



Remington

Community Newsletter

Twelfth Edition

April 2016

The PTA is Back at Margaret Brent

By Erin Colligan

After a two-year absence, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at Margaret Brent Elementary/Middle School is once again active and thriving. A group of motivated parents began meeting last summer and by fall were officially incorporated. PTA is a national organization that provides technical assistance to local groups in exchange for nominal dues. President Lakiya Emerson and Vice President Debra Mathews lead Margaret Brent's chapter. Mathews explained that the PTA's goal is to support the students and teachers at Margaret Brent and to empower parents to be involved in their children's education. Mathews, who has two children enrolled at Margaret Brent, notes that the school has "blossomed" in the past five years and that it "really feels like a community school." The PTA seeks to help Margaret Brent "continue on its current trajectory and become an even better place."

Some of the improvement Mathews observes can be attributed to more financial investment in the school. Margaret Brent has received support through Johns Hopkins University's Homewood Community Partners Initiative (HCPI). HCPI lists education as one of its focuses and is particularly interested in Margaret Brent and Barclay. As Hopkins president Ronald Daniels acknowledged at the project's launch, "The future of Johns Hopkins is inextricably linked to that of the community."

Mathews is especially enthusiastic about Margaret Brent's arts-integrated curriculum. The school has artists-in-residence through the nonprofit Young Audiences of MD; a full-time arts teacher, Rachel Prince; and theatre programs through Single Carrot. Mathews believes that the arts-integrated program is a great way for students learn more effectively. Margaret Brent has also incorporated the Support Success for All reading curriculum and the SABIS engineering curriculum. They even had a Science Olympiad team that made it to the state finals.

Most of Remington, except for a few blocks in the southern end, are served by Margaret Brent, as is a little less than half of Charles Village. Enrollment at Margaret Brent has

increased from 260 in 2006 to 340 kids in 2015. Despite this growth, Mathews recognizes that many parents in the neighborhood still have reservations about sending their children to public schools in the city. Mathews hopes the PTA can help parents become more comfortable with the idea. She believes that if they can get people through the door, they'll realize what an "adorable little place" Margaret Brent is and that it does not fit the stereotype of a Baltimore public school.

The PTA's main challenge, however, is parent engagement. With competing job and family demands, it is difficult for many parents to carve out time to participate in the PTA. Mathews and the rest of the PTA board are doing their best to make it possible for parents to get involved in whatever capacity they can. They recently ran an incentive program for students in which classes nominated kids who best demonstrated "character" and these students were able to go to the gym for an hour of fun activities. Parents could contribute by planning the event or participating on the day of by refereeing games.

**MARGARET
BRENT**
Elementary/Middle School

The PTA also collects box tops to raise funds and makes trips to Annapolis to advocate for Baltimore City public schools. Additionally, It has a set of

committees so parents can take leadership roles and get involved in the issues that interest them most. Mathews said the PTA board's philosophy is empowering parents to come up with ideas rather than using a top-down approach to get them engaged and invested.

So far, the approach is working. The PTA steering committee needed 25 paying members for incorporation and they had 35. They usually have around 20 parents at their monthly meetings. If you want to join the Margaret Brent PTA, the dues are \$7.50 annually for an individual with one vote and \$10 for a family with 2 votes. Meetings are the 2nd Thursday of the month in the school's cafeteria at 5:45pm. Mathews said there is a great deal of excitement at the school and she would love the community to know about it. Margaret Brent has been growing not just in enrollment but in the kinds of things they have to offer students. As Mathews remarks, "great things are happening" and getting involved in the PTA is an excellent way to ensure they continue. **R**

Primary Election Coming April 26

By Craig Bettenhausen

Vacant seats in city offices and competitive national races give Baltimore's primary unusual importance in 2016.

Carl Stokes, who currently represents Remington as City Council representative for District 12, is running for mayor, so that seat is vacant. Mary Pat Clarke is running for reelection to the district 14 seat. Remington is split between Districts 12 and 14.

To find out where you should go to vote, visit <http://cityview.baltimorecity.gov/electionPollingPlace> or call (410) 269-2840.

Candidates for District 12 Candidates for District 14

Cross, Kelly (D)
Crum, Gary (D)
Harris, Ertha (D)
Pyeron, Jason (D)
Staton, Rashad (D)
Stick, Gordon (D)
Stokes, Robert Sr. (D)
Richardson, Frank W. (R)
Schlakman, Ian (Green)

Carter, David E. (D)
Clarke, Mary Pat (D)
Williams, Terrell R. (D)
Hamilton, Tia
Harding, David

Mayor - Democrat

Clifton, Mack
Cupid, Gersham
Dixon, Sheila
Embry, Elizabeth
Gutierrez, Patrick
Mckesson, DeRay
Mosby, Nick
Pugh, Catherine
Stokes, Carl
Walsh, Cindy
Warnock, David
Wilson, Wilton
Young, Calvin Allen III



Longtime US Senator Barbara Mikulski is retiring after 29 years, and her seat is up for grabs. Voters will also elect a member of the US House of Representatives, the President of the City Council, and several other city and state offices.

A full list of registered candidates for all parties and races can be found at the Maryland state board of elections website, <http://goo.gl/J2q1tn>.

The primary election is April 26. This is the one to pay attention to because the Democratic nominee almost always wins these districts and the mayoral race.

The general election is Nov. 8. Voter registration deadlines are April 5 for the primary and Oct. 18 for the general election. Only registered Democrats can vote in the Democratic primary. **R**

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May 18th

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Remembering Clifton C. Williams, Sr.

By Victoria Hansard

Clifton C. Williams, Sr., born July 16, 1922, passed away at Union Memorial Hospital on Feb. 19, 2016. Williams was a long-time Remington resident. In his late teens, he lived on the 2800 block of Miles Avenue with his mother, Laura Skillman, and later for 65 years in his home on W. 30th Street (shown), which he shared with his wife of 64 years, Shirley, who died in 2006 and grew up on the 2800 block of Huntingdon Ave.

As a young man, Williams worked on a banana boat in the Caribbean before joining the US Coast Guard, where he patrolled the coast off of Narragansett, RI. He then served on a landing craft in the Pacific Theater of World War II. After the war, Williams worked in the Baltimore City Fire Dept. for 33 years, working most of that time as pump operator in Engine Company 21, on Roland Ave. He was an avid golfer and bowler, and enjoyed going to firefighter retiree meetings followed by a few hands of poker as well as sitting on his front porch to chat with those passing by.

Williams's kindness was not just for his fellow humans. He loved and was gentle with animals, such as the birds and squirrels that he fed, and particularly his beloved last two "children," his dogs, Buffy and Matilda. Neighbors remember always seeing him with a dog in his lap as he drove to the Giant, or walking his dogs around the block and across Beaver Hill.

Tom Culotta, of the Remington Community School, wrote about Williams, "I have always had so much respect for Mr. Cliff as both a friend and neighbor for the last several decades. He was the calm to Miss Shirley's storm and they were both such a gift to the neighborhood. I will miss him and it will take a long time before I don't glance at the porch expecting him to be there lording over the block."

Cliff and Shirley raised their five children on 30th Street: Clifton Jr., Kenneth, Donald, Victoria, as well as Robert, who passed away in 2008. **R**



A Fresh Look for Remington's Largest Playground

By Rose Reis

You know the playground at the end of Miles and 30th street, behind the Greater Faith Baptist Church? The play space that backs up to Wyman Park, with its lofty trees and meandering Stony Run creek below? If you have children, they probably race around the playground, climb the stairs, careen down the red slides. If you have a dog, you probably come to the adjacent green some mornings and evenings to play fetch. If you have kids attending the GreenMount School, they likely spend hours here every week, playing tag, swinging, and jostling to get on the monkey bars.

The playground was built in 2005 and is one of the most heavily used playgrounds on Department of Recreation & Parks property, according to department records. Although the existing structures are sound (albeit graffitied), the variety of equipment is limited, and its current appearance is less than inspiring.

A group of neighbors wondered if it had to be so. They contacted the city and found out that Recreation & Parks had already budgeted to replace the rubber surface, the most expensive portion of a playground renovation. We applied for additional funding from several local foundations and have been working with Seawall Development to fundraise in the local business community (R.W. Fewster Painting Co. on Fox Street is among those who have pledged their support).

Using feedback from more than 60 neighbors who took a survey, a survey of schoolchildren using the space, input from other users, and feedback at a community forum, we developed several key objectives for the renovation:

Provide additional play space that is **safe and attractive for children 2-5**, which represents the needs of the majority of local residents, according to a late-2015 neighborhood survey.

Strengthen a **neighborhood meeting place** for a wide range of residents including older children and teenagers, dog walkers, and other park users.

Provide diverse passive and active recreational opportunities to teenagers and adults by installing **new features such as a ping pong or other game table, picnic tables, benches, and play equipment.**

Enliven playground by installing a **ground mural** designed by local artists

Redevelop green space immediately surrounding park to reinforce the recreational opportunities, including new fencing and dynamic landscape design with natural and donated natural elements incorporated such as small hills, boulders, and logs.

We hope to bring you good news in the coming months as our fundraising campaign continues! Please contact Rose Weeks (rose.reis@gmail.com) if you would like to make a suggestion or get involved in planning for the playground renovations. **R**

Baltimore Faerie Faire returns to Remington on May 14!

The Faire will take over the whole Guardian Angel property from 11am to 7pm (though the Thrift Store will be open as normal).

The Faire will feature music, dancers, other performers, vendors, food, glitter, and magic.

Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$5 for children, \$40 max price for families.

The night before is the Masquerade Ball, a night of fun and revelry! This is an adult-oriented event with live music and dancing. \$10 until February 29, \$15 until April 30 and \$20 after that and at the door.

Job Listings

Remington-area employers: List your openings here, for free! If a Remington resident could walk to work, we'll list your opening free of charge. Contact the editor to list your opening.

This newsletter is produced for the residents and businesses of Remington in partnership with GRIA and the Church of the Guardian Angel. Distribution by Julie Dael. All are welcome to contribute about activities and events in Remington. Contact the editor at (443) 650-8733 or CraigBettenhausen@gmail.com.