

INSIDE:  
MID-CENTURY  
MODERN  
PART II

# HOLLIN HILLS BULLETIN

SUMMER 2016



## NOTES FROM THE CAHH PRESIDENT

### In praise of summer

Don't you just love summer? I do. Right now, I live in one of the most beautiful places on Earth. My wife, Barbara, retired at the end of April. Her previous tendency to spend copious amounts of time in the yard and garden has since exploded into something mind-boggling. Our property is awash in daisies, purple cone flowers, black-eyed susans, asters, geraniums, petunias, red and yellow hibiscus, evening primrose, daylilies, a variety of plants whose names are beyond me, nine different types of trees in pots, herb plants too numerous to mention. And a lot of that is after the spring burst (daffodils, crocus, pansies, hyacinths, azaleas, rhododendron, our beautiful yellow peony, etc.) has ebbed. As my wife jokingly says, "Our house is getting really close to perfect." I hope your summer is really close to perfect as well.

### The Fourth of July festivities

We got through the Fourth of July picnic in good order, in spite of the less than perfect weather. The band cancelled for the second year in a row because of threatened rain, but the everything else was a 'go.' The parade marched, the ponies provided exciting rides, the bicycles were stunning, the food and beverages were delicious, races were run, and eggs were tossed to their inevitable messy conclusion. Many neighbors and friends graced Voigt Park, laughed, and enjoyed each other. At the end, of course, during cleanup, it poured down rain, proving once again that God likes the picnic and did not want it to end. There are many stalwart people to thank, and I do, but I will not try to name them all, because so many people just showed up to set up tents, tables and chairs, purchase, cook and deliver food, act as judges, man the check-in table, work on behalf of airport noise reduction, register voters, etc., that they all sort of run together in my mind. Thank you all so very much. You make Hollin Hills a strong and grand community. And thank you bravehearts who risked a deluge to participate. My wonderful neighbor, Margaret Edelman, a Hollin Hills resident since 1957, told me she believes the Fourth of July picnic tradition began in the early 1960s. Think about that. More than fifty years of star-spangled fun, blueberry delights, "wheel-barrow" races, and a real sense of community. Hotdog!!

### Time for one more party

One more thought. The summer is speeding by. August is upon us. If you remember, last year I encouraged everyone to organize a block party (and invite me), wave hello to drivers in the neighborhood, and exchange 'hellos' with fellow walkers. The latter two, I still strongly encourage. If your block hasn't done it yet, there is still time to throw a block bash. So, get cracking. Flowers and gardens bring genuine joy; the Fourth of July picnic truly strengthens Hollin Hills. The people on your street—they are a special part of your life. They are present, a kind of family, wanting to connect. So, go for it. Have that block party. And don't forget to invite me. —Gus Matson

**BIKES, BLUEBERRIES,  
AND GAMES—  
ALL PART OF OUR  
CELEBRATION**



**WHY DOES A HOTDOG ON  
THE 4TH TASTE BETTER  
THAN ANY OTHER?**



**THE EGG TOSS BALLET**

*Photos by Pat McCallum (top two), others by JG Harrington.  
For more Fourth of July pictures, see page 10.*

## CIVIC ASSOCIATION OF HOLLIN HILLS (CAHH)

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## HOLLIN HILLS BULLETIN

Published monthly since 1951 by the CAHH. Material in this publication does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the CAHH Board or the editor.

Editor Barbara Shear	660-6543
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Deadline is the 15th of the preceding month.  
Articles generally should not exceed 500 words. Send your submission in the body of an email or as an attachment to barbshear@verizon.net. If you cannot produce computerized copy, please find someone to submit it for you.  
No material will be accepted over the telephone.

### Distribution problems:

- If you have not received your digital Bulletin, or to correct/change mail or email address, contact Linda Benson at 312-907-1797 or linda.benson@me.com.
- To replace a missing paper Bulletin, contact Eleanor Fina at 703-768-3174 or etfina@gmail.com.

## HOLLIN HILLS ARCHIVES

The Hollin Hills Archives are part of the Special Collections and Archives of George Mason University. To contact the SC&A staff with research questions, use the following:

- For general description of HH Archives contents, go to [http://sca.gmu.edu/finding\\_aids/hollinhills.html](http://sca.gmu.edu/finding_aids/hollinhills.html).
- For questions about collections, hours, usage, duplications, or directions go to [http://sca.gmu.edu/using\\_sc&a.html](http://sca.gmu.edu/using_sc&a.html).
- Other contacts: phone 703-993-2220, fax inquiries 703-993-8911, email [speccoll@gmu.edu](mailto:speccoll@gmu.edu).

## WWW.HOLLINHILLS.NET

Calendar of community events and information about our parks, the Design Review Committee, the National Historic Registry, and more.

# Quick Takes

## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

- Farewell to Brian and Robyn Baggetta of 7201 Beechwood Road, who moved with their kids, Luca and Chiara, to American University Park in D.C. to be closer to Bryan and Robyn's jobs.
- Welcome to Elizabeth Sproul who recently moved from Old Town to 7316 Stafford Road. The previous residents, the Lee family, moved to 2103 Pickwick Lane.

## STARS IN THEIR EYES

Thanks to Recard Lane stargazer Doug Megenity for offering his Hollin Hills neighbors the opportunity to experience magnificent views of the sky through his high-powered telescopes. Mary-Carroll Potter, ex-resident George Morduch, Wendy and Mike Kilpatrick, and the Medic family, Alyson, Jovi, and Eva, were Doug's most recent guests to view the sun, moon, Jupiter, and Mars.

—Wendy Kilpatrick



Eva discovers astronomy

## BULLETIN REMINDERS

Our June issue was sent to every Hollin Hills household as part of the Civic Association (CAHH) yearly membership drive, but starting with this combined July/August summer issue, only paid-up CAHH members will receive the Bulletin. If a neighbor mentions not having received their newsletter, please let them know that, although our regular membership drive has ended, it's never too late to join or to pay back dues. Contact Membership Chair Linda Benson (312-907-1797, linda.benson@me.com) or go to [www.hollinhills.net](http://www.hollinhills.net) and click on "Civic Association" for a membership form. (Note: Don't click on "Membership," which contains only pool membership information.)

A big thanks to all those who regularly or occasionally contribute written material and photos—you make the Bulletin a true neighborhood newsletter. Please make a note that the deadline for the September issue will be August 15. And please send your copy as an attachment in Word, another recognized word processing program, or in the body of your email, *not* as a PDF.

—Barbara Shear

## CARLY PUTS TOGETHER A WINNING TEAM

Hats off to Recard Lane's own Carly Matson, who organized the team that won second place in the Washington Post's annual Puzzle Scavenger Hunt on Sunday, May 22. Her proud parents are CAHH President Gus Matson and his wife, Barbara Liggett. Carly flew in from Colorado along with two friends (all three are math PhD candidates at the University of Colorado) to join a buddy from her UVA days plus another close friend, a fellow West Potomac graduate. He and Carly were also students of Hollin Hiller Rocky Curtis a few years back. This bright, energetic, highly motivated team took 3 hours, 11 minutes—just 2 minutes more than the first-prize team—to race from one puzzle location to another in *(continued on page 3)*



The team (l-r) Gabriel Islambouli, Mark Pullins, Carly Matson, Jackson Cooper (from our area), and Taylor Klotz.

# QuickTakes *continued*

downtown DC, all in a heavy rain—for their \$500 prize.

Very few teams actually complete the entire course; Carly had never before finished it, despite several efforts. However, this was her "best team ever," continuously bouncing ideas off one another. The incentive? Pure fun, figuring out conundrums that were "goofy and funny." Qualities required? Being analytical, thinking "outside the box," and possessing a weird sense of humor. Carly called this win her proudest accomplishment so far. I'll bet next spring she'll find her way back for the 2017 Puzzle Hunt! Meanwhile, she'll be learning lots about her PhD topic, elliptic curves in number theory (whatever that means!) —*Jo Ann Hersh*

Mike Damitz



Two enterprising Hollin Hills teens, Khloe Krizek (left) and Peyton Burns.

## GREEN THOUGHTS: REDUCE-REUSE-RECYCLE

- All that online ordering! Remember you can take your used packing materials (including plastic air bags, peanuts) to Parcel Plus at Belle View Shopping Center to be reused. Unfortunately, Tyvek (all Fedex and UPS envelopes are made of Tyvek) can't be recycled, but you can turn them inside out and reuse them.

—*Caroline Altmann*

- Service Source is a great electronics recycling service that employs handicapped people. They disassemble and recycle all kinds of electronics; however, if you bring a monitor, they will request a \$20 donation. I go there fairly often and will take anyone's items, but do go there yourself if you can—it's a treat to visit them. If you ask, they will give you a tour to see the things they do besides recycling, such as packing surgical supplies for hospitals. Service Source is at 6295 Edsall Rd, Suite 100, 703-212-4974.

—*Wendy Kilpatrick, 703-765-7163*

(Have other good reduce-reuse-recycle ideas? Please send them in.)

## WHAT DID YOU DO THIS SUMMER?

How do our kids make good use of their time during summer break? Here are examples of two enterprising Hollin Hillers, both West Potomac tenth graders, that were pointed out to us by Betsy and Mike Damitz.

Khloe Krizek supported the local UCM food pantry by collecting food from her neighbors to help low income families over the summer months. Her parents are Paul and Tracey Krizek.

To earn summer cash, Peyton Burns ran a car washing and

cleaning service throughout the community. The results were roundly praised by his many happy clients. Peyton is the son of Jodi and Dennis Burns.

## LEAF COLLECTION ADDENDUM

Thanks to Brandy Goldstein for this information: A total of 105 out of 164 households in the designated area signed the petition that requested leaf collection, putting those in favor of leaf collection at 64 per cent. (A minimum of 50 per cent was required).

Once leaves are vacuumed from neighborhood streets, they are taken to Pine Ridge Park on Woodburn Road. There, they are ground into mulch and distributed to various public sites around the county. Free leaf mulch is available for pickup while supplies last. You will need your own tools for loading and transporting the mulch. For information on availability and locations, call the mulch infoline, 703-324-5995.

## MYSTERY SOLVED!

During a recent Forum discussion about the 1951 Life Magazine photographs of three Hollin Hills houses, the houses were identified as being on Drury Lane, but Drury Lane residents Rebecca and Blair Bostick knew that wasn't right. They did some hunting and solved the mystery: the houses are the third, fourth, and fifth ones on Stafford, on the left, as you head up the hill from Paul Spring Road. The before and after photos below make one thing very clear: the original landscape looks downright open when compared with the current wooded lots.

Life Magazine photo



Blair Bostick



## LET'S ELIMINATE AIRCRAFT NOISE POLLUTION OVER HOLLIN HILLS

In 2015, the FAA implemented NextGen, their new flight tracking system that replaces radar navigation with far more precise GPS. As a consequence, the flight paths of southern takeoffs from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) that were previously dispersed over the entire Mt. Vernon district have now been concentrated in a very narrow, invariant band that passes directly over Hollin Hills and the other northern Mt. Vernon communities, including Villamay and Mason Hill. This new “sky freeway” has noticeably increased noise levels from the nearly 400 flights per day that depart during South Flow operations. About 80% of these aircraft turn west, at about 4 miles south of the airport after takeoff and at altitudes of 3000 ft, sometimes even lower. As you will see below, we have a unique opportunity to change this deplorable outcome.

On those delightfully quiet days when there is little aircraft noise over Hollin Hills, it is not because air traffic controllers are being considerate of us! It is simply because the prevailing winds are from the north. Be assured that when the winds turn southward, the aircraft will once again fly directly overhead, often at a frequency of every two minutes for extended periods, especially during “rush hour.” The direction of aircraft departure depends almost entirely on the winds. Consequently, there are daily, weekly and seasonal fluctuations in localized noise over Hollin Hills.

Whether flights are arriving at or departing from DCA, the entire Mt Vernon community, from New Alexandria to the Mt Vernon Estates, is subjected to continual aircraft noise and jet fuel exhaust. The physical and psychological health deterioration for communities living under flight paths is well documented and is increasing. It is particularly acute for children attending schools under flight paths.

Lest there be any doubt, the US Congress “owns” DCA and actively promotes its growth for its personal convenience and in support of the airlines and commerce in congressional districts. Despite efforts of Virginia’s senators to enforce perimeter rules and limit slots, flight activity at National Airport continues to increase. The airport renovation more than a decade ago and the refurbishment about to begin attest to this. The number of flights from National now exceeds those from Dulles, a much larger facility that is now being subsidized by the State of Virginia as a result.

Many of you are likely aware of renewed activism in our community to effect a change in the flight paths that were implemented (without community input) with NextGen. The Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority (MWAA) Noise Working Group has been established; their website, [www.flyreagan.com/dca/community-working-group](http://www.flyreagan.com/dca/community-working-group) has much information on the topic. As a result, for the first time ever, the FAA is actually willing to consider implementing new flight paths such that south departing aircraft continue to fly over the Potomac River for at least 8 miles, reaching altitudes above 5000 ft before turning west, also following the river. The proposed altered flight paths would reduce considerably aircraft noise and air pollution over Hollin Hills and our Mt Vernon neighbors, and finally redress the discrimination between southbound and northbound departures, which must fly for at least 10 miles before turning from the river. But there are serious obstacles to overcome, not the least of which is FAA bureaucratic inertia.

The Mt. Vernon community activism now underway was initiated by the Villamay Citizens Association, which launched the Villamay Air Traffic Noise Abatement Campaign [villamay.wordpress.com/vatnac/](http://villamay.wordpress.com/vatnac/) and is supported by key people in other affected communities. Bill Brown [bh\\_airplanenoise@yahoo.com](mailto:bh_airplanenoise@yahoo.com) from Hollin Hills is our point person. These activists have briefed VA Congressional offices, VA State

Delegates, Fairfax County Government and the Mt. Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, which has voted unanimously to support the initiative. They have also informed the FAA of this community-wide consensus in favor of flight paths that follow the Potomac River south for more than 8 miles, instead of less than 4 miles (as they do now). However, this is not enough!

To be successful, large numbers of citizens need to make their voices heard right now. At last, we have a very real chance at seriously diminishing, if not eliminating, aircraft noise and emission pollution over our community. This may be our final opportunity for the foreseeable future since the longer the new NextGen flight paths are allowed to remain, the harder it will be to ever change them. Now, at NextGen’s inception, is the time! Please make your voices heard loud and often in support of their efforts. If aircraft noise does not disturb you personally, please participate anyway to reduce air pollution and support your noise-sensitive neighbors.

### HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

**1. SIGN THE PETITION** online: [www.change.org/p/federal-aviation-administration-reduce-airplane-noise-from-dca-over-southbound-neighborhoods-00e92cbf-9f71-425c-98168dc07798a4cf?tk=BSZo7qLBf5iRen5xdy6xzi1p9FUUXOAJl767yplbdHQ&utm\\_source=supporter\\_signature\\_milestone\\_email](http://www.change.org/p/federal-aviation-administration-reduce-airplane-noise-from-dca-over-southbound-neighborhoods-00e92cbf-9f71-425c-98168dc07798a4cf?tk=BSZo7qLBf5iRen5xdy6xzi1p9FUUXOAJl767yplbdHQ&utm_source=supporter_signature_milestone_email) or on paper (contact us below). This is crucial. After several months, only about 900 have signed. We need far more signatures. It takes less than a minute to sign the petition. Pass it on to neighbors outside of Hollin Hills as well. Many are participating.

**2. COMPLAIN** to our elected representatives:  
 Sen. Mark Warner, [www.warner.senate.gov/public/](http://www.warner.senate.gov/public/)  
 Sen. Tim Kaine, [www.kaine.senate.gov/](http://www.kaine.senate.gov/)  
 Rep. Don Beyer, [beyer.house.gov/](http://beyer.house.gov/)  
 State Sen. Scott Surovell, [www.scottsurovell.org/](http://www.scottsurovell.org/)  
 Delegate Paul Krizek, [www.paulkrizek.com/](http://www.paulkrizek.com/)  
 Supervisor Dan Storck, [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/)

**3. SUBMIT NOISE COMPLAINTS ONLINE** to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, MWAA, [www.flyreagan.com/dca/reagan-national-submit-noise-complaint](http://www.flyreagan.com/dca/reagan-national-submit-noise-complaint) as often as possible (daily, weekly) during South Flow operations. Alternatively, the MWAA Noise Information Office phone is (703-417-1204). MWAA and FAA do keep track of complaints, and numbers count.

**4. UTILIZE WEBTRACK**, [www.flyreagan.com/dca/dca-webtrack-flight-track-noise-public-portal](http://www.flyreagan.com/dca/dca-webtrack-flight-track-noise-public-portal) an online tool that shows flight operations, noise monitors, and more on a map enabling users to lodge complaints on individual aircraft. Its calendar feature goes back minutes, hours, days, or weeks for lodging complaints.

Thank you everyone for helping to eliminate Aircraft Noise Pollution over Hollin Hills!

—Robert Meier ([robert.r.meier@verizon.net](mailto:robert.r.meier@verizon.net))

—Judith Lean ([judith.lean@verizon.net](mailto:judith.lean@verizon.net))

# WHAT IS mid-century modern? PART TWO

## THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR II ON HOUSING IN AMERICA

World War II brought enormous changes to the United States. Before the war America remained mired in the Great Depression, with high unemployment, little private sector construction, and a weak consumer economy. What would happen when the war came to an end? Would a depression return?

Just the opposite occurred. The enormous pent up demand generated economic growth, which provided consumers with jobs and a salary that allowed them to make up for more than a decade of buying very little other than the necessities of life. Technological innovations developed for the War also boosted the economy, with lower cost production, greater standardization in manufacturing, and the invention of new consumer goods all contributing to this process.

### THE G.I. BILL

Passage of the G.I. Bill of Rights further fueled the economy, enabling veterans to finance the purchase of housing. Demand for housing skyrocketed, and the industry had to develop new methods of construction, with new materials developed during the war, to meet that demand.

More widespread ownership of private automobiles, federal financing guidelines that favored new housing over existing stock, federal construction of highways, and the availability of less expensive land resulted in much of the new housing development occurring in suburban locations. These homes could be equipped with more conveniences than before the war, including the all-electric kitchen, televisions, and furniture made with the plywood and plastics developed or improved as a result of the war effort.

But there was no particular consensus regarding the design of this new housing.

### THE GROWTH OF THE SUN BELT

Another impact of the War was the growth and development of the emerging Sun Belt, as the federal government located factories for war production in this part of the country. No place benefited from this trend more than California, and particularly Southern California. It was here that a vigorous campaign was launched to promote new housing designed in the International Style, which by this time had come to dominate the Modern movement in architecture.

### THE CASE STUDY HOUSE PROGRAM

In 1945, John Entenza, the publisher of Arts & Architecture Magazine, commenced the Case Study House program in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. His goal was to develop a series of International Style houses that could serve as prototypes for meeting the burgeoning housing demand following the War. From 1945 to 1966, the magazine published 34 designs for such housing, of which 26 were built.

Entenza invited specific Southern California architects to design affordable, replicable houses. They were to have wood or metal frame construction without load-bearing walls, thereby facilitating open interior spaces and large window walls to emphasize the indoor/outdoor character that showcased the wonderful climatic conditions in Southern California. They were to exhibit a minimum of ornamentation and a streamlined rectilinear geometry. *(Continued on page 6)*



Case Study House #22, Los Angeles, CA (Pierre Koenig, 1960)

**WHAT IS**  
mid-century  
modern? *continued*

Given the emphasis on 'form follows function', modernists felt there was no reason for steep roofs, which enclosed fairly useless space. So, Entenza specified flat or low pitched roofs, thereby encouraging the observer to focus on the main body of the house, where the 'functions' were contained, rather than its roof.

To enhance the affordability of these homes, Entenza encouraged modular construction and the use of readily available standardized fixtures, and he sought major manufacturers of housing components to donate some of their products with the promise that the program would publicize them.

By this time, Los Angeles had emerged as the center for International Style housing design in the entire country, so there was a large pool of talented architects on which to draw. The designs they produced are in many cases spectacular, one of the most famous being House #22 by Pierre Koenig, a home cantilevered out over a hillside, with the L.A. skyline in the distance. Photographer Julius Shulman, who began his career early in the Case Study House program, produced a stunning photo of the home at night, by standing outside looking through the glass wall of windows at the brightly lit interior while downtown L.A. sparkles in the distance (*see photos on preceding page*).

Most of the Case Study homes did not pursue the use of dramatically different construction materials and techniques, although Charles and Ray Eames did so, using industrial building components.



Charles and Ray  
Eames House,  
Pacific Palisades, CA  
(Charles and  
Ray Eames, 1949)

None of the homes was really affordable or replicable; instead, they served as custom designed houses for financially secure clients. Nevertheless, the Case Study House program offered a dramatic, widely publicized promotion for International Style housing.

While a few merchant builders would take the bait dangled by John Entenza, including Joseph Eichler in California who went on to build more than 11,000 homes in both Northern and Southern California, and, on a much smaller scale, Robert Davenport in Fairfax County, Virginia, most merchant builders opted instead for more traditional designs which they produced by the tens of thousands in such cookie-cutter subdivisions as the various Levittowns.

The Case Study House and its progeny eventually came to be known as being part of the Mid-Century Modern style. As will be seen in the work of Charles Goodman, few of these homes reflected the absolute purity of the International Style. Instead, they incorporated a variety of design influences. They also evolved over time into less original examples of Modern architecture, such as the ranch style house.

But one can nevertheless marvel at the dedication, ingenuity, and bold vision of men like John Entenza way back in 1945, as they sought to remake America through the dissemination of a dramatic new approach to residential architecture. They are now, long after most of them have died, finally achieving public acclaim for the movement they spawned—Mid-Century Modern.

—Michael S. McGill

*Next: Prairie Style and International Style: Influences on Hollin Hills*



## HELP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD BEES, AND THEY'LL HELP YOU

Honeybees and other foraging insects are currently experiencing stressful times. You've likely read or heard of their loss of habitat and the controversy over the questionable safety of some pesticides. Bees can be afflicted by various bacterial, fungal and viral diseases. Hive beetles, ants and wax moths can pester a weak hive. But the current number one pest is the *Varroa Destructor* mite. Beekeepers have been combating this little monster since its appearance in the mid-1980s. It feasts on larvae, promoting disease and deforming its hosts. Although all this might sound apocalyptic for bees (and therefore, for some of our favorite fruits and vegetables) there are lots of humans trying to figure out how to improve the situation.

We have at least four beekeeping families in Hollin Hills! We've been learning the art by researching good beekeeping methods via more experienced keepers, the internet, and our own individual trial and error. Bees regularly forage for nectar and pollen up to 3 miles, so you've likely seen our bees in your own garden!

If you would like to aide in our endeavor to save the bees, there are things you can do:

### Choose bee-friendly plants

Plant bee-friendly plants such as cone flowers, salvia, and daffodils. A thoroughly representative list would be too cumbersome for this article, but you can find useful catalogs of these plants online at sites such as [buzzaboutbees.net](http://buzzaboutbees.net) and [honeylove.org](http://honeylove.org).

Here in northern Virginia, we experience a dearth of available food for our bees beginning in mid-July, so late summer- and fall-blooming flowers such as goldenrod, Russian sage and asters help. Also note that our beautiful azaleas and rhododendrons do not attract bees, so they are not useful in promoting our pollinators. When selecting plants, traditional varieties are best, rather than

the highly cultivated types. Also, ask your garden center or store whether any plants you purchase have been cultivated using neonicotinoid pesticides and avoid those.

### Avoid chemical weed and pest controls

Consider other ways to kill pests and weeds in your yard and garden. Many chemicals used to kill unwanted mosquitos, ticks or weeds in your garden also kill bees and other useful insects. Use personal bug repellants for your family and pets instead of spraying harsh chemicals or fogging your entire yard.

Beekeeping is a fascinating and rewarding hobby. It's astounding to look into a hive in mid-summer and see 50 to 60 thousand bees! The bee's ability to produce wax (to create comb for rearing their brood), propolis (a glue-like substance used to seal up cracks in the hive), and royal jelly (to create queens), and the ability to create up to 50 pounds of honey per hive in a year is phenomenal! Your neighborhood beekeepers appreciate any effort to help us maintain strong hives that can overcome threats to the honeybee's survival.

—Rebecca Ryburn



Rebecca Ryburn

Two of Hollin Hills' youngest beekeepers, Sayla and Zoe Runnels, all suited up to help maintain their family's hives.

## GRASSCYCLING GOOD FOR LAWNs, ENVIRONMENT, AND BUSY PEOPLE



I know I promised a column about stream restoration in our parks, but I've asked Elizabeth Lardner to write that column instead. She's the chair of the Hollin Hills Parks Committee, and a former member of the Fairfax County Tree Commission, and a professional landscape architect. She recently walked our parks with a forester from the Virginia Department of Forestry, and she'll soon be walking Goodman and Brickelmaier with Charles Smith, chief of watershed implementation in the county's Stormwater Management Branch. She's better qualified than I am to talk about stream restoration, especially when she has the latest updates from state and county experts. Look for her column in September. In the meantime, I'll write about something I actually know.

### Reduce the need for fertilizers

Grasscycling simply means leaving the grass clippings behind when you mow the lawn, in order to return the nutrients to the soil. This is good for the lawn and good for the environment. Grass clippings are mostly water, over 90 percent by weight. The rest consists of nitrogen (4 percent), potassium (2 percent) and phosphorus (0.5 percent), the same three nutrients that you're paying for with a commercial fertilizer. Leaving the clippings behind can reduce your need for fertilizer by 15 to 25 percent. The clippings also shade the soil and reduce evaporation. In short, grass clipping are too valuable a resource to throw away.

### Speed up your mowing by a third

Grasscycling also saves time. Instead of stopping every few minutes to empty the bagging attachment into the compost pile, or into a big paper bag to haul to the curb, you *(continued on page 8)*



## Grasscycling *from page 7*

can continue mowing without pause. My own experience is that this will cut the time it takes to finish the job by up to one-third. It will also help to induce the trance-like state that can turn mowing the lawn into a spiritual exercise, not unlike a Sufi's dance or a monk's meditative labyrinth. Or maybe that's just heatstroke.

### Better than composting

Grasscycling also works better than putting the clippings in the compost pile. On the lawn the clippings break down aerobically, leaving almost nothing behind. In the compost pile they turn into a damp, smelly mess that can make the whole pile objectionable. The mower does a good job of spreading the clippings evenly over the entire lawn, while topdressing the lawn with finished compost is a difficult and time-consuming job.

### Fancy mowers nice but not needed

Almost any lawn mower, push or electric or gasoline, can be used for grasscycling, so long as you're cutting less than one-third of the length of the grass blades (it also helps to mow when the grass

is dry, and to keep the blade sharp). Smaller is better, of course, and most new mowers have a "three-in-one" design that allows side discharge, bagging or "mulching." They also come with mulching blades, which are designed to lift the clippings and cut them again and again before they drop to the ground. (This feature also makes mulching mowers a useful tool for dealing with fallen leaves, a subject to which I'll return in the autumn.) Older mowers can be retrofitted for mulching, but this would be a good excuse to invest in a new machine.

### It's the right thing to do

Finally, grasscycling is good for the environment because it cuts down our waste stream. Even a modest lawn—call it 5,000 square feet—can produce up to a ton of grass clippings per year. A 1990 EPA study found that "yard trimmings" (grass clippings, leaves, branches, and brush) accounted for 18 percent of total municipal solid waste by weight. In the summer, yard waste represented almost half the volume of waste going into landfills. Jurisdictions like Fairfax County have responded by creating separate waste streams for trash, yard waste and brush, and by encouraging grasscycling, which allows us to turn one form of yard waste into a resource.

—Paul B. Phelps

## MUSIC MAN

*As the summer rolls on, there are still a lot of outdoor concerts. For weather cancellations of remaining outdoor parks concerts, check a few hours before an event at: Fairfax County Summer Entertainment 703-324-7459, Alexandria (John Carlyle Square) 703-746-5542, ad Lubber Run Amphitheater 703- 228-1850. Almost all are free; donations may be requested.*

- Fri. 7/22, 7:30pm, Grist Mill Park: Veronneau (world music/jazz vocal) 6-time WAMMIE Award winner [www.veronneaumusic.com](http://www.veronneaumusic.com)
- Sat. 7/23, 7pm, Workhouse Arts Center at Lorton: National Concert Band of America [www.nationalconcertband.org](http://www.nationalconcertband.org)
- Sun. 7/24, 7:30pm, Mason District Park: U.S. Army Blues (big band jazz) [www.usarmyband.com/blues/the-us-army-blues.html](http://www.usarmyband.com/blues/the-us-army-blues.html)
- Fri. 7/29, 7:30pm, Lake Accotink Park: NOVA Annandale Symphony Orch. [www.facebook.com/NOVAAnnandaleSymphony](http://www.facebook.com/NOVAAnnandaleSymphony)
- Sat. 7/30, 7:30pm, Lyceum: An Evening of Chamber Music (clarinet, cello and piano) music of Poulenc, Beethoven, Kovass, Dupon and Rota
- Sun. 7/31, 3pm, Lyceum: Rogelio Garza (clarinet, cello and piano) music of Lauridsen, Genzmer, and Campolietta [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org)
- Thu. 8/4, 7:30pm, Nottaway Park Vienna: Robin and Linda Williams singer/songwriter, folk music [www.robinandlinda.com](http://www.robinandlinda.com)
- Sun. 8/7, 3pm, Lyceum: Illya Bunyakyn (classical piano) music of Schubert, Chopin, Medner, and Rachmaninoff [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org)
- 5pm, New Deal Cafe Greenbelt MD: Big Band Tradition (big band jazz {my group}) [www.bigbandtradition.com](http://www.bigbandtradition.com)
- 6pm, Lubber Run Amphitheater: Margot MacDonald (singer/songwriter) 3-time WAMMIE Award winner [www.margotmacdonald.com](http://www.margotmacdonald.com)



- Tue. 8/9, 7pm, John Carlyle Square Park: Mike Flaherty's Dixieland Direct Jazz Band [www.dixielanddirect.com](http://www.dixielanddirect.com)
- Fri. 8/12, 7:30pm, Mason District Park: Tom Paxton (singer/songwriter, folk music) [www.tompaxton.com](http://www.tompaxton.com)
- Sun. 8/14, 3pm, Lyceum: Arnold Irchai (classical bassoon and piano) father & son [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org)
- Thu. 8/18, 5:30pm, Fairfax County Gov. Center: U.S.Navy Commodores (big band jazz) [www.navyband.navy.mil/commodores.html](http://www.navyband.navy.mil/commodores.html)
- Fri. 8/19, 7:30pm, Lake Accotink Park: U.S. Army Blues (big band jazz) [www.usarmyband.com/the-us-army-blues.html](http://www.usarmyband.com/the-us-army-blues.html)
- Rutherford Park (Braddock Nights): Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer (folk music) [www.cathymarcy.com](http://www.cathymarcy.com)
- Sun. 8/21, 3pm, Lyceum: Tim Kidder (classical violin, cello, and piano) music of Schnittke and Arensky [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org)
- Wed. 8/24, 7:30pm Lee District Park: Swing Shift (big band jazz) [www.swingshiftdc.com](http://www.swingshiftdc.com)
- Thu. 8/25, 7pm, Carter Barron Amphitheater: Joint Service Jazz Concert, Army Blues, Navy Commodores, Airmen of Note
- Sat. 8/27, 11am, Lubber Run Amphitheater: The Great Zucchini (preschool & kindergarten entertainment) [www.thegreatzucchini.com](http://www.thegreatzucchini.com)
- Sun. 8/28, 3pm, Lyceum: West Shore Trio (classical) music of Foote, Smetana and Whitney [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org)
- Wed. 8/31, 7:30pm, Lee District Park: The Nighthawks (blues) [www.wmpamusic.com](http://www.wmpamusic.com)

—Tony Jordan



## BOOK CLUB

At the June meeting, the Book Club discussed *Barren Ground*, a 1925 novel by a Virginian, Ellen Glasgow. Its main character is a young woman named Dorinda, who starts out docile and hard-working, but becomes more of an independent thinker. The story is set first in a rather unprosperous part of central Virginia. Even as a teenager, Dorinda is aware that the local farmers are not making the most of their land, farming as their ancestors did, never rotating crops or turning under other crops that could enrich the soil, but she has other things on her mind. She falls in love with a shallow but handsome young doctor, who manages to get two young women into trouble at the same time. Dorinda visits a local herbalist and folk medicine practitioner and takes a train to New York. After she falls in the street in front of a vehicle that hits her, two doctors take an interest in her. She goes to work for one, while the other informally contributes to her education. She goes to concerts, reads voraciously, and becomes far more urban, but after two years, she learns she is needed at home and returns to Virginia.

Back on the farm, Dorinda becomes still more independent and stubborn as her parents become older and frailer. Nathan, a friend

from earlier in the book and now a widower with several children, talks to her about farming, and the two marry, merging their farms and practicing what was then the latest in agronomy. They become prosperous workaholics, and while Dorinda admires Nathan in many ways, she is not very generous to him. Club members found this part of the book overly drawn out, though we were not very sorry to see the neighboring doctor become a drunk, lose his looks, and end up in the poorhouse.

The next meeting is scheduled for 2pm, Wednesday, September 14. For location and a possible date change, please check the Forum or contact Louise Wiener, 703-768-9522 or [louwie@cox.net](mailto:louwie@cox.net). We will discuss *Our Souls at Night* by the late Kent Haruf. This is a charming book—sometimes slightly funny, sometimes slightly sad—about two independent and free-thinking seventyish Coloradans, Addie and Louis, who come to an arrangement to alleviate loneliness and cold winter nights.

—Louise Wiener



## DESIGN REVIEW

The DRC met on Wednesday, June 8, at Sherwood Library. Members present included Frank Collins (chair), John Burns, John Nolan, Ginny Wallace, and Ken Wilson (via FaceTime).

### The following projects were reviewed and approved by the DRC at the meeting:

- **2102 Martha's Road, Stine Svenningsen & Zachary Mower:** Yardline “Ashton” shed to be placed in the homeowner’s backyard. The committee gave approval provided the homeowners comply with Fairfax County setback and location requirements.
- **7419 Rebecca Drive, Sharon & Thomas Kuester:** Closet/bathroom bump out on the south side of the home. The committee requested the homeowners complete neighbor notification of all contiguous property owners, regardless of sightlines to the addition. The DRC also suggested the homeowners have the property surveyed to ensure the addition remains within the property line and appropriate Fairfax County setback requirements.
- **7104 Rebecca Drive, Maggie Couto & John Davis:** Replacement of an existing backyard shed with a new shed per the design presented via drawings, using exterior plywood and paint color to match the house.

### The DRC provided guidance on these projects at the meeting:

- **7702 Elba Road, Mohra Gavankar:** Placement and design of a backyard shed (homeowner presented Yardline “Ashton” shed as a possibility), and design and placement of a horizontal refuse can storage shed near existing driveway. The committee suggested homeowner consider a refuse storage solution that can accommodate three large County refuse bins and asked homeowner to provide specific documentation of final designs, along with location of the sheds on the house plat prior to approval. The committee reminded homeowner that placement of both must comply with County setback and location requirements.

### Other DRC activity:

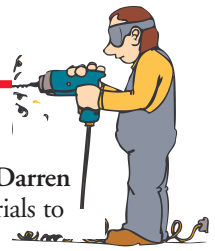
- **2105 Martha's Road, Jan Derevjanik and Darren Pogoda:** After receiving confirmation of materials to be used, the committee approved a privacy screen that had received conceptual approval in September 2015.
- **1933 Martha's Road, Kerry Himes & Patricia Komara:** The committee voted to postpone discussion/approval of projects previously discussed during a site visit with the homeowners until it received more specific information. Specifically, the DRC will ask the homeowners to provide more complete design drawings or additional Photoshop images with design detail notations.
- **1927 Martha's Road, Robert Jordan:** The committee reported that the homeowner had removed a fence panel at request of next-door neighbor, Anne Park, 1929 Martha's Road, to resolve a dispute.
- Chair Collins shared the DRC info sheet currently in use in Hollin Hills greeters' packets and asked the committee for thoughts about updating/improving the communications tool.

### Check with the DRC before you start your renovation project

The Civic Association of Hollin Hills DRC meets monthly to offer homeowners guidance about potential exterior property renovations and whether those desired renovations are in harmony and conformity with the association’s Design Review Guidelines. All DRC-approved projects are subject to and must comply with Fairfax County building regulations, policies and codes. Homeowners should complete appropriate County permit processes prior to the start of any renovations. Please contact DRC members (listed on page 2) for more information.

A report on the July meeting will be in next month’s issue. Next meeting: Wed., August 10, 7pm, at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Ln, Alexandria, Conference Room #3.

—Chris McNamara, CAHH/DRC Liaison



## PLANNING & ZONING

### More apartments at Huntington Metro

At its June meeting, of the Planning & Zoning Committee (P&Z) of the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations (MVCCA) heard an information update on a proposed six-story apartment building near the Metro station on Huntington Avenue. There are no office buildings on the agenda, because there is so much office space available.

### Senior housing at Bock Farm site

The committee resumed its discussion of Bock Farm on Hinson Farm Road near Inova Mt. Vernon Hospital. The plan is to build 125 units for sale to people over 55. The units would be in four buildings, each five stories high, with underground parking to accommodate 160 vehicles. A fifth building was shown on the plan, but not described. The committee voted 13-0 not to oppose the project providing that, as requested by a representative from the New Gum Springs Association, the developer will meet with that group before a scheduled Planning Commission hearing.

### Airplane noise

Another presentation focused on noise levels associated with airplanes flying over Hollin Hills and nearby communities. This topic is covered more fully on page 4.

### Long range planning for Route 1

Mount Vernon Planning Commissioner Earl Flanagan gave an extensive report of EMBARK, the long-term plan to improve transportation of Richmond Highway. The plan would first dedicate a central portion of the highway to bus lanes that would later be used for the extension of Metro to Beacon Mall and Hybla Valley. A 2003 Route 1 Location Study showed many

potential losses of lots, buildings, and frontage from Montebello to Hybla Valley. The east side of the highway would be impacted less than the west side, but almost every building along Richmond Highway would be affected. The plan may have merit, but will confront many delays and high costs.

—Burt Kronstedt



**RIDING  
IN STYLE  
ON THE  
4TH  
OF JULY**



JG Harrington