



The DOWNS

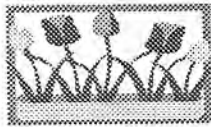
Volume 60, Issue 1

Your Roots in The Community Since 1942

March 2002

Upcoming Events

- GDCA Spring Fun-Fest on March 30
- Membership Drive in April and May
- Creek Clean-up on April 20
- GDCA Annual Meeting in May



Inside this issue:

Simple Ways We Can Keep Our Neighborhood Creek Clean 2

Greenway Downs and City Park Homes Launch Website 2

Winners of the Home Decorating Contest 3

Clip and Save: Important Fairfax County Phone Numbers 4

Ver circular en espanol

Your Membership Dues are the Fuel That Keep GDCA's Home Fires Burning

In 1942, the Greenway Downs Citizens Association was formed "to protect and promote the interest of the citizenry; to foster friendly and cooperative 'esprit de corps' among the freeholders and residents; and to maintain cordial relations and collective action with all agencies—local, county, state and federal, and any other groups or organizations having as their purpose the promotion of public welfare."

Sixty years later, the GDCA exists both because of, and for, YOU—the residents of the nearly 500 homes in our community. This year's dedicated and active board, committees, and street reps, have shown how community involvement, hard work and commitment benefit us all.

This year, GDCA saw a record turnout of both adults and children at the annual Halloween Parade. And the generous and bountiful donations neighbors made to the Caroling for Cans food drive during the 2001 Holiday festivities helped make the holidays brighter for many families in the Falls Church area. (See story, page 3).

But GDCA does more than sponsor social events. The successful implementation of a County Traffic Calming study currently in process on Summerfield Road (See story below) and the exciting launch of our very own neighborhood web site (See story, page 2.) are just two of the initiatives GDCA has undertaken in 2001-2002.

GDCA will launch a membership drive at the Spring

Fun Fest on March 30 (see insert). After that, street reps will go door-to-door, collecting the \$5 dues and updating information for the neighborhood directory.

All Greenway Downs residents, owners and renters, can join the association. Your annual donation of \$5 helps support the events mentioned in this article and representation at the Fairfax Federation of Citizen Associations, the Garden and Plant Exchange, Creek Clean-ups, Holiday Festivities, the Annual Meeting, and this newsletter.

Please help make your neighborhood a better place to live by paying your dues and supporting the GDCA.

Remember, it's not who's in the neighborhood, but who's *for* it that truly makes a difference!

GDCA Takes Street Concerns to Connolly

In recent years, speeding has become a big issue in The Downs. In particular, Summerfield Road has become a cut-through between Routes 29 & 50.

After meeting with GDCA members, Supervisor Connolly entered Summerfield Road in the county's Traffic

Calming Program. A study was concluded early this month and results will be released at the annual meeting in May. Meeting details will be published in the next issue of *The DOWNS*.

Strolling Along. It's not unusual to see neighbors out for a walk, but some have

literally taken to the streets!

Walking is a great activity, but for safety's sake, please stay on sidewalks, where provided. On streets with steep inclines and heavy traffic, such as Summerfield and Marshall, walking in the street is especially dangerous.

Health and Future of the Creek Are In Our Hands

April 20 is our annual park clean-up and this year there's as much work as ever! You may not have paid much attention to our creek, but if you're ever around a really healthy creek, you'll see an astounding difference.

Healthy creeks teem with life. You see all kinds of fish, frogs, turtles, salamanders, birds, and dragonflies. In a less healthy system, like the one we have now in Greenway Downs, you see much less wildlife, and usually a lot of trash.

Creeks are part of larger water systems called watersheds, and they're a great indicator of how healthy a watershed is. Our creek is actually part of a system of storm sewers that extend west on Lee Highway. Our stretch is the first part that is not in a cement channel. Because the openings are near commercial enterprises, a lot of what we see in the creek is actually from dumpsters and the curbs and sidewalks along Lee Highway. We've frequently taken from our creek artificial flowers that have blown into storm sewers near the cemetery.

On April 20, we'll meet at the basketball court at 10 a.m. to clean up our park and creek. We'll work as long as there's something to do, but probably no later than 12:30. Be sure to bring pruners, rakes and saws labeled with your name, work gloves, and—if you're willing—boots or old sneakers to wear in the creek. Trash bags will be provided.

Even if you can't come to the clean-up, there are simple things you can do any day to improve the health of our creek. For example, when you see trash in the creek or on the street, pick it up. The number one item removed from our creek is the useful and ubiquitous plastic grocery bag.

If your kids make a dam in the creek, knock it down when they're finished playing. Moving water is healthy water. And always wash your hands and feet after playing or working in the creek—virtually every water course in Virginia harbors E. Coli bacteria.

Clean-up after your dog and resist the urge to toss that bag of doo-doo in the creek. It sounds obvious, but it's a problem in our creek. Bring an extra bag when you walk your dog, so you can offer it to another dog owner in need.

Finally, if you fertilize your lawn, consider using organic fertilizers. And never overfertilize—it all goes into the ground water.

The future of the Greenway Downs creek is in our hands. We can keep it a beautiful, healthy asset to our community, or we can run the risk that the county will decide to pave it as just another storm drain. The choice is truly up to us.

To learn more about the watersheds that pass through Fairfax County, see Fairfax County's Stream Protection Strategies Baseline Study of Streams at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/DPWES/environmental/SPS_Main.htm.

GDCA and City Park Homes Launch Neighborhood Website

The joint website for Greenway Downs and City Park Homes went live on March 6, 2002. To check it out, go to www.citypark-greenway.com.

The site, which is still under construction, is designed to provide residents of Greenway Downs and City Park Homes with information of interest regarding the neighborhood, Fairfax County, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. It will include the current issue of *The Downs*, a calendar of events, listing of board members, commuter information, contractor referrals, and information about Neighborhood Watch.

As the site is developed, residents can send suggestions, comments, or news directly to webmaster Jim Mole, at webmaster@citypark-greenway.com.

Fairfax County has a new Web address. Point your web browser to www.fairfaxcounty.gov and you'll find a variety of great and useful information at your finger tips.

Users can apply for a county job, reserve tee-times at a county golf course, report the sale of a vehicle, change of addresses for tax purposes, check the status of a building inspection, permit, or plan, or renew a library book. You can even pay taxes with a credit card.

To go to Supervisor Connolly's Providence District page, click on "Government" from the homepage and then, "Board of Supervisors." Who said there's no place to surf in Fairfax?

Committee Gets Set to Welcome New Neighbors

The welcoming committee has been busy the past few months assembling Welcome Packets for our new neighbors.

The packets include information about the Greenway Downs neighborhood and Fairfax County, and coupons from area merchants.

Residents who moved into Greenway Downs on or after August 1, 2001 should be receiving packet in the next few weeks.

In the future, the committee will distribute Welcome Packets quarterly. The committee is working with local realtors to track home sales, but will have more difficulty keeping track of renters in the neighborhood. You can help by contacting

the committee at the number below when a new resident moves on to your street.

If you are eligible for a packet and do not receive one by the end of April, please contact Committee Chair Sara Forsyth at (703) 237-1330 or email jsfor-syth@yahoo.com. To volunteer for the committee, contact Sara at the number above.



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YOUR ROOTS IN THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1942

**Retail Sponsors of the
Greenway Downs Citizens Association's
2001 Holiday Home Decorating Contest**

The Spring River Corporation
Free Rental of a Canoe or Kayak and
Virginia Whitewater:
A Paddler's Guide to the Rivers of Virginia

Pampered Chef/Eva Schneider, Woodlawn Ave.
Pizza Stone and stand, the Classic Batter Bowl, and a
Pampered Chef Recipe Book and Spatula

The Pines of Florence Restaurant
Dinner for Two (\$20 value)

Galleria Flowers
large poinsettia plant in a holiday pot

Purrfect Grooming
\$40.00 Gift Certificate

*Thanks to These Merchants for
Their Thoughtful Donations!
Best Wishes For a Happy
and Bountiful Year!*

Important Fairfax County Phone Numbers

All area codes are (703) unless otherwise noted.

Emergency

Police/Fire/Ambulance 911
Poison Control 202-625-3333
Power Outage 888-667-3000
Rape Crisis Hotline 360-7273
Cable Outage 378-8440

Non-Emergency

Police & Fire/Rescue 691-2131
Inova Fairfax Hospital 698-1110
Va. Hospital Ctr. Arlington 558-5000

Board of Supervisors

Providence District Supervisor
Gerry Connolly
Phone: 703-560-6946
TDD: 703-207-9407
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e-mail: provdist@fairfaxcounty.gov

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Providence District Board Member
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Vienna Va. 22030
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County Services

Adult Education 227-2200
Alcohol and Drug Services 359-7040
Animal Services 830-3310
Child Care 449-9555
Consumer Affairs 222-8435
Courts 691-7320
Disposal Sites (I-66) 631-1179
Fastran 222-9764
Human Services 222-0880
Office for Women 324-5730
Park Authority 324-8700
Recreation Classes 324-5550
Recycling Information 324-5052
School Information 246-2502

Senior Citizens Info 324-5411
Tax Information 222-8234
Traffic Tickets 246-3764
Trash Collection 550-3481
Special Pick-ups 324-5040
For a complete list of TTY numbers,
please call
Fairfax County Human Services
Information & Referral
Voice: 222-0880
TTY: 803-7914



Holiday Events Draw Record Turn-out; Collect Bountiful Harvest for Area's Needy



In December, scores of Greenway Downs residents participated in the neighborhood's holiday events. The fun and great holiday spirit these events inspired can still be felt in the neighborhood.

The Holiday House Decorating Contest

The holiday season began with the introduction of the GDCA Holiday Home Decorating Contest, with prizes provided by very special and generous local retailers (See listing on page 4).

Votes were gathered from members of the GDCA, the Neighborhood Watch, and residents who made e-mail and phone recommendations. Recommendations were also made on Sunday, December 16th by the Caroling for Cans revelers as they walked throughout the Greenway Downs area singing and collecting donations for the Falls Church Community Services Food Pantry. The homes were judged in three categories.

The prize for **Most Festive**, was awarded to John and Cathy Thatcher of 2753 Woodlawn Avenue for best use of color/most flamboyant display. The Thatchers, who have lived in their home for just over three years, used many, many strings of oversized lights to surround their fence and home. They also displayed objects on the house and lawn, and poinsettias in baskets along the fence.

"This year, we actually toned down our holiday house decorating," the Thatchers said. "In light of Sept. 11 and the war, it didn't really feel like Christmas, but we tried to get more into the spirit by decorating.

"Personally, we really like the big, old-fashioned lights; not only for nostalgia, but because they are so festive and pretty even when unplugged—making color night and day. We really enjoy decorating our house and yard and hope to outdo ourselves *next* year!

For **Most Creative** Salvador and Dora Corral of 2830 Summerfield Road decorated with an abundance of lights,

color and holiday displays—including a large tree FULL of hanging decorations and Santa Claus wearing a sombrero—to win the award for most original and unusual holiday display.

"We have lived in this house for 12 years, but this is our first Christmas we have spent here," the Corrals said. "We decorated with lots of color and a manger scene, as is traditional in our home country. We want to thank the neighborhood for the honor of winning and the presents they have given us. We wish everybody a Happy New Year in 2002!"

Cindy Haney and David Stephens of 2827 West George Mason Road, who bought their home in March of 1993, won the prize for **Most Traditional**. They used electric candles in windows throughout the home and wreathes festooned with burgundy bows. The front door, porch railings, and mailbox were also decorated in green and burgundy garland and a lighted tree shone in a front window.

"Though we decorate every year anyway, we liked the idea of a contest... and the gifts were great!" Haney and Stephens said. "Thanks so much, and we hope other homes and residents of Greenway Downs will join the decorating in the future!"

Winners in each category received a letter of congratulations from GDCA President Sara Breaux and a Winners Packet with a variety of prizes and gift certificates.

Caroling for Cans Reaps Bountiful Harvest

On Sunday, December 16, just as the sun was going down and house decorations were lighting up, the GDCA carolers gathered at the basketball courts on Custis Parkway. Prepared with two large wagons for picking up donated canned goods, about 20 people split into two teams and sang seasonal tunes at homes where neighbors had made telephone or e-mail requests for a little extra holiday cheer. The group sang at

nearly 30 homes, and brought and simple seasonal joy to shut-ins, new residents, families with small children, and many others.

To add to the festivities, members of the GDCA Social Committee used luminaria—bags weighted with sand containing small lit candles—to mark the homes where the carolers would sing.

In conjunction with the singing, the carolers also collected many bags and boxes of donated goods to benefit the Falls Church Community Services Food Pantry. Residents of Greenway Downs were extremely generous in this initiative. The following Tuesday, volunteers filled two SUVs with donations and delivered them to Knox Presbyterian Church, coordinator for the pantry that week. A very big **THANK YOU** to all who contributed. We look forward to repeating this successful venture next year!

The Holiday Party

The culmination of the festivities was the Holiday Party at the home of President Sara Breaux and her husband, Rick. More than 80 guests, including carolers, members of the GDCA board and committees, and residents enjoyed superb and food and drink provided by the Social Committee and friends.

While children enjoyed watching holiday videos and playing together under the watchful eye of a babysitter, the adults enjoyed visiting with their neighbors and meeting new people.

Also attending the party were special guests Providence District Supervisor Gerry Connolly, and Officer P.G. Cuzzolino of the Fairfax County Police Department Bike Patrol.

The 2001 Holiday Season was a very special one. We hope these events—and the spirit of giving, sharing and community they inspired—can become tried and true neighborhood traditions. None of the events would have been possible without the hard work, dedication, imagination, and commitment of many resident volunteers. Thank you!!