

From the President

by Gary Brohawn

Good News - Your board of directors is making real progress on the new Rt. 40 sign for the Valley Mede entrance. We've raised \$3000, which is about half the cost of the project. Check the website for mock-up photos.

Bad News – Our dues collection is down. Out of 700 homes in the greater Valley Mede neighborhood, we've received dues from just over 100.

Good News – The board is considering combining the VM 5K race with the summer festival creating a fall race day followed by music and food. What do you think? Go to our website.

What's Happening with that Business Lot across the Street?

by Gary Brohawn

That empty lot on Rt. 40 between the Blockbuster and Nob Hill Swim Club was originally intended to be a 90-bed nursing home. Now the lot owners intend to change the zoning to a 2,000 SF retail space, a 5,000 SF restaurant space, and 84 parking spaces. The restaurant would be the size of a typical Panera Bread.

The zoning change request is for B-1, business local. There are over 50 business types in B-1, and you can have a say as to what you want or don't want on this property. You can attend a meeting for this purpose on May 4th at 6:30pm at the Ellicott City Senior Center, behind the library on Frederick Road.

Arcadia Cemetery Spring Cleaning

by Patti LeConte

We'll be working on a spring cleaning of the Arcadia Cemetery on Saturday, May 2nd from 8am – Noon. Last year's improvements kept the area looking much better all through the winter months, but you know how it goes....always something more to do! Bring your rakes, pruning shears/loppers and remember to wear long sleeves, pants, and sturdy work gloves. We are in need of drivers with pickup trucks or trailers to help us haul the yard waste to the landfill. Please email pattileconte@verizon.net if you can help.

Big John the Postman Retires

by Gary Brohawn

After 15 years delivering mail in Valley Mede and 25 years with the post office, Big John finally retired in February of 2009. Big John is actually John Dwyer who lives nearby off Illchester Road. John stands tall at 6 foot 4 and was often seen stuffed into that small post office truck. John told me on his last day that he looked forward to retirement, but will miss all the wonderful people he met in our beautiful community.

Enjoying retirement was Big John's plan., but grandchildren changed all that. John says he's busier than ever, saying "How did I ever fit work into my schedule." John has three grandchildren living nearby in York, PA, one grandson only a few weeks old.

John loved being a letter carrier, but with carpal tunnel, ulnar nerve damage, and both shoulders scheduled for surgery this fall, it was time to retire. John is never one to complain and doesn't blame all his injuries on the job, but in 1993 during a terrible ice storm, John fell four times on the ice before giving up for the day.

John says talking to the folks in Valley Mede every day made his job and life wonderful. In fact, many neighbors along Big John's route had posters, balloons, and even a flag hanging from their mail boxes on Big John's last day of work. John said "You'd think the Pope was coming through the neighborhood!"



Big John Dwyer On His Last Day

Walking Safely

by Beth Henderson

Walking is America's most popular fitness activity and 5 times as popular as jogging. If you walk 2-3 miles per day 3 times per week you can transform your body and mind. Now that the temperatures are up and the flowers are out, our neighborhood is full of folks reaping the rewards of a walk. Tips for safe walking:

1. Wear bright/light colored clothing and reflective materials. Dark blue, black and grey are the least visible.
2. Carry a flashlight at night. You may want to carry identification in case of an emergency and pepper spray as well.
3. Use a sidewalk and stay on the right side or if there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic.
4. Make eye-contact with drivers. If you only look at the car, you can't be certain you've been seen.
5. Avoid headphone and cell phone use because they limit your attention.

Civil War Veteran Honored

by Joetta Cramm

At 11 a m, on Monday, May 25th, Howard County will have the opportunity to honor a Civil War veteran, Col. Ephraim Anderson, whose long lost grave was located in Spring 2008.

After the Civil War, Anderson bought 31 acres of land in the area of Hanover Rd. in Elkridge. He paid the two men who sold him the property to build a church on a small lot on the ground. Through the years, the church disappeared and his burial lot marker was desecrated. Research brought back to the Anderson family the location of their relative's burial place.

Contact the GECA (Greater Elkridge Community Associations) for more details about this event at www.geca-elkridge.org.

4TH OF JULY PARADE AT 10AM

by Lisa Higdon

Come celebrate at the Valley Mede 4th of July Parade in Cypressmede Park! Decorate your bike, scooter, or stroller- be creative! Pets are also welcome to march. If you can help, contact Lisa Higdon at 410-461-3092 or higdonp@hotmail.com.

You're Being Published

by Beth Henderson

On the suggestion of a neighbor, our newsletter will begin a new free feature next quarter. "Neighbor to Neighbor" will accept your messages for print. Send your birthday wishes, kids accomplishments, retirement congratulations and thanks for being great neighbors to our website:

www.valleymede.org.



Spring is here!!

Pay your dues of \$12.00 if your address label reads RESIDENT.

Send your payment to Bill Henderson, 9853 Helmwood Court, Ellicott City, MD, 21042

Make check payable to VMCA. Thanks!!! (send \$13 to use PayPal: gbrohawn@verizon.net)

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Meets 6:00am at Cypressmede Park
Monday, Wednesday & Friday

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Session II: July 13 – August 7
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