

# WEST END NEWS

Email: [weca@cambridgemd.org](mailto:weca@cambridgemd.org)

Web Sites: [www.cambridgemd.org](http://www.cambridgemd.org) [www.dorchesterlibrary.org/wecanews](http://www.dorchesterlibrary.org/wecanews)



Fall 2001

## President's Message

by Brenda Hayward

After much discussion and deliberation, your Board of Directors approved WECA's Goals and Objectives for 2001-2002, at the July 17, 2001 Board meeting. These goals will guide WECA's course for the coming year. As always, our overriding objective is the betterment of the West End, and our broader community in general. To this end, WECA is committed to:

### ◆ Promote the benefits of Cambridge historic preservation.

We are continuing publicity in the *West End News* as well as local media, hosting community-wide meetings with speakers on various topics relating to historic preservation, and developing an informative brochure which will be made available to residents, realtors, contractors, and the city's housing department.

### ◆ Protect, preserve and improve West End neighborhoods and property values.

In order to preserve the neighborhood character of the West End, WECA continues to encourage single-family housing, and the reduction of rental housing owned by absentee landlords. This is in line with the Cambridge Comprehensive Plan which identifies an overabundance of rental housing in the city. We advocate impact studies of proposed development in the West End and will continue participating in public hearings regarding the West End portion of the proposed new zoning map, as well as hosting informational meetings on this subject.

WECA also encourages all homeowners to maintain their properties and work together to improve the appearance of our neighborhood. Blight remediation is a major concern and WECA is investigating methods of helping to accomplish this objective.

### ◆ Continue information exchange with city and county governments.

Our city and county officials are kept informed of WECA's activities through direct communications and the *West End News*. We are working closely with the appropriate city officials in monitoring enforcement of current codes and rules to ensure timely action.

### ◆ Promote home ownership in the West End.

WECA includes information about available loan and tax reduction programs on our web site and in our newsletter. We also frequently have speakers on topics such as loan availability, refinancing, historic tax preservation credits and other topics of interest at our quarterly membership meetings. WECA is particularly interested in working with local realtors and realtor associations to encourage opportunities for first-time home buyers to locate in the West End.

### ◆ Encourage creation of neighborhood associations in other Cambridge neighborhoods.

WECA is committed to working with other Cambridge groups and associations toward common goals to benefit our city. We encourage attendance at WECA meetings by anyone interested in developing their own neighborhood group and will be glad to provide any advice and assistance in the formation of new neighborhood associations.

### ◆ Support civic initiatives that the Board believes will advance WECA goals and/or generally benefit the City of Cambridge.

These include sponsoring, supporting and/or implementing projects such as the Cambridge Historic Tours, the Historic District Walking Tour brochure, Family and Youth events, community-wide celebrations and festivals, and the revitalization of our downtown. As a part of this, WECA intends to sponsor at least one special community-wide event during the coming year.

### ◆ Sponsor at least one event as a fund-raising activity and to solicit new members.

This will strengthen WECA as an organization and provide the financial means for accomplishing specific projects to benefit our neighborhood and community. Several exciting things are being considered. Look for more information as our plans develop. We encourage you to become involved with *your* neighborhood organization: attend our meetings, contribute your ideas, participate in and support our projects, and have a great time helping improve our community and making new friends. If you are interested in working on any particular objective listed above, please volunteer. Contact any WECA board member and offer your help.

## Property Transfers

by Carroll Dail

**June 14, 2001 through September 11, 2001**

ELMES, John T. & Marylane F. 116 Glenburn Avenue .....	\$75,000
PHIPPIN, Dorothy 1201 Glasgow Street .....	\$89,000
BENNETT, Douglas D. & G. Corinne 210 Market Square .....	\$155,000
BEATH, Ernest B., Jr. 302 Somerset Avenue .....	\$86,500
NORENE, Wendy Ann 1001 Locust Street .....	\$60,000
DOWNING, David J. & REAGAN, Chad H. 315 Belvedere Avenue .....	\$108,000
DICUS, Robert Wayne & Patricia L. 108 Vue de l'Eau Street .....	\$43,000
DICKERSON, David 114 Vue de l'Eau Street .....	\$93,500
CANTVILLE, John R., III & NIBLETT, Shelly L. 315 Willis Street .....	\$62,000
GAMBRILL, Alexis E. & MATTHEWS, Alois C. 404 Glenburn Avenue .....	\$103,000
McNAMARA, Mary Ann & KLINE, Elizabeth D. 11 Somerset Avenue .....	\$285,000
JOHNS, Delma D. & HAAS, Karen Louise & Charles H. 412 Oakley Street .....	\$35,000
ROSENTHAL, Gary M. & June F. 610 Church Street .....	\$172,000

ANDERSON, Helen E. 306 Glenburn Avenue .....	\$120,000
Redeemer Presbyterian Church 300/302 Mill Street .....	\$30,000
LARMORE, William A., III 202 Market Square .....	\$162,500
SLACUM, Shannon M. 416 Glenburn Avenue .....	\$76,992
COX, Wayne R. & Diane J. 123 West End Avenue .....	\$75,000
The W Group, LLC 113 Somerset Avenue .....	\$410,000
COX, Wayne R. & Diane J. 125 West End Avenue .....	\$55,000
PINAULT, Jeanne M. 10 Willis Street .....	\$73,000
RADA, William A., Jr. & BROPHY-RADA, Eugenie A. 305 Glenburn Avenue .....	\$139,000

## Welcomers of West End Start Second Year

by Jane Devlin

Our welcoming committee (WOWE) is excited to begin another year. The past 12 months have seen much activity in the real estate market of the West End. The basket deliveries, which started with property transfers of September 19, 2000, have exceeded expectations. To date, 34 baskets have been delivered with 12 more to be delivered in upcoming weeks.

As we begin our second year, I would like to acknowledge all who have supported our goal of welcoming new homeowners to Cambridge and the West End.

Our donors have supplied over 60 items, including but not limited to, gifts, calendars, discount certificates, business information, civic and social information, which are included in the Welcome Baskets.

The committee, which procures items, assembles baskets, bakes cookies and delivers the finished baskets, consists of Marge Hull, Barbara Williams, Marti Weiler, Donna Harms, Jean Wright and Carole Kramer.

Joan Travers of Simmons Center Market decorates and shrink wraps the baskets. Carroll Dail, WECA's Neighborhood Data & Oversight Chairman, has supplied the storage and work space, and a continuous list of new property owners.

Much support has been given. Much work has been accomplished. Thank you one and all! This program, which is so meaningful and helpful to newcomers to our neighborhood, would not be a success without your generosity.

### Help Needed – Job Openings

*Your* WECA needs *your* help! There are several committee openings which need staffing. Membership, Community Pride, Publicity and Special Projects all need more willing hands. These are not time-demanding jobs! At the most, one or two meetings a month and maybe some e-mail or phone time. Extra hands make lighter work for all, and you will enjoy the camaraderie. *Your* knowledge, *your* opinions, and *your* support are important for the betterment of our neighborhood.

WECA is *your* neighborhood organization, and along with our Council members, is *your direct voice* in the happenings in the West End of Cambridge. Please consider giving a few hours each month. Call Herm Kramer at 410-221-6294 or Brenda Hayward at 410-228-6523.

## Historic House Markers

by Donna Casarotti

The West End Citizens Association has an exciting new project underway! We are investigating the possibility of developing a standard style of historic plaque which would be offered for sale to identify historic homes in the West End. The markers would designate the actual or approximate year of construction and if desired, the original owner's name. We are looking at a marker which would be sturdy, weather-resistant, of quality construction and with an attractive and elegant design that would be compatible with an older, historic style of architecture.

While the markers would be customized for each house, the basic size, style and lettering would be uniform, which would create a very nice appearance when seen throughout the District. If you have seen such markers in other historic districts, such as Annapolis, Chestertown, Easton, St. Michaels and elsewhere, you know that they make a very attractive presentation. There are many different styles and materials which can be used, but the most common are metal (brass or bronze) and wood (painted and/or laquered, with routed or painted lettering).

The production cost of such plaques would be reduced if we can order them in quantity. Therefore, we would like to get an idea as to how many homeowners in the Historic District would be interested in purchasing such a marker. This is not a commitment to order at this time, just an expression of your interest.

We are looking at different materials and price ranges and are hoping to be able to offer markers with the same basic style and appearance at more than one price level. We are planning to present samples and cost information at our January 2002 membership meeting, or sooner if possible.

Before we proceed further with this, we need your input. Please let us know whether you would be interested in purchasing such a plaque, providing we can offer you a good price and an attractive, elegant design.

What would you be willing to invest in such a plaque:

- under \$100       up to \$200       up to \$250

What type of material would you consider:

- metal       wood       no preference

Suggestions or concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please drop this in the mail to WECA, P. O. Box 13, Cambridge, MD 21613, or call Jane Devlin at 410-221-6082 or Donna Casarotti at 410-901-9390 and share your thoughts on this exciting project.

## Commissioners' Corner

3rd Ward Report by Lee Weldon

After many months of disruptions, dust and detours, the first phase of the Combined Sewer Separation is nearly complete. Newly constructed sewer lines now serve Water, Mill, William, and Vue de l'Eau streets, and new gas and water lines, and underground utilities have been installed along Water Street.

Contractor Bryan and Sons has until November to complete the contract, and they say they anticipate finishing early. They are to be congratulated for the excellent work they have done, and the good relations they maintained with the neighbors throughout the process. Phase 2 will be starting in November or December, and will work in two areas: Glenburn Ave. and over on Maryland Ave.

One lesson that was learned during Phase 1 was the problems with dust, since the roads were left open with gravel in the work areas. (By the way, does anyone have a power washer I can borrow?) As a result of this learning experience, Phase 2 will be done in segments, with new lines installed, and the street patched with asphalt as soon as possible. That's good news for the residents of the Phase 2 locations.

You may have also noticed that repairs to the bulk-heading are beginning around the municipal yacht basin. This is part of the major overhaul that will be done at the marina starting this fall, which will include improved water and electrical services, repairs to the slips, piers and bulkheads, and other enhancements.

The City of Cambridge has submitted a request for a Community Legacy Grant in excess of \$400,000 to improve High Street from Church to Poplar streets. Replacement of 100 year old utilities and overhead power lines, and the full restoration of the brick street are planned. Combined with efforts to improve the streetscape with period lighting, benches and other amenities, this will serve to make downtown a more welcoming place to visitors and residents alike.

Commissioner Atkinson's drive to improve the condition of sidewalks in our city has been very successful, and I have seen many in the West End being repaired or replaced. Keep up the good work. We are also stepping up inspections of problem properties to encourage repairs and rehabilitation of our housing. The condition of our buildings is a reflection on the quality of life in our community.

If you have a question about a property, call our inspectors at the Planning and Zoning department at 410-228-6466.

Thanks again for your input, and your support.

*WECA Board meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Dorchester Public Library's downstairs meeting room. All board meetings are open to WECA members and the general public.*

## Heritage Preservation Tax Credits Benefit Historic Homeowners

by Armond Hayward, II

There is a tangible financial benefit to living in an Historic District, according to Ray Goodrow, administrator of the Heritage Preservation Tax Certification Program for the State of Maryland. This program is one of several programs designed to encourage rehabilitation of historic properties, and is administered by the Maryland Historic Trust, out of the State Historic Preservation Office. On September 18, 2001, the West End Citizens Association was pleased to host a public meeting with Mr. Goodrow as guest speaker.

Mr. Goodrow explained the Heritage Preservation Tax Credit program and the new laws that make it even easier for property owners to apply for and receive up to 25% of the cost of repairs and restoration as a tax credit (or a rebate if your credit exceeds your tax liability). With the recent changes, Mr. Goodrow said Maryland has the best tax credit program in the country. "There is no reason for anyone living in an Historic District not to apply", he said, if theirs is a "contributing" building, usually defined as one built prior to WWII and has not been too altered. To qualify, the homeowner must spend at least \$5,001 over a two-year period.

All work must be certified by the Maryland Historical Trust before work begins. Mr. Goodrow said that if you contact his office in the planning stages you can get answers to any questions you may have. All work must be documented with before and after photos (digital photos are not accepted), and the Heritage Preservation Certification Application, which has three parts, must be completed. Parts I and II are the justification and description of the project. Part III certifies that the work is completed.

Mr. Goodrow stressed the importance of following through with Part III, which must be filed in order to receive the tax credits. He said people sometimes forget to do this part and then wonder why they did not receive their tax credits.

Projects eligible for preservation tax credits include restoration of porches, exterior painting, roof replacements, windows, and interior work within the original footprint of the house. Structural additions or extensions are not eligible. The program also allows kitchen and bathroom upgrades, heating, electric, plumbing and air conditioning upgrades to qualify for tax credits. Even work done by the homeowner can be eligible, if the owner can show the value of the work if it had been done by an outside contractor (generally an average of three contractor estimates would be used).

Mr. Goodrow noted that approval of a project by the local Historic Preservation Commission does not automatically mean approval for preservation tax credits at the state level. However, to be a "certified

rehabilitation" as required to receive tax credits, the project must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

While it is best to plan ahead so that proper documentation of the project can be done from the start, Mr. Goodrow said that it is possible to submit already completed projects, if they were done within the past three years before the owner knew about the tax program. In this case, since "before" pictures would not likely be available, family photos that show the condition of the area in the background can be submitted.

Mr. Goodrow noted that owners of commercial historic structures can recover as much as 40% of the cost of renovations using both federal and state tax credits. There are different rules for commercial properties, as well as for churches and properties which are partly residential and partly commercial. There are even ways non-profits can tap into tax credits. Anyone interested in these types of tax credit programs should contact Mr. Goodrow's office for information.

The Heritage Preservation Certification instructions and application forms are available on the Maryland Historical Trust's web site at [www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net](http://www.marylandhistoricaltrust.net). Or, call 1-410-514-7630.

### Coming Events

Saturday, October 13 — West End Yard Sale

Saturday, October 20 — Yard Sale Rain-Date

Tuesday, October 16 — WECA Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 20 — WECA Board Meeting

## Light Up the West End!

**Christmas will be here sooner than we think. And that means it's time to get ready for the Annual**

**West End Christmas Decorating Contest.**

**Make your decorating plans now. This year it's more important than ever**

**for all of us to let our lights shine!**

**The many beautiful and imaginative**

**decorations shining brightly throughout our community lift everyone's spirit and give a great deal of pleasure.**

**Date of the contest judging and more details will be forthcoming as the holiday season approaches.**



## WECA Historic Tours — Mission Accomplished and There's More to Come

by Jackie Vickers

The spring Historic Tours for the Cape May ships were very successful. A big "Thank You!" to all of the docents who took the time and trouble to make it fun for our guests. Thanks also to the docents and other WECA volunteers who were on hand in a booth to welcome guests and offer tours during the Triathlon and the Feast-I-Val. While the latter two may not have been financially successful as historic tour venues, they gave WECA more exposure and left visitors with a good memory of Cambridge. So, we accomplished our mission.

Our docents are really getting into the spirit of the tours! A lot of thought and creativity has been put into the development of costumes. I think there has been an unspoken competition to see who could get the most "bang for the buck" in their costumes. The women have come up with some creative and inexpensive period costumes that when combined with the aprons and ruffled caps make a great first impression when the ship's passengers debark. And, two of our male docents boldly went where others feared to tread and came up with ingenious costumes. This spring, while buses were being loaded, there was a nip in the air by the river. Two of our docents purchased fabric and paid a seamstress to make them a warm cover-up. The capes are beautiful creations showing imagination and good taste. The costumes are an important part of the overall effect and really add to the historic tours. Even my improvised "costume", apron and cap, has caused smiles and comments. Or, maybe they were just laughing at me.

For the upcoming Cape May Light Cruise tours, we have a list of docents who have already signed up to serve as tour guides on the fall schedule. Just to refresh your memory, the cruise ship schedule is as follows: Thursday, October 25; Monday, October 29; Thursday, November 8; Monday, November 12 and Tuesday, November 20. All participants will receive a schedule indicating their dates for participation via e-mail or delivered to those who are not on e-mail.

Again, many thanks to all who have made this project a huge and continuing success.

We can always use more people in our docent pool. Anyone interested in helping out with this project, please contact me at 410-228-5563. We will be delighted to train you, and we provide a "cheat sheet" to take with you on your tour. Our docents have been delighted with the response of the passengers and their interest in the history of our area. Many docents have commented that they actually learned something themselves! So all you frustrated actors and actresses, if you can put in an hour or so every once in a while, sign up as a docent and enjoy wearing a costume from another era!

## Save our Sidewalks

by Herm Kramer

There are miles of sidewalks in the West End for a serious "power walk", an early morning constitutional, an evening stroll or just to get you from point A to point B. All of these give you the opportunity to enjoy the beauties of our neighborhood, the unique architecture of our homes, and the benefits of being out in the fresh air. Unfortunately, there are also many feet of these sidewalks that are very difficult to walk upon, and it's even worse if you are pushing a baby carriage or stroller. Besides broken or damaged concrete, the worst is the grass or weeds which seem to thrive in the sidewalk cracks better than in a lawn.

Our City Commissioners, led by Commissioner Atkinson, have a campaign going on for the repair of broken or damaged sections of sidewalks. However, all of us can help with the grass and weeds. A little regular maintenance with a spade or some carefully applied weed killer will do wonders to control this problem.

As a good citizen, keep your sidewalk clear, and as a good neighbor, assist someone who is not physically able to do this by themselves. Our West End will not only look better, but will be safer and more enjoyable for walking — something we all need to do more of for our health and to better appreciate this great place in which we are fortunate enough to live.

### DCAT

#### *"The Voice of the People"*

**Dorchester County Association of Taxpayers**  
**7:00 PM — 2nd Wednesday each Month**  
**Dorchester Public Library Meeting Room**  
**Dues \$10.00**

**John R. Neild, Sr. — President**  
**John S. Neild, Jr. — Secretary**  
**Portia Johnson-Ennels — Treasurer**

410-228-4313  
410-228-4980

FAX:  
410-228-8583

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West End Citizens Association

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Cambridge, MD 21613

## **WECA FALL YARD SALE SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2001**

The West End Citizens Association will hold their Annual Fall Yard Sale on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2001 (rain-date is SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2001) from 7:00 A.M. until..... West End residents should contact DONNA CASAROTTI at 410-901-9390 or FAX 410-901-9392 no later than SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2001 to register for the event. In case of rain, WECA will readvertise all locations for the rain-date if yard-salers state they wish to participate the following week. There is no charge for joining the event. The Yard Sale is a service available to all residents of the West End. The large number of yard sales located in close proximity to each other makes shopping very attractive to buyers.

Advertising for this yard sale event will appear in the *Daily Banner*, *Star Democrat*, *Dorchester Star* and *The Guide*.

Tips and suggestions for success: Price items to sell (buyers love a bargain). Have batteries and/or electrical cord handy to show appliances work. Be ready and set up to sell by 6:30 a.m., as the customers are always ready to buy at dawn!!

The community-wide yard sale provides a really great opportunity to move out those unwanted but still perfectly usable articles from closets, attics, sheds, garages, and so on. Salable items include but are not limited to, dishes, glassware, kitchen/household appliances, furniture, Christmas decorations (it's just around the corner!), books, tools, gently used clothing, toys and games. So reap some rewards from that long overdue "fall household cleaning" and get to know your neighbors!

From previous experience, WECA knows that both buyers and sellers enjoy this family fun time. Don't delay! Call to register now so your location can be listed in the ad.

To make clean-up easy, WECA has arranged for the Department of Public Works to make a special bulk trash pickup on the Monday following the event. For any leftovers you do not wish to keep, consider the Salvation Army, the Robin Hood Shop and the Lutheran Mission.