
The Greater VALLEY MEDE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Number 1

January 2009

From the President

by Gary Brohawn

Happy New Year!! And what a great year we will have here at Valley Mede. Many activities are scheduled all focused on the family. Check your newsletter and the street signs for details.

As you know, January always starts our yearly community dues campaign. Dues in Valley Mede are strictly voluntary; you will receive the Valley Mede Newsletter whether you pay or not. However, if you want to contribute to the success of the Valley Mede Community Association and its activities, and have a vote during our yearly community meeting, please send in your dues of \$12 dollars. What a bargain!

We send newsletters to 700 residents in the Greater Valley Mede area. Here's the challenge: Let's try for 50% participation from our Valley Mede community—350 homes. Write that check now!!!

Election of 2009 VMCA Board

by Gary Brohawn

On November 6, 2008, the VMCA held its annual community meeting at Saint John's Lane Elementary School. This year's meeting had an added twist – we invited our two council representatives, Courtney Watson and Greg Fox. But the main purpose of this meeting was to elect the 2009 Board of Directors. As it was a heated battle for many of the positions, may I present to you the winners of this year's elections:

President – Gary Brohawn

Vice President - Brian Winter

Treasurer - Bill Henderson

Secretary - Patti LeConte

Additional Board Member - Charlie Bell

Additional Board Member - Beth Henderson

Additional Board Member - Allison Anderson

Additional Board Member – Lisa Higdon

County Council Members Speak At VMCA Meeting

by Patti LeConte

Council Members Greg Fox and Courtney Watson led an informal talk at the VMCA General Meeting November 6th. Both representatives were invited because Valley Mede is split between their two districts. We were given an overview of their positions and they answered questions about power outages, zoning issues, the Turf Valley development plan, Route 40 plan, recycling program, enforcing community association covenants, and the Healthy Howard plan.

Fox and Watson both say that the biggest part of their job is constituent services. If you are having a problem inside the county and don't know which government agency to contact or if you aren't getting a resolution to the problem, they urge you to contact their office. If you would like to be kept up to date on council matters, send an email to be added to their email distribution lists.

District 5:

Greg Fox gfox@howardcountymd.gov

Assistant - Karen Knight kknight@howardcountymd.gov

District 1:

Courtney Watson cwatson@howardcountymd.gov

Assistant-Terry Chaconas tchaconas@howardcountymd.gov



Greg Fox and Courtney Watson

Neighborhood Love

by Beth Henderson

Do you realize buying your 40 year-old home was a modern thing to do? The "living better not bigger" trend is here and I think that is a great motto for Valley Mede. Vacuous McMansions crowded into awkward parcels stripped of trees do little to enhance happiness. The associated jumbo loan and monstrous utility bill can't be fun either.

In our neighborhood the streets are wide, home lots are large and trees are tall. We have our own large park and easy access to the retail world. Inside our homes all rooms are lived in and useful and the energy of a "human-sized" space makes us happy.

In the "Not So Big House", by Sarah Susanka, quality over quantity of floor space is emphasized. This architect describes the virtues of a quiet room meant for reading and conversation off a larger gathering room. She likes one eating area suitable for kid snack-time as well as Thanksgiving supper. For decoration, she likes permanent embellishments or things that stay in place if you "picked up your house and shook it". For example, handsome trim work around windows and doors, tile backsplashes, window seats, and built-ins add to the character of our homes and also the quality of our home-life

That choosing to live in a smaller home could bring happiness may seem overly dramatic, but it has been true for me. We've made improvements which enlarge our home including adding a garage and finishing the basement, but having an interior doorway moved and the living room furniture professionally re-positioned made bigger differences.

So here's to us, neighbors, for choosing to live smaller and smarter! And here's to making our neighborhood even better!

The Next Yard Sale – April 25th

We need a chairperson

Pay your dues of \$12.00 if your address label reads RESIDENT. Dues for 2009.

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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Valley Mede Neighbors Google Group

by Mark Kinzje

In case you haven't heard about it, the Valley Mede Neighbors Google Group is a way of communicating with your neighbors via email. If you are looking for a plumber or a babysitter, or have info you'd like to share with the community, just post a message to the group. Or you can sign up just to see what people have to say - all previous messages are listed and searchable on the Google Groups website. But this is a private list, open only to neighbors that live in Valley Mede or nearby communities, so only registered members can search, send or receive these messages.

To find out more about Google Groups in general, go to <http://groups.google.com/>. Send an email to valleymedeneighbors@gmail.com to join the group, and we'll add you to the group. Please tell us your real name and address so we can verify that you live in Valley Mede.

Lawn Care Tips

by Bill Henderson

Reduce your lawn size and increase native plant and wildlife diversity. Native plants not only add beauty and diversity to the landscape, they create wildlife habitat, and perhaps best of all, require less work once established. Here are some suggestions for native perennials, grasses, shrubs and trees. Try enlarging flower and shrub beds using the "lasagna approach:" mow the lawn at the lowest setting and lay 5-6 sheets of newspaper down, cover with 2" of mulch, dig, plant flowers and shrubs through the newspaper. The newspaper will act as a weed barrier, kill any grass left under the newly laid mulch, and will eventually rot away.

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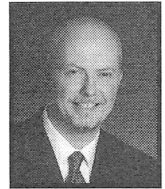
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Valley Mede Community Association is always looking for ideas and help!

Please share your time and energy by
working on a community project. Contact us
at www.valleymede.org and let us know how
you would like to be involved!

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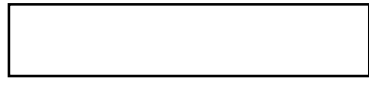


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Gary Brohawn, Editor
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