

The Echo

The Newsletter of the Randolph Civic Association and Randolph Civic Foundation

Volume 49, Issue 6

April 2006

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Way too much? This enormous new home/renovation dwarfs the neighboring rambler in the Parkwood community, not far from RCA-land.

Wanna Build a Bigger Place? Find Out How on May 4

by Richard Zierdt

RCA to Host Speaker on Home Improvements and Permits

The RCA, at its May 4, 2006 General Membership meeting, will host Ms. Gail Lucas from the County's Permitting Services division to talk to us about home remodeling, add-ons, driveways, sheds – everything to do with improving our properties.

But – how high can you build? How wide? How close? And my favorite: How Much? Answers to these questions are required before you improve your property. As housing prices skyrocket, current residents are tempted to stay put and remodel or enlarge their present homes rather than move. [See front-page article on property taxes in the Jan/Feb *Echo*.]

If you don't improve your property to County zoning regulations, you risk having to tear down what was just built. Come to the meeting and find out what these regulations are, and avoid a remodeling disaster. ■

Upcoming Events

RCA Executive Meeting

Thursday, April 6, 2006, 8:00 p.m.

RCA General Meeting

Thursday, May 4, 2006, 8:00 p.m.

**Guest speaker: Gail Lucas, Montgomery
County Permitting Services**

Meetings are held at the Randolph Hills Recreation Center at the corner of Ashley Drive and Macon Road on the **first Thursday of every month at 8 p.m.**, except January, July, and August. Usually, we alternate between General and Executive meetings. All are welcome at every meeting.

Spring is coming! Make plans now for the RCA Yard Sale!

The Spring RCA Yard Sale is scheduled for **Saturday, May 13, 2006** at Loehmann's Plaza. Mark your calendars!



RCA Executive Committee for 2005-2006

OFFICERS

President
Open

Vice President
Mike Saunders
12107 Hunters Lane
301-468-9268

2nd Vice President
George Gadbois
4718 Topping Road
301-770-5386

Secretary
Kevin Kline
4808 Randolph Road
301-230-1486

Treasurer
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301-881-0283

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301-231-4934

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301-468-1225

Matthew Shore
11230 Troy Road
301-468-1225

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301-770-7590

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11235 Ashley Drive
301-770-4377

Education
Elinor Walker
12111 Galena Road
301-468-6335

Yard Sale Signs
Lorena Segura
4802 Macon Road
301-984-8727

Special Projects
Kim and Cary Williams
4710 Topping Road
301-881-4554

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Dave Talbott
12104 Foley Street
Silver Spring, MD 20902
301-933-0048

Cub Master, Pack 1081
Mark Kibbe
4306 Emden Street
Silver Spring, MD 20906
301-946-6393

Scout Liaison
Frank Rossomondo
15133 Vantage Hill Road
Silver Spring, MD 20906
301-598-5772

Scout Unit Commissioner
Mike Saunders
12107 Hunters Lane
301-468-9268

Girl Scout Leader, Troop 1487
Stephanie French
11012 Schuylkill Road
301-770-3171

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION DELEGATES

Montgomery County Civic Federation:
Kevin Kline, Matthew Shore, Eileen White, Richard Zierdt
www.montgomerycivic.org

North Bethesda Congress: Matthew Shore, Richard Zierdt

MUNICIPAL AREAS FOR RCA

County Council District 1 (representing all of RCA):
Councilman: Howard Denis 240-777-7964
email: Councilmember.Denis@montgomerycountymd.gov
Mr. Denis's aide: Ken Hartman

Councilmember: Nancy Floreen 240-777-7959
email: Councilmember.floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov
Ms. Floreen's aide: Merle Steiner

General County Council Offices: 240-777-7900

County Executive: Douglas Duncan 240-777-2500

Montgomery County Public Schools: 301-279-3000

School Board Offices: 301-279-3617

School System Information: 301-279-3391

School Board Member for District 3
(representing all of RCA):

Ms. Patricia O'Neill 301-320-7600

Maryland Legislative District 18 (representing all of RCA):

Senator: Sharon M. Grosfeld 301-858-3137

Delegates: Ana Sol Gutierrez 301-858-3181

Jane Lawton 301-858-3638

Richard Madaleno Jr. 301-858-3130

Maryland General Assembly Website: <http://mlis.state.md.us>

Montgomery County Delegation Office:
All Senators & Delegates: 301-858-3010

U.S. Congressional District 8:
Christopher Van Hollen 202-225-5341
email: chris.vanhollen@mail.house.gov

U.S. Senate:
Barbara Mikulski 202-224-4654
Paul Sarbanes 202-224-4524

Election Precinct:
04-15 Vote at Rockinghorse Center, 4910 Macon Road

Montgomery Co. Board of Elections: 240-777-8500
751 Twinbrook Parkway, Rockville, Maryland 20851
www.777vote.org

Maryland State Board of Elections: www.elections.state.md.us

Governor Robert L. Ehrlich
Office of the Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-974-3591
governor@gov.state.md.us
www.gov.state.md.us



RCA Telephone Number: 301-881-2722 (881-2RCA).

Recorded announcements of community events, 24 hours a day. Callers may leave messages.

Membership in the RCA is \$5.00 per year.

The *Echo* is the official publication of the Randolph Civic Association, Inc., P.O. Box 2202, North Bethesda, Maryland 20852. The *Echo* is published 8 times a year and distributed free to all residents of Franklin Park, Hilltop Square, Montrose Park, Randolph Hills, Randolph Farms, and Westminster. Deadline for submission of articles varies; the next deadline is noted in each issue. Copy should be sent to the Editor, Eileen White, 11225 Ashley Drive, North Bethesda, Maryland 20852, 301-984-2579, email eeewhitedesign@comcast.net.

The Randolph Civic Association was formed in 1955 and incorporated in 1958. As stated in the original Articles of Incorporation, the purposes of the RCA are "to stimulate interest in all community problems and improvements that will better the general welfare of the community [and] to pay strict attention to any attempt to lessen the value of property within its borders..."

Web site: www.randolphcivic.org



Sledders in the park during the February snowstorm. Photo by Aaron Brown.

Minutes of the March General Membership Meeting

by Richard Zierdt, acting secretary

March 2, 2006

RCA 1st vice president Mike Saunders calls the meeting to order.

Minutes of the December 1, 2005 General Membership meeting are approved.

Treasurer's Report in the March, 2006 *Echo* is approved.

General discussion regarding code enforcement ensues. There are reports of building code violations, moving one building permit to another location to avoid getting another permit, and general non-enforcement of sites by County inspectors.

Playground equipment. RCA Environment Committee Chair Matt Tifford is working with County Park staff on replacing the playground equipment at Randolph Hills and Viers Mill parks.

RCA Concessions. Richard Zierdt moves that the RCA adopt a policy of concession sales at RCA Yard Sales as proposed and published in the March, 2006 *Echo*. In summary, the policy appropriates \$250 for each yard sale and allows an organization, approved by the RCA, to run the concessions in exchange for the profits. A list of condi-

tions is printed in the March, 2006 *Echo*, page 5. An amendment was made that the RCA executive committee is authorized to approve the group. Seconded. The amendment passes unanimously. The amended motion then passes unanimously.

Echo production. Richard Zierdt moves that the RCA appropriate up to \$100 for a power back-up device for the *Echo* editor. Seconded. Recent storms that interrupted electricity caused an abrupt stop to editing the *Echo*. A power back-up device will allow for a "soft" shutdown, so the editor need not re-enter or re-edit *Echo* copy. Motion passes unanimously.

RCA 2nd vice president George Gadbois gives an update on area schools. Connecticut Park elementary will re-open in September, 2006 under a new name. This will relieve overcrowding at Viers Mill Elementary.

Petition signatures. Richard Zierdt reports on the status of Maryland State bill MC 604 that could raise the number of signatures required to get a motion on a ballot. The current minimum is 10,000 signatures. This bill would effectively raise that to 20,000. The RCA is on record as opposing increasing the number of signatures. Richard notes that, in Maryland District 18 (all of RCA), only Maryland House delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez voted consistently against raising the number of signatures. As of mid-March, the Maryland Senate has not taken a final vote on the bill.

Meeting adjourned 10:00 PM. ■



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Incumbents Fear Getting Electric Shock

by Blair Lee

(Reprinted with permission from the Friday, March 10, 2006 Gazette)

[Note from Richard Zierdt: Mr. Lee writes a weekly column for the Montgomery Gazette that is published on Fridays. This is not the Bethesda edition that is distributed free on Wednesdays in our neighborhood. Mr. Lee covers Maryland politics with a lively writing style. This column seemed particularly timely given Pepco's letter that was mailed to customers the week of March 6 announcing a 39% rate increase starting July 1. Also, as preparation to the last paragraph, Mr. Lee is a life-long Democrat.]

Remember how Jane Byrne became the mayor of Chicago? In 1979, Byrne was a nobody running a hopeless race against the entrenched incumbent, Mayor Mike Bilandic, until just before Election Day when a heavy snow-fall paralyzed the city after Bilandic's snow crews failed to clear the streets. The resulting wave of anger swept Bilandic out of office and Byrne in.

Remember how Jim Gilmore became the governor of Virginia? He struck a deep, raw nerve by promising to end Virginia's hated "car tax," the annual property tax on motor vehicles. Overnight "car tax" became a single-issue popular uprising landing Gilmore in the governor's mansion.

And do you remember how George P. Mahoney won Maryland's 1966 Democratic gubernatorial primary? Mahoney, a semi-comical perennial candidate, was running fourth in a four-man race until his media advisor suggested "Your Home is Your Castle" as a campaign theme. The media and the political establishment scoffed at Mahoney's heavy-handed, out-dated racism but white voters, terrified by recent open-housing laws, flocked to Mahoney.

Which brings us to this year's statehouse elections in Maryland. Forget slots, stem cells, the Arab port deal and even gay marriages. Just two months before September's primary and four months before November's general election, 2 million shocked (no pun intended) Maryland residential electricity customers will see their electric bills jump 72 percent (BG&E) or 39 percent (Pepco) due to the state's badly bungled deregulation fiasco.

Baltimore-area customers' average annual electric bills will go from \$1,033 to \$1,776. Suburban D.C. customers' average bills will go from \$1,215 to \$1,683. Why? Because back in 1999 state lawmakers bought into the deregulation fantasy being peddled by the power companies and their lobbyists.

(continued on page 6)

Treasurer's Report *by Richard Zierdt*

As of March 16, 2006, combined RCA+RCF assets total \$6,895.25. ■

RCA Checking Register					
02/04/2006 through 03/16/2006					
Date	Num	Payee	Memo	Amount	Balance
		BALANCE 02/04/2006			8,218.18
02/06	781	Brian McGahey	Santa Claus / Candy Canes	97.78	8,120.40
02/06	782	Boy Scout Troop 1083	ECHO deliveries 4 months	480.00	7,640.40
02/27	783	Quick Printing	March ECHO	1,050.00	6,590.40
02/27	Exfr	Verizon	Jan 22 telephone	25.00	6,565.40
03/03		RCAssociation	membership, class ads	55.00	6,620.40
		BALANCE 03/16/2006			6,620.40
		<i>Suntrust Bank balance, February 21, 2006: 7,640.40</i>			

RCF Checking Register					
02/04/2006 through 03/16/2006					
Date	Num	Payee	Memo	Amount	Balance
		BALANCE 02/04/2006			274.83
02/28		RCFoundation	interest received .09%	0.02	274.85
		BALANCE 03/16/2006			274.85
		<i>Suntrust Bank balance, February 28, 2006: 274.85</i>			
Total RCA+RCF cash assets					6,895.25



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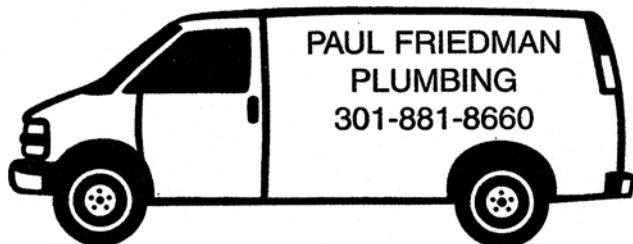
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DENTIST



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Electric Shock

(continued from page 4)

Before 1999, monopoly power companies supplied electricity at rates regulated by the state's Public Service Commission. Then, spurred by the promise of lower rates achieved through free market competition, state lawmakers and Gov. Parris Glendening broke-up the monopolies and deregulated the electric power market.

Supposedly, new power companies would compete with BG&E and Pepco thereby driving prices down. "State lawmakers deserve credit for passing a farsighted deregulation bill that will allow Marylanders — businesses and homeowners — to choose their own electric power provider," editorialized the Baltimore Sun in 1999. "The competitive nature of a free-market economy tends to drive prices down. There's every reason to believe it will happen with electric prices, too."

To help ratepayers through the transitional period while all those new power companies were starting-up and entering the market, state lawmakers froze the rates BG&E and Pepco could charge their customers for the next six years. So the power companies purchased six-year electric supply contracts, which expire this summer when their customers' rate caps end.

Unfortunately, none of those new, competitive power companies materialized. Why? Because of the enormous market-entry costs of starting a power company and because by freezing rates at below-market levels the state lawmakers unwittingly created a disincentive. How can a new power company undercut established utilities that are selling power at frozen, below-market rates?

In hindsight, this disastrous outcome was predictable to anyone with a business mind. But our state legislature is made up of professional politicians, not business people. They really, truly believed deregulation would work; why else would they let rate caps expire during an election year? The lawmakers probably expected wild applause and easy re-election as reward for the new low rates that were sure to come. Instead, they are standing on the beach helplessly watching a gigantic political tsunami racing toward them.

In Annapolis, terrified politicians are scrambling for cover. Some want emergency legislation extending the rate caps or delaying the rate hikes until at least after the election. Others are trying to shift the blame. For instance, Senate President Mike Miller now says the Public Service Commission caused this mess because it is "a tool of the utility companies." This is the same Senator Miller who sponsored the 1999 deregulation bill promising, "Prices will go down, no ifs, ands or buts."

Because self-survival is the dominant impulse in politics, resolving this mess has become a collective bipartisan effort in Annapolis. Instead of Democrats against Republicans, the deregulation controversy pits incumbents against non-incumbents, "ins" against "outs." And already

the "outs" are exploiting the issue. Martin O'Malley, fresh from demagoguing the Arab port deal, immediately blamed Governor Ehrlich for failing "to mitigate the damage." O'Malley is holding Ehrlich responsible even though Ehrlich wasn't governor when deregulation was enacted. O'Malley hopes voters won't notice the difference.

In 1999, deregulation passed by overwhelming majorities in the House of Delegates (67 percent) and the Senate (72 percent). Now those incumbents have until April 10, when the legislature adjourns, to save their skins.

Blair Lee is CEO of the Lee Development Group in Silver Spring and a regular commentator for WBAL radio. His e-mail address is blair@leedg.com. ■

Have you seen the RCA's Web site at
www.randolphcivic.org

Can't wait for the next *Echo*?
You can download the latest issue, which
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the printed *Echo* is delivered.
Back issues are also available.



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Hair Systems	(301) 881-0338
Kumon U.S.A.	(301) 231-6977
Lifestyle Spa	(301) 468-9770
Loehmann's	(301) 770-0030
Parcel Plus	(301) 468-2177
Safeway	(301) 770-3665
SunTrust Bank	(301) 998-8580
Sherwin Williams	(301) 984-7124
Subway	(301) 881-2477

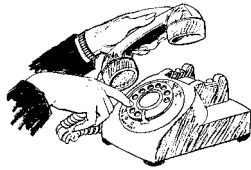


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The RCA Hotline

301-881-2722 (2RCA)

Calls Received February 6, 2005 to March 16, 2006



General Note: The RCA gets a lot of calls about code violations (untagged cars, tall grass, etc). Please note that phone numbers for agencies that handle such matters are published in the ECHO almost every month. You don't have to leave your name or phone number. The RCA is here to help everyone keep our neighborhood as orderly as possible, so please use these numbers. Please call the RCA as well. We appreciate knowing and learning about our community.

If anyone notices that the hotline is not working, please call Richard Zierdt at 301-881-0283, and/or e-mail the RCA at info@randolphcivic.org Thanks!

2006-03-06 (Mon) 11:11 pm Not anonymous. 114xx Schuylkill Road. Caller didn't receive the Echo.

2006-02-xx (Sun) 7:35 pm Not anonymous. Caller did not receive bulbs ordered last September. *[Yes, some residents were missed. Caller has been issued a refund.]*

2006-02-xx (xxx) x:xx xx Anonymous. Franklin Park resident wants to leave a Thank You for the neighbor (Mike) who has a snowblower and plowed all the sidewalks all the way up Ertter Drive. Caller feels warm about this volunteer's community spirit and generosity. *[The hotline lost power during the snowstorm, so date/time is not accurate.]*

2006-02-xx (xxx) x:xx xx Anonymous. Caller has never seen the streets plowed so cleanly after a snowstorm. We need to commend the County for hiring private contractors to come through. In all the years of living here in RCA, caller has never seen the streets so clean this soon after a snowstorm. *[Caller might call the County's transportation division and let them know (240-777-ROAD (7623)). They would likely appreciate knowing they are appreciated.]*

2006-02-18 (Sat) Caller found a girl's bike in the Boiling Brook Creek. If it's yours and you can describe it, call Cindy at 301-881-8745. *[Thank you, caller, for taking the initiative and helping the owner and the creek at the same time!]*

2006-03-0x (Mon) 7:33 am Anonymous. Caller has called and called and called, but nobody seems to be responding. There's a family at 11xxx Old Drovers Way running a carpet business out of their home. Why do you all let this go on? This is supposed to be a residence for people to live in, not a business. I wish it was taken care of. Thank you. *[Actually, it's not necessarily illegal to run a business out of one's*

home. It depends on the type of business and the amount of traffic it generates. Caller should call an RCA officer and describe the activity. Your name will be kept confidential, but the RCA can't do anything without a description.]

2006-03-06 (Thu) 12:18 pm Not anonymous. Hunters Lane. Caller doesn't think caller is getting the Echo. Caller knows neighbors on Mori Drive did, but not caller. Caller knows the Echo is available online, and just wanted to let the RCA know that caller isn't getting the paper copy. ■

Washington Redskins Opponents for the 2006 Football Season

Who says the Echo is nothing but a list of complaints? What about the Redskins? Exactly! Here's the list of opponents for 2006, but not the dates. That's because the NFL hasn't announced them yet, at least not publicly. But we'll keep you posted, especially so you can avoid the Beltway on those Sunday afternoons!

Washington Home games in 2006 will host:

Dallas, N.Y. Giants, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Carolina, Jacksonville (AFC), Tennessee (AFC), Minnesota

Washington will play away in 2006 at:

Dallas, N.Y. Giants, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Tampa Bay, Houston (AFC), Indianapolis (AFC), St. Louis

That's all 16 regular-season games! ■

***Comments on topics concerning
the neighborhood?***

**Call 301-881-2722
RCA Hotline – 24 hours**



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MONTGOMERY COUNTY DIVISION

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News from Pack 1081

by Mike Mulcahy



Cub Scout Master Mark Kibbe provided a gourmet chicken feast at our annual Blue and Gold Banquet which was held at Viers Mill Elementary School on Thursday, February 16th. Many pot-luck items as well were offered at dinner, and tasty cup cakes flew off the dessert table so if you were there, you most likely did not leave hungry. Thanks to every one who contributed to this event! A special thank you to **Leora Hernandez, Leyden Streed, Karen Tinknell, Andrea Kibbe and Laura Levensgard** who helped set up the facilities and served at the Blue and Gold Banquet. In addition, thank you to all the families who provided the added array of side dishes and desserts which were delicious as always. Scout Committee Chairman **Don Gibbon's** PowerPoint slideshow brought back memories as we saw ourselves over the past year in scouting, and the passage that Don read to the audience about this year's Blue and Gold theme, "Heritage," was very impressive! Everyone was asked about his or her heritage at the event, and Scouts and their families shared sto-



Some Scouts appear to be saying, "This is my fifth full plate of food!"

ries about their ancestors. The presentation of our 43rd annual Charter, flag ceremonies, recognition of our adult leadership and a host of awards to hard-working Scouts were among the highlights at the banquet.

Our Webelos II earned the following Webelos Activity Badges: Forestry – **Maxwell DeMulder, Karlo Begazo, Matthew Best and Patrick Owen**; Outdoorsman – **Maxwell DeMulder, Karlo Begazo, Matthew Best, Patrick Owen, Steve Hernandez, Joshua Murtagh, Matthew Luong and Brenton Polk**. Activity Badges

awarded to our Webelos I were as follows: Communicator – **Brad Gessford and Sawyer Kibbe**; Sports and Academic Pins: **Brad Gessford** – Math, Ice Skating, Computers, Communicating and Music, and **Sawyer Kibbe** – Communicating. Bear **Adam Levensgard** received the Sports and Academic Pin for Bowling, and **Adam Levensgard, Preston Polk, Aidan Gibbons, Chris Mulcahy, DJ Terry, and Danny Mbulaiteye** were presented the Bear "Rank Advancement" Badge. Congratulations to all on a job well done!

Left: Scouts enjoying themselves at the Blue and Gold Banquet. Right: Webelo Scouts receiving awards at the Blue and Gold Pack Meeting.





Scout Master Kibbe honors some Bear Scouts.

What has evolved as our annual Ice Skating event took place this year again at the Wheaton Indoor Ice Rink on Sunday, February 11th, and the boys zig-zagged their way around the ice to the music of the arena. **Matthew Luong, Brenton Polk, Preston Polk, Aidan Gibbons, Matt Kimball, Daniel Mbulaiteye, Sawyer Kibbe and Steve Hernandez** were in attendance and took a break to sip hot chocolate during the halftime ice cleaning.

On Sunday, the 19th of February, the Pack joined Troop 1083 for the annual ski outing to Liberty in Pennsylvania.

Conditions were prime on the slopes for our Olympics-inspired Scouts who chose to brave the especially cold temperatures and ski rather than stay at home and watch the Olympics on television (in the comfort of their warm home). Let's hear it for our fearless Olympic Scouts: **Brenton Polk, Patrick Owen, Sawyer Kibbe, Brad Gessford, Preston Polk, Aidan Gibbons, DJ Terry, Adam Levengard, Colin McLean and Mateo Streed!**

At press time, we're looking forward to some exciting March activities including a Metro ride and visit to the Museum of Natural History on the Mall on Saturday, March 4th. The Scouts will have a chance to learn about science and to complete work towards Achievement and Elective awards. The boys will have lunch together by den, and do be sure to bring some money for the gift shop guys! Webelos Scouts are gearing up for their fun Camp-In overnight at the Maryland Science Center on March 11th. In addition, a Webelos II overnight campout to Cabin John with Troop 1083, the District Pinewood Derby finals and our Parent/Son Bake-Off will all take place in March. On Saturday, April 1st, you will see some of us along Boiling Brook Parkway again doing some creek cleanup for our community as the Scouts participate in the "Potomac Watershed Cleanup" project.

If you are interested in learning more about the Cub Scout program for your 1st – 5th grade son, please stop by Viers Mill ES any Monday evening at 6:30 or call Mr. Mark Kibbe at (301) 946-6393. It's never too late to join! Please enjoy a visit to our website: <http://hometown.aol.com/pack1081>. ■

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Troop 1083 News

by Jaime Todaro

In February, many of our scouts and leaders traveled to Liberty Mountain Resort in Carroll Valley, Pennsylvania for our annual Ski Trip. Most of our scouts are seasoned skiers, but there were plenty of first-timers too. A ski lesson is part of the package, for those who need it. **Mike Saunders** provided guidance for the skiing merit badge to several scouts. Scouts who attended the ski trip: **Jason Beam, Jake Blakely, Kyle Blakely, Matt Fieller, Edwin Fuentes, Gregory Gadbois, Anthony Gadbois, Johnny Hilderbrand, Edward Huggins, Scott Levengard, Joseph Owen, Steven Santos, David Santos, and Scott Talbott.** Leaders who attended the ski trip are: **Mike Saunders, Dave Talbott, Judi Talbott, Geoff Owen, Jane Owen, George Gadbois, Richard Fieller, Fred Beam, Mrs. Santos, and Bill Blakely.**

The boys in Scout Troop 1083 really put a lot of time and effort into learning valuable life skills, how to be

Scouts make their way to the top of the mountain.



Scouts line up to ride the chair lift.

responsible citizens, and the importance of providing service to the community. Scouts lend a hand in the community throughout the year – sometimes with fanfare, more often without. They collect food for the hungry, pick up litter in public areas, help senior citizens with snow removal and other chores, and bring Santa to Randolph Hills for the annual fire truck ride. In fact, a scout brought you the *Echo* you hold in your hands!

In an age when many people are focused on their own interests, these boys take pride in reaching out to others. The parents and leaders of Troop 1083 are rightfully proud of these boys, and the troop is delighted to be able to offer the boys fun and rewarding opportunities like the ski trip, camping, hiking, swimming, and more – from the mountains to the beaches and everywhere in between – all year round.

Upcoming events include a weekend campout, and Potomac Watershed cleanup. If you are a boy who has finished the fifth grade you can join us. We meet Monday night at 7:30 at Viers Mill ES, or call Scoutmaster Dave Talbott at 301-933-0048. Check out the troop web page at www.troop1083.org. ■



A nice sunny day at the slopes!

RCA Meetings

RCA meetings are held the **first Thursday of every month** (except January, July and August) at the Randolph Hills Recreation Center at 8:00 p.m. Usually we alternate between General and Executive meetings. If you are unsure about meeting times and dates, please call the RCA Hotline (301-881-2722) for verification. The current meeting schedule is:

April 6, 2006 Executive Committee Meeting

May 4, 2006 General Membership Meeting

June 1, 2006 General Membership Meeting

All are welcome at every meeting.

**Support your Community.
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News from Girl Scout Troop 1487

by Stephanie French

What with the snow and holiday falling on our regular meeting Mondays in February we don't have much to report this month! Another girl joined Junior Troop 1487. Brownie Troop 1028 has switched to meeting a couple Mondays a month for a longer time each meeting. We continue with our craft projects and planning for trips this Spring.

If you have any questions about the Girl Scouts please call Stephanie French at 301-770-3171. ■

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Attention RCA-land Photographers!

Have you taken some great pictures of the neighborhood or surrounding areas? Consider submitting them to the Echo for publication! We'd love to include more photos in the Echo (space permitting). Of course you'll receive a credit line.

If you'd like your photos to be considered, please submit them to the Editor, Eileen White. Supply a little background info for your photo – where and when taken, and any other relevant information. Keep in mind that the Echo is published in black and white, so photos should be sharp and have good contrast or they will not print well. If you are taking digital photos, they will need to be at your camera's high resolution setting (low resolution photos may look great on your computer screen but they are not suitable for printing). You may also submit prints and we will scan them.

You can email digital photos directly (eewhitedesign@comcast.net), but please don't send more than one or two high resolution photos at a time; those files are large! Or you can mail your prints to the Editor's address on page two. Or bring them to an RCA meeting! Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like your print returned. I can't promise to use your photo, but if I can, I will!

Above: Tulip garden on Boiling Brook Parkway. Photo by Richard Zierdt.



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Pit Bull Letter Brings Results

Captain David Falcinelli of the Montgomery County Police Force fully investigated the Pit Bull incident (reported on page 9 of the March *Echo*) and called to thank us for the letter we sent. He has implemented several changes with the call taker/dispatchers and the ten police officers who report to him. Some of the changes include:

- Dispatchers stay on the line to get full information and give the caller a complaint number, used as a reference if same caller calls again.
- If a second call is made, the dispatcher will notify the supervisor immediately so the issue can be checked and resolved.
- The Field Supervisor and Deputy Director will review all calls, prioritize them, and develop a method for the police officers to take care of the calls.

Shortly after receiving our letter, Captain Falcinelli implemented some of the changes. The result was an almost immediate response to an upcounty attack on some livestock by stray dogs. The dogs were captured without further attacks. We have some confidence that the procedures put into place will help prevent incidences like the one concerning the Pit Bull from occurring again. ■

Cell Phone Recycling

from the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services

Do you have an obsolete or broken cell phone lying around? Recycling it is now as simple as dropping it into the mail – postage-paid! Print out the mailing label from here: www.thewirelessalliance.com/print_label.html

If your phone remains usable, consider donating it for reuse. In Montgomery County, the Sheriff's office and the Department of Health and Human Services accept cell phones with chargers. Reuse extends the period of time before the phone is disposed of, a process requiring special handling.

A number of local cell phone retailers serve as drop-off points for cell phones and rechargeable batteries.

We have more information about these cell phone recycling and reuse opportunities on our website: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/solidwaste. For your nearest rechargeable battery recycling drop-off point, visit www.rbr.org/. Rechargeable batteries are also accepted at the Shady Grove Transfer Station.

Why worry about old cell phones? The "guts" of the phones contain heavy metals and toxins. The most troublesome parts are the circuit board, which has lead solder on it, the liquid-crystal display, and the battery. Flame retardants in phone components can also cause environmental and health problems. When the phones are burned in incinerators, the heavy metals and toxins can pollute the air. When landfilled, they can work their way into the soil and water.

For more information about recycling, and trash disposal in Montgomery County: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/solidwaste; recycle at montgomerycountymd.gov; 240-777-6410; TTY: 240-777-6442. ■

Beware of Unlicensed Home Improvement Contractors

from the Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection

The first day of Spring is here and just as the flowers start to pop out, so do unlicensed home improvement contractors. Consumers lose thousands of dollars to unscrupulous contractors every year. Some of these contractors take a deposit from a consumer but never return to start any work. Others start the work but either do not finish or perform sub-standard work. It is illegal to perform home improvements in Maryland without having a license from the Maryland Home Improvement Commission. Our office is pursuing numerous criminal prosecutions against unlicensed contractors; several of these unlicensed contractors have previously been convicted of other crimes including robbery, theft, weapons charges and drug possession. For information on how to properly

contract for home improvements, check out our Guide to Home Improvements:

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ocptmpl.asp?url=/content/ocp/consumer/guide_home_imp.asp

Also, check Maryland Home Improvement Commission's website: <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/license/occp/homim.html> ■

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~ King George V of England

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Dear Mrs. Brown



Are there certain rules for children behaving in restaurants so that they don't disrupt other diners?

It is disturbing to go out for an evening of fine dining and atmosphere and find yourself next to, or in a room with, a table occupied by unruly children. While parents certainly have every right to take their children out in public, they should keep young children away from finer eating establishments until they can behave without loud voices and temper tantrums. There are "family" restaurants better suited for such an outing. Please don't have the attitude that you are paying for the meal and others should have to tolerate your youngster's behavior. Your rights are yours, so long as they don't impede the rights of others – and the right to dine in peace is one thing we pay for by dining in fine establishments.

Only parents can determine at what age a child is ready to control themselves. Good manners really do begin at home. Once a child can behave at home, only then should you expose them to a nicer place (and its clientele).

These are just a few rules of thumb. I am sure there are many more, and again the parent is the best judge for what their child can handle. Avoid nicer restaurants if:

- Your child hasn't learned to use their "quiet voice."
- Your child hasn't learned not to giggle over bodily noises.
- Your child cannot manage a fork without wearing the food – or feeding the floor.
- Your child is still in diapers on a full time basis.
- Your child eats with his fingers.
- Your child cannot sit quietly for at least 45 minutes without getting ants in their pants.

Manners aside, why is it that children can be so cruel to one another? This is not a new trend, but it seems that it's getting worse (Columbine, etc.)

In a world where violence and cruelty seem to be common and almost acceptable, a lot of parents wonder what they can do to help their children develop a sense of caring and compassion for others. Raising kids who care can be tough when you're up against the exposure of violence on television, the internet, at school or on the streets.

The most important thing you can do is to let your children know how much it means to you that they behave with kindness and responsibility. When you catch your child doing or saying something that you think is thoughtless or cruel, you should let them know right away that you don't want them doing that. Speak to your child firmly and honestly, and keep your focus on the act, not on the child personally: something along the lines of "What you did is not very nice" rather than, "You are not very nice!" Be frank, honest and up front with your kids about what kind of behavior you do and don't like. Also, keep it short and to the point; the idea is to teach them, not to make them feel guilty!

Try to surround your children with other people who are kind and caring so that they have several role models. Find organized ways for your children to get involved. Sign them up for Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts for example – we have great Troop leaders in our neighborhood. Find places where they can volunteer and encourage them to join. Our greater community has a myriad of volunteer organizations and churches with special programs for children, as well as entire families!

The winter is over and spring has sprung but so has our neighbor's debris. These otherwise friendly folks have flooded their front yard (which faces our home) with no less than five trash cans and a littering of newspapers they have failed to pick up. Their fence is falling down and needs mending or removal. Lastly their shrubs are overgrown and toys litter the sidewalk where other friendly folk like to stroll. Can you suggest a way we can encourage our neighbors to put some loving care into their front yard?

If we all lived in a bubble, never encroached on anyone else's living space, and never interacted with another person, there would be no need for manners – or in this case, being a good neighbor. We could simply do as we pleased, go about our business, and it wouldn't matter to anyone else. But since we live in a community rules of conduct are imperative. Homeownership is more than paying the monthly mortgage – upkeep and maintenance is all part of the picture. It's called "pride" in one's home.

Perhaps your neighbors are truly overwhelmed by life's daily responsibilities and have let the chore of keeping their yard clean a low priority. Here is an opportunity for you to show your good manners and unselfishness. To maintain good feelings with your neighbors, I would suggest taking the first nice weekend day and knock on their door and ask if you can help them clean up their yard. Don't be accusatory – show concern and understanding by letting them know how important it is to you and the rest of the neighborhood and that you are truly willing to help them out. Give them suggestions, tools if necessary, and offer to give of your time to work alongside them in an

afternoon's effort to get the job done. Once a yard is cleaned up and looking good it is easier to maintain. Your neighbors should be grateful for your helpful concern and, hopefully, keep it up with pride!

Mail your questions to: The RCA, Inc, Attn: Dear Mrs. Brown, P.O. Box 2202, North Bethesda, MD 20852; or e-mail: dearmrsbrown@msn.com

Questions used in the column may be edited for brevity and clarification. ■

Restaurant Good!

Monrovia Coconut Pie

Yield: one 9-inch pie



clip and save

This Monrovia pie is not a custard pie – it is made primarily of coconut, which absorbs the milk and eggs. Use fresh coconut if possible, and grate it into long shreds. You haven't really tasted coconut pie until you've tried this one!

Line a 9-inch pie pan with pie crust. Bake the pie shell for 5 minutes or until partially brown.

In large bowl cream until smooth:

6 oz. softened butter

1/2 cup sugar

Add and blend together:

2 large eggs, well beaten

Add:

2 cups grated coconut (if packaged, use moist)

1 cup milk

1 tsp. vanilla

1/4 tsp. baking soda

Pour into partially baked pie shell.

Cover the top with strips of crust in two directions

Flute the edges.

Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes or until golden brown.



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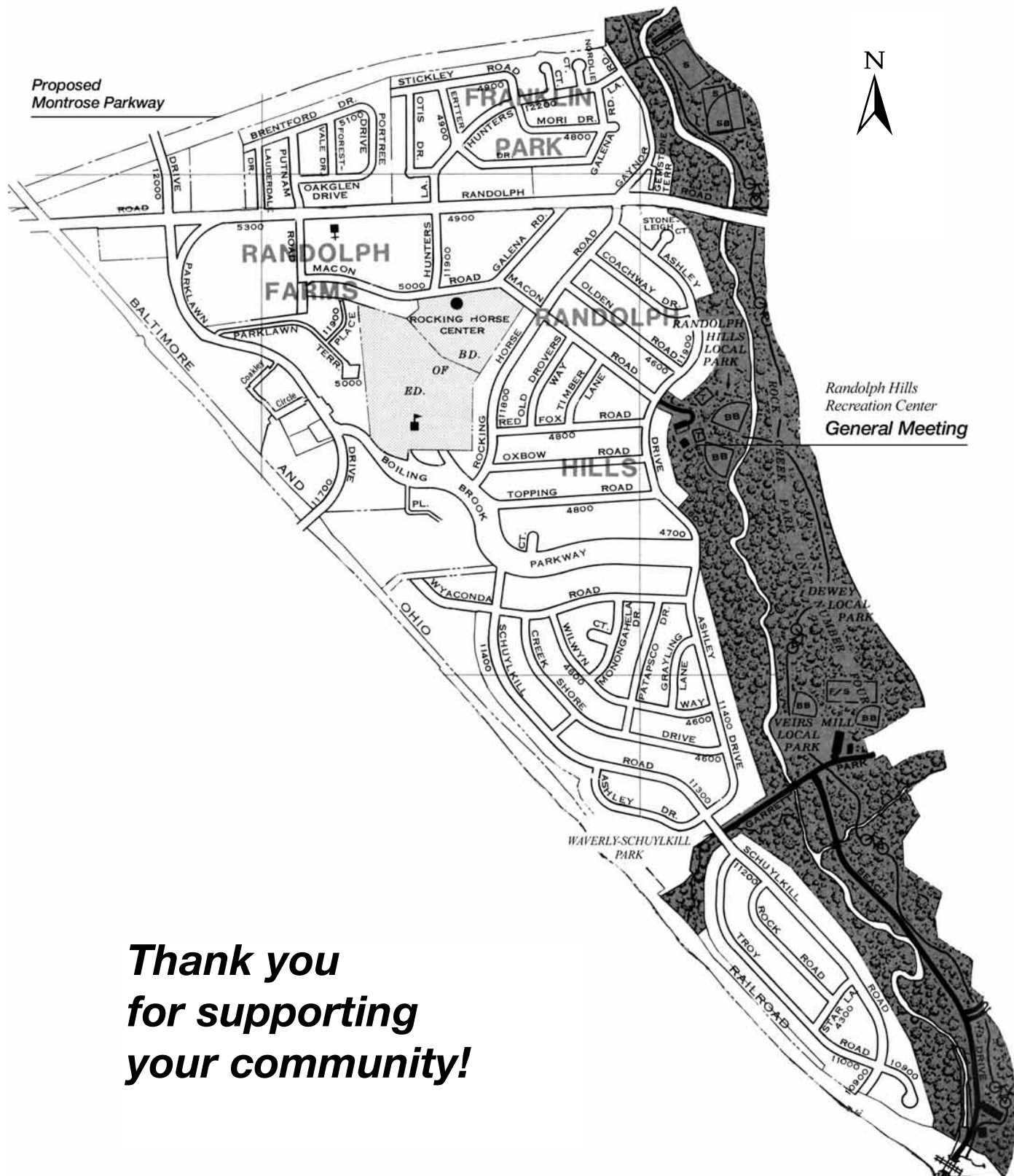
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HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING. Having concerns about your HVAC equipment or system? Is it outdated, not working, or completely broken? Call Konstantin at 301-251-0771 or 240-421-5805. Estimates are free.

Note to Contributors:
The deadline for the May issue of the *Echo* is Saturday, April 8th.



Yard Work and Grass Mowing: Here's Your Help

Here's a list of boys willing to perform leaf raking, grass mowing, snow shoveling, general yard work, etc. Negotiate cost and payment with each boy.

Andrew Souder 301-770-7632 Ashley Drive

Matt Bebawy 301-881-4698 Red Fox

Alex Cassel 301-770-8757 Macon Road

Steven Santos 301-468-1756 Wilwyn Way

Chris Geerman 301-230-1386 Ashley Drive

Mark Bushong 301-942-5890 Bennion Road

Andy Wood 301-946-4634 Idlewood Road

Moses (Bubba) Hart 301-230-2740



Important Phone Numbers



Police: Emergency ONLY	911
Police: Non-Emergency (County-wide)	301-279-8000
Police: Non-Emergency (Rockville Station)	301-279-1591
Park Police	301-949-3010
<i>(for Randolph Hills and Waverly-Schuylkill Parks)</i>	
Abandoned Cars (on private property)	240-777-3785
Abandoned Cars (on the street)	301-840-2454
Animal Control	240-773-5960
Building Permits	240-777-6200
Consumer Affairs	240-777-3636
Crisis Hotline (24 hours)	301-315-4000
Department of Natural Resources	800-442-0708
<i>(wildlife nuisance problems)</i>	
Disability Resources	240-777-1246
Fire Non-Emergency	240-777-0744
Housing Code Violations	240-777-3600
<i>(for calls about tall grass, broken windows, trash in yard, etc.)</i>	
Large Item Pick-up	240-777-6410
Libraries: Hours, etc.	240-777-0002
Telephone Reference	240-777-0001
Metrorail and Metrobus schedules & info.	202-637-7000
Montgomery County Humane Society	240-773-5960
Emergencies only	240-773-5900
Licensing Dept.	240-773-5946
Motor Vehicle Administration	1-800-950-1682
Office of Environmental Policy & Compliance	240-777-7700
<i>(noise, burning leaves, hazardous materials, spilled/leaking motor oil)</i>	
Parking Tickets	240-453-0113
Parks: Information & Permits	301-495-2525
PEPCO: Power Out	toll free 1-877-737-2662
Emergency/Life Threatening	202-872-3432
Post Office, Rollins Ave., Rockville	301-231-5973
Rat Control Unit (Health Dept.)	240-777-3986
RCA Hotline	301-881-2722
Recycling Info (www.mcrecycles.org)	240-777-6400
Recreation Information	240-777-6804
School Information	301-279-3391
Senior Citizens (Holiday Park)	301-468-4448
Street Light Out	240-777-2190
Transportation (Highway Services)	240-777-7623
<i>(to report traffic signals out, street sign damage, potholes, graffiti, etc.)</i>	
Transit Information Center (www.dtwp.com)	240-777-7433
Trash Collection	240-777-6410
Tree Maintenance (ask for county arborist)	240-777-7623
Voter Registration	240-777-8500
Water and Sewer (WSSC)	301-206-8000
Weeds/Rubbish Complaints	240-777-6400



*Randolph Hills, Randolph Farms,
Franklin Park and Montrose Park
Market Update...*

Neighborhood Home Sales Settled Since January 1, 2006

<u>Address</u>	<u>Orig Price</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Sold Price</u>	<u>Dom</u>	<u>Subsidy</u>	<u>Date Settled</u>
11820 Rocking Horse Road	\$519,900	\$479,900	\$479,900	111	\$2,000	1/23/2006
12003 Galena Road	\$395,000	\$395,000	\$405,000	7	\$10,000	1/31/2006
4805 Wyaconda Road	\$485,900	\$450,000	\$450,000	120	\$0	2/17/2006
4721 Boiling Brook Pkwy	\$429,900	\$429,900	\$435,000	45	\$0	2/21/2006

Homes Currently Under Contract...

<u>Address</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Contract Date</u>	<u>Note: Currently there are</u>
11822 Rocking Horse Road	\$479,900	2/6/2006	15 homes listed for sale in
4711 Topping Road	\$479,000	2/7/2006	Randolph Hills and 1 home
4705 Red Fox Road	\$475,000	2/18/2006	listed for sale in Franklin Park.
11414 Grayling Lane	\$450,000	3/1/2006	

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