

The Greenbrier Gazette

The newsletter of the Greenbrier Neighborhood Association

Spring 2018



Get in the Loop

The neighborhood group email list is a non-public “Yahoo Group,” and it is free. It is monitored and maintained by your GNA Executive Committee to connect all – and only – those

GNA residents who ask to be added. We currently have about 350 neighbors on the list. Membership on the list is a great way to stay informed about issues that affect the neighborhood and to let your neighbors know about a lost or found pet, borrow a tool, report a crime, or find out if others are having utility problems. It is also a useful source for recommendations of tradespeople and services. A full set of the use rules for our group list can be found on the home page of our website (which is also chock full of other information and history): <http://cvillegreenbrier.weebly.com>

The printed newsletters only go out twice a year, so we strongly encourage everyone to join our group email list to stay informed and connected. To be added to the GNA email list, contact Ned Michie at NedMichie@aol.com and include your street address.

There is also an Internet group, “Nextdoor,” for the Greenbrier neighborhood. “Nextdoor” is an advertising-supported nationwide company, and its Greenbrier Neighborhood network is not affiliated with or controlled by our Association. It has a “social media” Facebook kind of feel that many people appreciate, and it has a phone app. There are settings to adjust based on whether you want to allow posts to go to and from other neighborhoods. (The default is that you are part of some 45 neighborhood discussions.) The rules of use for our GNA email list are tighter than those of Nextdoor. We do not allow advertising, soliciting for the too-many good causes in the world, or using the list for political purposes. So signing up for one group does not substitute for the other.

A note from GNA governance – Please keep bushes and branches cut back, away from sidewalks in front of your property.

No Standing Water = No Mosquitoes

Please be vigilant and empty any standing water on your property. Mosquitoes need just a very small amount of water to breed. Enough water for their purposes can collect in a variety of objects around your house, including gutters that aren't fully draining.



NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at 7:30 PM Greenbrier School Auditorium

At the meeting, we will:

1. Hear from the police officer assigned to our neighborhood, D.L. Sprouse, and have an opportunity to ask him questions and share any concerns.
2. Hear from the Parks and Rec Department about the long-awaited start of construction of part of the Meadow Creek Stream Valley Park plan – a plan that was created through a series of meetings with our neighborhood and approved by City Council in June of 2013. The plan's main feature is an eight-foot-wide multi-use greenway path made of compact stone dust. The path will be built alongside Meadow Creek, and when completed, it will extend from Morton Drive (behind Bodos) all the way to the paved path next to the John Warner Parkway. The connection point with the JWP will be made through a tunnel under the railroad tracks next to the creek. The City has set aside some money in this coming year for initial tunnel planning work.

We will also get an update on the Route 250 paved commuter path that is already partially built in the woods behind CHS. These greenway paths will be a major asset to our neighborhood and our larger community once the planned network is completed. Finally, we will hear about the exciting changes which have started to take place in McIntire Park East.

3. Hear about the latest plans for a Botanical Garden right off Melbourne Road, near the intersection with the John Warner Parkway.
4. Take a few minutes at the end of the meeting to elect Association officers and Executive Committee members and vote on some changes to the Bylaws. (See page 2)

Bylaw Changes Being Voted on at the May Meeting

VERNAL POOLS IN GREENBRIER PARK

Our neighbors living near Greenbrier Park are likely very aware of the significant population of frogs living there. At this time of year, the spring peepers' chorus is almost deafening! What you may not know is that the park has some special habitats that attract frogs, salamanders, and other species. Vernal pools are isolated, ephemeral wetlands that are preferred habitat for many species. Some species, such as the spotted salamander and the wood frog, depend upon them. Because vernal pools dry up periodically, fish cannot live in them, and so the frog and salamander eggs and larvae are protected from those predators. Virginia Master Naturalist volunteers have been monitoring Greenbrier's vernal pools for several years as part of a statewide citizen science project, and we have found significant numbers of spotted salamander egg masses in some of the pools. Spotted salamanders spend most of their lives underground in the forest, emerging in the late winter and spring to migrate to the vernal pools to breed. So, not only are the vernal pools important habitats, the woods throughout the park are as well. Take a walk through the park this spring to enjoy the forest and look for our wetland wonders!

For more on vernal pools: <https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/blog/vernal-pools-for-salamanders/>

For more on spotted salamanders: http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/amphibians/salamanders/spotted-salamander/spotted_salamander.php

DEER CULL

The Final Report on the City's thinning of the Charlottesville deer herd was as follows:

"The official start date of the deer management/culling program was February 20, 2018. One hundred and twenty-five (125) deer were culled on the City of Charlottesville owned properties. The project was completed after 11 nights of work on March 8, 2018. An official total of 2,850 pounds of venison was donated to the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry of Charlottesville. A total of 125 deer were culled; 13 Mature Bucks, 27 Button Buck Fawns, 66 Mature Does, and 19 Doe Fawns. The Mature Does averaged, overall, 2 fetal fawns each."

When asked about future plans, City staff pointed out that they do "intend at this time to continue the contract with the wildlife management firm annually."

So, the bottom line is: any deer you see now are going to be our neighborhood pets/pests for at least a year. After the cull, some folks on our e-mail list have reported still seeing herds as large as 10 deer.

BIG PLANS FOR RT. 29 / HYDRAULIC AREA

VDOT, the City, and the County are working to improve traffic flow at and between the intersections of Route 29/Hydraulic, Route 250/Hydraulic, and Route 250/Route 29. The planning process is moving pretty quickly to meet next year's application deadline for the State's capital improvement program. Once the applications are all in, the State ranks the projects by a priority scoring system and funds them based on rank.

VDOT already has \$10 million in the bank, designated for extending Hillsdale across Hydraulic Road (between Kroger and Virginia Power), but they aren't going to spend that until the improvements for the whole area are figured out. They also have \$10 million toward figuring that out – i.e., doing the design, planning and engineering work. The committee tasked with advancing the project has now decided that the preferred plan for submission to the state is one where Hydraulic Road will go under Route 29 and roundabouts will be built at both the Hydraulic intersection with Hillsdale and at District Avenue (the main entrance to Stonefields Shopping Center).

Unfortunately, while the planning team understood the problems we face getting in and out of Brandywine onto Hydraulic, they have not to date been able come up with any real fix due to the layout of the roads and the topography. They believe a roundabout at Hillsdale would help some by giving those turning out of Brandywine an option to just always turn right in bad traffic and then use the roundabout to reverse direction toward Route 250 if desired. The roundabout will not help those wanting to turn left from Hydraulic into Brandywine. The current plan also calls for closure of the existing exit off Route 250 South onto Route 29 North (next to the "new" Country Inn hotel – i.e., the way you probably get to Best Buy). This potential closure may lead to more traffic turning right of Route 250 onto Hydraulic (although the planned connection of Hillsdale to Route 250 could help).

In any event, actual construction work is not likely to begin for more like three to eight years from now, depending on how the project(s) ranks in the state funding process.

Follow the events at the website:

<http://www.route29solutions.org/>

SIDEWALKS

The City is in the initial planning stages for building a sidewalk on Kenwood between Meadowbrook Heights and Yorktown. The City has done some initial survey work, but it is likely that construction will not begin until Spring of 2019. Money for a much-needed sidewalk on Yorktown Drive made the City's capital improvement wish list but unfortunately did not make the final cut to be included in the funded projects.



The GNA Executive Committee wants to continue to use some of our GNA funds for the most important purpose we can think of – building a sense of community.

To that end, we are offering up to seven \$100 grants in 2018 to anyone in the neighborhood who will host/organize a social gathering for your block or just some immediate neighbors around you. You can invite known neighbors, but the main point is to also invite others around you whom you don't know or don't know well. The money can be used for booze, tea, soda, food, table/chair rentals, party hats, or any other communal offering/amenity for the party. A member or two of the Executive Committee will also attend to meet people and further spread the good will, in addition to making sure you didn't just buy steak, lobster and fine wine for your family dinner.

In order to apply for such a grant, please contact Heather Griffith at heather@nestrealty.com.

Requested Dues

If you believe in what the Greenbrier Neighborhood Association is doing and want to support it, send in whatever you can afford. The **suggested amount is \$10 per calendar year** (the money goes toward printing this newsletter and causes such as those described below). Please support our efforts to have an active, useful neighborhood association by sending your check (made payable to the “Greenbrier Neighborhood Association”) to our treasurer:

Lise Dobrin

2101 Tarleton Drive

Charlottesville, VA 22901

Send it now while you're thinking about it!

GNA was a \$250 sponsor this spring for the PTO of Greenbrier Elementary School “Frog Jog.” This is a run that will take place on the school's field as the PTO's primary fundraiser and school spirit activity. Funds raised from the Frog Jog will be used to support the school by allowing for the purchase of additional supplies, books, and technology in classrooms. It will also support activities and educational programs that build and promote an inclusive and active community.



With the “Let's Party” funds, the GNA sponsored three community-building events in the last several months:

- A brunch to welcome a new family that just moved to the neighborhood. Seven families attended.
- A summer block party that is now in its third year.
- A Christmas caroling party that hosted over 40 folks. They visited at least five homes, singing favorite Christmas tunes. We paid for cookies and hot chocolate.

Note that you are not required to pay dues to join the neighborhood group email list. Joining the list is free.



Ting Service in Greenbrier

While it is not our practice to advertise commercial enterprises in a newsletter article, there has been a lot of interest in when our neighborhood might have another Internet service provider to choose from. A Ting representative reports that “*Ting is in the preliminary stages of bringing its service to Greenbrier. You may notice an occasional Ting truck in your neighborhood.*”

We were hoping that we could get a more definitive timeline, but the Ting folks aren't quite there yet. They hope to have an engineering plan and time line by late summer or fall.

Greenbrier Gripes and Gratitude

We all love our neighborhood, but this section is dedicated to those residents who wish to comment on things or actions we particularly appreciate or to suggest ways that we might potentially be even better neighbors to each other.

“In addition to picking up after your dog, please dispose of the bags properly too. Leaving the plastic bags on street corners is unsightly for our neighborhood. I've seen four of these bags around the neighborhood, so I know it's not a one-off occurrence.”

“Thank you to all the dog owners who realize that their dog doesn't like to be tied up [or fenced] outside until he shows his displeasure with continual barking. Your neighbors will say BLESS YOU!!”

“I would like to thank the person who put up the delightful nest and egg artwork on the power pole at the corner of Meadowbrook Heights Road and Kenwood Lane. This replaced a chicken, which had become a bit weathered. The art always makes me smile.”



GNA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and BYLAWS

It has been about a decade since we last updated our Bylaws. Consequently, we have a subcommittee of the Executive Committee working on some proposed changes. We will be recommending some minor wording changes as well as clarifying the terms of GNA officers and Executive Committee members. The key proposed change will be adding two (2) more at-large spots on the Executive Committee. We also still have a vacancy in the Vice President position.

If you are interested in getting involved, please let Ned Michie or other Executive Committee members know. We will be having elections at our upcoming meeting.

All the proposed amendments to the Bylaws will be posted on our website at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Current Officers and Executive Committee

Ned Michie, President and Web “Master”: NedMichie@aol.com

Vice President - position open

Lise Dobrin, Treasurer: lise.dobrin@gmail.com

Michael Barnes, Immediate Past President: michaelbarnes456@yahoo.com

Eve Solomon, Newsletter Distribution solomoneve@hotmail.com



Members At Large

Bruce Gehle: brucegehle@gmail.com

Heather Griffith heather@nestrealty.com

Sheila Haughey sheila.haughey@comcast.net

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