



BIRCHWOOD-CLEARVIEW

NEWSLETTER

“A Community That Cares” FEBRUARY 2024 EDITION

Published by Birchwood City-Clearview Community Association, Inc., (BCCA)
P.O. Box 7, Oxon Hill, MD 20745

Website: www.welcometobcca.org Email: birchwood.clearview@gmail.com



Support Your Community – BCCA Membership - \$25 per household

COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Prince George’s County Police: For Emergency dial 911, non-emergency, dial 301-352-1200.**
- **Request services from Prince George’s County: dial 311 or download the mobile Apps PGC311 at https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.connectedbits.connectedcounty311&hl=en_US&gl=US**
- **Use of Birchwood Park Building – Dial 301-699-2255**



UPCOMINGEVENTS

Community-Wide Meeting – **Please join us Thursday, February 15 2023, 7:00 PM, via ZOOM**, for all who live in the Birchwood City-Clearview Manor Community. **Remember, you don’t have to wait until the monthly meeting to get your questions/concerns addressed, you may send your questions via email to bccaconcerns@gmail.com.**

Saturdays @ 9am - Fitness in Birchwood Park with Planet Fitness Coach, Will Chambers, is now via Zoom for the winter months. See you on Zoom!

Friday, March 15, 2024, **"Grown Folks Night Out,"** Birchwood Recreation Center, 6:30pm – 9:30pm – BCCA Presents Enjoy yourself without the kids 😊; for a night of fun! See Flyer on last page or on our website: www.welcometobcca.org.

Coming soon to Birchwood/Clearview - Diversity Awareness! Diversity is important because it helps communities to learn from others and understand that everyone is unique and special in their own way! The focus will be to encourage learning and personal growth by interacting with different cultures from diverse backgrounds to expand knowledge and understanding of different cultures, values, and experiences.

From the Desk of BCCA President, Sylvia Griffin



There has been many challenges and progress made in the fight for equality, **Black History** serves as just a reminder of where we come from and the enduring challenges that persist. Such as, systemic racism and economic inequality to disparities in healthcare and education and much more. However, oppression continues to cast a long shadow, I feel, over our Black communities. Even though we are celebrating Black History Month, let us all honor the past by embracing the present and shaping the future for all.

I encourage all of us to not only uplift all our leaders but one another at this crucial time to help fight the many injustices and inequality that we are face with. One way we can do this is recognizing the importance of not only for Black History but all cultures especially as we live amongst each other in our communities. We can affirm our commitment to creating a world where every individual is valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential and we can do our small part right here in our Birchwood/Clearview community. *I read the words of Maya Angelou, that I thought was profound; she said, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again."* That quote was profound to me. I encourage every resident in Birchwood/Clearview for us to face the challenges of today with courage and conviction, in drawing strength from our history as we strive to build a brighter tomorrow and stronger community for generation to come.

From BCCA Community Service Committee Chair, Lucy Hall

SENIOR CALL CHECK PROGRAM

Maryland is starting a free, automated telephone service to check in on Maryland's older residents, all across the state.



A **free** daily call to check on Maryland residents 65 and older!

• Landline • Cell Phone • 



How Does It Work?

Every day a telephone call will be placed to a participant (65 or older) at a regularly scheduled time, between 8 AM and 4 PM. If the participant does not answer the first call, two more automated calls will be made. If those calls go unanswered, a call will be made to another person, who has been selected by the participant. It could be a family member, a loved one or a neighbor.

**For more detailed information, including how to apply,
please call 1 (866) 502-0560.
Please share this information with your neighbors.**

NOTE: After stepping down from BCCA Publicity Committee and turning it over to the very capable hands of Veda Dixon, I accepted the appointment to this committee, which I assumed is a little less work. The primary purpose of **BCCA Community Service Committee** is to provide information on services available to community residents. **The services include health care and safety, public transportation, veterans, senior citizens, the handicapped, day care centers, consumer affairs and other services benefitting the welfare of community residents.**

If you would like to join me in monitoring information to keep abreast of such services and perform other committee activities, please email lucyhall782@gmail.com.

From the BCCA Ways and Means Committee Chair, Sharon Sims-Colbert



Community Members, Sending Valentines Greetings to You & Yours and hope you will join us in March for our annual "**Grown Folks Night Out**" event.

Playground Update: Awaiting update on the special provision approval on the installation of the playground related to the recently changed entrance way requirements for MNCPPC Parks.

General Maintenance Report for the Birchwood City Recreation Center. I met several weeks ago with MNCPPC personnel. The following outlines Maintenance Action Items:

- **Arbor Day Tree:** The original tree will be transplanted. Hopefully it will thrive. Trees that sustained damage will be replaced and move to the East side of the Pavilion.
- **Crisfield Trees:** Some of trees have been damaged and will be removed. All thriving trees will be transferred to other areas throughout the Park. (If this string of trees were replaced, we would run into this problem again as it is directly related to grass cutting and constant tree trimming required around the power lines).
- **Limited use of Tennis Court:** This area will be upgraded to accommodate Tennis & Pickle Ball on the same concrete area.
- **Refresh:** While the outside walls of the building were painted a while ago, the doors and other areas will receive a facelift to enhance the entire building.

Looking forward to see many of you for the "**Growing Green with Pride**" event in April. Addition information forthcoming. Mark your calendars for the **3rd Saturday in April from 8:30am to 12:30pm**.

Your Ways and Means Committee
Sharon R. Sims-Colbert, Chair

From BCCA Publicity Committee Chair, *Veda Dixon*

Hi Neighbors! Happy Valentine's Day, Black History, and Healthy Heart month! Thank you to the volunteers and those who assist the Publicity Committee to get information out to our neighbors, whether you are a courier, printed copies or shared information. Your assistance is appreciated! 😊

In the spirit of **Black History Month**, BCCA is honoring one of its own former BCCA President in the Good News segment.



The "Good News" Segment! This is where we share and feature your "Good News"! We hope the "Good News" will inspire, encourage, and give our readers "food for thought." With that said, **please send me any "Good News" you would like to share, the first Monday of each month via email H15642vad@hotmail.com.**

Spotlighting – Mr. Richard Henry, Former BCCA President

Richard Henry became BCCA's President in September 1982 and served until September 2000. As the President, he significantly improved the services to the community residents living in Birchwood City and the surrounding area. Mr. Henry was able to convince the Planning Commission to expand Birchwood City Recreation Center; now, over double its size. The Birchwood City Recreation Center has become one of the most profitable Center in Prince Georges County and paid for the expansion many times over. Not only that, Mr. Henry was able to get the County Council to purchase the 139 acres adjacent to the recreation center so that we could develop a park.

The association, in conjunction with the Park Commission, developed a Master Development Plan to develop the park over the years as funding became available. Our thanks to the late Councilwomen Sue Mill whose help was significant in this effort.

Mr. Henry was successful in gaining approval from then, Governor Shaffer, for the building of safety barriers along the 495-highway passing through Birchwood City. Thanks to the then, State Senator Gloria Lawlah, whose help was significant in this effort. The meeting between Mr. Henry and Gov. Shaffer was featured on the Night Line News Show in addition to the local news stations.

Mr. Henry was successful in precluding Valley View Elementary School in our community from being closed by the County School Board to make it a Magnum School only for talented and Gifted children and thereby keep it so our neighborhood children could continue to walk to school in the neighborhood. This effort was highlighted in an article in the Washington Post.

After unsuccessful years of trying to get the County Council to pave our neighborhood streets, Mr. Henry fought for and won a campaign with the Washington Gas utility when it made repairs to gas lines in the neighborhood. In doing so, he was able to get Washington Gas to pave all of Birchwood City roads for the first time in 33 years. He was also successful in getting the County to repair the curbs and sidewalks because they had become so deteriorated that in some places they had eroded away. Afterwards the County instituted a regular program of repair.

Mr. Henry was successful in the effort to get the Superintendent of School to reopen the easement for access to the Valley View Elementary School at Jarvis Ave and Bari Dr. when it had been closed to our children disallowing the safe and quick school access for them to attend the school; and the neighborhood residents access during elections. The Superintendent of Schools refused to reopen the easement so he went to the County School Board and won their approval resulting in the easement being reopened the next day.

Mr. Henry wrote the community newspaper, made the copies on a mimeograph machine, (this was pre-computers), assembled the paper and delivered a significant number throughout the neighborhood. The remaining papers were delivered by the neighborhood teens.

Mr. Henry also started many activities such as the Teen Dance, Community Fun Day, Youth Birchwood City Association for the development of our young people into community leader and attended the county budget hearing to introduce budget proposals for the improvement of the Birchwood City neighborhood.

Mr. Henry was successful in preventing the opening of Birchwood City Streets for vehicular traffic from Glassmanner and Oxon Hill Village communities that would have allowed cars to drive from those communities through our neighborhood. This would have created a significant safety and security problem for the Birchwood City neighborhood.

At one point in his tenure Forest Height Government tried to annex Birchwood City to be a part of that government and I was successful in preventing Forest Height from taking control of Birchwood City.

Mr. Henry successfully operated the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program and many other programs with the county executive's office and county counsel that created several long turn benefits to the neighborhood.

Thank you again, Richard Henry, for your 18 years as President and the significant contributions you made to your neighbors and this wonderful neighborhood; which we are still enjoying the benefits of your labor of love.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

***“HAPPY BIRTHDAY” TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE CELEBRATING
A BIRTHDAY THIS MONTH!***

May your day be blessed and filled with joy!

Zodiacs – Aquarius (February 1st – 18th) and Pisces (February 19th – 29th)

Flowers – Aquarius (Orchid) and Pisces (Water Lily)

Birthstones – Aquarius (Garnet/Amethyst) and Pisces (Amethyst/Aquamarine)



Parks & Recreation: Looking for something to do? Activities, golfing, pools, boating, Museums & Art Galleries, and much more, check out **Parks Direct Memberships & Passes - Park and Recreation - Prince Georges County MD** (pgparks.com)

Unlicensed Rental Homes - A rental license must be obtained to rent a single or multi-family dwelling. Please go online at <http://dpie.mypgc.us> under Forms and Checklist or call 301-883-6168 for more information.

Dogs Should Be On Leash - Per Prince George's County Regulations, it is against the law for the owner or custodian of any animal to allow the animal to run at-large. Violators are subject to pet impoundment and fines. Call 311 with concerns.

No Smoking in Parks - The Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, part of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, sends a reminder to the community **that its parks have been and will continue to be smoke free. This includes all forms of tobacco, e-cigarettes, vapes and marijuana.**

From BCCA Membership Committee Chair, *Gloria Hernandez Saunders*



Support Your Community by renewing your membership or becoming a new member for 2024.

If you already paid your membership dues for this calendar year 2024 (January – December), thank you for your support and membership with the Birchwood City-Clearview Community Association (BCCA).

This year, BCCA Membership Committee will launch a Community-Wide Membership Drive going from door-to-door. We want to welcome our new neighbors as well as our long-standing neighbors to become a part of BCCA.

If you would like to join the Membership Committee to help me with the door-to-door Community Wide Membership Drive, or become a member (\$25 membership per household yearly) please complete the Membership Form on the next page or email me at army320@verizon.net.

Your Membership Dues Have Contributed to the Following Community Benefits--And Much, Much More:

- Thousands of dollars in scholarships provided to our youth to further their education;
- Newsletter-Printing & Distribution - keeping you abreast and up to date on what's going on in the neighborhood, including state and county impact;
- Maryland officials' spending over \$3 million to build sound/safety barriers along the Capital Beltway near the Birchwood-Clearview Community;
- Street Cleaning supplies - the people you see walking with trash bags and picker uppers and mowing the entrance are keeping our community clean; County-Wide Growing Green with Pride Clean-Up Projects;
- Walking Trail, tennis and basketball courts, the pavilion, and the planned playground at Birchwood Park;
- Tree planting throughout the community under Prince George's County "Right Place/Right Tree Program;"
- Community Center activities & senior activities: teen and adult Valentine dances, Halloween parties, exercise classes and chronic disease management and healthy eating classes;
- Community Days, annual holiday events including Family Breakfast/Dinner with Santa;
- Food/Coat Drives (in support of local Food Banks/Shelters); Holiday Basket Distributions and much, much more.

**BIRCHWOOD CITY-CLEARVIEW MANOR
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC. (BCCA)
MEMBERSHIP FORM**

BCCA's mission is to enhance the quality of life for residents of the Birchwood City-Clearview Manor Community. This is accomplished through community volunteers and membership dues from residents.

Become a member of BCCA for the calendar year 2024 by completing this form and enclosing your **annual membership fee of \$25.00 per household. Please make your check/money order payable to BCCA. You may complete the form and pay at our monthly meeting held every third Thursday or mail to: BCCA, P.O. Box 7, Oxon Hill, MD. 20745-0007, ATTN: Mrs. Hernandez Saunders, BCCA Membership.**

DATE _____

NAME of RESIDENT(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE
NUMBER _____

EMAIL _____

- Membership Dues \$ _____
- Donation for Scholarship \$ _____
- General Donation \$ _____

- Total amount enclosed \$ _____

You may now pay using Zelle. Login on your bank app, send money using Zelle. You may have the option of scanning the QR code or search for BIRCHWOOD CITY COMMUNITY ASSOC using the email Percellwalker@verizon.net



To see some of BCCA's accomplishments over the years, please read the articles under the Membership Committee in this newsletter and also click on www.welcometobcca.org

THANK YOU FOR JOINING AND SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

BCCA Presents Grown Folks Night Out

Enjoy a Night Out with Light
Refreshments, Entertainment,
Dancing and Fun!

When: Friday, March 15, 2024

Time: 6:30pm to 9:30pm

Suggested Donation: \$20

Where: Birchwood Recreation Center

1331 Fenwood Avenue, Oxon Hill, MD 20745

You must be 25 + of Age and Casually Dress

No Smoking, Alcohol, or Drugs Allowed

Please RSVP and make your Donation via Zelle by March 1st



Login on your bank app, send money using Zelle. You can either scan the QR code above or search for BIRCHWOOD CITY COMMUNITY ASSOC using the email Percellwalker@verizon.net.

For further information, contact: Sylvia Griffin, 240-460-8743, sygiffin@gmail.com or Sharon Sims-Colbert, 301-455-4355, Sharon.sims2@verizon.net