



The Gateway

Newsletter of The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd

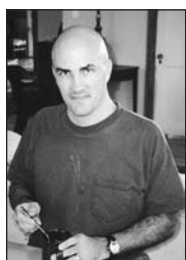
The Oldest of the Main Line Civic Associations – 1906

P.O. Box 717, Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania 19004 • www.balacynwyd.org

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President's Message



Any crime in our community impacts us all. I still hear from people who recall how my house was burglarized in the 1980s, long before I lived here. The memory is strong for those who were not

even victimized and speaks to how deeply crime can affect us. In the summer of 2007 close neighbors and friends were victims of a brazen, frightening carjacking. The crime brought the entire neighborhood to alert. Yes, we live in a relatively safe community but we always need to be vigilant.

At each month's NCBC meeting an officer from the Lower Merion Police Department briefs the Board and community about criminal activity in Bala Cynwyd and township-wide trends. We are fortunate to receive these briefings. The most frequent thing we hear from the officers is the request that we, the community, be alert and contact the Police Department when seeing anything suspicious or out of the ordinary.

At one NCBC meeting, a police officer told of a neighbor's watching as a criminal entered a car to steal whatever valuables were left in the vehicle. The neighbor did not notify the police, but as he watched the theft in process, sent a friendly email to the victim, his neighbor, saying "I hope they didn't get anything too valuable."

Neighbors, we need to help each other — an act through which we will also

(continued on page 2)

The Neighborhood Club's Annual Meeting

13 November 2007

7:00 p.m., refreshments • 7:30 p.m., start of business meeting

THE CYNWYD CLUB

332 Trevor Lane • Bala Cynwyd, PA

(Please note change in location for this meeting)

Please join us for refreshments prior to the meeting, followed by Elections of Directors and Officers. After our elections, we will conduct a full slate of business, including presentations and discussions about current neighborhood issues. All neighbors are welcome.

Candidate Slate for

The Neighborhood Club's Annual Elections

Following is the candidate slate for The Neighborhood Club elections. Candidates were interviewed over the summer by The Neighborhood Club's Nominating Committee.

Per our by-laws, all members (dues paid for 2007) of The Neighborhood Club are eligible to vote.

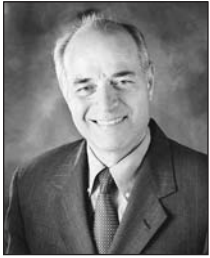
1. For Director, current Directors filling an unexpired term:
Meredith B. Toole (for Richard Wells, term expiring 31 December 2007)
2. For Director, beginning new terms, 1 January 2008 through 31 December 2009:
Meredith B. Toole (succeeds Richard Wells),
Mark Kocent, Maxine Goldberg, John C. Grugan, David I. Haas,
Judy Strazzella, Ellen Wertheimer
3. For Officers to serve one year (terms expiring 31 December 2008):
Casey O'Bannon, President
Anne M. Greenhalgh, Vice President
Deedee Litvin, Secretary
Ilene Wolf McCaffrey, Treasurer
Robert H. Zimmerman, Solicitor

(Per our by-laws, Phyllis Faber Kelley succeeds Jeff Lindy in the Office of Immediate Past President)

Any Neighborhood Club member wishing to nominate a Director or Officer other than those selected by our Nominating Committee should consult The Neighborhood Club's by-laws at www.balacynwyd.org for details.

Commissioner's Letter

By Commissioner George Manos



The previous edition of this column began with the observation that “This was an interesting spring for the Township and for Bala Cynwyd,” and indeed it was, as many of the initiatives that the Township planned to undertake began to get traction. However, as interesting as things were in the spring, for the fall they are becoming downright exciting.

First some old business: regarding the “Croyle” site and parking buses there, the Township did approve the site’s use for that purpose, and is now responding to legal action taken by a few neighbors of the site who oppose the use. Look for more on that in subsequent newsletters.

The “Ardmore RFP” for replacement of the Ardmore SEPTA regional rail station has attracted over a dozen interested developers. This is a very good thing, for there will be many lessons learned on the way to the accomplishment of this initiative that could apply as well to Bala Cynwyd, as it eyes revitalization of its own beloved but somewhat aging Bala Avenue. For a copy of the RFP see www.lowermerion.org/ecdev/atcrfp062207.html.

Movement on the agreement with SEPTA regarding plans for renovation of the Cynwyd Station slowed a bit over the summer as SEPTA grappled with severe budgetary issues. Bringing this matter to a close is being capably guided by Commissioner Bruce Reed, who is pressing SEPTA to bring focus to its deliberations regarding the station. Hopes are that all open issues will be resolved and an agreement forwarded to the Township for approval some time this fall. Currently working on this with Commissioner Reed are George Broseman, Jim Easter, Jerry Francis, Leon Levine, and yours truly.

Now the exciting news: SEPTA has provisionally accepted the idea of repurposing the R6 track bed north of the Cynwyd Station (toward Barmouth and Manayunk) and turning it into a trail linking Bala Cynwyd with the Township’s emerging Emerald Necklace of recreational parks, woodlands, and hiking trails. We owe thanks for this accomplishment to Township Assistant Director of Planning Chris Leswing for linking the eastern end of the Township with a trail that leads to Valley Forge, providing potential links to Manayunk via two pedestrian bridges as well as to the Manayunk viaduct. This roughly 8-mile trail has to be seen to be believed; its potential to provide a variety of recreational, cycling, and hiking opportunities for Bala Cynwyd residents is unmatched by any similar nearby resource.

For more on the open space initiative of which this is a part, see www.lowermerion.org/planning/osp/osp_linkage.html.

In addition to the “Cynwyd Trail,” as the R6 trail is to be known, the Center City Special Services District (“CityAve”), through the efforts and good grant-writing skills of Township Community and Economic Development Assistant Director Angela Murray and CityAve CEO Terry Foley, received a

substantial matching planning grant to study and recommend a zoning overlay ordinance for the Philadelphia and Lower Merion edges of City Avenue. This extremely important study includes the CityAve end of Bala Avenue, a subject of study by The Neighborhood Club itself. The Township has received proposals, and by the time you read this a contract will have been awarded for the planning services. Each resident of Bala Cynwyd should be interested in this study since the life along City Avenue affects us all one way or another, and residents will have an excellent opportunity to have their voices heard in any number of forums since a significant amount of community input is a prerequisite to this proposal’s planning process. To participate, please e-mail your interest to me at george@gtmanos.com or to Angela Murray, AMurray@lowermerion.org.

In a related development, the Township requested a proposal from the planning firm Wallace, Roberts and Todd (WRT) to update its November 2000 study of Bala Avenue. The Township has received that proposal and sources of funding are being identified. Together with the CityAve study, this initiative can set the direction for development in underutilized parts of Bala Cynwyd, promoting our village’s future as the wonderful residential community that it is while at the same time providing residents with access to a thriving business corridor that recalls Bala Avenue’s service and shopping heritage.

Finally, November 6 is Election Day. No matter what your political affiliation or interest, it is important for you to vote. Citizens should be aware that the Pennsylvania Department of State has an excellent Website dealing exclusively with elections and election-related information, and it is a resource not to be overlooked. Visit it at www.votespa.com.

Have a great fall season!

President's Message *(continued from page 1)*

help ourselves. Logic dictates that if Bala Cynwyd has a reputation as an easy mark, that reputation will affect us all negatively, just as we will be affected positively if we are known as an iron fortress.

Vigilance and cooperation take small things. I cancelled my paper delivery for vacation recently but to my chagrin the paper was still delivered. If the papers had piled up, our house would have been exposed as an easy mark for a thief. Fortunately, an astute neighbor gathered the papers for us.

If we lock our own cars and houses, keep an eye out for our neighbors and note anything or anybody irregular or out of the ordinary, hopefully we will become an even safer community. Don’t hesitate to contact the Lower Merion Police Department (911) if something seems shady, and please be safe.

The Neighborhood Club's 2007 Sidewalk Gardens Recognition

Awards will be made at our Annual Meeting, 13 Nov. 2007

Residential Category

Behind the white pickets that front **5 W. Lodges Lane**, **Mary Scherf** has created a cottage garden that bursts with four-season interest and varied plant selection. Tall burgundy cannas' orange blooms flank the house, grounding the color scheme and planting scale. Nandina, azalea, peony, winterberry, camellia and lilac assure year-round color. Meticulously maintained beds overflow with daylilies, rudbeckia, grasses, echinacea and gladioli.

At **34 Llanberis Road**, luxurious sweeps of carefully edited shade-loving plants thrive under the majestic tree canopy of magnolia, crabapple, ginkgo, and Japanese maple. **Gina Shapiro** has assured that the cool carpet of hosta, epimedium, hellebore, lirioppe, fern and ajuga is delightfully warmed by the glow of golden variegation and artful sculptural accents.

Nancy Pulkin's gift to the neighborhood is a subtle, small, perfectly scaled shade garden at **101 Dartmouth Road**. Plant selections, in addition to being scaled to the house, provide



The Pulkins' Prize-Winning Garden at 101 E. Dartmouth Rd.

maximal seasonal progression in a small space. Shrubs of note include oakleaf hydrangea, peony, Pieris japonica, Aesculus pavia, and boxwood. Heuchera, hellebore, epimedium, lamium, ferns, and hakonechloa round out the perennial mix.

Stop by **38 Derwin Road** to see how **David Rosenbaum** and **Diana Morgenstern** maximize the inviting and traditional beauty of a stone walkway. Gray, pink and lavender stones are complemented by graceful curves of juniper, holly, coreopsis, lirioppe and perovskia. The walk's shady bend pockets a delight of astilbe. Stately magnolias book-end this tranquil scene.

Nestled in the shady awning of a hemlock grouping, **Karen Anderson** of **84 East Dartmouth Road** has carved a restful oasis. Hosta and hydrangea usher the visitor through the arbor to a bench from which to enjoy the pinks, yellows and whites of the rudbeckia, buddleia, ivy and miscanthus that front the bordering fence.

Thanks to the following friends and neighbors who contributed to this issue of The Gateway:

Jody Burns	Roger Moog
Fred Fischer	Athena Rodbell
Mary Anne Diamond	Phillip Rodbell
Al McCarthy	Richard Widmann

Business Category

The owners of **Noel Sy Art in Beauty** have transformed their tiny parcel of the Merion-Cynwyd Business District at **321 Montgomery Avenue**. This new garden is a dramatic and imaginative collage of water views, water sounds, and plant diversity that attracts a bevy of beneficial birds and insects. Come early for your appointment, for we dare you to pass this garden without stopping in your tracks to trace the waterfall, behold the hummingbirds, and be beguiled by the papyrus, caladium, ferns, salvia, ornamental flax, and water lettuce.

Peter Herzog, Director of Operations and Public Safety, **CityAve Special Services District**, and his crew have created islands of intense jewel-like colors to greet visitors as they approach the CityAve district at Presidential Boulevard. Puddles of pink petunias are topped by the chartreuse drips of sweet potato vine, all overshadowed by the eruption of burgundy ornamental millet. The effect is dramatic and perfectly suited to the rapid pace of ever-present vehicular traffic. Careful attention to color coordination with the large overhead CityAve sign completes this effective and welcoming urban planting scheme.



CityAve's Winning Garden Entry.

Summit Court Apartments at **101 Summit Lane** have added significant garden improvements including construction of lovely stone retaining walls brimming with newly planted trees, shrubs and perennials. These improvements not only soften the edges of buildings and parking areas; they also provide four-season interest with selections of conifers, cherry laurel, hydrangea, spirea, hostas, daylilies, and lirioppe.

Encore Recognition

The following gardens received past Sidewalk Gardens recognition, but our judges feel that they should be recognized again this year for their continuing contributions to our neighborhood.

Alan Feldman and Maureen Pelta, 435 Bryn Mawr Avenue
Curt and Wendy Alloy, 530 Oxford Road
Mary Hufford, 307 Bryn Mawr Avenue
Barbara Finkelstein, 109 Righter's Ferry Road

July 4th Inspirational Speaker



Fr. Dan Joyce

A local Jesuit and Bala Cynwyd resident, Fr. Dan Joyce, delivered The NCBC's inspirational address on July Fourth 2007.

Fr. Joyce spoke to the community about religious tolerance, using examples from the early settlement of Lower Merion Township by Welsh Quakers.

Unfortunately, the entire text of Fr. Joyce's address was unavailable at press time.

2007 Merchant of the Year

Al McCarthy, owner of Valley Press, is The Neighborhood Club's 2007 Merchant of the Year.

Valley Press, a family-owned business in operation in the township for over 50 years, is a mainstay in Bala Cynwyd.

Al lived in Bala Cynwyd from the time he was 6 years old. He attended St. Matthias School as a youngster. When he was 16 years old he worked as a "Soda Jerk" at Shea's Drugstore across the street from Valley Press. Bob Stevenson owned Valley Press at that time. Bob came into the drugstore and told Al he needed a driver to make deliveries and the rest is history.

Over the years Al learned every aspect of the printing business. He truly is a "jack-of-all-trades." He bought the business from Bob in 1974.

When you call Valley Press, there is a good chance it will be Al who answers the phone.

Valley Press is sought out by groups, organizations and individuals throughout the area for their reliably top-quality service in delivering jobs both large and small.

Valley Press has a large, knowledgeable staff with uniformly friendly and cooperative spirits. The staff of 17 people includes 3 of his 4 children. Al, III and Tom work at the shop. Al's daughter, Annmarie, works from home. Al's daughter Patricia also worked at the shop during her college years. She is a nurse.

Most of Al's employees have been with him for over 20 years.

Al and his wife Ann have been married for 46 years. In addition to their 4 children, they have 9 grandchildren ranging in age from 24 years to 4 months. He and Ann now reside in Pottstown.

Al is most grateful for the honor of receiving this very special award and proud to be a "Bala Cynwyd Boy."



President O'Bannon (left) with Bala Cynwyd's Merchant of the Year, Al McCarthy of Valley Press (center). Al's son Tom joins them at the podium.

Rules of the Road, Redux



Bala Ave. after a 2006 Snowstorm

In our summer 2007 issue of *The Gateway*, we reminded neighbors of the responsibility of every homeowner to keep their abutting sidewalks and gutters clear of litter and trash. It is now time to remind everyone that we will soon be called upon to remove snow and ice from sidewalks that adjoin our lots. The following is from the Township's Policy Statement, dated 2000.

By Lower Merion Township Ordinance #1092, sidewalks are the responsibility of the abutting property owner and must be cleaned of snow and ice within 30 hours after it stops snowing. Sidewalks will be shoveled and/or salted as needed to provide for safe pedestrian passage in a manner as quickly and efficiently as possible at the completion of each storm.

If you are concerned about the lack of shoveling/deicing of a sidewalk near you, you may call the Township Police Department and request a snow-removal reminder to the homeowner. One of Bala Cynwyd's most attractive drawing cards is its walkability. Let's all help to keep our village accessible to all our citizens, regardless of the weather. Besides, it's the law!

Upcoming Meetings

Please join The NCBC Directors and Officers on the second Tues of the month at 7:30 p.m., September through June, at the Lower Merion Academy on Bryn Mawr Ave., adjacent to the Bala Cynwyd Middle School. Following are the dates of near-term meetings:

**13 November 2007 (Annual Meeting)
7:00 p.m. refreshments;
7:30 p.m. business meeting)***

11 December 2007

8 January 2008

* Please note change in location for the Annual Meeting:

THE CYNWYD CLUB, 332 Trevor Lane,
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004



Many thanks to all those who contributed
to our July Fourth 2007 celebration

Bala Cynwyd's Citizen of the Year Leaves a Lasting Mark on the Community



NCBC's Immediate Past President Kelley Naming Phil Rodbell "Bala Cynwyd's 2007 Citizen of the Year" as Phoebe Rodbell looks on

Bala Cynwyd's 2007 Citizen of the Year, Phillip D. Rodbell, is a U.S. Forest Service employee, member of Lower Merion Township's Shade Tree Commission, chair of The Neighborhood Club's TreeVitalize committee, and a resident of Bala Cynwyd. Phillip is making a lasting mark on the community through his dedication to our urban forest. Those who work with Phillip appreciate his easy-going, deliberate manner; his cooperative spirit; and his extensive knowledge of trees, tree care, and tree-care policy. Phillip works equally well with Township, County, State, and Federal agencies and departments, as well as with neigh-

borhood volunteers, gaining the confidence and support of all. The universal opinion is that Phillip's work is of the highest quality.

Phillip's involvement in Bala Cynwyd's extensive tree-planting efforts leaves two legacies: an increased green canopy and a stronger sense of community, honed through a cooperative tree-planting experience. During 2006, Phillip coordinated the Township's services with the efforts of a team of community volunteers to plant 120 street trees in Bala Cynwyd, with a grant from Governor Ed Rendell's TreeVitalize Initiative in Southeast Pennsylvania.

Phillip continues his tree-planting effort into the current year. In May, he led a group of Merion Station volunteers in planting a dozen trees along S. Latches Lane. Another planting week-end is planned for 10-11 November, 2007. (See accompanying article.)

It was with great pleasure that, on July 4, Bala Cynwyd's civic association, The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd, conferred upon our neighbor, our friend, our colleague, Phillip D. Rodbell, the honor of Citizen of the Year, 2007.

Tree-Planting Opportunity in November 2007



Neighbors planting trees in Bala Cynwyd in 2006

Saturday, 10 November 2007, tree planting (includes mulching)

Sunday, 11 November 2007, tree planting, mulching and other follow-up tasks

Assembly point To Be Announced

Participants: Volunteers of all ages

Registration isn't necessary, but if you contact NCBC TreeVitalize Committee chair Phillip Rodbell (Rodbell@juno.com) it will help us to plan the event.

As part of the Township's on-going effort to restore our green canopy, Bala Cynwyd will receive approximately 30 trees to plant on our community's streets. These trees are to be planted by volunteers, with leadership from the Township Shade Tree Commission in cooperation with the Township arborist, Cliff VanYahres. Phillip D. Rodbell, Chair of The Neighborhood Club's TreeVitalize Committee and member of the Shade Tree Commission, is the local contact and organizer of the planting effort.

Neighborhood Security Update

As you are probably now aware, a carjacking occurred in Bala Cynwyd in early August 2007 around 11:00 p.m., in the driveway of a neighbor's home. The thief brandished a gun, but the victim complied with the thief's orders, and no one was hurt. Similar events occurred in Wynnewood around the same date and another later in the month. The Neighborhood Club contacted the Lower Merion Police Department and our Commissioners and we have been assured of an increase of police presence in our community. But the police need the constant assistance of an aware community. With regard to carjacking, especially at night, be cognizant of being followed when arriving home. Do not drive onto your property if you expect you are being followed, but call police on your cell phone, and drive to a nearby lighted/populated area.

To keep your home safe from burglary, be aware that criminals posing as individuals seeking jobs — like lawn or housekeeping work — or asking directions have knocked on doors, and when no one answered, have broken into the houses. If you see anyone on your street who doesn't seem to belong or doesn't have a reason to be on the street, or is knocking on doors, or is just loitering, please call police immediately, so they can investigate.

Community awareness needs to exist all the time, not just after an incident when residents are crisis motivated. Police say that some criminals will come to neighborhoods like ours and just loiter to see if anybody notices them and notifies the police. If no one cares to check the situation out, the criminal sees the community as providing a good opportunity to commit a bad deed.

Lower Merion Police assure us that burglary, car theft, and strong arm incidents are not statistically on the increase in Bala Cynwyd, and we live in a safe community. To keep it that way, however, we must increase our personal vigilance and our immediate follow up. Contact the Lower Merion Police Department (911) immediately regarding ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS.



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P.O. Box 717
Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania 19004

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Mark Your Calendar:

Tues., 13 November
NCBC Annual Meeting

**Sat. and Sun.,
10 and 11 November**
Volunteer tree-planting
in Bala Cynwyd

*Contact information for NCBC
Officers and Directors is available at
our website, www.balacynwyd.org*

The Community Needs Your Support!

We are grateful to those of you who have paid NCBC dues for 2007.

Your civic association's honor system translates into numerous benefits to all residents of Bala Cynwyd, regardless of annual dues status. Your dues help us to strengthen the community in a way that is valuable to all and time-consuming for our Board members and Committee chairs. Please help us by submitting your 2007 dues before the end of the year.

*Many thanks to our hard-working
off-Board committee chairs:*

**Ken Brier, New Residents Reception
Mary Anne Diamond, Beautification
Committee, Fred Fischer, Web Site
Phillip Rodbell, TreeVitalize**



The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd Membership Form

Your dues help to

- Alert you to neighborhood discussions of critical topics
- Preserve the residential character of Bala Cynwyd
- Support appropriate commercial development
- Monitor zoning, traffic, and safety on our streets
- Provide community-building events like the July 4th celebration

Please send your 2007 dues to: The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd
P.O. Box 717, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

Household (\$30) Business (\$50) Contribution \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____