



Abell Improvement Association Newsletter

April 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Abell Community:

As I write this, the last piles of dirty, leftover snow in the Abell Open Space are finally melting away, and I think I speak for many when I say, "good riddance." I never thought I'd think of *snow* as a four-letter word. The return of spring feels especially welcome this year, so let's turn our attention to warmer things. Here's a sampling of the goings-on in the Abell Community this spring:

- The Greater Homewood Community Corporation is leading a new initiative, *Great Schools in Charles Village*, designed to foster a stronger relationship between the community and our local public schools. It's an exciting project with a lot of promise. More information is inside on page 2.

- Working with GHCC on this effort is **The Village Parents** organization, a new organization of – you guessed it – parents in Charles Village. Co-founded by Abell Avenue's own Laura Scott, the Village Parents maintains an active email listserv, organizes child and parent-oriented events, and is helping to coordinate a series of panel discussions; *School Daze: Five Conversations on Urban Education*, going on throughout the spring. More information at www.villageparents.wordpress.com/.

- The renovation of the Engine 31 Firehouse on Greenmount Avenue is underway. As the project nears completion, the AIA will be organizing a group of volunteers to spend a day or two doing light construction and finishing work (painting, etc.) at the firehouse. More details will follow when we have a specific date in mind. In the meantime, anyone interested in adding themselves to our list of 'Abell-bodied' volunteers may contact me at president@abellimprovement.org.

And last but not least, mark your calendars for the next **AIA Membership Meeting – Wednesday, April 21st, 6:30-8:00PM** at St John's in the Village Church Parish Hall (3009 Greenmount Avenue).

Warmest Regards,

Paul Burk
President, Abell Improvement Association

Inside:

Barclay &
Margaret
Brent Schools
Receive
Goldseker
Grant

Summer
Movie Plans

Abell
Centennial
Planning

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Gardens for
Tour

A New Day for Neighborhood Schools?

“White Americans ... are not willing to take the necessary action to make [school desegregation] happen. As one schooling expert recently put it, “Today a bipartisan consensus holds that integrated schools are a good thing but we shouldn’t do much of anything to promote them.” (Jennifer Hochschild and Nathan Scovronick, The American Dream and the Public Schools 2003.)

The Greater Homewood Community Corporation, with a Goldseker Foundation grant of \$105,000, has launched the “Great Schools in Charles Village” campaign. Focused on Barclay and Margaret Brent Elementary Middle Schools, the campaign goal is to “build strong, diverse neighborhood schools that all families will consider a good choice for their children.” Realizing this goal would be good not only for the schools but for the local real estate market which would stabilize as the pressure to move closer to good schools would let up for young families. It would benefit family finances if private tuition was no longer deemed an imperative expenditure. And it would add to the credibility of the Charles Village area’s designation as a “top ten neighborhood” in the United States.

This is an opportunity for Barclay and Brent educators, parents with children currently enrolled in those schools, and parents with children enrolled or headed toward enrollment elsewhere, to take a fresh and forthright look at the assets and weaknesses of our neighborhood schools and to engage in the hard work that is needed to multiply the assets and effectively address the weaknesses. This is not a new agenda for our neighborhoods. In the mid nineteen-seventies, both schools served the children of the middle-class, mostly white neighborhoods in their zones. Those children thrived, as did their fellow-students from less prosperous sectors of the community.

Join the “Conversations on Urban Education” that Village Parents are hosting. The next one is April 6 at 7 p.m. at Barclay: “Let’s Hear it for the Kids: an Introduction to Special Projects for Students in Baltimore City.” On May 17 at Brent panelists will address the “project-based, thematic curriculum” that the Great Schools project proposes to introduce into the two schools.

For more information contact
www.charlesvillageparents.org and
jbnet@greaterhomewood.org

Jo Ann O. Robinson, jooiman@msn.com

Welcome New Neighbors

From Ilisa Gould: “My partner Lisa Nawrot and I just purchased 3227 Abell. We’re not coming from too far away, just the 400 block of E. 31st Street, but we’re really excited about our new home and all our new neighbors!”

Barclay’s new VISTA

Vanessa Schaefer is the new AmeriCorps VISTA working at Barclay. She lives in Hampden, and writes, “I am out and about in Abell regularly. It’s a beautiful area and I hope to get to know the people who live there better!”

Contact information:

Vanessa Schaefer

Community Connections*VISTA

Barclay Elementary/Middle School

Greater Homewood Community Corporation

3503 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218

phone: 443-324-3918

fax: 410-261-3506

VSchaefer@greaterhomewood.org



Do you have new neighbors? Or are you a new neighbor? Tell us about you! Send a note to sbtreadway@aol.com.

Contractor Recommendations

For a list of past contractor recommendations, visit the Community Resources page at the AIA community website, www.abellimprovement.org

If you have had a great experience with a contractor for your home, please send your recommendation to sbtreadway@aol.com

Abell Centennial Celebration

The Abell Community will soon be 100 years old! A committee is forming to plan celebratory events, tentatively scheduled for the Spring of 2011. If you want to help plan the centennial celebration, please contact Shelley Treadway, sbtreadway@aol.com, phone 410-467-0310.

Non-Profit Organizations & Volunteer

Barclay School plantings

Attention water lovers! If you love the sound of running water and green gardens and trees you are in luck. We are able to offer you this experience at The Barclay School this summer. For just an hour or two of your time each week, your mind can be transported to any green wet spot you like as you simply aim your hose. For more information and to sign up for this once-in-a-lifetime offer, please contact Vanessa Schaefer at vschaefer@greaterhomewood.org, or call her at 443-324-3918 or 410-261-3506. Thank you; we know you're going to LOVE the experience!



Coming Soon: AIA Annual Summer Film Series

The AIA will again be hosting a Summer Film Series – Friday nights this summer in the Abell Open Space. We're looking for your ideas – and your contributions. Have an idea for a great movie we should show? Ever wanted to be a projectionist (not to be confused with an exhibitionist)? Here's your chance!

Do you have suggestions for films we should show? Are you interested in volunteering to help us organize, promote and run the films?

Contact me at
president@abellimprovement.org

Paul Burk

Unwanted SunPlus?

If you would like to stop delivery of the SunPlus supplements to your house, call 888-539-1280, or email sunplusservice@baltsun.com.

Charles Village Garden Walk 2010

The snow has melted, the days are getting longer, and the crocuses and daffodils are poking their heads through the earth. We can smell the scent of spring in the air, and with that comes the anticipation of the Charles Village Festival & Garden Walk. This year's Garden Walk will take place on June 6, featuring gardens north of 29th Street, which includes the Abell community. Here's an opportunity to clean up the debris of winter, spruce up your garden, and be a part of this wonderful neighborhood celebration. No need to worry that "My garden just isn't how I want it to be" or "The snow ruined my plants". This is not about perfection; it's about being a part of our community and showing what city gardening is like, as well as having a good time. This is a chance to motivate ourselves to make our gardens pretty.

Please consider having your garden on the garden walk tour, a great Charles Village/Abell Community tradition. We're seeking gardens that have been on the tour in past years and would love to have new gardens on display, as well. If you cannot be on the tour, please consider supporting your neighbors by going on the tour.

Please submit a brief description of your garden no later than May 14 to allow time for printing the brochure. For further information, please contact Val Kuciauskas (valdoned@comcast.net, 410-366-6071) or Beverly Fink (bvrlyfink@yahoo.com, 410-366-4157).

Barclay/Brent Plant Sale

This year the Barclay School will include its wonderful children's garden on the garden tour. The school will also feature the revived Margaret Brent & Barclay School Plant Sale. Master gardeners will be available to answer questions or give advice. Restrooms will be open for garden walkers. The sale will be held by the Reading Garden at the Barclay School on the day of the Garden Walk. Plant donations may be dropped off on Ann Leonard's porch at 2844 Guilford or Beverly Fink's porch at 3023 Guilford. The proceeds will go to Barclay's after-school Children's Garden Club. Contact Ann (annleonard@comcast.net) or Beverly (bvrlyfink@yahoo.com) with any questions.

- Bulletin Board -

Officers Contact List

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Email list and other info:
www.abellimprovement.org

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 Quarterly General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 21

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

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

Memorial Day Picnic Sunday, May 30

Come enjoy an afternoon
with your neighbors for hot
dogs, hamburgers and drinks.
Bring a dish to share.

Abell Open Space

4 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Mayor's Spring Cleanup Saturday, April 17

Join your neighbors to help
sweep, rake and haul away
Abell's winter trash in
Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-
Blake's Spring Cleanup on
April 17. Brooms, shovels
and rakes will be available.

Check neighborhood
sandwich boards for more
information as the date
approaches.

32nd Annual Charles Village Garden Walk

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Sunday, June 6

11 – 4

Featuring the outstanding
urban gardens of Charles
Village residents.

Refreshments are served.
Tickets can be pre-purchased
for \$8 at the Waverly
Farmer's Market on May 15,
22, & 29, or at the Garden
Walk booth at the Charles
Village Festival on June 5
Same-day tickets for \$10 will
be available at the Garden
Walk booth

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

May 17

August 8

September 16

November 17

Summer Issue

Street Fair Issue

Fall Issue

Holiday Issue