

SPRING
2006

HOTLINE

THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER OF WEST LAUREL

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In putting together this month's general membership meeting and *Hotline*, I was reminded of how talented and civic-minded West Laurel residents are. Some outsiders view the neighborhood as clannish, even snobby. A very down-to-earth friend who lives in the City of Laurel used the latter term recently to describe how we are viewed by some other Laurelites. His comment gave me pause, but I couldn't disagree more.

Perhaps by today's standards there is a higher than normal level of civic pride in our swimming pool and our elementary school, our Rag Tag Band and our parkland, but they are the glue that holds the community together and are integral to our identity. That there was a strong sense of community in the 1960s when the post-World War II generation began settling

West Laurel and starting their families is not unique. Rather, it is the fact that 40+ years later, that tradition has continued — even as the neighborhood has grown and changed, is much more culturally diverse, and only slightly less transient than much of the rest of suburban Washington.

What I find most inspiring is the willingness and enthusiasm of so many *individual* people from all walks of life to share their talents for the betterment of the *entire* community. I could cite dozens of examples, but I'll stick to people and issues relevant to this *Hotline* and the May 18 general meeting.

In addition to the general meeting, this *Hotline* promotes two other important, upcoming community events: the Bond Mill PTA Spring Carnival (May 20, see p. 11) and the

(Continued on page 5)

MEETING TOPICS

The WLCA has tackled a variety of topics at its general membership meetings over the years, always with a goal of providing information and resources that residents would not get elsewhere.

For the May 18 meeting, we first will take up two important items of business: a proposed dues increase for the 2006/2007 budget year (see

article on p. 5) and the election of one-third of our area representatives (see the list of candidates on p. 7)

The main meeting topic will be Lyme disease, its incidence rates in the region, and preventive measures to reduce exposure in a neighborhood where the deer seem almost as plentiful as the squirrels.

(Continued on page 3)

WLCA SPRING GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 18

7:30 PM

WEST LAUREL
COMMUNITY BUILDING

TOPICS

- LYME DISEASE
 - PREVENTIVE MEASURES
 - DISCUSSION
- PROPOSED DUES INCREASE
- ELECTION OF AREA REPS
- NEIGHBORHOOD Q&A
- ELECTED OFFICIALS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 1

MEETING TOPICS 1

WL HOUSING VALUES2

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES4

PROPOSED DUES INCREASE...5

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS6

ELECTION OF WLCA BOARD ...7

WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS...7

NEWS YOU CAN USE8

DEER & TICK REPELLANT9

INSIDE THE WLCA 10

FAMILY FUN IN WL 11

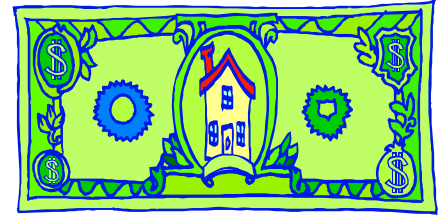
SPRING CLEANING 11

WEST LAUREL HOUSING VALUES

During the first quarter of 2006, there were 35 property transfers in West Laurel — 21 home sales, 1 property sale and 13 no-cost property transfers. The highest sold for \$625,000; the average value was \$427,076. The data for 2005 and the 1st quarter of 2006 shown at

right are for homes *sold* in the West Laurel areas of Montgomery County and Prince George's County. Data does not include the no-cost property transfers

For more information visit the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation web site at



http://sdatcert3.resiusa.org/rp_rewrite/. First, select the county you'd like to search. You can then search by address, property sales, property account, or map references.

If conducting property sale searches, West Laurel addresses in Prince George's County are located in District 10, Map 2; West Laurel portions of Montgomery County are located in District 05, Maps LS21 and LS22. ❖

Quarter	Total # Sold	Average Price	Lowest Price	Highest Price
Jan-Mar '06	26	\$427,076	\$275,000	\$625,000
Jan-Mar '05	8	339,362	285,000	380,000
Apr-Jun '05	17	390,835	300,000	581,000
Jul-Aug '05	12	423,658	387,000	525,000
Sep-Dec '05	24	504,845	355,000	769,000
2005	61	435,398		

Does not include no-cost property or transfers within families.

WEST LAUREL HOME SALES — 1ST QUARTER 2006

CLOSING	ADDRESS	SALE PRICE	CLOSING	ADDRESS	SALE PRICE
01/05/2006	16901 Melbourne	\$625,000	01/06/2006	15633 Birmingham Circle	\$330,000
01/06/2006	6303 Sandy Street	445,000	01/09/2006	6902 Fitzpatrick Dr	450,000
01/19/2006	16211 Julie Lane	422,500	01/23/2006	15407 Bounds Ave	439,900
01/23/2006	5708 Parkway Dr	585,000	02/07/2006	15617 Birmingham Circle	328,000
02/09/2006	6704 Brooklyn Br Rd	360,000	02/09/2006	6409 Forest Mill Ln	430,000
02/13/2006	15816 Wayne Ave	425,000	02/13/2006	15814 Wayne Ave	439,000
02/22/2006	15824 Bradford Dr	525,000	02/23/2006	7311 Brooklyn Bridge Rd	275,000
02/23/2006	16012 Kent Rd	477,000	03/03/2006	16004 Kent Rd	449,500
03/08/2006	7110 Fitzpatrick Dr	443,000	03/09/2006	6904 Bradford Ct	430,000
03/15/2006	16026 Burtons Ln	430,000	03/31/2006	15733 Ashland Dr	383,000
04/07/2006	15625 Bond Mill Rd	289,000			

MEETING TOPICS, CONT.

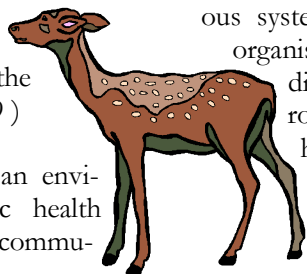
(Continued from page 1)

Lyme disease actually is prevalent throughout the United States because, as the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society (www.ilads.org) states on its Web site, “people travel, pets travel and ticks travel.”

But according to the American Lyme Disease Foundation (www.aldf.com), infection rates are spreading down both coasts and inland; in the east documented cases are on the increase from Maine to Maryland. Maryland seems to be a dividing line of sorts; in states south of Maryland, just 5 percent of adult deer ticks are infected with the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. In eastern states north of Maryland, up to 50% of adult ticks are infected.

Anecdotally, it does seem more and more people in West Laurel are being diagnosed. Exposure rates are directly related to the prevalence of the tick's two main hosts, which are white-footed mice and deer, plus the proximity of those animals to humans. West Laurel has a large number of whitetail deer, which have become increasingly plentiful and bold, traveling with greater frequency through yards to munch ornamental plants, graze in fruit and vegetable gardens and even eat at bird feeders. (For information on products that repel the deer and the ticks, see article on p. 9)

Because this is both an environmental and public health issue, we have asked commu-



nicable disease professionals from Prince George's and Montgomery counties to present an overview of Lyme disease, clinical and surveillance data for both jurisdictions, and measures to minimize exposure of our families and pets.

Staff with epidemiological and clinical health backgrounds from the two counties are coordinating a presentation and will try to provide information that is as geographically specific as possible. They also will distribute pamphlets and other literature from the federal Centers for Disease Control and other sources for residents to take and share with neighbors.

Lyme Disease can be difficult to diagnose for several reasons. First, it manifests with diverse symptoms, which early on, are relatively mild and flu-like. The symptom most commonly associated with the disease is a localized, “bull's-eye” rash, but fewer than 50 percent of those infected recall being bit by a tick or developing the rash. Also, these milder symptoms in the first month or so after infection yield a high number of false negatives on blood tests (though later stage tests are more reliable).

Later on, the disease manifests itself as a multi-system inflammatory illness that affects joints, the nervous system and, sometimes other organisms. It can be mistakenly diagnosed as multiple sclerosis or even ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease).

The good news is, if Lyme Disease is diag-

nosed and treated early with antibiotics, it is almost always readily cured. The best advice, says the American Lyme Disease Foundation, is for people to be aware of the risk of the disease in their own community and, if exposed, not to ignore those subtle early symptoms but seek medical treatment.

Two main topics for the general meeting tend to be too much, but there is always an open invitation for local and state elected officials to drop by — and they almost always do. It will be particularly interesting to hear from state representatives since the 2006 General Assembly session just ended. Also, it is of course an election year and this time around we have an open delegate's seat in Prince George's and an interesting Senate contest.

We have invited our Annapolis delegation as well as our County Council representatives (Tom Dernoga in Prince George's, Marilyn Praisner in Montgomery) to update us. However, there apparently is a District 21 (Prince George's) candidates' night in the College Park/Berwyn Heights area that conflicts with our meeting. However, if officials cannot stop by our meeting, they typically will send staff to provide a report.

In the refreshment room, we will display any available designs or architectural plans for proposed development along our end of 198. Finally, we still have plenty of our West Laurel car decals, the oval-shaped ones with the words “WL — a great place to live.” I hope to see you on May 18. ❖

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of *Hotline*: Jane Blewett, Dennis Cook, Laurice Crawford, Melissa Daston, Cindy Dollen, Mary Lehman, Kim Passmore, Doris Reynold & Howard Rosenberg.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

This report represents updates on proposed building projects that have changed since the February 2006 Hotline.

ALMAS SHRINER'S CENTER

Located at 6001 Sandy Spring Road on the south side of Sandy Spring Rd (Rt. 198) 400ft east of Old Gunpowder Rd. Preliminary plan 4-05045 was filed 23 November 2005.

This project has grown since it was originally presented to the Board as a storage and maintenance space for the Shriners' parade floats. Now it sports a large ballroom and meeting facilities as well as the float storage and maintenance. County staff originally recommended disapproval of the preliminary plan based on several concerns, including a condition attached to the property years ago that was related to funding for the Inter-county Connector.

At the applicant's request, the Planning Board has postponed final action several times to address various staff concerns including the ICC condition. Just as the *Hotline* went to press, staff had recommended approval of the plan. However, the Planning Board can accept or reject the recommendation. The WLCA board agreed that, although this might not be the preferred use of the property, it was reasonable and

better than other proposals that have been offered for that site.

BOND MILL STATION

Located east of Bond Mill Road, south of the intersection with Brooklyn Bridge Road. Detailed site plan 4-03103 was approved 16 June 2005.

There are still no bulldozers, but there is a lot of red tape marking out the maximum lines of disturbance. The small red brick house at the Bond Mill Road entrance, adjacent to McCahill Drive, is slated for demolition to make way for this development. (It was still standing when the *Hotline* went to press.) WLCA will be reviewing the layout and plans, and keeping an eye on the construction process.

BURN BRAE PROPERTY

Located south on US 29 near the Burn Brae dinner theatre.

The developers plan to put 1,202 condominium units on the 11.51-acre tract. The use is within the current zoning, and the plan seems well within the density and green space requirements.

CITY OF LAUREL ANNEXATION

WLCA's case challenging city annexation of land along Brooklyn Bridge Road was thrown out of court based on standing, which means the judge didn't think any of the plaintiffs would be sufficiently

injured. The Board has voted to appeal the decision. The Board believes if WLCA's attorney has an opportunity to argue the case on the merits, we have a good chance of having the annexation ruled illegal. This annexation was an unfortunate end-run by the purchasers of the property to avoid Prince George's County's more stringent building and land use requirements and oversight.

SEALING PROPERTY

This rezoning case involving property near Van Dusen and Muirkirk Roads dates back to 2004. On March 15, 2006, the Prince George's County Zoning Hearing Examiner (ZHE) recommended that the applicant's request for spot rezoning be denied. This was a one-shot rezoning request to convert residential land across the street from other residential land to light industrial use.

Although this land is not that close to West Laurel, the WLCA got involved to support the integrity of the Master Plan and the regional planning concept that has served our community well. The Board was concerned by the domino effect that could occur if the County Council, sitting as the District Council, approved this rezoning. Attorneys for the applicant requested in an April 6 letter that the District Council reject the ZHE's recommendation of denial and consider its case for rezoning. ❖

SPRING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Thursday, May 18 at 7:30 PM • West Laurel Community Building

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONT.

(Continued from page 1)

annual neighborhood cleanup (June 3, see p. 11)

The carnival, a major fundraiser for the Bond Mill PTA, would not happen without the organizational skills and dedication of **Sharon Cohee, Liz Dwyer, Ann Karpman** and dozens of parent volunteers. They spend months soliciting donations, organizing volunteers, arranging for games, prizes and food — and they do it all cheerfully!

The community cleanup, an annual event that WLCA tries to schedule close to Earth Day, is a little later than usual this year. The cleanup would not happen without our outstanding Environmental Chair, **Jane Blewett**. Jane single-handedly puts together this event, coordinating with county officials for trash bags and gloves, recruiting Scouts, 4-H members and others to help out, requesting food donations, and promoting the

event with area schools and through local newspapers.

Unfortunately, this is Jane's last community cleanup as she is stepping down as Environmental Chair. Hers will be hard shoes to fill, but I have faith that someone will step forward. Last year, about 30 people participated in the cleanup. I would love to see at least twice as many people take part this year. I know that's doable and I can think of no better tribute to Jane and her incredible commitment to the environment.

It was not easy arranging for speakers to address the main topic of Lyme disease for this meeting; however, initially, I had to go no further than Huckburn Court. I called on **Art Thacher**, former Prince George's County Health Department Director and epidemiologist extraordinaire, who gave me ideas about the meeting format as well as contact information for public health

officials in both Prince George's and Montgomery.

We are so fortunate to have neighbors like this. Despite the involvement these and other dedicated people, the WLCA and other community organizations — the PTA, Recreation Council and Swim Club, to name a few — need a regular infusion of new volunteers and new ideas. If you want to get involved but aren't sure what you can contribute or whom to contact, come to the general meeting and ask.

Finally, I wanted to explain the WLCA board's proposed dues increase from \$10 to \$15 for the 2006-2007 budget year. We try to be as frugal as possible and spend your money wisely, but rising postal and printing costs, plus the need to budget for legal fees in zoning cases are straining the WLCA's budget.

We have not raised dues in several years, and when we did, it was to go from \$5 per individual to \$10 per household. The proposed dues increase, advertised in this *Hotline* as required in the bylaws, will be voted on by the general membership at the May 18 meeting. We hope the increase will not pose a hardship for seniors or others on limited incomes. We are happy to make an allowance for anyone who *genuinely* can't afford the increase. Don't be embarrassed and don't apologize, just talk to treasurer **Laurice Crawford** or make a note on your membership form.

I look forward to seeing you at the general meeting or another upcoming event. Happy spring!

Mary Lehman

President

301-498-0694/mlehman1964@aol.com

PROPOSED DUES INCREASE

In the Fall 2005 Newsletter, a top topic was the increasing cost for the quarterly Hotline news and the cost of legal representation in zoning cases. To improve our fiscal condition, a group of volunteers engaged in a door-to-door campaign to improve dues-paying membership. Although membership is up slightly, the Board recommends that annual dues be increased to \$15 per year effective next fiscal year.

Pros and cons of the impact of a \$5 increase were discussed at several Board meetings during this year. Board members represent a cross-section of residents — new home-

owners and many long-time, retired residents. Our intent is not to create financial hardship. Therefore, the official recommendation includes an option that allows residents to check a box on the membership form with no other explanation and pay a reduced annual membership of \$10.

RECOMMENDATION

Annual membership dues for the West Laurel Civic Association be increased to \$15 per year effective September 2006. In cases of financial hardship, residents may so indicate and pay a reduced annual membership of \$10.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

	PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PHONE NUMBERS	MONTGOMERY COUNTY PHONE NUMBERS
Animal Control.....	301-499-8300	1-240-777-5960
Bulky Trash Pickup.....	301-952-7600	1-240-777-6410
County Council Member	301-952-3887	1-240-777-7968
	Council Member Tom Dernoga Judy Thacher (Assistant)	Council Member Marilyn Praisner Joy Nurmi (Assistant)
<i>(Call the above offices to request action on local and/or county-wide problems, to get information, or to pass on a compliment.)</i>		
Deerfield Run Community Center.....	301-953-2199	
<i>(For reservations or information regarding events at the West Laurel Community Center, ask for Deedee Sisson.)</i>		
Fairland Aquatic Center.....	301-206-2359	301-206-2359
Fairland Recreation Center.....	301-953-0030	301-953-0030
The Gardens Ice House.....	301-953-0100	301-953-0100
Highway Maintenance (potholes).....	301-499-8600 or 8520	1-240-777-7623
Housing Enforcement (trash in yard, etc.)	301-883-6100	1-240-777-3785
Information & Referral.....	301-350-9700	1-240-777-1000
Leaf Removal.....	301-499-8576	1-240-777-7623
Litter Pickup.....	301-499-8523	1-240-777-7623
Park Police (Lt. Kane).....	301-429-5644	
Trash/Recycling.....	301-883-5848	1-240-777-6410
School Bus Lot (our area).....	301-497-3665	1-301-879-1061
Snow Removal.....	301-350-0500	1-240-777-7623
West Laurel Swim Club	301-725-2034	301-725-2034
Zoning Enforcement (unlicensed cars, etc.).....	301-883-6130	1-240-777-6240

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

	PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PHONE NUMBERS	MONTGOMERY COUNTY PHONE NUMBERS
Emergency	911	911
Fire	301-776-3600	301-384-4320
Poison Control Center.....	1-800-222-1222	1-800-222-1222
Police.....	301-902-2060	301-279-8000
Rescue Squad.....	301-725-3345 (Laurel)	301-384-4320 (Burtonsville)
Utilities (gas & electric — outages only).....	1-301-685-0123 (BGE)	1-877-737-2662 (PEPCO)
WSSC (water).....	301-206-8000	301-206-8000

ELECTION OF WLCA BOARD

All Board members serve for two-year terms unless elected to fill a one-year slot. Board meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday at 7:30 PM at the West Laurel Community Building. We prefer to have two Alternate Area Reps in each area because we know it is often difficult for regular Area Reps to be at every meeting. Alternates are encouraged to attend as much as possible and participate in discussions and committee assignments, but will not be voting members unless filling in for an absent Area Rep from their area.

Please consider being an active member of the WLCA Board to help keep West Laurel well-represented and to stay in touch with what is happening in and around your community.

Officers and Area Representatives listed in bold italics are up for vote during the upcoming General Meeting.

OFFICERS

President..... Mary Lehman
 1st Vice President Robert Lennon
 2nd Vice President..... Barbara Sollner-Webb
Zoning Officer **Dennis Cook**
 Recording Secretary Denise Keener
 Treasurer Laurice Crawford

AREA I REPS

Rep (2 yr)..... **John Hebert**
 Rep (1 yr)..... Susan Railey
Alternate..... **Tom Sidor**
 2nd Alternate Jurgen von Bredow

AREA II REPS

Rep (2 yr)..... **Bob Stewart**
 Rep (1 yr)..... Melissa Daston
 Alternate Kevin Tuttle

AREA III REPS

Rep (2 yr)..... **Trish Crowley**
 Rep (1 yr)..... Jennifer Kalmanson
 Alternate Howard Rosenberg
 2nd Alternate Joan Norris

AREA IV REPS

Rep (2 yr)..... **Doris Reynold**
 Rep (1 yr)..... Lucy Grimes
Alternate..... **Bobby Garon**
2nd Alternate..... **Tony Spezio**

AREA V REPS

Rep (2 yr)..... **Steve Steenrod**
 Rep (1 yr)..... Bob Klein
 Alternate Carol Bounds
2nd Alternate..... **Elizabeth Schwartz**
3rd Alternate..... **Elizabeth Evons**

WELCOME, NEW NEIGHBORS!

The West Laurel Civic Association (WLCA) extends a warm welcome to the families who became residents of West Laurel this spring. Every homeowner is automatically a member of the Civic Association and upon payment of the annual dues entitled to vote in elections.

West Laurel is a vibrant community and there are many opportunities for volunteers to support the community including the civic association, recreation council, and Bond Mill Elementary School. We look forward to meeting you at the May 18 General Meeting.

- William & Denise Raynor**
(Melbourne)
- Regla & Allen Carrington**
(Sandy)
- Richard & Lori Gallagher**
(Fitzpatrick)
- Robert & Page Nichols** (Julie)
- David & Marta Sigaran** (Bounds)
- Daniel & Agnes Mootini**
(Parkway)
- William & Stacey Keim**
(Brooklyn Bridge)
- Juan & Ana Orellana** (Wayne)
- Miguel Pimentel** (Bradford)
- Jerome Nguessan** (Bradford)
- Garner Gourley** (Brooklyn Bridge)
- Muhammad & Faraz Saleem**
(Kent)
- Celine Pico** (Kent)
- Stephen & Deborah Curtin**
(Fitzpatrick)
- Kevin & Kendie Reich** (Burtons)
- Jose & Sonia Romero** (Ashland)
- John Johnson** (Bond Mill)

NEWS YOU CAN USE

YARD WASTE (PRINCE GEORGE'S)

Call (301) 952-7630. Weekly curbside yard waste collection resumed on April 15. Allowable yard waste includes grass clippings, leaves, small branches, and brush. Yard waste must be placed in securely tied, heavy-duty plastic bags or heavy-duty trash cans with handles and a secure lid. Cardboard boxes and paper bags are not acceptable containers. Limbs must not exceed four (4) feet in length and three (3) inches in diameter and must be securely tied in bundles. Bundles of limbs and bags of dry grass and leaves must weigh less than 60 pounds. Wet grass and leaves must weigh less than 25 pounds.

YARD WASTE (MONTGOMERY)

Call (240) 777-6410. Place leaves, grass, brush, and other yard trimmings in large paper bags (available at most grocery stores, home improvement stores, and garden centers). The total weight of the bag CANNOT exceed 45 pounds. Save money and use reusable containers, such as trash cans. Cans must be marked "Yard Trim" to ensure proper collection. Use the free Yard Trim decals available at [Montgomery County libraries](#), [Regional Service Centers](#), or by [ordering online](#) or calling our Customer Service Line at 240-777-6410. Total weight CANNOT exceed 45 pounds per container. Be sure the "Yard Trim" decal faces the street. Brush can also be tied into bundles with twine. Bundles should not exceed 36 inches in diameter. Each branch should not be larger than 4 feet in length, and 4 inches in diameter. Total weight CANNOT

exceed 45 pounds per bundle. No rocks, dirt or sod, rootballs or tree stumps, or lumber.

BULKY TRASH (PRINCE GEORGE'S)

Call (301) 952-7600. Bulky Trash Collection is provided by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, call (301) 952-7600 Monday-Friday, or email Bulky-Trash@co.pg.md.us. Appointments are scheduled for normal County workdays on a first-come, first-served basis. Acceptable materials include: Furniture and refrigerators (remove refrigerator doors for safety reasons), washing machines and dryers, hot water heaters, lawn mowers (remove the gas tank and drain the oil from lawn mowers), and other large materials generated in the household that are not picked up by refuse collection.

BULKY TRASH (MONTGOMERY)

Call (240-777-6410). Each residential property receiving County-provided trash collection is entitled to 5 bulk collections per calendar year for certain types of miscellaneous and/or bulky household trash. Bulk collections must be scheduled in advance with the County by the occupant or resident; the collection will then be made on your trash collection day. All items must be placed at your curb by 7:00 a.m. on the day of collection. Collections are made between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. [Schedule bulk collection service online](#) or call 240-777-6410 no later than 9:30 a.m. on the business day before your trash collection day. Please provide a list of items to be picked up.

PAPER RECYCLING BENEFITS OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

If you haven't been down to Bond Mill Elementary lately, there is now a big, yellow bin outside being used for paper recycling. The best news is that Bond Mill gets paid for being "environmental friendly." This is *easy* money that will go back directly to the school.

The more paper in the bin, the more Bond Mill gets paid! The bin will be emptied year round, not just during the school year. We realize you can put paper recycling in your county bins, but the bin at Bond Mill supports our neighborhood school. Anyone and everyone can use the recycling bin. Newspaper, magazines, office and school papers, catalogs, and mail can be recycled. Please do not use the bin for plastic, glass, metal and trash.

It is useful for disposal of paper we all go through day-to-day (though you'll want to save it up for perhaps a week or two before making the trip to Bond Mill). Also, it is particularly ideal if you are doing heavy-duty cleaning, reorganizing or moving and end up with oodles of paper. One of our WLCA board members, while requesting anonymity, confessed to recently cleaning out her home office and throwing out four huge garbage bags full of paper!

Please take the extra step and bring your paper to the school instead of

(Continued on page 10)



DEER & TICK REPELLANT

As with most communicable diseases, awareness and prevention are keys to reducing the incidence of Lyme disease.

The main carriers of the ticks that transmit Lyme disease are deer and field mice. If you are like most suburbanites and spend time in the yard, your exposure is most likely to occur on your own property.

Two of our own West Laurel experts recommend products that either repel deer or interrupt the life cycle of the ticks, both of which will reduce (though obviously not eliminate) your odds of exposure.

Deer come into most yards to munch on a variety of shrubs and ornamental plants such as hostas, impatiens, and azaleas. To make your landscaping less appealing, check a local nursery for a spray called Liquid Fence. West Laurel's own Mr. Green Thumb, **Dan Barkdull** of Gales Street, has tried all kinds of products to protect his

extensive landscaping, and he swears by Liquid Fence.

Dan told us he applies the product, which comes in plastic gallon jugs, about six times per year to plants around entry points at the perimeter of his property. He does not spray every plant, but chooses areas where deer would cross into his yard from various directions. The smell of the product is apparently so noxious to the deer that they don't even try accessing his property anymore. "It's like screaming in their ears," Dan said.

What is in this product? It consists of ingredients most humans would find offensive as well, namely rotten eggs and garlic. If it sounds like a bad combination for anyone doing backyard barbecuing or hosting a garden party, have no fear. Dan assured us the odor does not permeate a property; in fact, to smell it, he said, you would have to get very close to the treated plant and breathe quite deeply.

Dan said a gallon of Liquid Fence lasts him a whole year. If you like to support locally owned businesses, try Behnke's Nursery on U.S. Route 1 in Beltsville, which charges \$29.99 for a gallon or \$44.99 for a 32-ounce concentrate that, mixed with water, yields four gallons. In the Spencerville area, just west of 29 on Rt. 198, try Country Nursery, which charges \$30.99 for the gallon jug or \$42.99 for the 32-ounce concentrate.

To control the ticks themselves, Bethany Community Church Pastor

Kevin McGhee suggested a product called Damminix. Kevin has done an enormous amount of his own research about prevention and treatment of Lyme disease since being diagnosed himself.

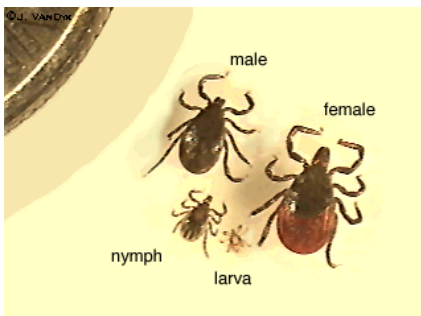


Harvard University researchers developed this product after figuring out that field mice are the primary source of infection for the ticks, so they set out to sever the connection between the ticks and the mice.

The researchers knew mice are always gathering nesting material and figured out if they could lace cotton with a tick killing agent and get the mice to transport it to their nests, they would get poison on their fur and eliminate the ticks as they attach themselves. The agent is permethrin, a synthetic form of a naturally occurring pesticide found in chrysanthemum flowers, and it does not harm the mice or other mammals.

Kevin and his neighbors along the Greencastle Road corridor negotiated a bulk order of the product, which comes in tubes in sets of 24 (enough to treat half an acre). It typically costs \$69 plus shipping, but Kevin got them for \$51 per set. He plans on using the tubes around the church property in West Laurel as well as in his own backyard.

For more information about this product, call (617) 742-2400 or check out the Web site: <http://www.damminix.com/>. ❖



Ixodes scapularis, the black-legged or deer tick, has four life stages. Shown here are the larva, nymph, and both adult sexes.

The ticks are placed next to a dime for size comparison.

Thanks to Iowa State's Deer Tick Home Page for this photo. <http://www.ent.iastate.edu/imagegallery/ticks/deertick.html>

**LEARN MORE ABOUT LYME DISEASE
AT OUR GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday, May 18 at 7:30 pm • West Laurel Community Building

INSIDE THE WLCA

CONFESSIONS OF A NEW VOLUNTEER ... BY MELISSA DASTON

Last year at the February 2005 General Meeting, I belatedly paid my dues to the nice lady with red hair who is there in the foyer at every meeting. While I was filling out my check, I said something like, "This is a great community. Let me know if there's anything I can do to help out." Little did I realize what would come my way as a result.

About a month later, I was contacted by the same nice lady (Laurice Crawford) who asked if I was willing to volunteer to be one of the Area II representatives. After asking how much time that this would take and hearing it was only about 2-3 hours a month, I agreed.

I started attending the monthly Board meetings after the Spring General meeting elections. Here's what I found. First, let me talk about the people. The WLCA board is an all-volunteer team. We've got some long-term members who are true stalwarts of our community and we've got new residents. What we all have in common is that all of us agree that West Laurel is a great place to live and we want it to keep it that way.

Secondly, I was amazed at the range of topics which the Board covers on behalf of West Laurel. The WLCA is renowned for its ability to protect against commercial and high-density development in a residential area. For that reason, many developers come forward with proposals and plans to brief the WLCA and solicit suggestions on how they might fit in. I've learned that the Board represents the community fairly,

ensuring that development matches the zoning of the area and fits into the community. The agendas are varied and have included a proposal for a dog park, issues at Supplee field, crime and safety problems, and beautification projects. The Board members consider how each proposal will impact the residents and the overall community before taking action.

Finally, how much time does it really take? For those of us with not

much flexibility in our schedules, I've found that 2-3 hours a month does make a difference! Whether it's participating in a community clean-up, reporting a blocked storm sewer, posting signs before the General meetings, writing a Hotline article, or attending a zoning hearing in Upper Marlboro — each small thing helps. You don't have to be a board member to lend a hand just send an email or call anyone on the board to say you're interested. ❖

NEWS YOU CAN USE

(Continued from page 8)

just taking it to the curb. Try to avoid drop off during school hours, which are 7:45 AM to 1:55 PM. Thank you in advance from the staff, students and families of Bond Mill and the civic association. WLCA fully supports initiatives like this that keep trash out landfills.

REGISTER NOW FOR FALL KINDERGARTEN

If you have a child entering kindergarten this year, it's registration time.

In Prince George's County, children who are five years old by September 1 are eligible to enroll at Bond Mill Elementary, 16001 Sherwood Avenue, West Laurel, 301-497-3600.

In Montgomery County, children who are five years old by September 1 are eligible to enroll at



Burtonsville Elementary,

15516 Old Columbia Pike, Burtonsville, (301) 989-5654.

Both schools require that you bring the child's birth certificate, immunization record and proof of residence. If you have questions, please call the appropriate school.

WLCA WEBSITE UPDATE

The WLCA has an active web site — www.wlcaweb.org — that is updated monthly. A County Services Survey has been posted this month to assist WLCA in compiling a list of community issues. Results will be consolidated with WLCA's master list and sent to the County for assistance. If you are aware of a problem in the community, please complete the survey at www.wlcaweb.org/survey.htm.

If you have announcements or wish to submit a picture taken in West Laurel, please send a note to the webmaster at wlcaweb@comcast.net. ❖

FAMILY FUN IN & AROUND WEST LAUREL

BOND MILL CARNIVAL ON MAY 20

Bond Mill Elementary's annual Spring Carnival will be held May 20 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM on school grounds. All your old favorites will be back, from the basketball toss to the moonbounce to the ever-popular cake walk. Children just love all the cool prizes like hats, inflatables, basketballs and a whole lot more. Don't forget that the pocket lady has "free homework" passes hidden in some of her many pockets! As always, lots of goodies will be available through the silent auction. Class raffle baskets will be offered again this year, each with a different theme.

Bring the whole family for an inexpensive lunch and lots of fun at the carnival! The 6th grade will once again sponsor the food table for lunch items and drinks. Proceeds help to offset their Big Six Day and

other special sixth grade year-end events. Let's give Bond Mill's 6th graders a great send off to middle school!

In order for the carnival booths to be open and tickets collected/prizes awarded, an adult volunteer (13 years of age or older) must be available. It takes more than 155 volunteer hours to make Carnival Day a success! Please consider signing up for one hour or donating a cake for the cakewalk or something for the bake sale. Teens who are 14 or older can volunteer an hour or two to earn community service credits. For more information, contact **Anne Karpman** at 301-725-0798 or **Sharon Cohee** at 301-498-0985. Time slots are still available!

ICE CREAM SOCIAL & BIKE PARADE JUNE 2

The West Laurel Recreation Council will hold its annual Old Fash-

ioned Ice Cream Social and Bike Parade on Friday, June 2 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the West Laurel Community Building. Kids, don't forget to decorate your bikes, trikes and scooters for the bike parade! If you want to volunteer at this event show up about an hour early. As always, this fun family event is free; however, small donations to help defray expenses are always welcome!



This event is brought to you by the West Laurel Recreation Council, which meets on the 4th Monday of every month from 7:30-8:30 pm at the West Laurel Community Building to plan fun things for West Laurel (except May, when the meeting is on the 3rd Monday). Thanks, WLRC! ❖

COMMUNITY SPRING CLEANING ON JUNE 3

Mark your calendar for West Laurel's annual community cleanup, which is scheduled for Saturday, June 3, from 9:00 AM to 12 noon.

WLCA Environmental Chair **Jane Blewett** coordinates this event and works with county officials to arrange donations of trash bags, gloves, vests and pick-up poles. Jane asks that participants arrive at the WL Community Building (Bond Mill & Brooklyn Bridge Roads) at about 8:30 a.m. for bagels and juice and cleanup assignments.

Cleanup efforts will be concentrated along the community's main

roads: Bond Mill, Brooklyn Bridge/Riding Stable, Bounds Avenue, Sweitzer Lane and Jerald Road. If more people turn out, volunteers can fan out further along those roads and onto side streets.

Prince George's County will later pick up the trash at five locations in the community. And these nice people will haul away Montgomery trash as well — unfortunately, litter knows no boundaries. That means volunteers won't have to haul the trash back to the community building as in the past.

The last few cleanups drew about 25-30 residents. We realize



everyone is busy, particularly on Saturdays in the spring, but this is a great way to help the environment in general and our neighborhood in particular while getting fresh air and exercise. We should easily be able to turn out 75-100 people for this event! *This is an especially ideal opportunity for high school students to earn required community service credits.*

For more information, questions about the cleanup or weather-related concerns, contact **Jane Blewett** at (301) 498-2553. ❖

THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER OF WEST LAUREL

Hotline — Spring 2006

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