

Brookland & Bush Hill

NEWS

A Newsletter for the Residents of Brookland-Bush Hill and Gunnel Estates in Alexandria, Virginia

March 2005

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Members Asked to Vote on Bylaw Changes

Sharada Gilkey, *President BBHCA*—president@bbhca.org

Sometimes we have to step out of our comfort zones. As members of this civic association and community, I'm going to ask you to make that step. Since its inception approximately 20 years ago, the Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association has been governed by its constitution and bylaws (both of which, if you are so inclined, are available on the BBHCA Web site). Occasionally they have been tweaked to better reflect the current needs of the association. Now is that occasion.

Your active participation and feedback in this process is important. During the March 8 meeting, we will present and then vote on the above proposals. The bylaws amendment process requires that the proposed changes (if approved at the March meeting) be published in the May newsletter. Then a final vote on the bylaws amendments will be taken at the annual May meeting.

The Board is proposing the following bylaws changes at the March 8 meeting:

- Increase the membership dues from \$3 to \$5 for a single member and from \$6 to \$10 for a family.

Why? During 2004-2005, the membership approved the funds to cover the cost of mailing the newsletter. The current dues structure does not cover this additional cost and this

budget year we netted a negative -\$971. To account only for the mailing and postage costs, a dues increase is necessary. The proposed increase will cover only the additional cost for mailing the newsletter.

- Make the dues part of the budget rather than an item in the bylaws.

Why? Rather than have to amend the bylaws to raise the dues in the future, the dues will be approved with the budget process. Dues make up a majority of the budget and we believe the dues should not be relegated to the bylaws.

- Adjust the budget year (June 1 to May 31) to match the membership year September 1 to August 31.

Why? Currently the bylaws requires that the budget not be presented for approval until the September meeting, which means the board operates without an authorized budget from June 1 to the September meeting. We propose that the budget be approved at the annual May meeting, go into affect with the new membership year in September, and be effective through August 31 the following year. To account for possible changes that might be made by the incoming Board, amendments to the budget may be presented to the membership at the September meeting.

In addition, to cover the gap from June 1 to September 13, 2005, the

**BBHCA
Community Meeting
Tuesday, March 8, 2005
7:00 pm
Bush Hill Elementary School
(Cafeteria)**

AGENDA

- **Approval of Jan. 11 Meeting Minutes (See page 5)**
- **Board and Committee Reports**
- **Bylaws Proposal (Vote)**

PROGRAM

**Traffic Safety
& Teenage Driving
Captain Jesse Bowman,
Fairfax Police**

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Budget and Finance Committee will have to propose an interim budget.

We are extremely fortunate to have someone among us who will guide us, step by step, through the process of amending our bylaws—Bob Michie, former BBHCA president and current chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. He will address the proposed changes in this issue of the newsletter and at the March meeting. Please take a few minutes to read them in advance. ►

President's Message

Continued

We Missed You!

By the way, we really missed you at the January meeting. The emergency preparedness presentation by George Byer, a volunteer for the Red Cross, was highly informative, entertaining, practical, and life saving. Those who attended now have the resources and tools to be prepared for an emergency, no matter where they are and no matter when it occurs. Thanks to Randy Bowman for organizing the event.

Come to the March Meeting

The March meeting will feature another energetic and informative speaker, Police Captain Bowman, who is an expert in traffic safety and will address the problem of speeding among teenagers. Inexperience and speed are deadly partners behind the wheel. Parents of teens and soon to be teens are urged to attend. Other members of the community will also learn how they can help with this important issue.

Call for Volunteers

Thank you to Andrew Schneider who offered to tally the membership surveys. He will present the results at the March meeting. Former BBHCA Board member Mary Joe Bush has volunteered to assist with newsletter advertising as well as the annual Community Yard Sale in June. Barbara Sotirin has stepped up to serve as the chair of the Awards and Recognition Committee and needs a couple of eager individuals to help jump start this important initiative. Many, many thanks!

2005-2006 Call for Nominations

This is the fun part! Volunteering for the BBHCA really is a rewarding experience. No, you don't get paid, but you meet a lot of wonderful peo-

ple who truly care about their community. All positions are open for nomination: president, vice-president—newsletter, vice-president—membership, treasurer, and secretary. If you have questions or would like to submit your nomination (self or other), please contact John Neves, (703) 971-3962 or jjneves@aol.com by April 1, 2005. Elections will be held at the May 10, meeting.

See you March 8, at 7 pm in the Bush Hill Elementary cafeteria!

**The most important
motive for work in school
and in life is pleasure
in work, pleasure in its
result, and the knowledge
of the value of the result
to the community.**

—Albert Einstein (1879–1955)



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Street Light Outages	1-888-667-3000
Faifax County Zoning Enforcement	703-324-1300
Fairfax County Health Department.	703-246-2300
Supervisor Kaufman's Office	703-971-6262

Neighborhood Watch Update

Randall Bowman—*Neighborhood Watch Coordinator*
(703) 922-9334 bowmanrand@verizon.net



I hope that by the time you read this the snow will be behind us for this year (and Spring on the way!), but here's a good snow driving tip from the Franconia police: Remember to clear ALL of your car windows COMPLETELY, and brush the snow off the tops of your vehicles AND your headlights and tail lights before venturing out on the roads. Your actions can prevent accidents. Also, wash off your headlight lenses after driving on roads that are treated with salt and chemicals. The spray will coat your lenses and cause diminished illumination at a time you might REALLY NEED IT.

I was informed at the last BBHCA meeting in January that there had been a home burglary on Pratt Street right after Christmas. This incident had not been reported in the weekly incident summary report sent out by the Franconia police, and I'm follow-

ing up with them to see why—it may have just been an oversight. Other than that I've just noticed reports of some thefts from cars reported in our immediate area. However, here's a serious incident very close by which happened on Wednesday, January 19:

Crown Royal Drive / South Van Dorn St.: A woman was walking west-bound on Crown Royal Drive near South Van Dorn Street Wednesday evening when she was robbed. Around 8:40 p.m. January 19 a man exited a car and approached the 41-year-old Alexandria area woman. He displayed a gun and demanded her purse and jewelry. She complied and he fled back toward the car and drove away. The victim was uninjured. Police are looking for a black man, 5 feet 9 inches tall and 180 pounds. He was wearing a black snow hat and black jacket. There are no sufficient descriptors on the vehicle.

Also, there was a report of a purse snatching in the parking lot of Kohl's at Kingstowne on January 11 around 9 pm. As always, please be careful and aware of your surroundings when you are out and about.

I hope many of you will come to our March 8 program, which will feature guest speaker Captain Jesse Bowman, the commander of the Fairfax Police traffic division. He will be speaking on traffic safety. Those of you with teen drivers in the house may be particularly interested in light of the many tragic accidents involving our youngest drivers in the past year. Captain Bowman is an excellent speaker and offers many interesting and surprising facts, and is very passionate about his mission. Hope to see you there!

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Michael Fogarty & Sandra Wilkinson

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Brookland-Bush Hill Civic Association Officers and Committees

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Sharada Gilkey
703-313-8490
president@bbhca.org

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Newsletter
Judi Connelly
newsletter@bbhca.org

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Membership
Darrell Meyer
703-313-8490
membership@bbhca.org

SECRETARY

Helen Michie
703-971-3769

TREASURER

Michael Fogarty
703-719-7929, 703-719-0774
mfogarty1@cox.net

COMMITTEES

ZONING AND LAND USE

Roy Rice
703-971-4379
roywrice@aol.com

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Randy Bowman
bowmanrand@verizon.net

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Bob Michie
703-971-3769
michier@cox.net

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Barbara Sotirin
703-922-9515

BBHCA YARD SALE

Mary Jo Bush
703-922-1987

BBHCA WEB SITE

Bob Michie
703-971-3769
webmaster@bbhca.org
Sharada Gilkey
703-313-8490
president@bbhca.org



Proposed Bylaws Change

By Robert Michie – Chair, Constitution and Bylaws Committee



When we performed the last revision of our bylaws back in the 1980s, we made future revisions a moderately cumbersome process. Our intent was not to prevent changes, but to make sure that the Membership knew that it was happening. On the whole, the process has worked very well.

In order to make any bylaws changes, the proposal must be presented before the membership for discussion. In order for the proposal to move forward, a majority vote of the members present is required. If a majority vote is not obtained, the proposal is rejected and cannot move forward. However, if a majority vote is obtained, the bylaws change will then be published in the following newsletter and presented for a final vote at the next meeting.

Following is the text of the proposed changes.

Article I, Section 2 (Dues and Voting)

Present Text: Dues: The membership dues shall be \$3.00 per member per year, up to \$6.00 per household (i.e., a street address within the service area), and may be paid anytime prior to the end of the membership year.

Amendment I: Dues: The membership dues shall be \$5.00 per member per year and \$10.00 per household (i.e., a street address within the service area), and may be paid anytime prior to the end of the membership year. This amendment is effective for the Membership Year that begins September 1, 2005.

Notes: The first amendment is to make a dues change under the current bylaws structure.

Amendment II: Dues: Dues can be adjusted once a year at the Annual Meeting. The membership dues will be reviewed annually as part of the report of the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee. The membership will approve by majority vote any changes to the dues amount, to become effective in the next membership year.

Notes: The second amendment is to move the dues process from the bylaws to the budget.

Article VI, Section 3 (Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee)

Present Text: The Budget, Finance and Audit Committee shall present an operating budget for the approval of the membership at the first regular meeting following the annual meeting, exercise surveillance over the financial affairs of the Association, and perform an annual audit of the books and records of the Treasurer.

The Committee shall present its audit report for approval at the regular meeting next following its audit. Its recommendations on financial policies and procedures shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

Amendment: The Budget, Finance and Audit Committee exercises surveillance over the financial affairs of the Association, and perform an annual audit of the books and records of the Treasurer. Its recommendations on financial policies and procedures shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. The Committee shall present its audit report for approval at the Annual Meeting, as part of the Treasurer's Annual Report. The Committee will present for approval by the members a provisional operating budget for the following membership year. The Committee will recommend for approval by the members any changes to Annual Dues amount for the following year. The incoming Treasurer and the new Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee will present a final operating budget for the approval of the membership at the first regular meeting following the annual meeting.

Notes: This amendment aligns the budget year with the membership year, takes into account the election process, and incorporates the dues as part of the budget process.

Article VII—Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1. Amendment of these By-Laws shall be by the affirmative vote of the members after appropriate notice by publication, as provided by Section 2 of this Article.

Section 2. Amendment of these By-Laws shall be pursuant to the following procedure:

First Meeting: a proposed amendment shall be submitted by motion, duly seconded, then after discussion and subject to amendment, be put to vote. Upon approval by majority vote of the members present and voting, the proposed amendment shall be published and distributed to all households not less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the next meeting of the membership.

Second (next following) Meeting: The proposed amendment shall be put to vote without further amendment. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of all members present shall be required for enactment.

Note: Each paid member has one vote; maximum of two votes per member household. Members must be present to vote.

Minutes of Brookland Bush Hill Civic Association Meeting January 5, 2005

In attendance: Sharada Gilkey, President; Judi Connelly; Vice President Newsletter; Helen Gettys Michie, Secretary; Michael Fogerty, Treasurer; Robert Michie, BBHCA Constitution and By-laws Committee and Lee District Trails Commissioner; and Roy Rice, BBHCA Representative to Lee District Land Use Committee

The meeting was called to order by Sharada Gilkey, BBHCA President at 7:07 PM. It was held in the Bush Hill Elementary School cafeteria.

Report on membership by Sharada Gilkey:

BBHCA currently has 244 paid members, and membership renewals are in process, out of 854 households in our service area.

Judi Connelly announced the upcoming BBHCA Newsletter deadline for the May 2005 issue is issue is Tues., April 5, 2005.

A report followed from Mike Fogarty, BBHCA Treasurer. BBHCA currently has \$17,582 in assets, and has given out \$500 in donations. BBHCA has paid the Web page expenses of \$299. A short discussion followed regarding publishing and mailing the BBHCA newsletter. Printing costs are \$240 per issue, with \$70 for folding and sorting and \$165 for postage per issue.

Sharada Gilkey raised the issue that the current budget cannot cover the increased cost for mailing the newsletter, which was approved by the membership in November 2004. To cover the cost, the dues must be increased, but such an increase requires a bylaws amendment. She noted that the current dues structure has been in place for more than 20 years and has not taken into account inflation and increased costs.

Sharada Gilkey then asked Robert

Michie to make a presentation on the BBHCA Bylaws, last updated in 1991. He explained that the way our bylaws is written, there needs to be a change in the bylaws if we are to increase our dues. This change would take affect for the 2005-2006 membership year. In addition, Mr. Michie recommended that we change our budget year to our current membership year which is September 1-August 31. Mr. Michie said he would publish the proposed amendments to the bylaws in the March newsletter and asked for comments from membership. In June 2005, we will take a vote to update the bylaws which will be revised so that if the dues need to be raised in the future, it will be incorporated as part of the budget approval process.

BBHCA Secretary Helen Michie was asked by Robert Michie to re-read the part of the minutes which provided the list of donations by the civic association to Lee District Associations and charities.

Randall Bowman, BBHCA Neighborhood Watch chair, discussed the break-in at Pratt Street between Foldi and Brookland, where a garage door was forced open to gain entrance. There were eight robberies in the Franconia Springfield Metro, for which a suspect was apprehended, and there was a murder in a car in Spring Mall Drive.

At the upcoming BBHCA meeting on March 8, 2005, Captain Jesse Bowman will give a presentation about teenage accidents and fatalities.

Roy Rice presented information from Mark Sickles, our VA House of Delegates representative 43rd district, stating that there are limited funds available for road repairs. Roy Rice will be attending an upcoming meeting regarding state funding issues.

Robert Michie was asked to make a report to BBHCA as the Lee District Trails Commissioner. He reported on the South Van Dorn St. Phase III extension, which has not yet been stripped yet and has not been opened for vehicular traffic. He stated that it is a Corps of Engineers project, and a bad example of Fairfax County ignoring its own regulations. This happened in 2002, before Mr. Michie became Trails Commissioner, when a local civic association demanded that the greenway be restored which then did not allow for sidewalks or bike lanes.

An interesting presentation was made by George Byer representing the Department of Homeland Security and the American Red Cross "How to Prepare for an Emergency."

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Gettys Michie



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Message from Supervisor Dana Kauffman

It's The Best of Times and the Worst of Times

Reflections on Becoming Chair of the Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

February 17 is the day when I begin my first full meeting as the chairman of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority—Metro to most folks. With all the problems you've read about—and possibly experienced if you're a Metro user—you may wonder why I am looking forward to chairing the Metro board over the next year.

WMATA is a unique entity, responsible for coordinating and operating mass transit in the National Capital region (the District of Columbia, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland, and Arlington, and Fairfax County in Virginia). Members of the WMATA board are appointed by their own jurisdictions and the chairmanship rotates from year to year.

I've been on the Metro board since first taking office in 1996 and perhaps even more importantly, I've been a faithful Metro customer. Every Thursday, I drive to the Huntington Station, park, board a Yellow Line train to Gallery Place, and walk the remaining blocks to Metro's offices. Over the past nine years, I've seen firsthand how Metro binds the Washington region together and supports its economic stability. (A few years ago, an Urban Land Institute study estimated that Metro was responsible for some \$15 billion in economic development and projected that it would account for up to \$25 billion when the full system is completed.)

The Metro system provides access, economic development, job opportunities, and mobility. Consider the magnitude of providing service for the 1.3 million customers who Monday through Friday rely on

Metrorail, Metrobus, and Metroaccess to get to jobs, medical appointments, and the like. Consider also, what our overextended road system would be like if even 25 percent of Metro riders decided to get back in their cars.

Because I ride Metro regularly, I'm also aware that our once shiny, new transit system is showing its age. Many of the problems stem from the

Many problems don't need money to be solved. They need a good dose of some old fashioned common sense and accountability.

system's aging and overburdened infrastructure, compounded by a lack of dedicated funding. Many problems, however, don't need money to be solved. They need a good dose of some old fashioned common sense and accountability.

As WMATA chair, I intend to take a common sense back-to-basics approach to making Metro work. On my watch, we'll be focusing on:

- Safe, clean, and reliable operations
- Employee 'ownership,' pride, and accountability
- Metro board outreach, availability, and accountability to our region and our riders

We'll also be working with others to create our first ever customer advisory group and will take pains to ensure it is supported and objective. We'll also begin each Board meeting with a public comment period and we'll put all Metro board meeting material on our web site for public review and comment. I firmly believe that 'sunshine' cures many things that can sicken even the best organizations.

Finally, I'll be encouraging my fellow board members and Metro senior staff to ride the system whenever possible. The best way for us to ensure quality service is to be customers ourselves.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with your concerns, comments, or suggestions. You can reach me at 703-971-6262 or by e-mail at leedist@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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Report from Richmond

Delegate Mark Sickles (43d District)

In the third full week of the Session, the House transportation proposal took shape, and tax politics reemerged, and several choice bills were passed by the House. I try to give you a flavor for some of this legislation.

The House is sending to the Senate a bill that will phase out the car tax on the first \$20,000 in value over the next six years. The budget would have to grow by at least five percent a year and the total reimbursement to the General Fund. While I like the idea, the Senate does not, to say the least. It is my hope that we can leave here with at least enough money in the budget to continue covering 70 percent in 2006. That will require an appropriation of about \$230 million more—the two-year appropriation of \$1.9 Billion (!) is enough in 2005 but needs to be supplemented for 2006 to continue covering 70 percent.

With the booming economy, I think we can afford it and still meet the needs of our growing elderly population and booming school age population.

The transportation package coming out of the House is a variety of modest initiatives that will help get VDOT back on track. It will not deliver the type of relief we need in Northern Virginia. The plan we send to the Senate will include a new revolving fund and

employing new 10-year debt. We will also send the Senate a plan to further fine the and nights. Among other things, the worst drivers annually to supply new millions House transportation proposal took shape, carto the Transportation Trust Fund. Both of those ideas will be a hard sell in the Senate. However, there is broad support for retiring existing debt and for paying back money borrowed from ongoing projects. There will also

be some dedicated one-time funding for public private partnerships and hopefully for transit.

Several abortion-related bills again passed the House. A bill to require ambulatory surgical standards for first trimester abortion clinics, which are currently treated like doctor's offices, passed with ease. If enacted, the bill could shut down most of Virginia's 20 clinics. The House would also give local governments the ability to regulate abortion clinics for the first time. A "fetal pain" measure to provide anesthesia to 20 week old fetuses passed in a bill that would also put in law, for the first time, a definition that human life begins at fertilization, not pregnancy, birth or anywhere in between. This pronouncement, if it becomes law, has dramatic implications for some methods of contraception, the morning after pill, in-vitro fertilization for infertile couples, stem cell research and likely other things.

Feel free to contact my office at 804-698-1043 or del_Sickles@house.state.va.us.