

The ECHO

The Newsletter of the Randolph Civic Association

Volume 53, Issue 5

March 2010

RCA Seeks to Re-establish Neighborhood Watch

by David Matera, RCA Public Safety Chair

Hello, everyone. As you may recall, RCA President Matthew Tifford wrote in the last issue of the Echo about reviving our community's neighborhood watch program. I am still looking for volunteers to assist in this endeavor. I also wrote earlier about how important it is to have a community that

Please consider being a volunteer for the Neighborhood Watch. For more information contact David Matera by email at safety@randolphcivic.org

is involved in its own safety. I hope you all take pride in our neigh-

borhood, as much as I do. I monitor police and fire calls, as well as crime trends, through the county as well as right here in our area. I firmly believe that if we were to stand up and take action when necessary, our streets will become safer for everyone. Not that it is terrible now, but there is always room for improvement, such as the lighted basketball court in the park. People should never be afraid or intimidated to contact police or fire personnel when necessary. These public service professionals and volunteers are here to help each and every one of us, but they cannot help if they are unaware of problems.

I am looking for as many people that are interested to take part in the Neighborhood Watch, such as being a block captain, in which you will monitor activities in your area and report on any issues that may crop up. I also would be more than happy to meet with you, in a group setting, to discuss home safety issues, such as what types of locks, doors, and lighting may make your home safer.

If you are interested in either being part of our neighborhood watch, or a home safety class, please drop me

an e-mail at safety@randolphcivic.org. We are a community of many concerned and responsible individuals. With your assistance, we can make the Neighborhood Watch program successful.

RCA Communities Dig Out from Unprecedented Amounts of Snow

by Matt Tifford

The remnants of our recent blizzard still covers most of our neighborhood, with mounds of dirty snow and ice piled high at the curb. Crews have come in with heavy equipment to give us safe, passable streets, but only after much time had passed and after being told repeatedly that we had already been "plowed." During this time the RCA was in constant contact with the County Council, including Councilmember Berliner's office.

Our patience and understanding regarding this



Snow crumples a Randolph Hills carport

record-breaking event eventually gave way to frustration. The RCA received numer- (continued on page 6)

Upcoming Events

RCA Executive Board Meeting

March 4th, 2010 8:00pm-10:00pm

Review of draft 2010-2011 budget and other administrative items

RCA General Membership Meeting: Public Safety in Our Community

April 1st, 2010 8:00pm-10:00pm

The theme for this meeting will be public safety and we will be welcoming several notable leaders from the County responsible for ensuring the safety of our neighborhood. The list of speakers will be announced in the next issue.

RCA Executive Committee and Committee Chairs for 2009-2010

OFFICERS

President
Matthew Tifford
11235 Ashley Drive
301-770-4377

Vice President
Dan Hoffman
4602 Wilwyn Way
301-938-7494

2nd Vice President
Chad Salganik
4818 Mori Drive
202-359-6158

Secretary
Steve Feehan
4809 Wyaconda Road
202-316-8899

Treasurer
Nick Kriesle
4302 Star Lane
301-770-0119

Directors
Kevin Kline
4808 Randolph Road
301-230-1486

Frank Shore
11230 Troy Road
301-468-1225

Karen Helfert
11429 Ashley Drive
301-468-0236

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND POINTS OF CONTACT

Echo Editor
Mark Nensel
marknensel@yahoo.com

Echo Production
Huyen Nguyen
12115 Portree Drive
301-770-3389

Echo Advertising
Kendra Fletcher
12109 Galena Road
703-863-0906

Communications Committee
(Primary Contact for Media
Requests)
Dan Hoffman
4602 Wilwyn Way
301-938-7494

Membership and Welcome
Committee
John Kehoe
4814 Red Fox Road
301-231-4933

Environment and Services
Committee
Matthew Tifford
11235 Ashley Drive
301-770-4377

Education Committee
George Gadbois
4718 Topping Road
301-770-5386

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

Webmaster
Chad Salganik
4818 Mori Drive
202-359-6158

Public Safety Committee
David Matera
safety@randolphcivic.org
202-412-6820

External Affairs Committee
Dan Hoffman
4602 Wilwyn Way
301-938-7494

Ways and Means
Nick Kriesle
4302 Star Lane
301-770-0119

President's Message

by Matthew Tifford, RCA President

I'm sure we can all agree that this has been a remarkable winter, though whether that remarkability is defined as a positive or negative may be hotly debated! Certainly for some, the snow storm brought a great deal of misery. For many, however, the storm brought good as well. The most common story heard around the RCA is that of residents looking out for one another, and making friends with neighbors who they'd never met before.

This was also a great opportunity to show the value of our Civic Association during a crisis situation. Through the RCA Hotline and Yahoo group, we were able to identify folks in need and coordinate with volunteers to get help to those needy individuals.

When county plowing efforts proved less than satisfactory, we were also able to work with Councilmember Berliner's staff to make sure those streets were eventually plowed. We plan to follow up with the County Council to find ways to improve plowing efforts in the future.

Looking forward, we have a community meeting with Parks on the possibility of a new Dog Park in Randolph Hills Park. For more information, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/randolphdogclub/> and join the dog club yahoo group.

Also in this issue, we have a newly updated list of local teenagers available for snow shoveling, lawn mowing, and leaf raking. Don't miss your chance to order mulch from the Boy Scouts, as well as cookies from the Girl Scouts. Our push for Neighborhood Watch volunteers continues, and we have an interesting proposal for reducing train noise along the CSX/MARC tracks.

Hope to see you at the next meeting!

RCA Telephone Number: (240)668-4722.

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

Membership in the RCA is \$10.00 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. If you would like to send an article in for consideration, please email the article to info@randolphcivic.org.

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

Neighborhood News in Brief

- **Call for Nominations!** It's that time of year again, and we could use some more volunteers to help us run this great organization. We made the official call for nominations at the last general membership meeting on February 4th. While I will continue to be as active as always with the civic association, my two year term as President will be up after the next election. All Board positions are up for election except the two Director positions held by Karen Helfert and Kevin Kline. All others are term-limited, with the exception of Nick Kriesle, who may run for another term as Treasurer. Please let us know if you are interested. Nominations must be received by Monday, April 8th and can be sent to info@randolphcivic.org.
- **Know of someone new to the neighborhood?** Let the Welcome Wagon know! The Welcome Wagon volunteers deliver baked goodies and a welcome letter from the neighborhood to our newest neighbors. If you know of a new owner or renter or you'd like to help with the Welcome Wagon, email Alison Dewey at sabaly@hotmail.com.
- **With important County Council and other elections coming this fall, the RCA is considering putting together a Voters Guide for RCA residents.** This would NOT include endorsements of candidates, but rather information on issues relevant to RCA-land and where County leaders stand. If you have any thoughts, comments, or would like to help develop the criteria and content, please contact dan@randolphcivic.org
- **Boy Scout Troop 1083 Spring Mulch Sale;** We would prefer to get orders by February 26th for delivery on March 12-14; \$4 per 3 cubic foot bag of Mountain Top Shredded Hardwood Bark; \$3.75 each for orders of 20 bags or more. Call 301-933-0048 or email dave.judi.talbott@verizon.net; Free local delivery to your driveway. The Troop will take orders until they run out.

Do you have a quick bite of news you'd like to share with the neighborhood? Please feel free to submit a few sentences to info@randolphcivic.org by the deadlines posted on page 15 of this issue. Thank you!

Community Fixtures: The Pre-Release and Reentry Services Center

by Dan Hoffman

We're starting a new feature in The Echo to highlight various organizations, businesses or resources in our community that people may not know much about, or that they even exist.

I recently had the opportunity to attend a community meeting at what RCA-land residents commonly refer to simply as 'the Pre-release Center' (located at 11651 Nebel Street, across from the former Sport and Health Club -- just down the street from White Flint Metro and Harris Teeter). I met the Chief of the center, Stephan LoBuglio, and asked him for some information that we could provide to our residents in an effort to build awareness and understanding.

Echo: What is your title and role at the center?

Stephan LoBuglio: My title is Chief of the Pre-Release and Reentry Services Division of the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. I oversee the center and its programs.

Echo: How long has the center been in operation and what is its mission?

SL: Work release began in Montgomery County in 1969, and over 15,000 clients have been served in our forty year history. The first location for Work Release was the Montgomery County Detention Center in 1969. In 1972, the first offsite location on Huff Court (next to White Flint Mall) was established. The current center was built in 1978 and has been expanded twice. We work with individuals who are incarcerated [and] who are soon to be released. They come from either the local system, the state system, or the federal system, and all are within one year of release. Actually, most are within six months of release. The mission of the programs is to provide

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Guest Contributor: At-Large Councilmember Marc Elrich

What is Bus Rapid Transit?

In Montgomery County there is little opportunity to add additional roadway capacity, especially in the denser, more urban areas. If the Washington Council of Governments (COG) population projects are accurate, COG predicts that Montgomery County will grow by about a third by 2050. With the inability to expand the roadway system and an increasing population, alternative transportation methods need to be considered. At \$10 - \$25 million per mile, bus rapid transit (BRT) is affordable and allows for more interconnecting routes. Representatives of the Randolph Civic Association (RCA) have briefed me on how important connectivity and transit options are to residents of "RCA-Land" and BRT could play an important role in meeting those needs.

What is BRT? Think of a rail system with dedicated right of ways, station stops, high quality vehicles, frequent reliable fast service, but the vehicle has rubber tires instead of steel wheels. BRT combines the most attractive components of light rail with the flexibility and lower cost of bus technology. With dedicated lanes and signal priority, BRT moves faster than regular traffic, offering a more efficient ride for passengers. In addition, BRT can be deployed more quickly than light rail and at a fraction of the cost.

As the BRT system is built, the benefits of each completed segment can be realized immediately, but true value comes with the completion of a system which connects all the County's housing areas with its job centers. BRT has already been proposed as one of the primary transit improvements for the White Flint area in the White Flint Sector Plan. For neighborhoods such as those represented by the RCA, a comprehensive BRT system would connect them with many other parts of the County. There could be 2-3 potential stops within walking distance.

Because the vehicles operate in guideways, the lanes are narrow with minimal right of way requirements. The guideways can usually fit in existing road median strips thus not requiring the acquisition of expensive new property. BRT routes can be converted to light rail (LRT) if demand warrants in the future. BRT, LRT, Metrorail and local bus service can work together to create a complete public transportation system. Current buses can be cost effectively outfitted with equipment to use the guideways, but as new stock is added, it can be upgraded to make the rapid transit experience even better. Vehicles can drive into existing stations without elaborate modifications.

Finally, if we are to meet our CO2 reduction targets, we need to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in Montgomery County by 8 - 10% to get back to 2002 levels and somewhere between 15-20% to get back to

1990 levels. 8%, 15%, 20% are doable numbers. Not everyone has to get out of their car. To the extent that there are 8% to 15% fewer vehicles on the road, then the intersections begin to clear up, and the street network begins to work much better for those still driving and for the buses still in regular traffic.

Cleaner air, less congested roads, extensive convenient service, and supporting a healthy and sustainable economic development -- BRT is a transportation solution for Montgomery County in the 21st century.

[Editor's Note: Marc Elrich is an At-Large County Councilmember and resident of Takoma Park. Councilmember Elrich currently serves on the Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED). Marc also serves on the Public Safety Committee, where he is the Lead Member for Youth Programs. The RCA has supported the inclusion of BRT in the White Flint Sector Plan. For more information on BRT visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov and click on Councilmember Elrich's page. In each issue of The Echo, we will attempt to include an article of special community interest from a "Guest Contributor" who serves as one of our County leaders. We thank Councilmember Elrich for being the contributor for this issue.]

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RCA Considers FRA Quiet Zone for Randolph Hills

by Kevin Jackson

Though train whistles have been used informally for over a century, it wasn't until 1994 -- when Congress directed the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to create a nationwide rule ensuring all trains blow their whistle for ¼ mile approaching each and every crossing -- that noise issues have become significant. Congress, however, directed FRA to also develop a quiet alternative to whistles called Quiet Zones which prohibit use of whistles and rely instead on gates and other devices. For those that do not know, the FRA is the federal US Department of Transportation sub-agency that regulates the operation of the nation's railways, such as the CSX Railway and the 2 grade crossings, and possibly a third crossing, adjoining Randolph Hills. FRA records indicate that over 60 trains use the CSX railway next to Randolph Hills daily.

The Quiet Zone Program was intended to give communities a safe but quiet alternative to mandatory use of whistles at grade crossings through the use of FRA-approved gates and other safety devices, hence the name Quiet Zone. The improved gates and devices prevent pedestrians and vehicles from crossing railways when a train is approaching and have been established safely and successfully in Hagerstown and elsewhere in the DC area, and throughout the U.S. FRA maintains an interactive website for public use to calculate the Quiet Zone devices needed at a particular crossing. Other communities near Randolph Hills have expressed strong interest in establishing a quiet zone area adjacent to Randolph Hills/Garrett Park areas. Interested readers should email info@randolphcivic.org to learn more or to get involved.



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Community Fixture
(continued from page 3)

community residential and non-residential alternatives to secure confinement for adult residents and to provide reentry services while maintaining community safety.

Echo: Can you describe a typical day for one of your residents?

SL: All clients are required to work, participate in treatment, and are encouraged to involve their family members. The hourly breakdown on a given day might be: Ten hours of work including travel time, two hours for treatment including travel time, two hours with family members. Additionally residents might be attending school – Montgomery College, High School, or an in-house GED program. On weekends, they travel to worship services, and depending on their progress in the program, may enjoy the privilege of being allowed to visit their families in their homes.

Echo: What are some misconceptions or frequently asked questions about the center?

SL: Given our population of individuals who have convicted criminal offenses, many individuals believe that the center must be a dangerous place to work, and poses risks to the community. In fact, our talented staff members successfully manage our population and center to create an environment of safety, order, responsibility, and accountability. We have few incidents of violence in our facility and that speaks to our attention to creating a productive, encouraging culture filled with high expectations. Our clients know that they must display excellent behavior and demonstrate commitment to their release preparation in order to stay within the program. Residents are only allowed into the community with prior staff approval, and we use technology and mobile teams to ensure that our clients are where they should be. We employ GPS technology extensively, and conduct three daily alcohol breath tests and three weekly drug screens. We are all about services and all about accountability. Out of 700 individuals served last year, two individuals escaped. Both were apprehended within three days, and were successfully prosecuted.

Echo: If someone wanted to get involved or volunteer, what kinds of opportunities are available and who would they contact?

SL: We have plenty of opportunities for volunteers including: mentoring, literacy tutoring, computer instruction, and career assistance. Our clients have many needs, and we pride ourselves in creating excellent volunteer opportunities. Interested potential volunteers can contact me at stefan.lobuglio@montgomerycountymd.gov or Unit Manager Patricia Braun at 240/773-4222 (pat.braun@montgomerycountymd.gov).

If you know of a "Community Fixture" that we should feature or would like to contribute a feature to the Echo, please contact Mark Nensel at marknensel@yahoo.com

Snow Removal
(continued from page 1)

ous complaints, and has sent the following letter to the County Council as a follow-up to our many phone calls: Councilmembers:

On behalf of the neighborhoods of the Randolph Civic Association, I am writing to express our dissatisfaction and disappointment with the quality of snow clearing and in particular the way snow clearing has been managed in Montgomery County following the recent snowstorms. We understand that the size and impact of the recent snowfalls are unprecedented, and that snow removal personnel worked long hours to try and return our area to normalcy. However, we trust you will understand our frustration upon discovering that while our streets were mostly impassable, the streets of nearby municipalities had been fully plowed. The disparity between county services and those provided by our incorporated neighbors was shockingly clear. Our frustration deepened when upon calling to report neighborhood streets in need of plowing, our residents were told that those streets had already been plowed. In reality, these streets had only been visited by a private contractor in a pickup truck spreading sand, leaving 10+ inches of snow and ice with a very small amount of sand on top. One resident witnessed a driver (again a private contractor) sending text messages as he drove down their street, plow lifted above the snow, spraying sand out the back.

Our goal in writing to you is to impress upon you the importance of changing the way the snow removal process is managed. We feel that a street should not be considered "plowed" until at least one lane has been cleared to the pavement. A street covered by 6-8 inches of packed snow and ice should not be considered "plowed." It is not safely passable by many vehicles, especially the lighter, more fuel efficient hybrid vehicles that many people have converted to in recent years. Of course, primary and secondary roads take priority given that they are essential for emergency personnel. However, we feel that the quality of product the County received from many private contractors was very poor. We feel that private contractors should be held accountable for the conditions of streets they are contracted to clear. Further, when a resident calls to find out when their streets will be plowed, they should be given an honest estimate as to when that will happen. Ideally, this information should also be available on the MCDOT website. We non-incorporated communities are frequently told that county services are equal to that of the incorporated towns and cities of Montgomery County. We hope that the Council will place a priority on making sure that this is the case and that future county snow response efforts are better managed.

*Sincerely,
Matthew Tifford
President, Randolph Civic Association*

RCA General Meeting Minutes

By Steve Feehan and Kevin Kline

This RCA general meeting was a Special Education Forum. The guest speakers were: School Board President Pat O'Neill, School Board Member Laura Berthiaume and Viers Mill Elementary Principal Matt Devan.

Jane de Winter, a candidate for the County Council



RCA Education Panel (from left): Jane de Winter, Principal Matt Devan, School Board President Pat O'Neill, and School Board Member Laura Berthiaume

At-Large, introduced herself and our panel of speakers. County Councilmember Valerie Ervin was unable to attend as planned, but sent a representative. Each panel member delivered short introductory remarks, and then the floor was opened to questions. For over an hour RCA-ers asked questions and received answers on the County school budget, school capacity, programs and curriculum.

This was the first visit by Pat O'Neill to the RCA. Laura Berthiaume has attended RCA meetings in the past, and the RCA has been in regular communication with Ms. Berthiaume on school issues.

School Board President Pat O'Neill spoke first, asking how many attendees had children of school age; many RCA-ers raised their hands. O'Neill discussed the budget, and passed out flyers discussing the school budget crisis. Both O'Neill and Laura discussed the \$23.4 Million in fines that Montgomery County will suffer due to the "Maintenance of Effort" charge leveled by the State of Maryland. All agreed it is a complex and unfair situation.

Much discussion revolved around the number of students (capacity) at Viers Mill Elementary. The latest Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) has already been approved by the School Board, includ-

ing funds for a building addition at Viers Mill Elementary. O'Neill briefly mentioned our closed Rocking Horse elementary that the RCA wants re-opened. RCA-ers want the Viers Mill addition completed on-schedule and not delayed due to budget cuts.

The modernization of Wheaton High School has been delayed for years, and now is also in the latest CIP budget. The RCA supports and wants this modernization to remain in the budget with no further delays.

O'Neill discussed the ideal size of an elementary school. Principal Matt Devan thought between 450-600 students was the ideal size. Some RCA-ers suggested smaller was better. There apparently are no studies available as to ideal size.

Earlier Principal Matt Devan shared his background: from New York, started as a teacher, then school vice-principal, and now Principal of Viers Mill. Matt Devan described the recent visit by President Obama. Viers Mill was chosen for a visit by the President because it is a Blue Ribbon school.

RCA VP Dan Hoffman asked Matt Devan what he expects from a PTA (Parent Teachers Association). Devan replied that he expects it to be engaged, that size doesn't matter so much, and for the PTA to enhance the school experience for all the kids. The proper advocacy role of a PTA was also discussed.

RCA President Matt Tifford asked if the middle school consortium was on the chopping block due to the severe budget crisis. O'Neill did not think so. However, the 3-year grant for the program could be cut.



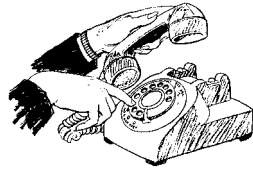
Viers Mill Elementary Principal Matt Devan, School Board President Pat O'Neill, and School Board Member Laura Berthiaume. At 2nd table are RCA Execs: Dan Hoffman, Chad Salganik, Nick Kriesle, and Matt Tifford (standing).

The guest speakers were thanked for visiting the RCA and given a round of applause. Special thanks to RCA-er Lindsay Hoffman (continued on page 13)

The RCA Hotline

240-668-4722 (4RCA)

Calls Received January 8, 2010
through February 16, 2010



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 on the website. 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.

12-03-09 (Thurs) at 1:28pm. Anonymous. Caller has a request. In the past, in the Echo, there has been a listing of emergency numbers – utility numbers, park police and so forth. Caller doesn't see that listing in the November issue and it would be handy to have as a quick reference. Caller asks that it be resumed. Thank you. *(Thank you for reminding us of this. The old list had become outdated and is need of updating. If anyone would like to volunteer to update the old list and possibly add new useful numbers, please email info@randolphcivic.org. We will then continue posting it in the Echo, space permitting, and it will always be available at www.randolphcivic.org)*

1-25-10 (Mon) at 7:02pm. Anonymous. Caller lives at 114xx Ashley Drive. Caller noticed that, in the last two Echos, there are no numbers listed like there used to be for bulk trash. Caller has some items to put out and would like that number.

1-27-10 (Wed) at 9:40pm. Anonymous. Caller was reading the Echo and, to the lady talking about her friend's boyfriend with the auto alarm, it's a shame we don't live in a perfect world where we don't know auto alarms because nobody steals from one another. We should attack the first problem – people stealing from our cars. Calling thinks the lady should be thankful she doesn't have neighbors like caller has. Caller saw someone in caller's side yard and went outside to see who it was. It was a neighbor caller had never seen before plundering around in caller's yard. When called asked her what she was doing, the neighbor got funny and said she 'was just looking around.' Caller says she had no business looking around in caller's side yard, backyard, looking around in caller's trash cans. Caller wouldn't have the gall to go into caller's neighbor's backyard without their permission. Caller believes that's the first step in stealing – looking around. So, to

the fellow with the car alarm, someone would say, 'I was just looking around.' Prior to stealing something, you were just looking around. Caller doesn't know if the lady wandering around caller's backyard was planning on stealing something. But, why don't you look in your own backyard first?

1-29-10 (Fri) at 9:06am. Anonymous. Caller wants to let the association know that the people at 114xx are continuously throwing bags of trash behind their house. Caller has no idea what could be in them since we have trash pickup but caller does see old tires. Caller is wondering if there's anything the association can do about this – it's beginning to look like a dump back there. *(RCA is looking into this. There are laws against dumping trash in unauthorized areas and public places.)*

1-29-10 (Fri) at 10:34am. From Info@RandolphCivic.org. Not anonymous. This is in response to the Hotline entry from 12/7/09 in the January Echo. I happen to live directly across the street from the "friend with a boyfriend" who has an alarm on his car. What the caller fails to mention is that this alarm is a motion sensor alarm that honks the car's horn 6 to 8 times in rapid succession. Boyfriend has the alarm set so sensitively that EVERY time a car drives down the street, all night long, the alarm goes off. In fact it's so sensitive it goes off when the wind blows hard. This gets old really fast when you've been woken every hour or so all night long. I get up early in the morning and don't appreciate being kept up all night by this nuisance. Another point the caller fails to mention is that this couple lives in the basement of the home so the alarm is not waking them. So what's the point of having an alarm on your car that you don't even hear? We neighbors have every right to complain. This issue has nothing to do with "older people" or "retirement homes", it has to do with total disrespect and inconsideration for your neighbors. If boyfriend is so worried about his car being broken into or stolen while parked in our neighborhood, perhaps he and his girlfriend could find a safer, gated community in the area.

2-6-10 (Sat) at 3:50pm. Not anonymous. Caller is calling from Ashley Drive to let you know that there's no power in caller's home and the adjacent homes. There's also no landline phone and no cable. In case anyone has an update on when Pepco is restoring electricity, let caller know! Caller can be reached on caller's cell phone. If you know whether parts of the neighborhood are with electricity, we'd like to know that, too. For the time being, caller is hunkering down with caller's gas stove – caller is making a lot of soup and hot cocoa. *(During the storm and in the days after, the RCA Yahoo* *(continued on page 9)*

Hotline Calls

(continued from page 8)

group served as an important link between neighbors who needed information and assistance. We strongly encourage all readers to sign up for the group by going to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/randolphca/> and joining. By doing this you can get the latest community information and bulletins. For example, after the storm RCA representatives were in continual contact with the County regarding snow removal and used the Yahoo group to find out which streets had not yet been plowed and report this to the County Council.)

2-8-10 (Mon) at 8:15am. Not anonymous. Caller lives in Randolph Hills and is not sure if this is the right number. Caller is wondering if we're ever going to get a plow to come through. If you know anything, will you please return the call? (See letter on page one for the RCA's response to the County.)

2-9-10 (Tues) at 4:42pm. Not anonymous. Caller is calling to report a concern about the snow removal on caller's street. Please return call.

2-9-10 (Tues) at 7:04pm. Not anonymous. Caller is looking for someone to help caller with snow removal. Please return call.

2-9-10 (Tues) at 8:10pm. Same caller. What caller really needs is just someone to shovel for caller – caller's driveway or walkway. Thank you!

2-10-10 (Wed) at 8:03pm. Not anonymous. Caller is looking for someone who can clear caller's driveway tomorrow. Please return call. Thank you!

2-13-10 (Sat) at 10:22am. Not anonymous. After the first blizzard and four nights without electricity, caller had to get out of the house, which was 30-something degrees. Caller had a wonderful neighbor help so caller could get out. Caller went somewhere warm and was away for five days. Then we had the second snow storm and caller thought, oh my, how am I going to get back home? When caller got home, caller found that caller's driveway and sidewalk and the walkway to caller's door had been shoveled. Caller doesn't know who did it. Caller's neighbors don't know who did it. Caller doesn't know how to thank them. Caller would have been lost without them. They are such a good person. Thank you so so much to whoever did this for me. (A Group of RCA volunteers had been contacted about houses in need, yours was probably one of these. If so, you're welcome!)

2-13-10 (Sat) at 11:27am. Not anonymous. Caller is calling to report that a manhole cover over the gas line was knocked off recently by a snowplow and is missing in front of 117xx Ashley Drive. The Washington Gas

Company was not interested in fixing it when caller called them and they said to call back only if gas is escaping. Caller doesn't know who else to call. There are also several potholes around it. So, caller doesn't know what to do with that.

From Rosa Wong on the RCA Yahoo Group (Tue, Feb 16, 2010 at 6:11 PM) I want to share the snow shovel truck drove by our street today on Mori. It is nice that we have both lanes open now for the most part of the neighborhood. However, the truck didn't only remove the snow, it also removed some flower bed, mud, and broke all the tiles walkway outside our house. I am thankful for the truck to clean up the snow, just too bad there is collateral damage.

From District 18 State Delegate Jeffery Waldstreicher (Thu, Feb 18, 2010 at 4:53 PM) Ms. Wong, There is a County program specifically for making residents whole where County plows (or their contractors) accidentally create damage. I've heard they actually do a fantastic job with the repairs. I would be happy to work this on your behalf. Contact Carol Sloan in my office and we'll make it happen. (301) 858-3130 Best, Jeff (*This Yahoo group is monitored by some of our elected officials. Ms. Wong had an issue, and was able to get constituent service directly from one of her representatives. Of course, nothing is a replacement for sending your concerns directly to the RCA or the appropriate elected official, but it just goes to show the value of joining the Yahoo group.*)

Upcoming Vote to Change RCA By-Laws

A Message from the RCA Executive Committee

The following changes will be voted on at the next RCA General Membership meeting in April. They have been approved by the Board and are being submitted for member consideration prior to a vote. A rationale is provided in parenthesis.

Article III, Section 2, a. be revised to read "Officers shall be elected for a term of one year, **except for the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be elected to a term of 3 years, to maintain fiscal oversight, and continuity** (e.g., lessen changes to check signing cards, etc and help with continuity at that position).

Article IV, Section 4, e. be revised to read "Shall periodically prepare an income statement disclosing total receipts and expenditures by major categories. Such statement will be presented to the Executive Committee and published in the ECHO **or via the Internet.**"

Article VII, Section 4 be revised to read "The annual meeting and election of officers shall be held on the first Thursday in ~~February~~ **April** of each year unless voted otherwise by a majority of the Executive Committee. (*This is to align the by-laws with the annual calendar adopted by the Board last summer*)

RCF NEWS

President's Message

by Chad Salganik, Interim RCF President

You may have noticed that the RCF does not hold regular meetings like those of the RCA. The RCF is an important aspect of Randolph Hills, Franklin Park, Montrose Park and other surrounding communities, but its operation is different than that of the RCA. They are completely separate organizations, legally and financially. The RCF provides a way for residents to make tax-deductible donations towards activities related to neighborhood beautification, education, among other things. Rather than semi-monthly meetings, the RCF has an Annual Meeting. Last year we had a very enjoyable spaghetti dinner at the Viers Mill Rec Center that was open to everyone and soon we will announce the date for the next Annual Meeting. The recent blizzard reminded all of us how important it is to have a connected community that looks out for residents in need. This will no doubt be a topic of conversation among RCF Board members in the coming weeks as we look towards the Annual Meeting.

Having a connected community, or as some people call it, a "community village" means creating a network of volunteers who provide services like lawn care, meals, childcare, and some times they just 'check-in' on residents living alone. These services are provided to those who need them at no charge. The intended recipients may be elderly (also referred to as "aging in place"), sick, or just temporarily in need. Creating this community village is no easy task, but the County provides many resources for neighborhoods attempting to build something like this. One of our neighborhood volunteers will be writing an article for the next Echo about what goes into creating a community village. I hope you take the time to read it!

Also, as you may have noticed in the announcement below, we have been given a generous gift towards our neighborhood entrance beautification fund. This brings the total amount collected for this fund to almost \$1500. If you would like to provide specific suggestions on how this money should be put to use, please email info@randolphcivicfoundation.org. Thank you!

Last December, Denise Szczur gave a gift of \$500 to the RCF to be used towards beautification of our neighborhood. Such gifts, and those of all RCA-ers, help to keep our neighborhood an attractive place to live. Now only if spring would arrive!

News from Girl Scout Troop 1028

by Jennifer Tifford

This winter we have continued our study of Aerospace, which was topped off with a visit by guest speaker Dr. Fred Herrero, Senior Scientist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. In his presentation, we learned about the northern lights and solar winds and were awed by amazing pictures of our solar system presented in a power point show.

We also have planned a joint trip with the Boy Scouts to enjoy a day of skiing and snow tubing at Ski Liberty. For some of the girls it will be their first time on a mountain enjoying the winter sports.

We are also planning our World Thinking Day 2010 celebration. Each year on February 22, the girls participate in activities, games and projects with global themes to honor their sister Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in other countries. The theme for World Thinking Day 2010 is girls worldwide say "together we can end extreme poverty and hunger."

We are involved with our annual cookie sales right now. Please support your local Troop 1028. You can buy cookies for yourself or donate them to a local shelter or the military troops overseas. We are selling cookies this year to help with the cost of our camping trip in the spring and all the other fun and educational activities we do all year.

Troop 1028 is a combined troop featuring Daisies, Brownies, and Junior Girl Scouts, and meets at Viers Mill recreation center every-other Thursday. If you have any questions about our troop feel free to contact Jennifer Tifford at tiffordband@gmail.com

For more information about getting your daughter involved with Troop 1028, contact Jennifer Tifford at tiffordband@gmail.com

RCF Executive Committee for 2009-2010

OFFICERS	4707 Coachway Drive
President	301-881-0283
VACANT	
Directors	
Vice President	Mike Saunders
Chad Salganik	12107 Hunters Lane
4818 Mori Drive	301-468-9268
202-359-6158	
Secretary	Dan Hoffman
Matt Tifford	4602 Wilwyn Way
11235 Ashley Drive	301-938-7494
301-770-4377	
Treasurer	George Gadbois
Richard Zierdt	4718 Topping Road
	301-770-5386

The Randolph Civic Foundation originated in 1996. It was formed to provide educational and charitable services to the Randolph Community.

www.RandolphCivicFoundation.org - Phone: 301-468-0236

Troop 1083 News

By Ben Pitkin, Assistant Scoutmaster

Troop 1083 conducts two major fundraisers each year: a Christmas tree sale in November-December, and a mulch sale for which orders are accepted until late February. In both cases—trees and mulch—the troop provides free local delivery. 2010 mulch deliveries are to take place the weekend of March 12–14. We want to offer sincere thanks to everyone who supported us at the tree sale, and also to those who bought mulch from us. If you meant to order mulch and it slipped your mind (hey, blizzards can do that!), check with Scoutmaster Dave Talbott at 301-933-0048 or e-mail him at Dave.Judi.Talbott@verizon.net. There may still be some mulch available for sale.

On January 15, 2010, John Pitkin passed his Eagle Scout Board of Review -- the last requirement he needed to meet to earn the Eagle rank. We hope John is only the first of many Troop 1083 scouts attaining Eagle rank in 2010!

In late January, Troop 1083 scouts attended the Montgomery District Klondike Derby at Little Bennett Regional Park for two days and two very cold nights of camping and gaming. The scouts slept out in tents and cooked outside too. The temperatures dropped into the twenties at night, well below freezing and well within the requirements for all the scouts to earn their symbol of polar bear brotherhood -- the polar bear patch. The Derby events included various tests of Scout craft, first aid and life-saving skills and knowledge and teambuilding exercises. WEBELOS II Scouts from Packs 1081 and 493 joined the Troop Saturday evening for some lessons in fire-building and enjoyed dinner before returning home to their warm beds to sleep.

Troop 1083's Winter Court of Honor (COH) was scheduled for February 7 but you may recall there was a little snowfall that caused some disruptions that weekend. So the COH will be recapped in next month's article.

Upcoming events include a ski trip to Ski Liberty, March WEBELOS Weekend, and campouts at Wye River Island and Sandy Point State Park. 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's web page at www.troop1083.org.

For more information about getting your son involved with Boy Scout Troop 1083, contact Scoutmaster Dave Talbott at 301-933-0048 or visit www.troop1083.org

Young Entrepreneurs at Your Service:

While the Great 2010 Snowmageddon storms of February 6 and February 10 have come and gone, leaving approximately three feet of snow in the RCA community, winter is not quite over. March 20 (the first day of Spring, believe it or not) is still a few weeks away. You may recall, last March 2, 2009, it snowed six inches around here. Seems like nothing at all, doesn't it? In any case, it may snow again. And we have put out the call for RCA entrepreneurs and youngsters who will offer their snow shoveling services to the neighborhood. A list of the young, able, and stout of spirit and shovel follows:

Anthony Gadbois 240-672-1940
Aidan Gibbons* 301-816-2367
David Santos..... 301-468-1756

*Also available for babysitting and dog walking.

(Note: The RCA salutes these young adults for their willingness to work hard to make a buck! However, for liability purposes, we have to state that the RCA makes no claims or guarantees related to the service they provide.)



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For more information, go to <http://randolphcivic.org/echo/media-guide/> and click on the link for "RCA Media Kit". Or, just send an email to Kendra Fletcher at vtkendra@hotmail.com for more information.

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News from Venture Crew 1083

By Ben Pitkin, Corresponding Secretary

In January the Venture Crew participated in an annual midwinter competition of scout skills called the Montgomery District Klondike Derby. The Derby is held at Little Bennett Regional Park near Clarksburg, and involves camping out in (and being fully prepared for) less-than-toasty conditions.

In the Derby itself, participants go from station to station; at each they are tasked with demonstrating (or cleverly improvising) various scoutcraft, wilderness survival, and backwoods engineering skills. Examples are as varied as building a fire in the shortest possible time; identifying plant and animal species; tying various types of knots and explaining their uses; winter rescue techniques; building and testing a catapult; providing first aid under disabling conditions; and even the caber toss (of "Highland Games" fame). Of course, prior to the event, each team must construct a sled or wagon to haul their equipment from station to station (see last month's article at http://randolphcivic.org/echos/echo_jan_10.pdf for a look at Crew 1083's masterpiece).

Over thirty troops and crews were entered in the Derby, and most of them had teams for more than one patrol. And of all these entrants, can you guess which one scored the highest of all? Why yes, as a matter of fact, it was Crew 1083. Way to go, crew!

By the time you read this article, the Crew will at long last have completed the much-anticipated and oft-rescheduled curling outing. If it indeed comes to pass, pictures will appear in next month's article as evidence that we're not just making this "curling" stuff up.

Venturing is open to coed youth aged 14 through 21. Crew meetings are every second Monday night, from 6:30–7:30 pm at Viers Mill ES. Why not join us? Bring a like-minded friend so you'll already know someone else at the meeting! For more information about getting your son or daughter involved with Venture Crew 1083, contact Crew Advisor Greg Skolnik at 301-942-3755.

For more information about getting your child involved with Venture Crew 1083, contact Crew Advisor Greg Skolnik at 301-942-3755



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February RCA Meeting Minutes

(continued from page 7)

for arranging this special Education Forum, and for inviting the key school personnel that make the decisions that affect our neighborhood schools.

Next, attention turned to RCA business. Approved by RCA majority voice-vote: the November 2009 meeting minutes as published in the December 2009 Echo newsletter. Approved by majority voice-vote: the Treasurer's Report as published on our website www.randolphcivic.org. Also reported: the RCA now has over 500 members, so the 2009 fall membership drive reached its goal, and now the RCA is growing again instead of being in decline.

RCA President Matt Tifford brought up the new Costco that may open in Wheaton Mall. The County may offer \$4 million in tax breaks to lure Costco into the Mall. Should the RCA take a stand, pro or con? After some discussion, no vote was taken, and the discussion was tabled.

VP Dan Hoffman gave a brief update on the MARC train station location. The RCA was very successful in coordinating its efforts with Garrett Park. Garrett Park carries some political clout because it's incorporated as a town. Garrett Park sent a nice letter in support of the Nicholson Court location for the train station. The RCA was very pleased with Garrett Park's support, and believe the Nicholson Court site for the new train station is back on track.

Director Kevin Kline reported that the elections, which were supposed to be held that night, were postponed by the Exec Committee in accordance with the RCA Bylaws. Traditionally, the RCA elections are held in June, but the Bylaws state the elections should be held in February of each year.

The Execs are going to ask RCA-ers to make three revisions to the RCA Bylaws: (1) to have the elections in April instead of February; (2) to have the Treasurer serve for 3 years instead of 1 year (so financial documents won't have to be changed so often), and (3) to make minor grammatical corrections throughout the Bylaws.

These changes will be published in the Echo newsletter and on the website. All RCA members will have an opportunity to review the changes and vote on them.

This RCA general meeting adjourned at 9:30pm. Thirty-one people were in attendance.

The next RCA General Membership Meeting is April 1st and the theme is public safety. Guest speakers will be announced in the next edition of the Echo. Make plans now to attend!

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Keep in touch with your neighbors! Join the RCA Yahoo Group at
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/randolphca/>

CLASSIFIEDS

The Echo publishes classified ads free for RCA members, to a maximum of one ad per year per household. Additional ads may be purchased for \$5.00. The Echo makes no claims or guarantees regarding the quality of goods or services sold.

WATERCOLOR CLASSES. Learn to paint in nearby Garrett Park! Small, informal classes for adults. All levels welcome, including complete beginners. Held in teacher's Victorian home. Martha Seigel, MFA, the American University, 27 years experience. Call 301-946-5388.

Note to Contributors:

Deadlines for the remainder of the 2009-2010 Issue year are:

April 2010.....	March 8th
May 2010	April 9th
June/July/Aug 2010	May 3rd

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

<u>Address...</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Sold Price</u>	<u>DOM</u>	<u>Subsidy</u>	<u>Date Settled</u>
4806 Topping Road	\$329,900	\$329,000	6	\$5,000	04-Nov-09
4818 Oxbow Road	\$314,999	\$325,000	33	\$10,500	23-Nov-09
12112 Lauderdale Drive	\$390,000	\$390,000	2	\$11,000	23-Nov-09
5004 Macon Road	\$299,900	\$319,900	20	\$9,597	09-Dec-09
12109 Putnam Road	\$395,000	\$395,000	7	\$11,000	24-Dec-09
11116 Schuylkill Road	\$339,950	\$325,000	11	\$0	31-Dec-09
11403 Patapsco Road	\$249,900	\$250,000	5	\$0	29-Jan-10

Denise's recent listings and sales...

7059 Wilson Lane, Bethesda \$830,000 (L)
 3906 Underwood St., Chevy Chase \$915,000 (S)
 10500 Rockville Pike #410, Rockville \$275,000 (L)
 4607 Coachway Drive, N. Bethesda \$297,500 (L)
 11427 Schuylkill Road, N. Bethesda \$365,000 (L)
 4148 Mount Olney Lane, Olney \$430,000 (S)
 24 Courthouse Sq., #802, Rockville \$235,000 (L)
 9206 Shelton Street, Bethesda \$600,000 (L)
 10911 Troy Road, N. Bethesda \$370,000 (L)

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