



Abell Improvement Association Newsletter

February 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Abell Community:

I am delighted to be serving as the AIA President this year. I want to thank Past President **Robin Truett-Theodorson** for her service over the last 2 years. As President, Robin brought an unflagging dedication and an admirable professionalism to her role, and I only hope I can live up to her example.

I'd also like to acknowledge the new faces among the AIA's officer and committee positions. **Janet Wright, Allan Garske, Shelley Treadway** and **Kevin Darrow** all serve in AIA positions for the first time this year. I want to welcome them, and welcome *back* the returning officers and committee members. Thank you all for giving your time and energy. I'm looking forward to a great year – no matter what my 401k has to say about it!

You may notice some changes to this newsletter as well. In each issue, we'll highlight a local nonprofit or service-oriented organization that's working to make our community stronger. These organizations are doing some truly important and innovative things, and they're always looking for volunteers. I hope you'll consider making a contribution of your time and talents to one – or all – of them.

On a far sadder note, the Abell community mourns the loss of a great friend and neighbor, Mark Theodorson, who died in December. Mark was a buoyant presence in our community, an authentic free spirit and free thinker who made numerous contributions to our community, among them his help in maintaining the Abell Open Space. **To honor Mark, an event is being planned for April 11th (Mark's birthday) in the Open Space.** More details can be found on page 4.

I hope to see you all at that event and at the many other community gatherings the AIA will host throughout the year. If you aren't currently a member of the AIA, I hope you'll consider joining today. The AIA is always looking for new members – and for its members to get actively involved in the Association's community-building efforts. As clichéd as it may sound, our organization really is only as strong as our membership. We can always use one more pair of hands and one more good idea. Yearly dues are only \$5 – a tiny price that signals your support for the programs and events the AIA organizes each year, from our annual Street Fair, to the Summer Outdoor Film Series, to our new Mini-Grants Program for teachers at Barclay School (see page 3).

Finally, please know that as members of the Abell community, your contributions, suggestions, and input are always welcome. Anyone may submit contributions to this newsletter; please refer to the deadline for submissions on page 4. And you may always feel free to email me at president@abellimprovement.org or to give me a call at 410-366-3883. To join or learn more about the AIA, please visit our website: www.abellimprovement.org.

Warmest regards,

Paul Burk
President, Abell Improvement Association

Inside:

Marian
House
needs
volunteers!

Barclay
Mini-Grants
are
working.

Would you
like to be a
Story Pal?

“One Plus
One” Refuse
& Recycling
Proposed

City Proposes “One Plus One” Trash & Recycling Collection

Fourteenth District City Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke addressed the AIA’s annual meeting to explain the “One Plus One” refuse and recycling plan proposed by the Dept. of Public Works, Bureau of Solid Waste. At present, trash is collected twice a week and recyclables every other week. Under the proposal, *both* trash and recyclables would be collected once weekly. The city hopes that more frequent recycling collection will encourage more recycling; meanwhile reducing trash pick-up to once a week would save the city \$5.5 million a year. Collection would begin at 6 a.m., *one hour earlier* than currently. Residents would be allowed to put their trash out in a covered, durable container after 8 p.m. the night before collection.

The change would require a City Council ordinance to amend the City Code, which now requires two mixed-refuse collections per week for residential households, not including recycling. The city administration will introduce the proposal at the City Council meeting of Monday, February 9, 2009. The proposed legislation will then be assigned to a committee for public hearing and testimony. If you would like to be notified when the hearing is scheduled, please call or email Mary Pat Clarke at 410-396-4814 (0) or marypat.clarke@baltimorecity.gov.

Dumpster Dates

The dumpster that regularly appears at 31st Street and Abell Avenue is on hiatus for the next couple of months. It will be back in March or April. In the meantime, Abell residents are encouraged to take advantage of dumpsters that have been arranged by the Charles Village Community Benefits District (CVCBD). These dumpsters will arrive on Friday afternoons, rotating from week to week among three locations around Charles Village. All dumpsters are for the use of Charles Village residents only. For the dumpster locations and schedule, please visit: www.charlesvillage.org/media/pdf/Roll_Off_Dumpsters.pdf

Ace Hardware Eyes 32nd St. Locale

Picture it. You are in the middle of another procrastinated home project, and just when your handy-person momentum starts to build, it hits you--"D'oh! I'm gonna have to drive all the way to Home Depot again before I can finish this darn project!"

Or will you? The AIA was recently contacted by Gina Schaefer, an Ace Hardware cooperative entrepreneur, who, with her business partners, is considering opening an Ace Hardware branch in the old Blockbuster building (née Post Office) at 32nd Street and Old York Road, just across from the Giant.

Don't worry, I know what you're thinking: "Please not another retail chain in my neighborhood!" Not quite: Ace Hardware stores are locally and independently owned cooperatives that have a fabulous reputation for serving local communities well by adapting to their needs. Before moving to Abell Avenue, I lived in the Logan Circle neighborhood of Washington DC, where I frequented an Ace Hardware branch operated by Schaefer's cooperative. The store was clean, organized and well stocked, and the staff was helpful, knowledgeable and courteous. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to walk to such a dependable, locally owned hardware store in our own neighborhood?

However, this is not yet a done deal. This Ace Hardware cooperative is still in the process of determining whether this neighborhood can support such a business. I think we can and should. Check out their website at acehardwaredc.com. If you are at all interested in the prospect of an Ace Hardware within walking distance, please take a moment to write to Gina Schaefer at gina@acehardwaredc.com and let her know!

- Kevin Darrow

Contractor Recommendations

Freda Kirkham:
All-around Handyman: Gerardo Vinas 443-834-5485
"Does fantastic work and is a great guy"

Auto Mechanic :Linder Automotive, 3118 Brentwood Ave. (Just off 32nd street, across from the Farmer's Market) 410-467-7129

Erica Christoph:
Painter: Kehring Painting (interior and exterior): Jim at 410-245-2609

Non-Profit Organizations & Volunteer Opportunities

Marian House

A transitional and supportive housing program, Marian House is located at 949 Gorsuch Avenue in the Better Waverly neighborhood of Baltimore City. It serves homeless women who have suffered through poverty, addiction, abuse, mental illness or incarceration. Marian House is a holistic, healing community for women and their families who are in need of housing and support services. It provides a safe, loving environment that challenges women to respect and love themselves, confront emotional and socioeconomic barriers and build stable and productive lives.

Marian House offers a variety of services to its residents, including rehabilitation counseling and case management, addiction recovery support services, education advancement, employment assistance, life skills training, and family reunification support.

Marian House needs volunteers for a variety of projects. Tutoring, administration and assisting with special events are a few examples of the ways volunteers can help the group in its mission. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Marian House's Volunteer Coordinator at 410-467-4121 or volunteer@marianhouse.org.

More information about Marian House can be found at www.marianhouse.org.

Barclay School

Alumni alert: 50th Anniversary celebration. Please join in the celebration of the Barclay School's first 50 years on Saturday, May 2, 2009. There will be lots of fun, including: games, music, food, prizes and more!

Are you an alumnus or alumna? Do you have fond memories of your days at Barclay? *The school would love to hear from you!* Please contact: Katie Horn at 443-324-3918 or khorn@greaterhomewood.org

A Whole Lot of Reading Going On!

Books-2-Go has come to the Barclay School! Thanks to the Greater Homewood Community Corporation, Experience Corps volunteers, and Early ID, this program now provides students with

books to read at home with their families. After reading together, students and parents can earn rewards and prizes at Barclay. "Story Pals" are needed to read aloud to, and/or be read to by, Barclay students. All it takes is 20-45 minutes of your time, once a week or a few times a month. If you would like to learn more about being a Story Pal or a Book Scout (to gather and organize free books), please contact Katie Horn at 443-325-3918 or khorn@greaterhomewood.org.

AIA Launches Mini-Grants Program

Last year the AIA membership voted to devote \$1,500 to fund a new initiative: a Mini-Grants Program for teachers at Barclay Elementary/Middle School. These modest grants, modeled on a similar program offered years ago by the Barclay-Brent Education Corporation, are intended to help teachers by covering the costs of classroom materials and supplies, educational programs or projects or other expenses not typically covered by the school's operating budget or other funding sources. It is hoped that these funds will help Barclay's teachers provide more enriching and innovative learning opportunities for their students.

I'm pleased to report that since its launch last fall, the Mini-Grants program has been a resounding success. In just over three months, we have provided funds to six applicants, totaling \$1,150. Projects that have received funding include a Lunchtime Book Club for fourth-graders, a Young Males Enrichment Group, a "Just Say No to Drugs and Smoking" Club, and a Math Literacy Center for first-graders. We continue to receive applications and will keep making grants until our funds are depleted.

Because the program has been such a success in this, its pilot year, the AIA voted at its annual meeting to renew the Mini-Grants program for the coming school year, budgeting another \$1,500 toward the initiative. We hope to expand the program even further by securing additional funds from other grant-making organizations.

If you would like to get involved with this program, or if you have ideas about how we can expand it in the future, please contact me at president@abellimprovement.org.

-Paul Burk

- Bulletin Board -

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RECYCLING SCHEDULE

2nd & 4th Wednesdays of
the month:
2/11, 2/25, 3/11, 3/25

Regular trash pickup is
every Tuesday and Friday
morning.

Mark Theodorson 1968-2008



The Abell Community mourns the loss of Mark Theodorson, who died in his home last December. Originally from England, Mark lived at 3140 Abell Ave with his wife, Robin Truiett-Theodorson. Mark was a regular – and unmistakable – fixture around the 3100 block of Abell Avenue and the Abell Open Space, which he helped to maintain. Those of us lucky enough to have known Mark will remember him for his generous spirit, his lively and inquisitive mind, and his wonderfully caustic sense of humor. He will truly be missed by this community.

In Mark's honor, a memorial celebration will be held in the Abell Open Space on Saturday, April 11th. Details for this event are still being worked out, but will include a tree-planting ceremony, live music, and a variety of 'greening' workshops. More information about this event will follow in the next issue of the newsletter.

The **Abell Film Committee** will begin scheduling the summer season of free movies in the Open Space soon. If you have any suggestions for films to screen, please send your ideas to Paul Burk, 3218 Abell Avenue. Email: burkpaul@hotmail.com.

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

March 17	Spring Issue
May 17	Film Series Issue
August 8	Street Fair Issue
September 16	Fall Issue
November 17	Holiday Issue