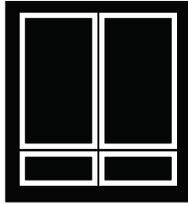


# Hi

WINTER 2009



# Neighbor!

News & Information for Neighbors & Friends  
of the Rock Creek Woods Community

**Book Club Meeting**  
**2nd Weds of each Month**  
**8:00 pm**  
**4018 Ingersol**



Check the website for more information and the current book, or contact Ruth Gruenberg and Helen Beachem.

**RCW 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee** - Annabel Kaufman and Pati Young are co-chairing the committee to plan neighborhood anniversary festivities for Labor Day Weekend 2009 and to create historical records for the neighborhood. Please contact Annabel if you would like to serve on this committee.

**The Neighborhood Listserv** is a great way to exchange information and make inquiries among neighbors. Contact Renana if you would like an invitation to join via Yahoo! Groups. The listserv allows members to send emails directly to everyone subscribed, and to dialog about items of interest to neighbors. Official announcements will still be sent out by neighborhood secretary Pati Young; items should be emailed to Pati for widest distribution.

## DOGS OF ROCK CREEK WOODS

*Here in Rock Creek Woods we have dogs of all kinds: Labs, Poodles large and small, a Greyhound and even a pair of English Bulldogs. Multi-dog households are almost as many as single-dog families. Kim Young and Brad Koltek have four!*

*We must report, however, that not all share our enthusiasm. Motek, Cat-in-Residence of 4015 Ingersol, protests: "Rock Creek Woods has gone to the dogs! Only dogs get attention. 'Man's best friend,' you say? Mee-oww!! People should look at our wonderful cat population. They are your true friends."*

*The staff and editorial board of the Newsletter apologize to Motek and his friends for this perceived but unintended slight. We have invited Motek to write a follow-up article for the next issue of the Newsletter on the Cats of Rock Creek Woods. You will get to know through Motek's own words all the neighborhood "hot" cats. Meanwhile, here are the Dogs of Rock Creek Woods.*



I am **Bailey**, a pure-bred American Cocker-Spaniel, living with Jeff and Betsy Binckes on Spruell.

Betsy chose me after I was born in December 2002; I was the biggest, brightest and cutest. She brought me to Rock Creek Woods in February 2003 - But, Holy Smokes, I found a cat named Zachary already in residence. Scary, let me tell you! As far as Zachary was concerned, I was not welcome at all. But after a short time we came to respect each other.

Because he works at home, Jeff takes care of me. He's not a bad guy. He lets me walk him around the neighborhood on a leash and go for an occasional run down Rock Creek Park to Ken Gar where he throws tennis balls for me to catch.

In the neighborhood I try to catch ground squirrels and rabbits. So far I haven't caught even one. I keep trying! I get along with most other dogs in the neighborhood and look forward to seeing you on 'my rounds'.

*Continued on Page 4*

## RCW Welcomes New Neighbors

Jim & Catherine Roberts

Rock Creek Woods is fortunate to have attracted to the neighborhood another talented family, in this case with special competence in biology and music. The *Furtado* and *Suhett* families, now living at 3918 Rickover Rd (the Maroggi house), are Brazilian and have been in the U.S. for relatively short but varying periods.

Marcio de Araujo Furtado and his wife, Taiza Helena Figueiredo Furtado, are both neuroscientists who are doing post-doctoral research work at U.S. military research institutions. Both received their doctorates recently from the University of Sao Paulo. Marcio's main interest is in animal neural systems; Taiza's training also includes considerable experience in psychology. They have lived in our area for about two years, making their home in the central Silver Spring area.

When they were joined a couple of months ago by cousins from Rio de Janeiro, they searched for larger quarters and found them on lower Rickover. Davi Suhett and his wife, Camila Almeida Suhett, are finding their new experiences in the U.S. and the necessity of operating almost exclusively in English a challenge – though a very welcome one. Both are enrolled in evening English classes. Camila, also a biological science specialist, is doing research with the U.S. military institute while working on her PhD. Davi, an artist among biologists, graduated in Rio with a Bachelor of Music degree. He is looking forward to a career as a professional oboist and plans to work for a Master of Music degree at one of our local University music departments.

Marcio and Taiza have two bright eyed children: Felipe Figueiredo Furtado is eight years old and a pupil at Woodlin Elementary at the moment, but his parents are considering a transfer to Rockview in the fall. His sister, Fatima Figueiredo Furtado, is only three and still has a few months to go before she is a candidate for pre-school.

The music/science connection is of special interest to Taiza, who believes that early contact with music can form important neural connections in the minds of infants. Before Felipe reached his first birthday, he was the subject of experiments conducted by her and fellow neuro-scientists that measured his physical reactions to various kinds of music. Conclusions from the study were subsequently published in a Brazilian journal.

While life here is not altogether different from the areas where they spent their early years in Brazil (Marcio and Taiza are from suburban Ribeirao Preto, a city of about one million about two hundred miles northwest of Sao Paulo) that suburb had obvious differences from Silver Spring and the family has great enthusiasm for exploring activities that are common here but not readily available in Brazil. For example, Camila can't wait to get started on ice skating. Taiza also mentions getting her children to the rink for an early start on ice.

We warmly welcome the Furtado and Suhett families to our neighborhood and look forward to becoming better acquainted with them.

### ***Bringing the Back Yard Into the Living Room***

*The Washington Post*  
Real Estate - Where We Live  
Saturday, December 6th

By Andrea Rouda

*Outstanding architecture doesn't have to be wildly expensive. Consider the Montgomery County community of Rock Creek Woods, where every resident lives in a work of art, but the average selling price is about \$600,000.*

To view the entire article, go to <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/05/AR2008120503331.html?referrer=emailarticle>

### ***Message from the Editor***

Many thanks to Tom Klein, Jim & Catherine Roberts, Heather Cox, Gregory Arms, the RCW officers and all the neighborhood pooches for providing content for this issue. Actually, Tom Klein contributed so much material that the Editor feels he should have a title and a job description!

Thanks for your patience with this overdue issue. You know what they say about giving a busy person something that needs to be done - just be prepared to wait! As one of those scientist/musicians and also a mother, my time in December and January was a bit overbooked. Please send items for the next issue by late March.

Cats, the ball is in your court....

--Maggie Toscano

**RCWCA OFFICERS**

Kathy Waldman – President  
Gregory Arms - Vice President  
Pati Young – Secretary  
Jules O'Rear – Treasurer

## How the layout of Rock Creek Woods Created a Sense of “Neighborhood”

**Tom Klein**

Rock Creek Woods is an unusually cohesive neighborhood. Families are brought together easily and naturally. Just about everybody knows who lives in each house, and all have a genuine sense of neighborliness.

Judith and I bought 4008 Ingersol in 1965, attracted by the quiet street, no through traffic, sidewalks, short walk to the elementary school, and an easy walk to Einstein High School. The church on the corner of Spruell and Ingersol sponsored a nursery school. The location provided access to excellent public transportation to DC, including express rush-hour bus service (then) on Connecticut Avenue and Viers Mill Road. Local shopping in Kensington was just a mile’s drive.

I suggest that the geography of the neighborhood is responsible for this agreeable sense of community. There is only one way into RC Woods by car. Spruell, Ingersol and Rickover form a small residential island, with Rickover dead-ending at the black path back to Spruell (going left into RCW or right into the next neighborhood). When we arrived in 1965, children went outside to play on their own, quite safe as there was no through traffic. Parents were quickly drawn together. Dog-owners met one another walking their respective pooches. We got to know each other, gradually, casually, informally because our normal movements brought us into contact with one another.

Forty some years ago, every house had children. When the children grew up and moved out, many of us stayed put because these houses are easily navigable by the no-longer-readily-mobile, and we like living in a house with a garden. In the last few years, there has been a new influx of couples in their late 30s and early 40s with young children, so we have a nice age group mix. Having little ones around and seeing them grow up is a delight for the older folks, much nicer, in my opinion, than living in a “retirement” community and having as your neighbors only people who are at least as decrepit as yourself and who, when you see them, remind you of your own physical decline.

Neighborhood cohesiveness has facilitated this decision. A number of empty-nesters here keep in touch with one another, reluctant to leave behind shared long-term associations with the neighborhood. We also have confidence that, should any small emergency or problem arise, we can count on our younger neighbors to give a hand if called.

If Spruell went right through instead of being blocked at the church, If Rickover and Ingersol had been built as parallel through streets, linked with the streets beyond the creek, the RC Woods residents would not have been tied-in together in this self-contained community.

## Recent Crime in the Area and Neighborhood Break-ins:

Do not hesitate to call the Police if you see something suspicious. More info is better than less or none.

For example, on November 13, 2008 a Hispanic-appearing man knocked at a house on Spruell, stating that he was from the “Gas Company.” He had no identification as such; a call to Washington Gas confirmed they had no workers in our neighborhood. This event was reported to the police.

During the summer, several cars were sideswiped on a Friday night by an erratically-driven white pickup truck bearing a commercial logo. Several neighbors saw this truck, heard crashing and scraping noises, and noted the behaviour of the driver, but none recorded or recalled any identifying information such as the logo on the truck or the license plate number. As a result at least one car was totaled and all were damaged with no hope of recovery of insurance claim costs.

### Dealing with the Police:

Detective Scott, who deals with events in our neighborhood, asks that all be informed of crimes via the e-mail list. Any such occurrences need to be reported to the police—even if they took place more than a few days ago.

Any observations you can make—time of day, location, type of car, color, make, license plate number, etc., any aspects of any suspicious person—should be reported to Detective Scott (301-657-0144), and to Kathy Waldman (301-946-6253).

To check crime occurrences in our neighborhood, use the link from our website to Montgomery County. We are “Section D3 Bethesda” in those reports.

The Montgomery County Police department no longer supports Neighborhood Watch programs. We may want to create a sign which informs visitors that our neighborhood is a safe space where we observe everything and take care of each other.

That said, if you don’t already, consider alerting your neighbors when you know you will be away.

**“Watching While You Walk.”** In response to a daytime robbery on upper Rickover, Tom Klein suggested that daytime dog walkers and exercisers coordinate the time of their walks so that there will be a presence on our streets during the hours of 9:30 to 3:30, spread out as evenly as possible. They would report anything out of the ordinary to the police. The Civic Association endorsed Tom’s proposal. Tom has been coordinating the participants - the neighbors thank you!

## DOGS OF RCW CONT.



**Boris and Biscuit** - Boris gives us the word: That's me on the left, mostly white with a little brown and black. I'm four years old. The other English bulldog, the brown one, is my aunt (can you believe it!). She is my mother's sister and is eight years old, twice my age. We weigh about sixty pounds each, and are we strong!

Carla and Lee Haner got us from a kennel in the Shenandoah Valley when we were each nine weeks old. We live a quiet life at home, couch potato dogs really, and we like nothing better than to spend an evening snuggling up to Carla and Lee. Aunty Biscuit has a real nice disposition; I'm not a bad guy, but Aunty is the real sweetheart. I want people to know that I'm in charge.

Aunty Biscuit and I bark a lot at other dogs and people, but that's all for show. We've got to live up to our appearances.



**Skipper and Alfie** of Spruell Dr, sharing a quiet moment. A rare occurrence!!



Hi! My name is **Megan**. I am the Blenheim Cavalier King Charles Spaniel on the right. That's my brother (not really) on the left. His name is **Duffy**; he is a tri-color CKCS. We are six years old, going on seven. We live at 3700 Spruell Drive with Joan and Sue. I'm sure you've seen us around the neighborhood, one time or another. If you walk by our house and we see you, we will always bark "hello."

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My name is **Teagan** and I live at 4004 Ingersol. I am part boxer and part pug. My owners got me from the Montgomery Humane Society about 5 years ago.



**Grady**, couch potato, thief of peppered salamis becoming real dog

**Simba**, arm chewer enthusiastic greeter ever so smart

-- Susan Holbeck

Views on the national energy problem:

Grady: Conserve Energy – Think Grey!

Simba: Tail Power – The Alternative Energy Source!



**Gia** was adopted from Caroline County when she weighed about 30 lbs. She has grown considerably but she is still a sweetheart with a Big Bark.



My name's **Miranda**. Rugby is my game. Actually anything that has to do with running, tackling, jumping on top of the other guy – especially my best friend **Kozmo**. I'm all for it. Add a ball and I'm in heaven. I could tell you some stories about the two people who live with me. Gregory thinks he's in charge of me and is always telling me what to do. Of course I've learned some neat tricks from him and he does throw a mean Frisbee. Valerie is good for treats and snuggling and letting me get away with all kinds of fun. Sheesh! I'm probably going to need lots of therapy when I grow up.



*Cody, escape artist,  
chaser of baby bunnies,  
gentle in-home pal.*

Hi, I'm **Cody**, a reformed escape artist. I love to chase rabbits and squirrels and will even try to climb a tree after one. My Mom chose me because I looked kind of like her old dog Barney, but now she is glad that I am my own self. It took a lot of training and discipline, but my Mom is now a good and faithful companion.



**Rudy** (right) says: I like to have all my valuables nearby. Sal and Dee are generally okay but they disagree about how many treats I should have. She thinks I'm too fat. He loves to give me more.

**Magic** (left) gets the last word: I'm ten years old, the senior dog here. I'm in charge of who gets to sit on the downstairs couch.



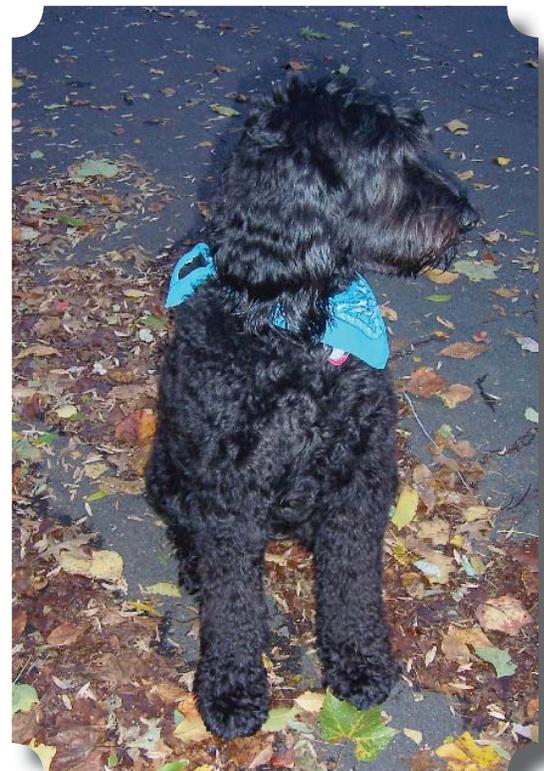


**Bongo** came to his family from Washington Animal Rescue League 5 years ago and is the best dog they've ever owned. Bongo loves other dogs and people and will come out to say "Hi" at a speed suggesting he was shot out of a cannon. He loves to chase squirrels and get the Sunday paper and most of all he loves to follow his family anywhere they go. He is far better than a doorbell at the house because he will start barking when anyone even gets close. They are lucky to have him; he's 90 pounds of love (and 10 pounds of poop).

**Madison** is the only canine we know who keeps a smile on her face. Disney Dog is in a little space of heaven each day as she chases butterflies, birds and the occasional rabbit. Things really get grand when **Miranda** or **Kosmo** are around for a good old fashioned romp. Her 60 lbs of exuberance tempers as she addles up for a scratch behind the ear, sitting on your feet, lest you escape sharing her glorious day.



**Gracie, Kozmo, Jasper and Harley** report: You might have heard about us – the newest canine additions to the neighborhood. We are brothers – **Jasper** and **Harley**. You could say that we are Bobbsey Twins. Okay, so we aren't twins. One of us is yellow (**Jasper**) and one of us is black (**Harley**). But we do everything together – we sleep together; we eat together; we play together. You probably have even seen us walking together through the neighborhood. Sometimes we also walk in the neighborhood with the rest of our pack. That would include our "sister", **Grace** (aka Gracie Bear) who is yellow just like Jasper. And there is also our new "brother", **Kozmo** who is black just like Harley. It kinda looks like there was some plan to keep the color balance in our house – two of us are black and two of us are yellow. The rest of our pack is made up of Brad (the leader of our pack) and Kim (the main giver of cookies and other treats – YUM!!!!). Our pack is very friendly so please stop and say hello if you see us while we are on one of our walks.





Donna Smith writes:

We adopted *Sachi* from the American Brittany Rescue in February 2002. We believe she is 11 years old. Her favorite activities are basking in the sun, hunting butterflies and squirrels, and playing with Nobu and Aiko.

*Missy* (left) and *Rocky* - We adopted both this past summer from Best Dawg Rescue group, which is based in Bethesda. Regarding their past, we know only that they were turned in to Prince Georges County Humane Society where the rescue group found them and put them in foster care until we adopted them. Both are very, very happy to be part of the pack at 4012 Rickover.



*Cagney & Lacy* here, just wanting to drop everyone a little note to say hello. We've seen y'all out and about over the two years that we've lived out here and have enjoyed every minute of it. I (Lacy) enjoy hunting squirrels & rabbits and Cagney loves to just lie around and beg for food. ☺ She's working on that diet and has actually trimmed down a few pounds. Just in time for the holidays and all the candy, turkey and Christmas goodies!

Oh, our two Dads have also enjoyed living out here as well. Steve and Mickey couldn't imagine being anywhere else than here.

Best to y'all,

*Cagney & Lacy*



## “Dogs of Yore” We Remember Them Well

**Tom and Judith Klein (4008 Ingersol) remember Heather and Mercy.** The story began in April 1958 when Margaret Weill, Judith’s 12 year old daughter, wrote this letter: “Tom, when we come to America we have to leave our cat behind in London. Can we have a puppy or a kitty?” On the strength of passing my PhD orals and my appointment as Assistant Professor of Economics at Hamilton College, I had proposed to Judith, my sweetheart from LSE graduate school days. I was to return to London for a June wedding.

In September 1958, I not only was a new husband but a father to three children. Many faculty puppies were waiting to join our household. I had replied to Margaret that a dog was a better pet than a cat out in the country where we would be living. By return mail Margaret wrote that it was not a dog she wanted, but a puppy. The entire faculty knew about this correspondence.

Slowly settling in, we hesitated to accept one of the many puppies offered us until 10-year old David announced one day that a school friend, a farm boy, was going to give him a newly-born German Sheppard pup. “That’s nice,” we fibbed to David, “but just this afternoon, we agreed to take one of the Miniature Collie pups.” A quick phone call, and Heather was ours.

Heather was a true sheep dog, raced up and down College Hill Road barking furiously at the passing cars, snapping at their tires, vainly trying to round them up. In the house, she was Margaret’s dog, always cuddling up to her for affection. Heather survived to come with us to Ingersol Drive next June, and she tried her level best to herd all motorized vehicles coming around the corner. Heather lived until April 1972, when she had to be put down after suffering a stroke.

Our son, Ed – then 11 years old – missed the sound of Heather snoring outside his bedroom door; he couldn’t sleep without that reassuring rhythmic sound. Margaret and Joe Wilkes’ cocker spaniel had just produced a litter, and they presented us with Mercy, a beige American Cocker Spaniel.

Mercy attached herself to Judith; she followed Judith around the house, always had to be with her. She loved food; one day we carelessly put dinner on the table and turned our backs. Next thing, Mercy was on the dining table, wolfing down greedily the supper intended for ourselves.

As a pup and as a young dog, she was a walker and would hike with me miles down the trail in Rock Creek Park, past Cedar Lane, past Connecticut. Later, she wouldn’t go out of the neighborhood. I would walk down the black path around the church. If I started up towards Byrd Road, instead of turning right on the path, Mercy would splay her legs in four different directions, making it impossible to go on. As she got older, Judith could coax her around the neighborhood only by stopping first at the Wilkes’ house and getting Margaret and one of Mercy’s more vigorous sisters to lead the way.

Mercy, like Heather, lived for about fourteen years before she passed away.

**The Vanek Dalmatians.** Jim Roberts remembers them. Actually there were two Dalmatians. The first died around 1970 while he

was still assigned overseas. When Jim and Catherine returned a couple of years later they found that number one Dalmatian had been replaced by what seemed to be her doppelganger.

When Jim asked Oda Vanek what he and Malada named the new dog, he said “Punchau” Jim asked wasn’t that the name of the first dog? Oda said “Yes that’s true, but it just means ‘Spots’ in Czech.”

**The Moeschlin’s Irish Setter.** The Moeschlin’s lived on Ingersol next door to the Pelz’s, where Dolores and Sal live now. Kelly Pelz reminds us that his name was Rafferty, a magnificent Irish Setter with a lovely red pelt. He was well on in years when we got to know him. On warm summer days, Rafferty loved to sleep in the street on the warm asphalt pavement, not at all close to the curb. Everybody knew he was there, UPS driver included, and steered clear.

The Moeschlin’s moved away, and Rafferty lived to go with them.

**May Nakamura remembers Nickie.** Nickie was Lois Mullen’s dog. Even when Lois’ health began to fail and Lois could barely move, she would take Nickie for walks. The time came when this was too difficult for her. May became Nickie’s walker and continued until Lois’s daughter, Linda, moved to Frederick.

Looking after a dog was quite an adjustment for May, for May’s pets have always been cats. Cats don’t require leashes. Nickie loved everybody except the mailman, the UPS man and the FedEx man. When they came by, Nickie in his excitement would bark and dash about, wrapping his leash around May, maybe two times. Calliecat would never do that!

Despite this, Nickie and May became dear friends. Nickie would greet May with great exuberance when she came to collect her for her walks. Today, Nickie is alive and well in Frederick, recovering from a shoulder injury, perhaps from chasing after Linda’s two cats, who spend the day running up and down the three flights of stairs in their Frederick home.



## The Luncheon Club

It's not actually called the Luncheon Club. It doesn't have a name. You will see an announcement through the RC Woods e-mail network that the neighborhood lunch will be next Friday and that you should phone Jean Hoyt if you are interested in coming.

The neighborhood luncheon group was started by Kelly Pelz to explore the interesting little eateries in Wheaton. When the Pelz's moved to Seattle, the luncheons stopped. Two and a half years ago Jean Hoyt and May Nakamura talked about how they missed the luncheons – why not contact the old regulars and try this interesting Indian restaurant? Since then there has been a luncheon every month!

The group has a grand time exploring the area and trying restaurants of every type imaginable. Many nearby ethnic restaurants have been visited; Asian and Thai are favorites. Sol de España on the Pike was a big hit. Towards the end of each luncheon the group decides where they should eat next, consulting Jean Hoyt's collection of reviews of interesting-looking restaurants.

One of the more adventuresome luncheons took place at the Ethiopian restaurant on University Blvd just east of Viers Mill Road. The proprietress could not have been more hospitable; she welcomed the group with glasses of Ethiopian wine. Eating the very spicy dishes with only Ethiopian flat bread (injera) – no forks or knives - really made for a most interesting food experience.

Next luncheon: O'Donnell's – first visit to a mid-American restaurant – February 27th, in Gaithersburg. Give Jean a call if you would like to join in - Carpools are available.



The luncheon group at the Green Papaya Restaurant in October (from left around the table): May Nakamura, Cordie Goldstein, Helen Beachem, Jan Downing, Jean Hoyt, Judith Klein, Kathy Waldmann, Alice Holland, Dolores Battle and Ruth Gruenberg.

## Music While You Work

**Tom Klein**

Do you like listening to classical music while working on the computer? Would you like to hear what is beyond WETA and WBJC, with their narrow programming and often just musical wallpaper? Major stations now “stream” music to your computer via their web sites.

My favorite is CBC Radio 2: [www.cbc.ca/radio2](http://www.cbc.ca/radio2). You can hook on to whatever is playing, or check out “concerts on demand.” Past performances of special interest from all over Canada are saved and you can tune in any time of the day or night. Some are quite unusual. For example, I discovered the 21-year old brilliant Canadian pianist Evan Yu (born in Hong Kong), by tuning into a recital he gave on December 30th in far away Lion's Bay, BC. Here he plays Chopin with delicacy and grace. On the same day he recorded Mozart with young violinist Nikki Chooi, also wonderful to hear. Down the road these artists will be at the Kennedy Center and available on CDs, but thanks to CBC Radio 2, you can hear them now.

Another station with unusual programming is BBC Radio 3: [www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical/). Click “On Air Now” for pleasant listening. One series of programs I enjoy is “Composer of the Week.” Opera lovers - ever miss the Saturday afternoon Metropolitan Opera broadcast and wish you could hear it later? BBC Radio 3 makes your dream come true. BBC streams all the Met Opera matinee broadcasts on its web site for a full week. You can hear each one any time of the day or night through your computer, until the next matinee is broadcast live (Saturday afternoons, usually 1:00 PM EST). Log on to [www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/classical). On the right side of the home page you will see a list of “Classical Programs.” About half-way down the list is “Opera on 3.” Click on that and you will be connected to the Met in New York via London.

I had hoped to find interesting classical music from continental European stations, but I haven't gotten very far - I have a hard time tearing myself away from CBC Radio 2 and BBC Radio 3 (Classical) just to explore. If you search, let us know what you find!

# “Aging in Place” Issues for Rock Creek Woods

Thomas Klein

Did you know that about one quarter of RC Woods families are couples or singles over the age of seventy? We remain in Rock Creek Woods because we like our spacious homes and gardens, we enjoy our community, and we want to stay here as long as we can: “Aging in Place” the process is called.

How do we look after ourselves in our own homes as we get older? Part of the answer is cooperative action among our neighbors. I learned what other communities are doing in this regard at a panel discussion, sponsored by the World Bank retirees’ association on November 20, 2008.

Here and there, groups of older people have formally joined together to assist each other through dedicated associations. Two types of associations have evolved: “Retirement Villages” and “Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities.”

A retirement village is a grouping together of older people scattered in a community of younger families or individuals. Creating such a “village” is a big organizational job because potential members do not, by and large, know each other. Because members are not already bonded together in an existing community, volunteer services are difficult to organize. A paid director is necessary, and consequently a large membership; costs are met through dues. This is a high-cost operation, but has worked. See [www.beaconhillvillage.org](http://www.beaconhillvillage.org) for the Beacon Hill Village (Boston, Massachusetts) experience.

A naturally occurring retirement community exists in a residential neighborhood with a substantial number of elderly people that are easily brought into contact with each other. One successful operation that seems to have lessons for Rock Creek Woods is the Volunteer Neighbor Network in the Van Ness North Cooperative Apartments in DC, which revolves around a few volunteer coordinators. Each participant indicates on a questionnaire how he or she can assist others if needed, creating a volunteer pool. Floor coordinators in the building receive requests for assistance (e.g., taking somebody to and from physical therapy a few times a week) and lines up help from the volunteer pool.

Having a floor coordinator eliminates embarrassing situations. Nobody likes to ask neighbors continuously for help - the floor coordinator does the asking for the ill or injured resident. Conversely, a volunteer may find it impossible to help out on a particular day, and may find it awkward to tell that directly to the person in need. The floor coordinator smoothes out problems of availability.

On January 12th, Ruth Gruenberg and I got together with a few of our contemporaries plus a couple of youngsters in their 60s to explore the extent to which the Van Ness North experience is applicable to us. Here’s what came out of that discussion:

**Safety issues.** Much good advice is available on how to make one’s home more accident-proof (e.g., grab-bars in bathrooms, carpeting, appropriate stairway handrails). Through his volunteer activities, Jules O’Rear is quite expert on these matters and can offer practical advice.

**Communication and home access.** We agreed that at least two neighbors should have keys to your home and know whom to call in case of emergencies. Montgomery County has designed a standard form, to be stored in a conspicuous folder that is magnetized to mount on refrigerator doors, on which one records key medical info. County emergency responders will look for this form, called the “File of Life.”

**Handyman services.** As we get older, we need help with simple home maintenance tasks that we no longer can handle ourselves, but that are too small to warrant high-priced contractor services. One possibility is to contract with a “handyman” to come to the neighborhood one or two days regularly each month. How this can be managed in practice is not clear. A simpler possibility is informally for two or more people to contact a handyman as needed to work a short time in each person’s house. More thought, and some experimentation required!

A related issue is how to find help with such chores as snow-shoveling and leaf-raking. We no longer have numbers of teenagers in the neighborhood willing to do these chores as a source of pocket money.

**A Rock Creek Woods Senior Volunteer Network.** Because the entire community of Rock Creek Woods is linked by personal relationships, do we really need a formal organization like that of Van Ness North? Those older people living alone in RC Woods can attest to the sincere friendly helpfulness of their immediate neighbors who often anticipate problems and initiate help. On the other hand, when an older person runs into persistent difficulties, problems come up that may require more organized assistance from the broader community: driving, shopping, heavy errands, care of pets, relief to a live-in family caregiver. This issue must be explored further.

At the January 26th regular bi-monthly RC Woods meeting, it was agreed:

- (a) Each household (not just seniors’) should have a “File of Life” card. Betsy Binckes will arrange a supply.
- (b) Regarding a volunteer network, it was felt that we should continue with existing informal arrangements.
- (c) However, we should explore how our community might better serve those in difficulty.

I was asked to chair a committee that would look further into ageing and related issues, taking note of the various needs and how they may be dealt with effectively. Interested in taking part? Please give me a ring!

## **Reminder \*\*\*\* Snow Shoveling**

Please remember that Montgomery County requires all residents to keep the sidewalks in front of their homes clear of snow. The mailman and people walking up to the bus will thank you. Please assist any neighbors around you that may need help shoveling their walks and driveways. If we get a heavy snow, we should also attempt to un-block storm drains.

Thanks! \*\*\*\*

## Cherry Trees - Arborist Report and Plan for the Future

The survival rate of our last planting of cherry trees was terribly low. The trees we purchased from Benhke were grafted trees and not worth planting. Grafted trees will not grow as tall and may not be as strong as trees grown on their own root stock. Because Yoshino cherry trees are prone to pests and the wood is not as strong, it is better to use seedling trees. The County Arborist did not recommend spraying or fertilizing.

The County has doubled its budget and has a new program for which RCW is eligible that offers us much better replanting options. The County's program for re-planting the trees is not a grant program. We do not have to apply for funds as we did with earlier re-plantings. The funds are available. We need only to specify and request that the work be done.

Now your feedback is requested in order to implement a plan that will maintain the beauty of our Rock Creek Woods streetscape.

Montgomery County arborist Brett Linkletter made a site visit to our neighborhood on October 22, 2008 to assess the condition of our street trees. It seems we will lose nearly all of our cherry street trees within 15 – 18 years. He has recommended that we send him a list of trees in need of replacement and pruning and he has assured us this work will be done at no cost to the neighborhood.

Dolores Battle and Gregory Arms surveyed the cherry trees on October 29 and November 5, noting trees or stumps in need of removal, missing trees, and trees in need of pruning.

At least 14 mature trees may not live another four years— 4 mature trees on upper Rickover, 5 trees on lower Rickover, 4 mature trees on Ingersol, and 1 on Spruell. An additional 7 mid-sized and small dead trees will also need to be removed. Removing the 14 large trees will reduce the number of mature street trees by 17%. Tree and stump removal, the replanting of 42 trees, and selective pruning of the remaining mature cherry trees, will take about two years.

### Proposed Plan

Attendees of the November 19 civic association meeting formed a consensus on the following recommendation:

- A unified approach to street tree management would allow us to document, expedite, and track the progress of our requests for County services.
- Selective pruning, removal, and replacement of trees; with 4 to 5 re-plantings on a 3-year cycle; phased in over 12 – 15 years; will minimize the loss of street cover and maintain a canopy for climate mitigation.

- Yoshino cherry trees are preferred over Okame cherries, mixed cherries, or mixed tree species from the Montgomery County approved street tree list. Although Yoshino cherries are no longer on the approved street tree list because of their short life span and weak wood, the County will make replants available for neighborhoods with existing plantings.

- The phased-in rotation of the cherry trees was favored over the prospect of allowing trees to decline without care. Without care the trees will lack vitality, have dead and decaying branches, and the potential to damage property and cause injury due to falling branches and/or trees. This would lead to the eventual clear-cutting of the remaining trees by the County and replacement with all young trees.

### Your Feedback required:

1. See the tree survey summary attached to the January 12 email to the neighborhood. Look for your address in yhr listings for removal/replacement and/or pruning. **If you need this email to be re-sent please contact Gregory Arms or Pati Young.**
2. Reply to the email with any questions or concerns.
3. Let us know if you 1.) agree, or 2.) do not agree to participate in this unified approach to street tree management.

### Next Steps:

As the weather improves we will tie ribbons on the proposed trees to be removed and place survey flags at the approximate locations for tree replacements.

Once we have heard from a majority of neighbors, certainly each of those who would be affected in this first phase, we will notify Brett Linkletter that the County can begin the process of tree removal and replanting.

Thank you for your careful attention to this important matter.

Gregory Arms [garmsp@yahoo.com](mailto:garmsp@yahoo.com)

Dolores Battle [dlrsbattle@aol.com](mailto:dlrsbattle@aol.com)

Julie Marcis [julie.marcis@comcast.net](mailto:julie.marcis@comcast.net)

### Just when you thought you knew what to recycle.....

Good News - According to Montgomery County, we are now allowed to recycle the plastic bottle caps, container covers, etc. in the Blue Bin, as long as they are not attached to their original containers.

Pretty soon there will be no "trash" - all will be recyclable!



**ENVIRONMENTAL  
FILM FESTIVAL  
IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL**

**The 17th annual Environmental Film Festival will take place from March 11-17, 2009. The 2009 schedule of films and venues will be released online in early February.**

**Go to the website**

**<http://www.dcenvironmentalfilmfest.org/>  
for details and schedules.**

*www.WineWordsWisdom.com*



*Dick Marcis has a beautiful new website specializing in Italian wines, travel and all things Italian. It's not yet a commercial venture – Dick has been having a great time with it. You can view it at [www.WineWordsWisdom.com](http://www.WineWordsWisdom.com). The site was designed by Heather Cox of MillerCox Design, Inc. Check it out and let Dick know if you have any comments or suggestions.*



***Arts Offerings for the Winter Months:***

***Rockville Concert Band, Vince Patterson, Conductor***

F Scott Fitzgerald Theater, Rockville Civic Center, Sunday 3:00 pm, Free, great for children

***February 8 "Swingtime"***

***March 15 Children's Concert***

***April 19 TBA***

***Cathedral Choral Society, Washington National Cathedral, J. Reilly Lewis, Conductor***

[www.cathedralchoralsociety.org](http://www.cathedralchoralsociety.org) for tickets and more information

***March 8, 4:00 pm Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Concert***

***May 10, 4:00 pm A French Spectacular!***

***Tuesday Noontime Concert Series (Free, donations accepted)***

***Church of the Epiphany, 13th & G Sts NW at Metro Center***

See [www.epiphanydc.org](http://www.epiphanydc.org) for concert schedule and performers

(Washington Bach Consort, Levine Faculty, instrumental and vocal soloists)

***Music Center at Strathmore***

***Sunday, February 15, 11:00 AM, Discover Strathmore - The Art of the Circus***

***Sponsored in part by Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. Free - No Tickets Required***

The community is invited to be part of the magic of the arts of the circus as jugglers, clowns, musicians and acrobats perform and lead interactive workshops throughout Strathmore. Kids of all ages will be surprised and delighted as performers interact with audiences and offer visitors a chance to try their hands at some favorite circus feats!

***Strathmore Mansion - Children's Talk and Tour***

***Saturday, March 7, 2009 at 10:15 AM***

***Saturday, April 18, 2009 at 10:15 AM***

Children ages 5 and up, accompanied by an adult, are welcome to attend these Saturday morning programs. The talk and tour begins at 10:15 a.m. and continues to 12:30 p.m. The activity is free, but reservations are required. Please call (301) 581-5109 to register.

***Hi Neighbor!*** is a quarterly publication of the Rock Creek Woods Civic Association. To contribute stories or items of interest to the community, personal milestones, photos and announcements, please email them to the Editor ([mtoscano@sprintmail.com](mailto:mtoscano@sprintmail.com)). Contributors to this issue include Tom Klein, Jim & Catherine Roberts, Gregory Arms, Heather Cox, RCW officers and the pooches. Thanks!