

Winter Meeting and Pot-Luck
Sunday, January 25th
Potluck 6:30 Meeting 7:30-9:00
Grace Episcopal Day School
9411 Connecticut Avenue, Kensington, MD

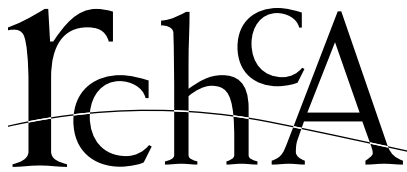
Rock Creek Hills Citizens' Association
9609 Old Spring Road
Kensington, MD 20895-3523

RCHCA



**Inside
New RCHCA Website
New Directory
New Year!**

Winter on Old Spring Road 2003



Rock Creek Hills Citizens' Association
rchca.org

Message from the Board

Happy winter tidings and post-holiday wishes to Rock Creek Hills residents. We hope that both the frozen weather and the frozen credit markets begin to unthaw together before too long.

Many of us are not very sad to see 2008 go, and are hopeful that 2009 will bring better things. To re-cap the events of this past year and look forward to the next one, there are both plusses and minuses to consider. On the plus side:

- There have been no burning, divisive issues such as the one in 2007 involving traffic safety and speed humps;
- We successfully held two very well-attended events, thanks to Lyle Farmer and others: our spring Concert in the Park (Noah's Ark in attendance) and our fall Halloween Parade and Potluck;
- Our Committee Chairs and Liaisons are more full than anytime in recent memory:
 - o With Bob MacDowall as new Chair for the Health, Safety, and Environment committee and as Membership/Welcoming Liaison;
 - o With Mike Baker staying as Transportation Committee Chair while also offering to reprise his role as RCHCA Secretary. (Alexa Freeman will be stepping down, and we thank her for her past 3 years of service);
- We have a new, smart-looking, easy to use, and more informative website (www.rchca.org), thanks to the efforts of our talented webmaster, Sam Hoxie;
- For those concerned about train horn noise relief, there has been real progress (see article in this newsletter).

On the minus side, the main concern that some of us on the Board have is the rather spotty attendance at our recent meetings. Our fall meeting at which we had an interesting

presentation by Pepco was attended by no more than a dozen people. The spring meeting wasn't much better. On the one hand, perhaps the main reason for low attendance is because we currently have no burning issues. And maybe people just want to know that RCHCA is there to manage our few annual events and the occasional hot issue. We on the Board are struggling with trying to decide whether low attendance is just the natural way things are, absent a major issue. One thing that we do need to decide is whether or not to try and have speakers at each meeting, which we thought of as a way to keep people involved and to help foster a sense of community.

We welcome the thoughts of everyone on the questions of (a) Do you want us to bring in speakers for each of our three General Meetings, and (b) If so, please suggest speakers or topics that you would personally be interested in and willing to come out for. (We promise that we won't send anyone to your door for conscription). Please contact us at jrosenberg@comcast.net with your thoughts on future meetings.

Anyway, we look forward to seeing you at Grace Episcopal Day School for our Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner, which for the first time will be held on a Sunday evening, January 25, 2009. (Potluck Dinner at 6:30, Annual Meeting at 7:30). Please bring salads, side dishes or desserts for the Potluck; we will provide pizzas, chicken and drinks. It's a good opportunity to see your neighbors while they are in the middle of hibernation season. Hope to see you then!

<i>President</i>	Joe Rosenberg
<i>Vice President</i>	Bill Casson
<i>Treasurer</i>	Karyl Kramer
<i>Secretary</i>	Mike Baker

Next Meeting

The RCHCA Annual/Winter Meeting is scheduled for Sunday evening, January 25, 2009. It will be held at Grace Episcopal Day School, 9411 Connecticut Ave, in the multipurpose room.

Please note we are keeping with our tradition of having a weekend evening Potluck Dinner preceding our Annual Meeting, but due to the unavailability of Grace's multipurpose room on Saturdays, we have shifted our Annual meeting to be held on a Sunday. (We still plan to hold the other two General Meetings on Thursdays in May and October.)

Potluck Dinner: This annual event, commencing at 6:30 pm, gives an opportunity to see and/or meet some of your neighbors who may have been hibernating. The Association provides pizza, chicken and drinks. Members are requested to bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share.

Annual Meeting: The Annual meeting will follow, and runs from 7:30 – 9:00 pm. Babysitting will be provided.

Agenda items include:

- Treasurer's Report
- Election of Officers of the Board
- Guest Speaker from WSSC on plans affecting Rock Creek Hills
- Production of 2009 New Rock Creek Hills Directory
- Open discussion on what members would like to see happen at meetings, including future speakers, and any other topics involving how our association can best meet members' needs.
- Update on train horn noise issue

We welcome volunteers to help in set-up and clean-up of the event. Please contact Joe Rosenberg at 301-495-9821 or jrosenberg@comcast.net if you are interested in helping.

Train Noise Update

Two important actions have occurred recently. First, the county DOT (formerly DPWT) completed a supplemental study to the 2006 study, in this case focusing on the technology of hard plastic "lane separators" used elsewhere in Quiet Zones. The previous study assessed and rejected using median barriers made of concrete because usage would have required widening the road leading to the tracks. In contrast, the lane separator system analyzed here would not have this requirement, and in fact would only cost about \$14,000 installed. Based on the results of this study, Traffic Chief Wolanin is now supportive of having a Quiet Zone at this location, and is writing a letter to the County Executive, asking him to concur with the Quiet Zone concept and begin the application process with the Federal Railroad Administration. Since the process of establishing a new Quiet Zone (as opposed to a "grandfathered" one) is a first time exercise in Maryland, it remains unclear whether or not a public hearing will need to be held specifically on this project. Given the 8 year history of bureaucratic indifference and sometimes hostility toward the concept of Quiet Zones, we should not be complacent.

In order to facilitate this process, Delegates Al Carr and Jeff Waldstreicher and Senator Madaleno held a hearing for a bill that would permit the county to install "automated enforcement systems" at railroad grade crossings. The thought was that if safety concerns surface again to thwart momentum toward establishing a Quiet Zone, such a law would permit automated cameras to be installed near the tracks and deter cars from illegally driving around a lowered gate arm in order to "beat the train". I gave testimony in support of this bill on December 11. Other associations whose representatives also signed up to support the bill include Rock Creek Hills Homeowners Association, Glen Manor Condominium Association, Glen Briar Condominium Association, and Forest Glen Station Home Owners Association. There was no opposition voiced at the hearing.

New and improved RCHCA website

If you're not familiar with the recent renovation to our website, please take the time to get familiar with it at RCHCA.org. Our resident webmaster, Sam Hoxie, has put a great deal of her expertise into tailoring this easy to use, resource tool. Everything you could possibly want to know about our community is compiled here, from past event photo galleries to the history of our community. You can also stay informed by joining RCHANET.



It's free, and takes a few minutes to sign up. You'll be able to access a forum for posting and viewing general information and planned events. To join rchanet, you can go to rchca.org, click on the link and register from there, or contact Mike Baker at mikebaker@comcast.net. Be sure to include your name and address if you would like to join so that we may verify your connection to the neighborhood.

Speaker from WSSC for January Meeting

Several Guest Speakers from WSSC will join us at our Winter meeting to discuss the Bi-County Water Supply Project. This undertaking will include a huge underground pipe (twelve feet in diameter). The pipe will run from the water works at the Potomac River, across Montgomery County, and finally to Prince George's County. The WSSC is planning to start construction in 2009; the project is expected to take five years. It is our understanding that a significant amount of this work will be near the RCHCA area.

We have asked the WSSC to include a short discussion on the history of this project, the need for and ultimate capability of the system, special problems, and estimated costs and sources of money. The most important part of the talk will be a detailed discussion of the effects of this project on our local environment. For instance, the many effects of digging large deep holes in the area, trucks moving dirt and stone (and where will it go), effects on our water, gas, electric and other facilities, noise, dust and night work, and the time the construction will be in our area. Questions will be encouraged.

New Directory to be Published in 2009

We will be publishing an updated neighborhood phone directory and need your help to ensure its accuracy. If you have any changes, or are new to the neighborhood, please send household name(s), address, phone and (optional) email address to Sam Hoxie via email (hoxiesam@gmail.com) or regular mail (9711 E. Bexhill Drive), or visit our website (www.rchca.org) and click on 'Contact Us' and then 'Submit Address Changes' to send changes & updates online.

We are also accepting advertisements to help defray the cost of the printing & mailing. If you are interested in advertising a business in the 2009 Neighborhood Directory, please contact Joe Rosenberg (jrosenberg@comcast.net) or 301-495-9821.

Images from the 2008 RCHCA Halloween Parade



Photos by Sam Statland

RCHCA Treasurer's Report

RCHCA Treasury/
Dues Status – Winter 2008

Enclosed with this newsletter is a pre-addressed envelope for payment of the 2009 Rock Creek Hills Citizens' Association dues of \$35. Your dues payment supports annual RCHCA social events such as the Halloween party and the Concert in the Park. The dues also cover the costs of newsletters, meetings, the RCHCA directory, and maintenance of the RCHCA website and resident database.

Residents interested in supporting the costs of annual traffic triangle project maintenance are encouraged to do so by adding an additional amount above the recommended \$35 in their dues payment.

If the envelope is missing, lost, or damaged, the mailing address is:

RCHCA Treasurer
Karyl Kramer
9524 W. Stanhope Rd.
Kensington, MD 20895-3523

Treasurer's Report

(As of 12/01/08)

Income

(12/01/07 -12/01/08):
\$12,865.39

Expenses

(12/01/07 -12/01/08):
\$11,251.24

Account Balance

(As of 12/01/07):
\$29,053.67

Account Balance

(As of 12/01/08):
\$30,667.82