



# Abell Improvement Association Newsletter

January 2010

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Abell Community:

It was great to see so many of you at the AIA's annual New Year's Eve Progressive Dinner. And while not everyone made it up 'til midnight, there was plenty of carousing and lots of excellent food. Special thanks to this year's hosts: Susanne Riveles, Steve Gewirtz and Janet Wright, and Todd Whaley.

And I'm proud to report that not only was the Progressive Dinner a success as a social event, but as a fundraiser as well. With the help of special guests Mary Pat Clarke and Baltimore City firefighters, **we raised over \$800 for the Engine 31 Fund** that supports the renovation of the Engine 31 Firehouse on Greenmount Ave. To all those who made a donation on New Year's Eve, thank you for your generosity. For those who wish to contribute, it's not too late; donations are being accepted through March. Details on how to contribute can be found on page 2.

Looking ahead, the AIA's Annual Membership Meeting is fast approaching: **Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30AM at St John's in the Village Church Parish Hall** (3009 Greenmount). This is an important meeting for several reasons. The meeting agenda includes a discussion of the proposed development at the Anderson Automotive site in Remington. As many of you have heard, a mixed-use development has been proposed for that site that would include big-box retailers, among them a Lowe's store. This news has stirred up many strong feelings, both for and against this development. (Inside on page 3, Abell residents Steve Gewirtz and Jo Ann Robinson argue the merits of the issue in a Pro/Con format.) At the meeting we'll debate the issue and try to determine what, if any, position the AIA should take. In order to do so, we need to hear from as many members of the community as possible. If you have views on this issue you'd like to express, or if you just want to learn more about the proposed development, I hope you'll consider attending the meeting.

Another agenda item will be the AIA's 2010 budget. And as we do each year, we'll be considering how best to allocate our organizations' resources. This year, we're fortunate to have a modest budget surplus, meaning we have money to spend on things, programs, and ideas that support the AIA's goals: encouraging a sense of neighborliness and community spirit, maintaining the appearance and safety of the neighborhood, and fostering the general welfare of our residents. If you have ideas on how we can achieve these goals, the Annual Membership meeting is the place to share them.

And lastly, it's at this meeting that we'll be electing AIA officers for the coming year. The AIA's Nominating Committee has recommended a slate of candidates – those names can be found on the back page of this newsletter. But as always, nominations will also be taken from the floor at the meeting.

I hope to see you all on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. In the meantime, Go Ravens!

Warmest (and I do mean *warmest*) Regards,

Paul Burk  
President, Abell Improvement Association

### Inside:

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# Non-Profit Organizations & Volunteer Opportunities

## Campaign to Restore Waverly Firehouse #31 *Fire Officers, Medics and Our Safety at Stake!*

*A message from Mary Pat Clarke*

Dear 14<sup>th</sup> District Neighbors, Businesses, and Institutions,

We need your help and financial assistance to return our local fire officers and medics to their home base at 3123 Greenmount Avenue. The City is committing capital funding to restoring Firehouse #31, and volunteer teams will complete that work.

Along with recruiting volunteer teams, our job is to *raise \$20,000 to furnish the renovated firehouse* and get our officers and medics back within *safe distance* of our neighborhoods as soon as possible. Goal is by March 2010.

Your tax-deductible contributions are payable to "GHCC/Firehouse #31." Mail them to our Greater Homewood fiscal agent, a 501 C3 non-profit organization, at:

Firehouse #31 Fund  
Greater Homewood Community Corporation  
3503 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

You can also join our Facebook Cause Page and donate online at  
<http://apps.facebook.com/causes/412187>.

### RecycleMORE Community Tonnage Competition

The Abell Community is participating in the citywide competition to recycle the most. Clear out all your recyclable paper, bottles, and cans, and put them in the regular weekly recycling to help put Abell over the top!

### Got Babies?

If you would like to announce your new arrival to the Abell community in the newsletter, send a note about your baby to [sbtreadway@aol.com](mailto:sbtreadway@aol.com).

### Passing of Bill Ross

Bill Ross, of 3118 Abell Avenue, died suddenly on December 9 in his home a few days before his 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Beloved by his neighbors as "the Mayor of Abell Avenue," he was always present - taking in your delivered packages, carrying things in from your car, helping with your garden, playing with your child or pet as you passed by on the street, gratefully accepting home-cooked treats, and keeping you up-to-date on current events on Abell and elsewhere. Born William Carlton Ross in Mitchell County, Georgia, on December 13, 1936, Bill served as a 1st Lieutenant in the 119th Infantry NCARNG. He moved to Baltimore, where he worked with the Social Security Administration for more than 30 years. He leaves many friends on Abell Avenue, and many gathered at a neighbor's house on December 19 for a celebration of Bill's life. He is survived by brothers Daniel Ross in Toccoa, GA, Dr. Larry Ross in Columbia, SC, and four nieces and a nephew.

### Contractor Recommendations

This column is a regular feature. If you have had a great experience with a contractor for your home, please send your recommendation to [sbtreadway@aol.com](mailto:sbtreadway@aol.com)

Michael & Shelley Treadway  
*Wood Flooring & Refinisher: Dan Manger, DANZCO Hardwood Flooring – 410-788-5919; [www.danzcohardwoodfloors.com](http://www.danzcohardwoodfloors.com)*  
*Dan's crew is fast & neat. They moved a ton of stuff in no time, and did a great job sanding & refinishing our pine flooring.*

Steve Gewirtz  
*For all kinds of repair and remodeling jobs, call Aracely Garcia at 240-418-0053. Her son and crew do a superior job of painting, smoothing out walls, and other remodeling chores. They did a fabulous job with my house. They actually can do almost any remodeling chore. They have worked for a number of people in Charles Village.*

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# Anderson Motors Property Development

## *Why I Support the Anderson Motors Property Development*

Although there is still a lot to be worked out, including traffic patterns and whether the stores on the west side of the 2400 block of Maryland Avenue will face Maryland Avenue (my preference) or an interior courtyard, I find myself generally supporting the proposal for developing the Anderson Motors site south of 25th Street. The developers are seeking neither City subsidies nor eminent domain.

The proposed project will bring 400 construction jobs followed by 800 retail jobs. Remington is a blue collar neighborhood that desperately needs those jobs. The Mayor's Office of Employment Development and the developer are already offering to work with people in Remington (and will be glad to work with people in Abell) to fill the expected jobs.

Not long ago, I spent more than three hours of travel time on buses going to and from a Lowe's in Timonium to pick up something that our local Ace Hardware did not carry. Yes, I am sympathetic to Ace Hardware, but if it can develop a niche that Lowe's does not fill, through better service and carrying things that Lowe's does not carry, it will survive a new Lowe's. Think of Eddie's, which delivers groceries, caters to JHU students and to seniors, has a good deli counter, carries good produce, and therefore survives despite Giant and Safeway. Giant and Safeway both have better stores in Baltimore County and Canton. The grocery in the new development promises to give us better prices and, hopefully, better service, and Giant and Safeway can be forced to match that.

We need also to make an effort to get the merchants in the Greenmount corridor to improve their offerings in order to attract customers who come to our area for the new shopping center. Then, it can be a win for everyone.

Steve Gewirtz

## *Why I Oppose the Anderson Motors Development*

My assessment of the proposed development at the former A.D. Anderson location begins with the old adage, "all that glitters is not gold." Behind the shiny promises of shopping convenience, new jobs and other resources lie some troubling issues.

Foremost is the impact that the development will have on the hard-won gains that have just begun to be realized from years of struggle to upgrade the Greenmount Avenue corridor. The neighborhoods of Abell, Waverly and Charles Village have rallied to support the Waverly Main Street initiative and to bring in new small businesses with the potential to spark economic revival, most recently the Ace Hardware. To build a Lowes and other national chain stores at Howard and 25th Street will, without doubt, drain energy from Waverly Main Street and very possibly put local merchants, including Ace, out of business. Maryland Smart Growth studies have found that when big box stores move into a community, local businesses always suffer. The economy of Abell and neighboring communities is based primarily on local businesses. This is what makes living here so attractive. Local merchants become part of the life of the community in ways that no national chain - directed and limited by a distant corporate headquarters - can possibly match. The Institute for Self-Reliance and Civic Economics has found that for every dollar spent at a national chain the local economy realizes as little as a 16 cent return, while 56 cents of every dollar spent at a local business is returned to the local community.

The promise to create hundreds of jobs ignores the jobs that will be lost when local owners are driven out of business, and what about job quality and longevity? Are a living wage and opportunities for advancement guaranteed? Given current volatile economic conditions, just how viable are the corporations included in this proposal? As recently as last September the Financial Times reported that Lowes' chief executive warned of "reductions in the asset value of underperforming [Lowes] stores." According to this report, Lowes had "trimmed its store opening plans for the next year" and "planned to review 'the future viability'" of some of its existing operations. Rather than take the risks associated with Big Boxes and national chains, I think we should work with local developers and independent businesses to create a plan that fits and enhances the unique character of our community.

Jo Ann O. Robinson

# - Bulletin Board -

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## Trash & Recycling Schedule

**TRASH – EVERY TUESDAY**



**RECYCLING – EVERY THURSDAY**

*All trash and recycling is picked up in **back of houses**.*

Trash may be put out after 6 p.m. the night before, by 6 a.m. the day of pick-up.

**Trash must be in rigid containers with tight-fitting lids.**

## AIA Annual Membership Meeting and Officers Election

**Saturday, January 23**  
10:30 a.m.

St. John's in the Village Church Parish Hall  
3009 Greenmount Ave

### AIA Nominating Committee slate:

*Paul Burk, President  
Linda Forlifer, Vice President  
Andy Scott, Treasurer  
Jo Ann Robinson, Corresponding Secretary  
Janet Wright, Recording Secretary  
Bonnie Bessor and Robin Truiett-Theodorson, Members at Large*

Nominations will also be taken from the floor

*Agenda items include a discussion of the proposed Anderson Automotive development, and budget items for 2010. Suggestions from community members are encouraged!*

## Thank You to our Distribution Team

*Thank you to all AIA Newsletter distributors for your timely work bringing Abell news to the community throughout the past year.*

Several blocks are open for newsletter distributors. If you can help distribute newsletters in the Abell community, please contact Shelley Treadway - [sbtreadway@aol.com](mailto:sbtreadway@aol.com), or 410-467-0310.

Please send **newsletter contributions** to Shelley Treadway, 3026 Abell Avenue, or email to [sbtreadway@aol.com](mailto:sbtreadway@aol.com). Deadlines for newsletter submissions:

March 17	<b>Spring Issue</b>
May 17	<b>Memorial Day/Film Series Issue</b>
August 8	<b>Street Fair Issue</b>
September 16	<b>Fall Issue</b>
November 17	<b>Holiday Issue</b>