

# The Riverdale Park *Town Crier*

**September 2005**

Volume 34, Issue 7

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## World-Class Solar Home in Riverdale Park

By Patrick J. Prangley and Rob Oppenheim

What in the world is going up in the parking lot next to the old NOAA mapping facility? A storage box? A temporary office? A fast food drive-thru? The correct answer: None of the above. The project is an 800-square-foot home designed and built by a team of more than 125 undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Maryland. Team members come from the university's architecture, journalism, engineering, and business programs. The structure will be part of the U.S. Department of Energy's 2005 Solar Decathlon.

Most college projects last a couple of months, so it has been a challenge to sustain this 3-year-long effort. Just finishing is a great achievement. Project manager Rob Murray stayed past graduation to see the job through. Other principals include assistant project manager Dan Vlachich, construction superintendent Mike Boteler, and fund-raising chief Dan Feng.

(Story continued on page 13.)



**GEM e4 electric vehicle sits in front of UMD Solar House.**

To:	Bulk Rate U.S. Postage PAID Riverdale Park, MD
	Carrier Route Presort Every Resident and Business Riverdale Park, Md 20737

# Council Actions

By Colleen Ferguson

## Legislative Meeting, Tuesday, July 5, 2005

1. Denied variance request, Redeemed Church of God.
2. Approved M-UTC nominations of Orazio Puglisi and Rebecca Feldberg.
3. Waived sealed bids for police fleet acquisition and approved piggyback with Maryland State Police purchase contract.
4. Approved waiver for request for quotes for Public Works trash packer and pickup truck.
5. Proclamation welcoming home U.S. Army Reserve Civil Affairs Troops.

## Special Legislative Meeting, Monday, July 25, 2005

1. Approved changes in revised plan for Redeemed Church of God.
2. Accepted quote of Sheehy Ford, Marlow Heights, for pickup truck.
3. Accepted quote for 2006 Ford F-750 Heil PT-1000 trash compactor.

## Legislative Meeting, Monday, August 1, 2005

1. Approved minutes for legislative meeting of July 5 and July 25, 2005.
2. Approved resolution to adopt Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (10th ed.), as amended, to conduct legislative meetings.
3. Introduced Resolution 2005-OR-3, asserting mayor and council control over the *Town Crier*, see below.
4. Partner with Anacostia Watershed Society as a sponsor for Gorgeous Prince Georges' Day, Oct. 15, 2005.
5. Approved closure, 4900 block Sheridan St., for block party Aug. 20.

## Resolution 2005-OR-3

[An ordinance to amend § 3-9: Oversight: Chapter 3: *Town Crier* or Newsletter of the Town of Riverdale Park Ordinance Code]

Whereas the *Town Crier* Newsletter is a primary means the Mayor and Council has to communicate with town residents, and

Whereas the *Town Crier* is a primary means of conveying policy as set forth by the Mayor and Council to residents, and

Whereas ultimate responsibility for accurately communicating with the public is the responsibility of the elected officials, and

Whereas it is essential that the Mayor and Council has all power necessary to insure that the aforementioned occurs in the publishing process

Changes to this subsection are indicated by strike through

Chapter 3 *Town Crier* or Newsletter Sub-Section 3-9, Oversight shall be amended as follows:

The Editor-in-Chief shall follow above procedures in making decisions concerning the production of issues of the town newsletter. Oversight of the Editor-in-Chief shall be done by the Town Administrator. ~~No elected official may direct the decisions by the Editor in Chief or the Town Administrator with regard to the town newsletter except as provided in this subsection or by amending this chapter.~~

Introduced by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Riverdale Park at a regular legislative meeting on Monday, August 1, 2005.

**Town of Riverdale Park**  
www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us

### Town Hall

5008 Queensbury Road  
Riverdale Park, MD 20737  
301-927-6381  
RiverdaleParkMD@comcast.net

Mayor Vernon Archer  
240-832-2257  
varcher@gmail.com

### Council Members

Ward 1 Tracey Toscano 301-927-9022  
TraceyRPark@aol.com

Ward 2 Mary Donaldson 301-927-2954  
msmarydon@yahoo.com

Ward 3 Novella Sargusingh 301-927-8422  
msnovella19@aol.com

Ward 4 Lawrence Taylor 301-474-6868  
taylor.lawrence@gmail.com

Ward 5 Gerard Kiernan 301-277-4554  
gerardkiernan@earthlink.net

Ward 6 Kenneth Webb 301-523-6202  
webbward6@hotmail.com

Patrick J. Prangle, Town Administrator  
Public Works 301-864-1803  
James Houser, Public Works Director  
Debbie Murphy, Assistant

Code Enforcement 301-209-1505  
CodeRiverdalePk@comcast.net  
Colleen M. Ferguson

Police Department 301-927-4343  
RivPD@comcast.net  
E. Thomas Parker, Chief

Fire Department Emergency 911  
Information 301-927-0356

info@riverdalevfd.com  
www.riverdalevfd.com  
Vincent Harrison, Chief

### Town Crier

The Official Newsletter of the  
Town of Riverdale Park, Maryland

Editor-in-Chief Rob Oppenheim  
RP.TownCrier@comcast.net  
Home: 301-779-1745  
Copy Editor: Kate Kelly

Some material contained in the *Town Crier* represents the opinion of the authors and does not necessarily represent the views of the Town of Riverdale Park.

Submission deadline: 15th of each month.

# Mayor's Report

## Staffing

By Vernon Archer



It has been an exciting and challenging two months since I took the oath of office back in June to become Riverdale Park's new mayor. So much has happened both in town and for me personally that I'm tempted to slip on my educator's hat and write an essay about what I did on my summer vacation. However, what I really need to tell you about is what I've been doing with the town government to get organized and ready to achieve the goals laid out in the campaign last spring.

The policies the mayor and council make can become realities only if the hired staff can and will meet those goals. The town government is primarily made up of people, not trucks, buildings, cars, and equipment. It's a great thing that the new council and I inherited a good staff that is becoming even better. Knowing that, my emphasis has been on bringing the town government to full staffing and to implementing a clear chain of command, so we are assured of a work force that is motivated to do its best for Riverdale Park's residents.

Staffing in general government, the name for the section of the town's administrative structure that oversees all other areas of town services, was in particular need of attention after significant personnel cuts in 2003. For that department to complete its work in a professional and timely fashion, we need a deputy town administrator and two full-time administrative aides. Over most of last year the department was staffed through a mixture of temporary hires and town employees borrowed from other areas. As a result, Code Enforcement and the Department of Public Works have been hampered. Applicants for those positions are going through rigorous examinations, and new staff people should be in place by the time you read this or shortly thereafter.

It is critical to get general government back up to full strength with highly qualified staff because all other departments—the mayor and council, too, for that matter—depend so much on it. General government oversees more than 30 critical functions—personnel, financial, legal, regulatory, and planning activities, to name a few—for the town. The temporary staffers have filled in admirably, but we need permanent employees who will be dedicated to their responsibilities and who can be held accountable if a job is not done correctly.

Staffing the town's Police Department poses different concerns. Although there are several slots to fill, the main

goal is to keep experienced officers on the force. As many of you know, the county police department has begun an aggressive hiring campaign, and this is just the latest of the constant demands placed on law enforcement personnel in the post-9/11 world. The added pressure has driven salaries up and made the market more competitive. We all want the county to be successful in its quest to expand its police force, but not to the detriment of our town.

I have been working with Chief Tom Parker to develop standardized pay and rank classification systems that will help us to hire and retain officers. The new structure will provide for some salary increases, but its primary effect will be to provide a more predictable and rational way to compensate officers. The department will be able to hire experienced officers at a rate above that paid to rookie officers. It also will be transparent, so every officer will know how his or her pay will change over time and with promotions. Incidentally, the public will be able to see it as well for easy comparison with other police departments' pay scales.

The Department of Public Works faces still different challenges. Although staffing generally is adequate to manage the workload, there has been little flexibility for times of high demand. The council passed a budget that allows Public Works Director Jim Houser to contract for labor, up to the equivalent of one full-time laborer, as needed. In other words, if the department needs three ex-

tra people once each week, the director now has the flexibility to bring in that help. When it is fully implemented, the system will allow Public Works to do a better job of responding to unforeseen events like the cleanup from last July's windstorm.

Finally, I am putting in place a system of administration that will assure senior managers that they have the tools they need to do their jobs and that they will be accountable for getting their jobs done well. Central to that is establishing a clear chain of command.

The council representatives and I were elected to formulate policies and make certain they are carried out. The staff that makes up our town government is paid to do the work of making those policies become reality. With the help of our excellent staffers, the commitments I made in the campaign will be executed to improve our town. We all expect the progress to continue in the coming months and years.

*My emphasis has been on bringing the town government to full staffing and to implementing a clear chain of command, so we are assured of a work force that is motivated to do its best for Riverdale Park's residents.*

# Meet Your Town Staff

## Donald Soles

By Corey Slavitt

### Riverdale Park Public Works

Right about this time, in the early autumn 22 years ago, Donald Soles was out looking for a job. He was 19 and pounding the pavement. His quest for work ended when he accepted a position for seasonal leaf collection with the Town of Riverdale Park. As a student at Bladensburg Vocational School, Soles studied carpentry, electrical work, and plumbing, but right then, he just needed a job.

“Some people called it ‘temporary’ work,” Soles says about his early employment with Riverdale. “I don’t like calling it that, though.” And with 20-plus years now as a full-time, permanent town staffer with a ‘round the clock, ‘round the calendar commitment to his job, the all-around skilled and multi-talented Soles is anything but temporary. His two-month seasonal gig in 1983 evolved into a two-decade, full-time career.

Soles’ co-worker Debbie Murphy and Town Administrator Pat Prangley call Soles a “jack-of-all-trades,” but they speak of him as a revered king. And anyone who’s been out and about in Riverdale Park knows that their praise is on target—if anything, it could be an understatement. You can find this super-skilled laborer just about everywhere, doing just about everything.

He builds structures for the town, runs the floor buffer, plows snow, drives and even repairs town vehicles, plants flowers, collects refuse and leaves, constructs and assembles voting booths, installs road signs ... and so much more.

Prangley says, “Donald is a loyal, dedicated, hard worker. Donald does it right. He’s good at anything he does, from street painting to driving a tractor.”

Soles is modest, though, “I’ll let you know when I can’t do it,” he says. “If I can fix something, usually through trial and error, I’ll do it. I’ll let you know if it’s not going to work out—if I just can’t do it.

“But it’s nice being wanted,” he says with a grin.

His inclination to help out, pitch in, and try to fix things is contagious, and maybe it’s hereditary. Soles’ 5-year-old son enthusiastically helps his mom and dad around the house. “He’s just right there, helping out with

little things naturally,” Soles says smiling with paternal pride. “I’ve never asked him, he just volunteers.”

When he’s not on the job, Soles enjoys camping with his family, and he shares an enthusiasm for remote-control cars with his son and with fellow Riverdale Park staffer Murphy. Soles has lived in the Riverdale Park area all of his life, and he lives in town now so he can stay close to his parents—and his extended family at the Riverdale Park Town Hall and Public Works offices.

His home includes two dogs, five cats, an aquarium full of fish, and a lot of good humor, good fun, and strong family bonds.

Soles’ job at Public Works is work-order-driven, so he and his 11 co-workers never know what will be on their plate from day to day. They spend a lot of their time outside—in rain and snow and intense heat and humidity—collecting leaves and trash, plowing snow, spreading salt, planting trees. They work together to maintain Riverdale Park’s three buildings, too—Town Hall, the Police Department, and Public Works. There’s always so much to do. As Soles says, “It’s nice being wanted.”



**Audrey Bragg and Simon Plog receive a basket of appreciation at the Farmers’ Market Celebration. See page 11.**

# Riverdale Park Day

Saturday, October 1, 2005

12 Noon to 5 PM

Riversdale Mansion Grounds

Celebrate  
Riverdale Park's  
85th Anniversary!



Food, Music, Games,  
Rides, and Crafts for the  
Whole Family.

Enjoy Festivities  
Typical of the 1920s ...



SACK RACES



PIE EATING  
CONTESTS

OLD TIME  
PHOTOS

...When Riverdale Park  
Was Founded!

## St. Bernard's

# YARD SALE

Saturday, September 24, 2005  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
St. Bernard's School Parking Lot  
5811 Riverdale Road

**200 spaces available**  
Space fees, \$10.00



For more information:  
Frannie Day, 301-779-2917  
St. Bernard's Rectory, 301-277-1000



**Sunday, September 11, 2005**  
**11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., rain or shine**  
Takoma Park Middle School  
7611 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park  
**FREE to all!**

Enjoy crafts, food, music, and dance from around the world on eight stages. Lots of audience participation: dance workshops, Seventh Heaven Stage, many activities at and surrounding the Children's Stage. No pets, please.

For more information:  
[www.tpff.org](http://www.tpff.org), [info@tpff.org](mailto:info@tpff.org), 301-589-0202

## Christian Life Center's *Passion & Compassion Community Outreach Festival*

Saturday, September 24, 2005  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Christian Life Center, 5600 Taylor Road

Games, moon bounce, clowns, and much much more!  
Free food and clothing for those in need.  
Come out and be a part of this wonderful community event. Donations of food or clothing may be delivered to Christian Life Center's Community Outreach building  
Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon.

For more information: 301-277-5969

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Walk, Jog or Bike In Memory of 9/11

Sunday, September 11, 2005

5K or 10K walk; 25K bike ride  
Start between 9 a.m. and noon; finish by 3 p.m.

Bladensburg Waterfront Park  
4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg  
Entrance fee \$3 (12 & under free)

This pleasant, easy walk or jog is a volksmarch on paved pathways and side-walks through the port towns of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, and Cottage City and along the Anacostia River. The 10-kilometer (6.1 mile) trail takes you to the historical sites of the Indian Queen



Tavern—George Washington House, Bladensburg Dueling Ground, Bladensburg Balloon Garden, Memorial Peace Cross, and the Bladensburg Waterfront Park. The shorter 5K walk is ideal for beginners. Kids: *yes*; strollers: *medium-sized*; wheelchairs: *no*; pets: *yes*; restrooms: *yes*.

For more information: Donald Conway,  
[donjoy@starpower.net](mailto:donjoy@starpower.net), 301-572-5574,  
[www.ava.org/clubs/freestate](http://www.ava.org/clubs/freestate)



A volksmarch is not a pledge walk, and it's not a race. It is a fun activity for clubs, friends, families, people and their pets, and those who walk alone. Most walkers complete a 10K trail in about 2 hours. Go at your own pace—even stop to shop or eat. Refreshments are provided. The event's 5K (3 mile) walk is perfect for beginners.

For more volksmarching information:  
[www.ava.org/vmfaq.htm](http://www.ava.org/vmfaq.htm) or [www.mdvolks.org](http://www.mdvolks.org)

# Riverdale Park on the Internet

By Leslie Plant

Here are a few sites and e-mail lists of local interest.  
This page is available online: [www.tinyurl.com/csxuk](http://www.tinyurl.com/csxuk)  
or <http://www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us/Misc/200509/tclinks.html>

## Town of Riverdale Park

<http://www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us>

*Free, user-friendly e-mail lists bring timely information about Riverdale Park to your inbox.*

## Town-Sponsored E-mail Lists

[www.tinyurl.com/dn6tj](http://www.tinyurl.com/dn6tj) or  
<http://riverdale-park.org/mailman/listinfo>

**Town-Announce:** events, meetings, agendas  
**ComTalk:** discussions on improving communications  
**TownTalk:** informal, wide-ranging discussions

## Farmers' Market List

<http://clarimetry.com/mailman/listinfo/rpfarmersmarket-clarimetry.com>

## Weblogs

*Blogs are personal observations about anything.*

Jack Jones (Ward 1)  
<http://TheRiverdaleObserver.blogspot.com>

James Landry (Ward 1)  
<http://MusicFromTheFilm.blogspot.com>

Maureen Farrington (Ward 1)  
<http://riverdaleparkette.blogspot.com>

David Hiles (Ward 2); lots of local links  
(see also Hiles Web site, listed separately)  
<http://RiverdalePark.blogspot.com>

Alan Thompson (Ward 2)  
<http://riverdale-park-politics.blogspot.com>

Audrey Bragg (Ward 2)  
<http://RiverdaleParkReader.blogspot.com>

## Living in Riverdale Park

Unofficial site; lots of good photos  
[www.lissa.net/riverdale](http://www.lissa.net/riverdale)

Riverdale Volunteer Fire Department  
[www.RiverdaleVFD.com/home.html](http://www.RiverdaleVFD.com/home.html)

Town services (town site)  
[www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us/CityServices/default.html](http://www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us/CityServices/default.html)

Riverdale Park Business Association  
[www.RiverdaleParkBiz.com](http://www.RiverdaleParkBiz.com)

History of historic Sears catalog homes  
[www.lissa.net/riverdale/Riverdale%20Sears%20Homes.html](http://www.lissa.net/riverdale/Riverdale%20Sears%20Homes.html)

Riversdale Historical Society  
[www.riversdale.org](http://www.riversdale.org)

Riversdale Mansion information, including rental info  
[www.pgparcs.com/places/ElegantHistoric/riverdale\\_intro.html](http://www.pgparcs.com/places/ElegantHistoric/riverdale_intro.html)

Local artist Gerald King's Riverdale Park paintings  
[www.GeraldKing.com/Riverdale.htm](http://www.GeraldKing.com/Riverdale.htm)

David Hiles, former Ward 2 council member, gives lots of information and posts recent issues of the *Town Crier*  
<http://homepage.mac.com/hilesd/RiverdalePark/Personal7.html>

## Local, County, State Government

Maryland Archives, Riverdale Park page  
[www.mdarchives.state.md.us/msa/mdmanual/37mun/riverdale/html/r.html](http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/msa/mdmanual/37mun/riverdale/html/r.html)

Riverdale Park history  
<http://www.mdmunicipal.org/cities/index.cfm?townname=RiverdalePark&page=home>

Find your elected state officials  
[www.MDelect.net/ElectedOfficials](http://www.MDelect.net/ElectedOfficials)

Links on the official town site  
[www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us/RelatedLinks/default.html](http://www.ci.riverdale-park.md.us/RelatedLinks/default.html)

## Local Interest

*Gazette online*  
[www.gazette.net/princegeorgescty](http://www.gazette.net/princegeorgescty)  
County, local, area news and weather  
[www.topix.net/city/riverdale-park-md](http://www.topix.net/city/riverdale-park-md)

## Riverdale Park Data

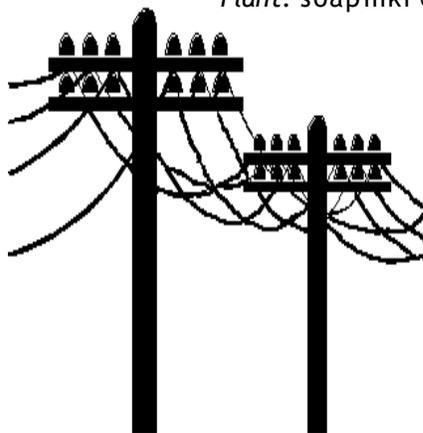
Data from various sources  
[www.city-data.com/city/Riverdale-Park-Maryland.html](http://www.city-data.com/city/Riverdale-Park-Maryland.html)

U.S. Census data (year 2000) for Riverdale Park  
<http://censtats.census.gov/data/MD/1602466635.pdf>  
(this is a PDF file with Riverdale Park census data).

*If you have a link to add to this list, send it to Leslie Plant: [soapmkr@erols.com](mailto:soapmkr@erols.com).*

*Disclaimer:* All links are provided for the convenience of our residents. Any opinions expressed on any site are those of the site's owners and not necessarily those of the *Town Crier* or the Town of Riverdale Park.

[If approved, a new *Town Crier* site will offer recent issues in portable document format, or PDF. Some issues are available online now:  
<http://homepage.mac.com/hilesd/RiverdalePark/Personal7.html>  
—*Editor.*]



# September 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>To be listed in the Calendar or in Community Circles send an e-mail to RP.TownCrier@comcast.net. For repeating events please specify a repetition rule and a stop date.</p>				<p><b>1</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - A  3 pm - 7 pm Farmers Market Town Center</p>	<p><b>2</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - B  2:45 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>3</b> 9 am - 5 pm Trash, oil, paper drop off, PW<sup>1</sup></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b> <b>Labor Day</b> <b>Office Closed</b> <b>PW<sup>1</sup> Closed</b>  <b>No Trash</b> <b>Pickup</b></p>	<p><b>6</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - A  7:00 pm Traffic <b>8:00 pm</b> <b>Legislative</b></p>	<p><b>7</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - B  County Recycling  7:30 pm M-UTC<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><b>8</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - A  3 pm - 7 pm Farmers Market Town Center</p>	<p><b>9</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - B  2:45 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>10</b> 9 am - 5 pm Trash, oil, paper drop off, PW<sup>1</sup></p>
<p><b>11</b> 9 am-12 Walk, Jog or Bike<sup>3</sup>  11am-6:30 Takoma Park Folk Festival<sup>3</sup></p>	<p><b>12</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - A  7:00 pm Boy Scouts  7:30 pm Rec Board</p>	<p><b>13</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - B  7:30 pm Madison Hill Assoc</p>	<p><b>14</b> County Recycling</p>	<p><b>15</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - A  3 pm - 7 pm Farmers Market Town Center  Town Crier Deadline</p>	<p><b>16</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - B  2:45 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>17</b> 9 am - 5 pm Trash, oil, paper drop off, PW<sup>1</sup></p>
<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - A</p>	<p><b>20</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - B  7:30 pm PG Home Learning Network</p>	<p><b>21</b> County Recycling  7:30 pm Beautification</p>	<p><b>22</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - A  3 pm - 7 pm Farmers Market Town Center  <b>Autumn</b> <b>begins</b></p>	<p><b>23</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - B  2:45 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>24</b> 9 am - 5 pm Trash, oil, paper drop off, PW<sup>1</sup>  9 am - 2 pm St. Bernard's Yard Sale<sup>3</sup>  10 am - 2 pm CLC Festival<sup>3</sup></p>
<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - A  8:00 pm Work Session</p>	<p><b>27</b> Regular trash &amp; yard waste pickup - B</p>	<p><b>28</b> County Recycling  7:00 pm Lions Club</p>	<p><b>29</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - A  3 pm - 7 pm Farmers Market Town Center  6:30 pm - 8:30 Conflict Resolution<sup>3</sup></p>	<p><b>30</b> Regular, heavy &amp; metal<sup>2</sup> pickup - B  2:45 pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>Oct 1</b> <b>Riverdale</b> <b>Park Day<sup>3</sup></b> Noon - 5 pm, Riversdale Mansion</p>

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations: PW, Public Works  
ComCom, Communications Committee  
M-UTC, Mixed-Use Town Center Zoning Review

<sup>2</sup> Regular trash, heavy trash, and metal recycling.  
<sup>3</sup> See article for more information.  
All activities at Town Hall, unless otherwise noted.

# Farmers' Market Insert – p1

This page is replaced by the Farmer's Market Insert (English).

# Farmers' Market Insert – p2

This page is replace by the Farmer's Market Insert (Page 2 of FM Insert is in Spanish).

# Farmers' Market Celebration a Success

By Alice Ewen Walker



**Tony Evans of Harris Orchards enjoys a chat with a customer at the Riverdale Park Farmers' Market. The market is at Town Center, Thursdays, 3-7 p.m.**

A record-breaking 600 people came out July 14 to celebrate the 8th anniversary of the opening of the Riverdale Park Farmers' Market. Live music, fresh fruits and vegetables, plants, herbs, nuts, crafts, door prizes, a clown, and cooking demonstrations by a local chef were big draws for the event, along with the presentation of a basket of appreciation to Audrey Bragg and Simon Plog for their contributions to the community (picture page 4).

"Prince George's County is still agriculturally vibrant, and this market proves that," said Christine Bergmark, director of the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, which cosponsored the event. "You make the difference. Your choice matters. You can choose to stop at the most convenient grocery store, or you can go a few minutes out of your way and get better tomatoes, lovely sweet corn, and succulent peaches, straight from the farm."

## Letters To The Editor

The *Town Crier* wants to hear from you. E-mail your letter to [RP.TownCrier@comcast.net](mailto:RP.TownCrier@comcast.net) or mail it to *Town Crier*, 5008 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, MD 20737. You must include your name, address, and phone number, but your address and phone number will not be printed. Anonymous letters cannot be published.

### Justin Troy Slye

On July 21, 2005, Justin Troy Slye went home to be with his Heavenly Father after a long and courageous bout with cancer. Justin, in his short 18 years, accomplished many wonderful things in his life. He was a youth leader and guest speaker at his home church, Christian Life Center, and at other churches during his illness. The courage and faith that this young man displayed will live on forever in our hearts.

Justin's parents, Pastor Benjamin Slye of the Christian Life Center in Riverdale Park and his wife Deborah Slye, would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their compassion and thoughtfulness during this time. The community leaders and townspeople of the Town of Riverdale Park all came together, as a community, to give support and love to the Slye family in its time of need. This sense of family and community has consoled them during this time. So, to the Town of Riverdale Park, THANK YOU!

*Sandra Bonnefond*

*August 16, 2005*



### Corner of Main and Main

The Riverdale Park Business Association complained about the rubble pile on the corner of East West Highway and Baltimore Boulevard for the first time in September 2004. Almost a year ago. There was an ineffective attempt to level the trash, but it still remains at the entrance to our town. Members of our association are losing revenue and business as a direct result of this demolition site. People bypass this block because they think the entire block is being demolished. In addition, the unsightly mess is attracting panhandlers, gangs, and vandals. A man was soliciting money from the patrons of the Dental Group. A lady of the evening was working the parking lot on the day the Dental Group held a blood drive. The Century 21 building had graffiti painted on it. A worker at the now-defunct Riverdale Bookshop was violently threatened.

We have written a detailed letter to town officials asking for solutions and relief for the various businesses located at the Baltimore Avenue intersection. We suggest that the vacant lot be leveled, mulched, and seeded to provide a park like setting until development is certain. The Riverdale Park Business Association is willing to work with the town's economic development committee to get things moving in the right direction. Recognizing and supporting established businesses is just as important as, if not more important than, attracting new business to the area. Riverdale Park cannot afford to lose the economic base of established businesses.

*Audrey Bragg*

*August 20, 2005*

*President, Riverdale Park Business Association*

# Community Circles

## E-Mail Lists for Town Residents

By Alan K. Thompson

Shortly after Mayor Vernon Archer took office in June, he asked me to set up an electronic mailing list to allow the town to inform residents of events, especially council and committee meetings. Because the list was to be an official voice of the town, posting would be restricted, and the volume of messages would be low.

Mayor Archer also wanted a second list, with an open-posting policy, for general discussions on topics of interest to residents.

The first list, "Town-Announce," went live June 16; it now has 56 subscribers. Twelve messages were posted in the first 5 weeks, providing quick notification of events (including one emergency, notifying residents that a case of Lyme disease had occurred in town). Meeting agendas are routinely posted before legislative meetings.

The second list, "TownTalk," on which residents could have informal and wide-ranging discussions about everything from baby sitters to gardening to economic development, has been held back until recently; we wanted to be comfortable with the technical requirements of running such a list. It's now in operation, and subscription information is at the end of this article.

A third list, ComTalk, was created for discussions of the Communications Committee (which has been charged with making recommendations to the Town Council for promoting efficient communication between the town government and citizens). That list is open to residents; you must subscribe to post to the list, but anyone may view the archives.

Other lists, not run by the town, of interest to residents include PGParents, which offers information and resources for organizing events and activities for county families, and HOPE (Hyattsville Organization for a Positive Environment), which encourages Hyattsville residents to work for environmental protection, to strengthen the community, and build a healthy local economy.

### Subscription Information

To sign up for town-sponsored e-mail lists go to [www.tinyurl.com/dn6tj](http://www.tinyurl.com/dn6tj) or <http://riverdale-park.org/mailman/listinfo>

To enroll in HOPE: [groups.yahoo.com/group/HOPE\\_in\\_Hyattsville](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HOPE_in_Hyattsville)

For PGParents subscriptions: [groups.yahoo.com/group/pgparents](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pgparents)

*Alan Thompson is a certified geek and town resident for the past decade or so.*



## National Night Out

By Lt. Patrick Timmons

On the evening of Aug. 2, 2005, the Riverdale Park Police Department participated in National Night Out, a project aimed at curbing crime in cities and towns across the country.



This year's observance was a little different, however. Instead of hosting an open house as the department had for the past two years, saturation patrols were conducted throughout the town.

The entire town was patrolled, but special attention was given to Wards 4, 5, and 6.

Persons found drinking in the park near the intersection of Greenway Drive and Spring Lane were moved along their way, but only after they picked up large amounts of trash in the area. Public drinking and loitering also were addressed along Kenilworth Avenue, in response to recent complaints from business owners.

Madison Hill received numerous patrols during the evening, and the citizens seemed happy to see the officers—many waved and greeted the police on patrol.

This year's National Night Out was certainly considered a success by all those involved in the event.

## Recreation Board

The Recreation Board plans Riverdale Day and other family events, including a Winter Party and the Easter Egg Hunt. If you would enjoy planning or helping with parties for our children, contact Doris Pullman, Chair, 301-927-6992, [rhsTeaLady@aol.com](mailto:rhsTeaLady@aol.com). Next meeting: Monday, Sept. 12.

## Beautification Committee

The Beautification Committee is out to make our town, well, beautiful. Interested? Contact Anne Larson, Chair, [annemarie.larson@am.jll.com](mailto:annemarie.larson@am.jll.com), 202-222-1612. Next meeting: Wednesday, Sept. 21.

## Public Works

### Keep our Town Beautiful

Please sweep or remove grass clippings and weeds from the sidewalks, curbs, and gutters when mowing lawns, raking leaves, or trimming weeds. This allows easy flow of water in the gutters and keeps our town beautiful.

**Public Works Information.** Call 301-864-1803 or check [www.tinyurl.com/b28wb](http://www.tinyurl.com/b28wb) and [www.tinyurl.com/c7zp2](http://www.tinyurl.com/c7zp2) for maps, fees, schedules, and trash restrictions.

# World-Class Solar Home

Continued from Page 1

The Solar Decathlon will consist of model homes submitted by 18 student groups from around the world. The buildings will be erected on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., Oct. 7–16. The “solar village” will be open to the public, so visitors—over 100,000 are expected—can see the advantages of alternative energy. The solar village will be closed Oct. 12 for judging, and winners will be announced Oct. 15. Corporate and foundation partners in the competition are the American Institute of Architects, the National Association of Homebuilders, BP, the DIY Network, and Sprint.

The home team has spent the past 3 years planning, designing, and building the house that runs entirely on solar energy. The design team focused on providing comfortable, spacious rooms, and it emphasized creating a connection with the outdoors. The arched roof is supported by curved glue-laminated beams that hold 51 solar panels of 175 Watts each. The structure rests on long, raised glue-laminated beams, so it can be transported to the mall. By mid-August, the framing was nearly complete, and the students were busy installing almost \$40,000-worth of triple-pane, argon-filled Loewen windows. Radiant heat will be supplied from within a poured concrete floor.

All of the teams support their projects through tax-deductible donations. The Maryland group currently is about \$50,000 short of its goal—a predicament that has resulted in lost time in the schedule. The group is working 7 days a week to finish by month’s end. Dan Vlacich expressed special appreciation for the professional craftsmen who have volunteered to train the students in construction skills, and hopes that still more will help.

Decathlon entries will be judged for how well each demonstrates practical application of solar energy in daily life. Each home must be powered entirely by solar energy, and all will need to be able to charge a DaimlerChrysler



GEM e4 electric vehicle from their solar panels. The homes will be evaluated in 10 areas:

- architecture
- dwelling
- documentation
- communications (media, Web site)
- comfort (temperature range)
- appliances and home office equipment
- hot water (clothes and dish washers, two 10-minute showers a day)
- lighting
- energy balance
- transportation (power access for electric vehicle)

Maryland’s team placed first in the 2002 Solar Decathlon for its heating design and energy balance system; the team came in fourth overall.

After the competition, the building will be donated for staff housing at the Red Wiggler Community Farm at Ovid Hazen Wells Park in Clarksburg, Maryland. The community farm provides jobs for adults with developmental disabilities who grow and sell produce. More information is available online: [www.redwiggler.org](http://www.redwiggler.org).

You can visit the house while it’s under construction: Drive north on Lafayette Street next to the railroad tracks, pass the Field of Dreams, and at the dead end turn right (you will pass the old maps building). The solar house is on the right. You can’t miss it. Stop in and take a tour; the students enjoy talking about the project.

To learn more about the project or to donate assistance or money, call 301-405-1943, or visit the solar house Web site, [www.solarhouse.umd.edu](http://www.solarhouse.umd.edu), which

has links to the Department of Energy’s Solar Village Web site.

Riverdale Park salutes the University of Maryland team. We are proud of the group’s dedication and commitment to energy conservation through this innovative project.





WORRIED ABOUT HOW TO OVERCOME  
CONFLICTS WITH YOUR PARENTS, YOUR  
CHILD, YOUR FRIENDS, YOUR TEACHERS,  
AND PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY?

YOU AND YOUR CHILD ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE  
IN THE RIVERDALE PARK COMMUNITY'S

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTERS

COMMUNITY-BASED SMALL GROUP FORUMS FOR YOUTH & PARENTS!

**Conflict Resolution Centers (CRCs)** provide young people (8–18) and their parents with violence prevention and conflict management life skills in a safe and caring environment within the Prince George's County communities where they **live, attend school, or worship**. **Young people and their parents or guardians will acquire**

- ∴ Practical conflict resolution skills
- ∴ Good communication skills
- ∴ The ability to handle peer pressure, gangs, and dangerous situations
- ∴ The ability to recognize triggers to violence: drugs, alcohol, and guns
- ∴ Knowledge of the criminal justice system
- ∴ Skills to bridge racial divisions

**Beginning Date:** Thursday, September 29, 2005  
**Time:** 6:30–8:30 p.m., 2 hours per session for 9 consecutive weeks  
**Location:** **Riverdale Park Town Hall**  
5008 Queensbury Road  
Riverdale Park, MD 20737  
301-927-6381

The sessions will focus on relevant issues that plague youth and families and that keep communities from being safe and healthy places to live. CRCs are small, highly interactive groups led and managed in the community.

**Participant**

**Certification:** Participants receive a *Certificate of Achievement* for the successful completion of a 9-week CRC program. *Youth may participate only if a parent or legal guardian attends each session as well.*

**To Enroll a Child and an Adult, Call**  
Town of Riverdale Park, 301-927-6381  
Parkdale High School, 301-513-5700, Ext. 303 (Mr. Martin), or Ext. 228 (Ms. Golf)