



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



Neighbors and friends,

I am pleased to report that the Independence Day Celebration was a sparkling success — thanks to your membership, sponsorship, and participation.

The event cost roughly \$22,000. Contributions from the community — from generous merchants and residents — amounted to approximately \$12,000. The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd contributed just under \$10,000. Please see The Gateway's full listing of all those who supported the Independence Day Celebration. Thank you!

Household and business membership are critical to the success of the Independence Day Celebration and, moreover, to health and well-being of our community. I understand from Amara Briggs, our Treasurer, that household membership is down 3% but business membership is up 5% for the same period as last year. If you have not yet paid your membership dues, please do. Household membership is \$30, business membership is \$50, and both are payable by mail or online at www.BalaCynwyd.org.

Your dues enable The Neighborhood Club to take an active role in

- Pressing for a long and stereoscopic view of zoning, especially along City Avenue, Belmont Avenue, Rock Hill Road, Bala Avenue, and Old Lancaster Avenue

(continued on page 3)

The Neighborhood Club's Annual Meeting

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

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

UNION FIRE STATION

Montgomery Ave. at Tregaron Rd. • 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 discussion about current neighborhood issues. All neighbors are welcome.

Candidate Slate for The Neighborhood Club Annual Elections

Following are the candidate slates for The Neighborhood Club elections. Candidates were interviewed by The Neighborhood Club's nominating committee. Per our bylaws all members (dues paid for 2009) are eligible to vote.

For Director filling an unexpired term:

Merle Zucker (for Serge Nalbantian, term expiring December 31, 2010)

For Director beginning new terms January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011:

Katherine Foy, Maxine Goldberg, David I. Haas, Mark A. Kocent, Patricia Smith, Meredith Toole, Ellen Wertheimer

For Officers to serve one year (terms expiring December 31, 2010):

Anne M. Greenhalgh, President
John Grugan, Vice President
Dee Dee Litvin, Secretary
Amara Briggs, Treasurer
Bob Zimmerman, Solicitor

Any Neighborhood Club member wishing to nominate a candidate for officer or director other than those selected by our Nominating Committee should consult The Neighborhood Club's bylaws at www.BalaCynwyd.org for details.

Commissioner's Corner



As I sit down to write this “Commissioner’s Corner” I can’t help but reflect upon something that happened the other day as I watched my kids say goodbye to what was hopefully viewed by them, and many others, as a long and pleasant summer. As they enjoyed what would be one of their last, carefree summer swims, I overheard a conversation between my daughter and her

friends. They were talking about the new challenges that the school year would bring when they returned the following week, and the choices that they each would have to make in the upcoming year.

Why do I mention such a simple conversation held by a group of grade school children? It was my signal that summer was indeed over, and the focus of the Township’s work for the remainder of the year is now front and center: the 2010 budget. I myself will be faced with many questions and decisions over the coming months — questions that will clearly be harder to answer in light of the tough economic climate that we all are experiencing.

What do the residents of Lower Merion want and expect from their Township in both maintenance and service levels? In light of the current state of the economy, some have suggested cutting back on services, and deferring maintenance to further in the future.

I have several concerns in doing this, the first being the additional inflationary cost that will be incurred in doing so. Currently, the Township uses a factor of 3% per year in projecting future project costs. This year, however, the Township has been experiencing bids that are exceptionally lower than in the past for comparable work, with concomitant savings against budgeted costs. This creates a favorable climate for pursuing the Township’s infrastructure work, but we must move expeditiously, for I suspect we will see pricing begin to rise again within the next year, and we will see neither the number of bids nor the pricing that we are currently experiencing. Therefore I think we should take advantage of the exceptional bidding climate that we are seeing to get the best investment return for our dollar by staying at our current maintenance levels.

My second concern is with cutting of services and deferment of maintenance, and the impact that those actions can have on the quality of life for the residents of Lower Merion, as well as the maintenance of property values within the Township. Many suggestions can be and have been made as to what services can be cut, but the interesting thing that I have found since becoming Commissioner is that often those advocating such cuts don’t fully understand the consequences of such cuts. That is, they ask only “How will this affect me?” (because if it would have little, if any, impact on them, they wouldn’t hesitate to suggest it). But we as Commissioners must also ask “How will it affect others in the Township?” Many times what some view as unimportant,

others feel is most needed. A recent example occurred earlier this year: when the size of the police force was decreased by three full time officers. While some might not have noticed an effect, the parents of elementary age school children likely have. An indirect effect of those cuts is the loss of the DARE (“Drug Abuse Resistance Education”) program at our area schools, a program that many parents — me included — feel was very beneficial to the children. So again I ask all to ask themselves to look not only at what might be important to them but also to look at each item for its impact on the community as a whole.

The last point of deferred maintenance and service levels that I would like to touch on is that of manpower. In the last year the Township has not filled positions that have become vacant through attrition. Some people assert that service levels have not been affected, nor has quality of life. I am of a different view. I feel that we have been affected but don’t yet know to what extent. I point to the extreme storms and damage that we have experienced this spring and summer. No amount of staffing would have helped in preventing the storms or damage, but recovery time would have been greatly reduced. In talking with staff about this, there is still a large amount of storm-related damage that needs to be repaired. And, as staff scrambles to correct these issues, projects that were underway sit still, leaving the neighbors in the immediate area of those projects wondering when their homes and their neighborhoods will return to normal. And again, I would ask all who felt little or no impact from this to remember: *we are a community*. And I would ask, as you drive throughout the Township, look behind the curbs. You will see many areas where there has been washout. If those areas are not repaired in a timely fashion and more damage occurs, we will all be affected. We in fact would face the possibility of losing sections of roads, an unnecessary expense that would eventually have to be borne by all.

In sum, therefore, I must caution against a temporary expedient which will have long-term consequences. We have benefited from a history of careful maintenance and prudent financial spending by the Township. That’s a good policy in any economy, and I intend to support its continuation.

— Paul McElhaney

Upcoming Meetings

NCBC Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month, September through June, 7:30 p.m. at the Lower Merion Academy (next to Bala Cynwyd Middle School) on Bryn Mawr Ave.

Why not join us for any or all of the following meetings?

November 10, 2009

January 12, 2010

December 8, 2009

February 9, 2010

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

- Advocating for continued and improved public transportation for Bala Cynwyd
- Preserving historic structures such as the Cynwyd Train Station
- Supporting the Friends of the Cynwyd Heritage Trail, open space, and private and public gardens
- Ensuring top quality education for our children
- Fostering community through such special events as the Independence Day Celebration

Again, thank you for your support! If you have comments, questions, or topics of interest for our monthly board meetings, send them to me at our new email address: **TheNeighborhoodClub@BalaCynwyd.org**. The Club meets the second Tuesday of every month at The Academy on the campus of the Bala Cynwyd Middle School on Bryn Mawr Avenue. Be sure to let me know if you would like to receive electronic copies of our newsletter and updates from the Club. The oldest civic association in Lower Merion Township is going green and high tech!

With best regards,
Anne M. Greenhalgh, President

NCBC Creates Development of Bala Cynwyd Sub-Committee

The NCBC has created a sub-committee consisting of Directors Mark Kocent, Roger Moog, Bob Zimmerman and Commissioners George T. Manos and Bruce Reed to examine and monitor the potential impact of proposed development and zoning changes on our community. This comes in response to the many meetings The NCBC has had over the past few years regarding proposed development on Rock Hill Rd., in the M district on Righters Ferry Rd. and with The City Ave. Special Services District. The sub-committee hopes to work with Elizabeth Rogan, Chair, Building & Planning Committee and commissioner from Ward 7, Wynnewood.

Community Watch

The Neighborhood Club has long supported our Community Watch program. Founded in 1977, Lower Merion Community Watch is recognized as one of the finest volunteer mobile crime watch patrol organizations in the nation. Working in close cooperation with the Lower Merion Police Department, over 1,100 residents have been trained to serve as "extra eyes and ears" of the Department's ongoing crime prevention efforts.

There is always room for volunteers and there is currently an opening for a Bala Cynwyd resident for the Lower Merion umbrella organization. For more information please check out the website <http://www.lmcommunitywatch.org/>.

Anyone interested in joining and supporting this fine effort should contact Anne Greenhalgh or Lower Merion Community Watch.

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

Fred Fischer
Anne Greenhalgh
Phyllis Faber Kelley
Mary Anne Diamond
Sarah Bonnie

Another Successful July Fourth Celebration in Bala Cynwyd

Below are the names of individuals and businesses who helped to make our 2009 July Fourth celebration a success. We are grateful!

Aquatic Fitness Center
Adenbaum, Samuel
Bala Cynwyd School for Young Children
Bala Eye Care
Bala House Montessori School
Bosin, Deborah and Family
Boy Scott Troop Bala One
Broadlands Financial Group, LLC
Buddy Bear Jewelers
City Avenue Special Services District
Converse Winkler Architecture, LLC
Demchick-Alloy, Wendy
Elias, Pearl
EY Productions

Fischer, Frederick and family
French International School
Group Dynamics In Focus
Hearing Technology Associates, LLC
Herbert Yentis & Company Realtors
Hoffstein Dentistry
Kelley, Phyllis Faber
L.F. Driscoll Company
Law Offices of Jeffrey M. Lindy
Main Line YMCA
Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, LLP
McGillin Architecture, Inc.
Rays Custom Shirts
RE/MAX

Saffron, The Indian Kitchen
Saint Matthias Church
Samberg, Beth
Schieffelin, Katherine and family
Skillings, Gerald and family
State Farm Insurance Company
The New Tavern Restaurant and Bar
The Women's Club
Valley Press
Walls & Windows
West Laurel Hill Cemetery
Z Event Group

The Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd Beautification Committee Sidewalk Gardens Recognition 2009 Green Thumb Awards

Awards will be made at our Annual Meeting, November 10, 2009

Residences



27 W. Amherst Rd.

Dan McNally and **Kris Conner's** garden at 27 W. Amherst Rd. boasts crisp geometric planes of stone and iron wrapped in a blur of red-tipped horticultural abundance. This expertly-conceived garden design is structurally grounded with clean, glossy evergreen shrubs. A closer inspection

reveals magical use of foliage and texture to tease out a full spectrum of red-tinted delights, seemingly inspired by the crimson front door. Photinia, sweetspire, smoke bush, enkianthus, heavenly bamboo, crape myrtle, weeping cherry, red twig dogwood, astilbe, geranium, coral bells, Japanese skimmia, and Japanese blood grass are all used to compose a dynamic four-season parade of red.



63 W. Lodges Ln.

At 63 W. Lodges Ln., tempting glimpses through breaks in the yew hedge reveal the charming cottage-style garden that **Nancy Ash** has created on nearly every square inch that borders her property. Mount the stone entrance steps shadowed by a hammock of hemlocks and

encounter a cool bed of lush shade-lovers, including hosta, ferns, astilbe, epimedium, sweet woodruff and annual impatiens — all spread beneath the canopy of a grand magnolia. Wander along sunny, serpentine beds bursting with butterfly

weed, shasta daisy, coneflower, globe thistle, tickseed, and hibiscus and greet the statuesque Garden King who arises from the classic flowering hydrangea, mock orange and weigela.

The curb appeal at 120 Bentley Ave. extends far beyond the curb. **Tracey Ellenbogen's** garden aptly demonstrates design principles of asymmetry, forced perspective and architectural interest. Craftsman-style gates and arbor complement the crisp, clean plantings of comfortable and classic plants including hydrangea, hosta, spirea, tickseed, black eyed Susan and cherry laurel.



120 Bentley Ave.

Paige Talbot and **Jim Gould** of 440 Bryn Mawr Ave. have created a garden that artfully marries a stately corner lot boasting glorious old growth trees and shrubs, with sinuous new garden beds and paths. Delightful plant combinations utilizing varied texture, form and color create



440 Bryn Mawr Ave.

outstanding visual interest and fuse seamlessly with the original landscape. Newly-installed plants like blazing star, lobelia, lantana, salvia, artemisia, tickseed and verbascum nestle happily amongst tree-sized azaleas, a stunning blue Atlas cedar, St. Johnswort, butterfly bush, and amsonia.

(continued on page 5)

HGTV Is Looking for You!

MY FIRST SALE, a brand new HGTV show, is looking for first-time home sellers (and their agents!) in the Philadelphia metro area.

We are looking for fun, high-energy people who are *just starting* the process of selling their first place! We'll be there to capture all the trials and tribulations, stress and success of prepping for sale, pricing, negotiating, and ultimately selling a home for the first time.

Taping will begin in Fall 2009 and will continue through Spring 2010. Ideal candidates will be motivated, financially candid people who want to share the experience and the purchase details with HGTV and their audience. Singles, couples and families are all invited to apply!

If selected to appear on an episode of *My First Sale*, home sellers will receive a DVD copy of the episode to enjoy for years to come. Real estate agents will also receive a DVD of the episode. If this sounds like fun, first-time sellers should apply now for immediate consideration!

Request an application by emailing: CBaggish@highnoonentertainment.com or call **Cindy Baggish** at (303) 712-3093.

West Laurel Hill Cemetery Events

Saturday, October 24th

Howl-o-ween Dog Walk & Funny Match Dog Show

Registration 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Dog Walk: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Funny Match Dog Show: 12:15 pm – 1:30 pm

Doggie Café by Buzzy's Bow Wow Meow

Free Tours of West Laurel Hill Cemetery

Olympia The Caricaturist

Rescue Groups • Vegetarian Food

*All proceeds benefit The Spayed Club's
low-cost Spay/Neuter Clinic*

Sunday, November 1st

Annual Memorial Service – 2:00 pm

A special afternoon of remembrance
in the Bringhurst Chapel at West Laurel Hill Cemetery.

Our non-denominational service will be accompanied

by music and the lighting of candles.

Call for reservations and/or to submit
your photo of a loved one to be specially
remembered during the service.

Saturday, November 14th

Cynwyd Heritage Trail Workday – 9:00 am

Saturday, December 19th

Winter Walk at West Laurel Hill Cemetery – 9:00 am

Free. Tour departs from our Conservatory.

Reservations requested.

For more information about these or other events
call 610-664-1591 or visit www.forever-care.com

WEST LAUREL HILL CEMETERY

215 Belmont Avenue

Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004



WEST LAUREL HILL

CEMETERY • CREMATORY • MAUSOLEUM • MONUMENTS

2009 Green Thumb Awards *(continued from page 4)*

Business Category



555 Associates at 555 City Ave.

555 Associates, under the able direction of **Christopher P. Sulpizio**, have installed a commercial entrance garden at **555 City Ave.** that delights the eye while creating a sense of space and calm. This garden manages to accomplish a complex and pleasing textural plant composition

without relying on the “usual corporate plant suspects.” A shady retreat invites the garden viewer to sit a while in the shade of the Kousa dogwood and admire the mixed-bed plantings of begonia, variegated liriopse, sedum, sage, yucca, yew, Japanese holly and inkberry, red Knock Out Roses, junipers, astilbe and blackeyed Susans. Garden beds wind around the building, demonstrating appropriately-scaled and -sited plants including sweetspire and a finely-textured thornless honey locust.

Bala Oral Health Center at **125 W. City Ave.** continues to demonstrate a welcome horticultural respite in an area of Bala Cynwyd that is visually dense with hard urban surfaces. This entrance garden demonstrates superb scale and color combination in the harshest of gardening conditions. Culturally-appropriate plants laugh off the unrelenting sun, minimal water access

and occasional pedestrian debris donations. Artful signage is complemented by the blue, yellow, purple and red hues of the sage, blackeyed Susans, daylily, petunia, butterfly bush, and geranium. Winter interest is assured with solid yew, and the sweetbay magnolia delights the nose with its fragrant yellow flowers. Peek around the entrance drive and see tough sedums and blanket flowers thriving in the narrowest of gravel beds.



*Bala Oral Health Center
at 125 W. City Ave.*

See color photos of winning gardens at our website: www.balacynwyd.org



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Mark Your Calendar:

Tuesday, November 10, 2009
NCBC Annual Meeting
7:00 p.m., Union Fire Station
Montgomery Ave. at Tregaron Rd.

NOTE CHANGE in time and place
for this meeting only.

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

Mary Anne Diamond,
Beautification Committee

Fred Fischer
Web Site

Jerry Francis
Historic Preservation

Phillip Rodbell
TreeVitalize

The Community Needs Your Support!

We are grateful to those of you who have paid NCBC dues for 2009.

Your civic association's honor system translates into numerous benefits to all residents of Bala Cynwyd, regardless of annual dues status. However, we need your dues to help us strengthen the community in a way that is valuable to all. Our Board members and Committee Chairs contribute their time and energy. Won't you please help us by submitting your 2009 dues now?

To pay by credit card, please visit our website: www.BalaCynwyd.org.

NOTICE: The Neighborhood Club is working to send newsletters electronically. In the near future anyone who has provided an email address to The Club will receive their newsletter via email. We hope you like this greener and less costly delivery.



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 2009 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 _____

Interested in Becoming a Director of The Neighborhood Club?

Please send a resume or letter of interest to:
The NCBC, Attn: Nominations, P.O. Box 717, Bala Cynwyd PA 19004