program that teaches life skills and provides a safe and secure environment 24 hours a day. Students live on campus five days a week and are provided comfortable accommodations, three nutritious meals a day, and consistent, holistic services. Rising middle school students commit to a seven-year intensive college-preparatory program of small class sizes, strict promotion standards, intensive mentorship, community service, extracurricular leadership, and self-discipline.

For your information, I have attached four documents, which provide information on The SEED School and which I encourage you to share with other community leaders as well as students and families who may be interested in attending. These documents include 1) a one-page overview, 2) a one-page flyer, 3) eligibility criteria, which was set by state legislation and approved by the state Board of Education, and 4) a student interest form, which interested students should fill out and return to the address on the form. [Editor's Note: please contact www.seedfoundation.com/ if you would like copies of this information].

The school, which is located in southwest Baltimore on a 52-acre campus about three miles from Inner Harbor, will open in the fall with 80 sixth graders. The school will grow eventually to 400 students. Students are selected among qualifying applicants by a random lottery (the more Prince Georgians who apply the more

who will win admission). The SEED Foundation, for whom I work, has committed \$70 million in private financing and debt to build a state of the art campus and provide the start-up funding. Please let me know if you have any questions or contact the Baltimore office on the material for more information. You also may enjoy visiting The SEED Foundation website at <http://www.seedfoundation.com/> and watching the seven minute informational *video*.

Our young people have so many factors working against them. This is an incredible opportunity for those students and their families who are willing to make this exciting yet challenging commitment to their success.

Warm regards, Cheye M. Calvo

Mayor, Town of Berwyn Heights, Phone 301-789-5469
ccalvo@town.berwyn-heights.md.us
Director of Expansion, The SEED Foundation
202-785-4123 x34, cheye@seedfoundation.com

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de aplicar, en escrito, sobre formas proveídas por el pueblo, acompañadas por una copia de las especificaciones y planes dibujados con suficiente claridad y dimensiones detalladas para demostrar la naturaleza y el carácter del trabajo que serán realizados; que también han sido aprobados por el Inspector de Construcción del Condado de Prince Georges, juntamente con la cuota por la emisión del permiso cuando se le sea proporcionado. El pueblo puede descartar los requisitos para archivar los planes si el trabajo implicado es de menor naturaleza.

Otros Códigos para recordar:

Apropiada vasija o recipiente debe ser usado para cuando se recoge la basura--Código del Pueblo Capitulo 36
Mantener el pasto y la maleza a una altura de 10 pulgadas o menos--Código del Pueblo Capitulo 68
Tener todos los Vehicle apropiadamente registrados --Código del Pueblo Capitulo 64
Recortar todos/cualquier matorral que quizás estén colgando sobre las aceras--Código del Pueblo Capitulo 66
Obtener una Licencia para casas que rentan--Código del Pueblo Capitulo 55
Actividad Comercial – garaje publico, taller de reparación de automóviles, taller de mecánica en residencias es ilegal--Código del Pueblo Capitulo 50-4

Cumplimiento es la meta del Departamento de Códigos. Si tiene alguna pregunta, comentarios o preocupación por favor llámenos a: 301-927-6381, 240-508-8460 o mándenos un correo electrónico a: coderiverdalepk@comcast.net

Troop 252 News

Troop 252 (five Scouts and two Scouters) spent last week camping at Jug Bay (Patuxent River Park), in Croom, Upper Marlboro. We arrived Friday afternoon and got our tents set up just in time for the rain. We returned to Rte 301 and at a local fast-food restaurant (Mr. Bojangles). Later, we came back to discover that only several drops had fallen in the vicinity of our camp site, and everything was dry, so we stoked the fire and had a Cracker Barrel which consisted of S'mores and Bug Juice. We hit the sack about 10:00 PM and rose early Saturday in time to watch the sun rise.

We had banked our fire Friday night so there was no problem in getting it hot for our breakfast of bacon, eggs and toast, washed down with milk and orange juice. After oinking out, the three older Scouts (who had suffered with my dry sense of humor on a previous orienteering course) hopped on their bicycles to set up a challenging orienteering course for the two Scouts who had not. "Mercy" was not a part of their agenda. While they were gone, we did the dishes, and the two hapless Scouts studied their orienteering notes. One of our Assistant Scoutmasters dropped by, and he joined the two Scouts on their quest to find the orienteering clues set out by the other three.

While they were out searching for clues, the other three Scouts cooked lunch for all of us as we Scouters inspected the makeshift shelters our Scouts were constructing with hopes of surviving a cold night without being in tents. We ate a late lunch together around 3 p.m. We did the dishes in time to shoot a few hoops before the rain started Saturday evening.

We got up early Sunday and attended the 8:30 Palm Sunday service at St. Thomas Church. Long story short - during the week, our Scouts made shelters (in which they slept all night), bows and arrows (with which they had great fun seeing whose arrow would fly farthest), bicycle races (one bicyclist did a face-plant on the blacktop road//bloody nose and road rash//, and another claims that a tree jumped out and hit his bicycle //bumps and bruises//) and nobody was seriously hurt, and lengthy bicycle tours of the surrounding environs.

We held our semi-annual Troop Elections and did calisthenics in the barn during the rainy periods to burn up the energy we got from eating so much (?REALLY DELICIOUS?) food, and made it home Thursday afternoon. Our Scouts are already conniving, plotting, and scheming what we're going to do at our Protestant-Catholic Religious Retreat at Mattaponi in a couple of weeks. Stay tuned for the next report. If you visit the Religious Retreat, we're the Scouts with the tipi.

Crier readers - you have the opportunity to get in on the fun - We have eight flat-bottom boats, a dozen new truck inner tubes, and plenty PFDs. White water tubing, canoeing, kayaking and rafting are on our short

list, as well as the Washington-Old Dominion Rails to Trails Bicycle path, not to mention the C&O Canal Tow Path. Contact me, Scoutmaster Bob Killen (202) 282-8302, or Committee Chair Eneida Martinez-Brown (MHB) (301) 864-0059 for information. Boys 11-16 have a GREAT opportunity to earn the highly-coveted Eagle Scout rank with all the benefits, and they'll be busy having so much fun they won't realize how much they're learning. Most of our Scouts speak Spanish.

Put Your Pipes on a Fat-Free Diet

It's not something we think about when we pour leftover grease down the drain, but wastewater treatment plant operators across Washington state wish folks would put their pipes on a fat-free diet.

Most blockages in sewer systems can be traced to the presence of fats, oils, and grease, creating sewage spills and sewage overflows both onto private property and into city streets. It can also mean more frequent pumping of septic tanks.

Many people believe that pouring grease down the drain and following it with lots of hot water will keep the fats liquefied and carry them safely through the pipes. This is not true. Fats, oils, and grease cool down very quickly and can solidify after traveling only a few feet.

Raw sewage in the pipes will attach to fats, oils, and grease, creating impenetrable globs that back up sewer lines. These globs of fat and waste are difficult to disinfect at treatment plants and can allow disease-causing pathogens to enter nearby streams, lakes, and rivers.

"Cleanups are difficult and costly," explained Lynda Jamison, a water-quality specialist with the Washington Department of Ecology. "Blockages can cause raw sewage to back up into streets and possibly even into homes and businesses."

You can help keep fats from clogging pipes by disposing of grease properly:

- Never pour fats, oils, or grease down the drain.
- Never flush fats, oils, or grease down the toilet.
- Always put grease in the trash.
- Pour hot oils or grease into heat-proof containers, such as a tin can, and cool before putting it in the trash. You may even freeze the grease for easier disposal. Wipe greasy pans and dishes with paper towels before washing them and throw the paper towels into the trash to keep as much grease as possible out of your drains.

These tips can help prevent expensive plumbing repairs and sewage overflows. You can save yourself some repair bills, as well as keep our rivers and streams clean. Put your pipes on a fat-free diet. Dispose of grease properly.

Community Circles

What to Watch For

Wednesday, April 2, 2008—M-UTC Meeting, TH, 7:30 p.m.

Monday, April 7, 2008—Legislative Meeting, TH, 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8, 2008—Traffic Study, TH, 7:00 p.m., Madison Hill Home Owners Association, TH, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9, 2008—RPBA, 5:30 p.m., contact Audrey Bragg for site of meeting—301-277-7393.

Monday, April 14, 2008—Public Works meeting, TH, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 22, 2007—Earth Day; celebrate the earth and help save it!



Monday, April 28, 2008—Work Session, TH, 8:00 p.m.

Community Organizations

Northern County Soccer Alliance, Inc. (NCSA): For more information on NCSA and on travel, recreation, home school, and training programs, contact www.ncsa-soccer.org or call 310-927-0560. NCSA is the only year-round soccer club in the North/west Prince Georges County area. Tax deductible donations accepted at www.justgive.org. Volunteers needed—this is an excellent opportunity to get involved with your child in fun and great physical activity.

Riverdale Park Business Association (RPBA)

Contact Audrey at 301-277-7393 for site of meeting.

Riverdale Park Girl Scouts

Contact: Charmaine Wilson at 301-449-5690.

Riverdale Park Boys Scouts – Troop 252

Contact: Scoutmaster Bob Killen at 202-282-8302. This is a service the troop offers to the community. Support our Troop!

CIVIC COMMITTEES

Recreation Board – Volunteers needed. This is a great opportunity to become involved with your children and the community. Contact Anissa Sunday at 301-277-2458 for more information.

Madison Hill Homeowners Association

For information, call 301-513-9188 or email MadisonHillHOA@aol.com

Riverdale Park Farmer's Market

Contact Jim Coleman at 301-209-8529 for more information.

Lion's Club—Contact Guy Tiberio at 301-864-3545 for more information.

Riversdale Historical Society—Contact Riversdale Mansion at 301-864-0420 for more information.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, April 5, 8 pm, Tavern Night

Join us for an evening of rousing entertainment by the Ship's Company Chantey men and partake of tavern-style food and beverages. This jolly band of interpreters of early 19th century maritime history will sing rousing chanteys and tell sailor stories of the sea. The fee includes tavern-style food and beverages. Come as you are — or in period attire. Tickets are \$20 for residents of Prince George's and Montgomery Counties and \$24 for non-residents. Reserve your spot early as space is very limited. Reservations required.

Tuesday, April 8, 7:30 pm, Spring Lecture Series

University of Maryland, College Park, American Studies Professor and Chair, Dr. Nancy Struna, presents her lecture, *Early American Taverns*. Fee: \$5

Tuesday, April 22, 7:30 pm, Spring Lecture Series

Dr. Jenny Masur, Underground Railroad Regional Coordinator for the National Capital Region, presents her lecture, *Seeking Freedom: The Underground Railroad*. Fee: \$5

Riversdale, a National Historic Landmark, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in the town of Riverdale Park, Maryland, 20737. For more information or reservations, call 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544. Website: www.pgparcs.com; email Riversdale@pgparcs.com.

This facility is owned and operated by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County.

Part-Time Position Available At College Park Aviation Museum

Do you enjoy working with children and are you looking for something to do this summer or while your children are in school? We have a part-time position that involves taking children through the museum, talking to them about aviation & aircraft and doing educational crafts or projects. The information is interesting and easy to get across to the public. No experience needed, just an interest in working with kids in a fun & interactive museum. The Museum is walking distance from the College Park (Green Line) metro station and on the grounds of historic College Park Airport in College Park, Maryland. Average 20-25 hrs/wk, 8/hr. Call the Museum at 301-864-6029, or email jane.welsh@pgparcs.com

**TO SUBMIT ARTICLES TO THE CRIER,
SEND INFORMATION TO:**

RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net.