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THE FOREST HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

INSIDE

Winter 2009



**Know Your Neighbor**  
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## THE LAKE AT FOREST HILL PARK



*The summer-long restoration of the lake in Forest Hill Park came to an end in mid-October with stunning results. Over the course of the project we saw the lake bed exposed, cleaned and reshaped, new drainage basins created and lined with stone, new walls wrapped around the lake, and new grasses and trees planted. And to the credit of all involved the restoration came in ahead of schedule and under budget. See related article on page 11. Photo: Brent Tennefoss*

## City Proposes Roundabout at Roanoke and Forest Hill

By Shannon & Mathew Taylor

On November 11, Thomas Flynn, the City of Richmond's traffic engineer, presented information at the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association meeting detailing the city's proposed installation of a roundabout at the intersection of Roanoke Street and Forest Hill Avenue.

The city has allotted \$950,000 of a 2.7 million-dollar grant for the specific creation of a roundabout at Forest Hill and Roanoke Street. The proposed roundabout seeks to improve the safety and traffic flow of a dangerous intersection responsible for 31 accidents from 2003 to 2007, 20 of which resulted in nonfatal injuries.

The city is considering two options. Option One is for a roundabout that encroaches significantly into the park and does not guarantee a major decrease in automobile speed. Option Two, which the city favors, will deflect cars more significantly, slowing their speeds. It also requires less taking of the residential property at the inter-

section and includes additional money for landscaping. However, Option Two still intrudes into the park and will require relocating portions of the historic retaining wall. Both options will sacrifice some park trees, but Option Two affects fewer trees, possibly as few as two.

Another alternative to the roundabout altogether would be to create an extra lane of traffic on Forest Hill Avenue and Roanoke Street. However, this option

*continued on Page 12*

## Historic District Status Advances

By Carolyn Paulette

On an evening in pouring rain, Wednesday, Nov. 11, the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association (FHNA) members voted overwhelmingly to approve seeking State and Federal Historic District status for the Forest Hill Neighborhood, and, after spirited debate, agreed to contribute \$5000 over two budget years.

These funds will be used to cover the expense of retaining a consultant to prepare the application and to pay for the printing of the anticipated 2,100 photographs on archival paper. The Historic

Designation Committee will continue to seek additional fundraising and sponsorship opportunities to help defray expenses related to achieving historic district status.

Forest Hill will seek historic designation based on its development as a trolley-car neighborhood similar to Woodland Heights and other neighborhoods on the north side of Richmond. Because of the transportation provided by the trolley cars, families moved from other areas, especially Manchester, to settle in Forest Hill.

Significant books on the subject include B.B. Weisiger's *Old Manchester and Its Environs* and Francis Lutz's *Chesterfield*. The Weisiger family owned several homes in Forest Hill, including 1106 43rd St. The Miller family owned four houses side-by-side in the 4400 block of Forest Hill Ave.

To view some of the research already found, please access the committee's website: [historic-foresthill.com](http://historic-foresthill.com). If you have materials or information you would like to share or if you will volunteer for photography, research, or data entry, contact the committee at [cmp4312@yahoo.com](mailto:cmp4312@yahoo.com).

## Pathway to Opening Day at Patrick Henry School

By Krista Simmerman

In case you haven't heard the great news, Patrick Henry School of Science and Arts has been awarded a federal grant for \$471,800 by the U.S. Department of Education.

The grant will be meted out over three years, with \$114,850 as the award for year one, the preparatory period.

The funds for this year include money for principal's salary and fringe benefits (for working advance of opening in July 2010), staff development and teacher training, and ADA compliance renovations.

To see more details about the grant see a press release online at the news link on [www.patrickhenrycharter.org](http://www.patrickhenrycharter.org).

## GRACE NOTES

# Candles in the Window

by Grace LeRose, FHNA President

Just recently, I realized I have lived in my house on 41st St. longer than I have lived anywhere else. When I bought in the spring of 1985, I bought more house than I could afford at the time – stretching my paycheck to the penny. I could not afford those little white Christmas candles that first Christmas and was thrilled to have them the next year. Over the years, I have removed and added walls, windows and doors. Thanks to Hurricane Isabel I know have practically a new second



## Good Shepherd Festival A Success In Spite of 'Strange Weather'

By Laura Dysart

The families, students and Good Shepherd Episcopal School community want to say a big thank you to FHNA for supporting its fall festival and for being a sponsor.

The event was held on Saturday, October 24, and despite the strange weather, all had lots of fun! Because of the poor forecast, many activities were moved inside and spread throughout the school. It did manage to stay dry during the event so children were able to enjoy the moon bounces and giant slide outside too.

Richard and John provided fun,

festive folk songs throughout the event. Good Shepherd families and families from the larger community were able to play games like the cupcake walk, pumpkin bowling, knock the cans and fishing for prizes as well as make their own "buttons," sand bracelets or decorate mini pumpkins.

We even had a homemade mini golf course on the stage. Cotton candy, popcorn and apple cider as well as a bake sale offered many treats to eat. Our entire school community greatly appreciates your support of our event and truly enjoy being part of the Forest Hill community.

floor. My neighbors on two sides were the original occupants of their houses. The widow women, as I called them, were independent, feisty and one of them loved a shot of vodka every now and then. Another neighbor, a couple new to the neighborhood, were about to welcome their first baby. That baby is now in graduate school in Michigan. My view out of my front door remains the beautiful and verdant Forest Hill Park great lawn.

I knew then, and still believe that this neighborhood is a jewel. Back then, Forest Hill was a little known gem, hidden in the City between the better-known Westover Hills and the bohemian Woodland Heights. Today, Forest Hill can claim a beautiful, refurbished Park, a summer concert series "Music in the Park", a 5K race, a colorful flag and a popular house tour.

The neighborhood association has come and gone over these past 24 years, right now we have an active and creative group of folks who volunteer their free time to bring you these events, create this newsletter and keep you informed. Where we go from here is up to you.

As we celebrate the holidays, I wish you all health and happiness. As for me, I am thrilled to have a candle in every window.

## FOREST HILL FLYER

Published by the  
Forest Hill  
Neighborhood Association

2010 Publication Dates

April 1

Ad/Articles Deadline: 3/5/10

We are looking for a volunteer to take over newsletter layout starting with the April '10 issue. Contact the Flyer Editor if interested.

We are seeking story ideas and article submissions for upcoming issues. Please send suggestions to  
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Previous editions of the FLYER are available electronically at  
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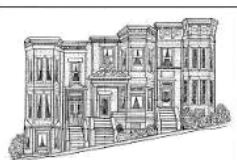


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## Local Associations to Offer Gang Awareness Training

Have you wondered whether our neighborhood or surrounding areas have gang activity? Are you concerned about negative influences on children? Have you ever thought, "What can I do to help keep a child from joining a gang?"

The Forest Hill and Woodland Heights Neighborhood Associ-

ations will host a Gang Awareness Training Program for residents on Thursday, February 18, 2010, from 7 - 8:30 p.m., at the Forest Hill Presbyterian Church, located at 4401 Forest Hill Avenue.

The Wrong Family: Virginia Fights Back Against Gangs, an award winning documentary about

gang activity in Virginia, will be featured, followed by a presentation on local gang activity by the Richmond Police Department and the Virginia Office of the Attorney General. For more information, please contact Shannon Taylor at [foresthillsafety@hotmail.com](mailto:foresthillsafety@hotmail.com) or call (804) 231-1789.

**KATHY GRAZIANO, 4TH DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL**

## A Vigorous, Diverse Richmond



As we are celebrating the season, and the end of another year, we have a great deal for which to be thankful, and a great deal to look forward to.

First and foremost, we can be thankful to live in a great neighborhood, in a great city.

Sometimes we live too close to the trees to see the park, but the figures don't lie. Richmond is a leader in business, with many Fortune 500 headquarters providing hundreds of jobs. The Richmond region is a leader in health care, with a number of leading organizations, including VCU, Henrico Doctors, HCA, and Bon Secours. Richmond has a thriving arts and cultural community, giving light to our spirits.

For those of us who love Richmond and want to stay in our neighborhoods, the city has a tax abate-

ment program to reduce the taxes on additions, renovations, etc. Information on the program is available through the City Assessor's Office at 646-5600. If you plan upgrades or repairs, it's worth checking because the savings can be substantial.

Of course, we cannot end this year without taking note of the repairs and renovations at Forest Hill Park. The work at Forest Hill Lake is almost complete, and what a great job it has been. Along with the work at the Stone House and the continuing volunteer efforts of the Friends of Forest Hill Park, our jewel is shining brightly again.

We are well into our leaf collection program for 2009-2010. The collection dates for the Forest Hill section begin December 28th. The second collection date has not been set.

I want to thank you all for a great year, and for all the support you have given us. I look forward to a 2010 that is even greater.

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## Know Your Neighbor

# Barbecue Competition Has Resident Cop Smoking

By Martha Cooper

Have you caught the aroma? Usually, on Friday nights the smell of someone cooking floats over a part of Forest Hill. But this smell is a little different and it lingers in the air for hours.

Mandy Jernigan knows it all too well because on most occasions it's either ribs or a few pork shoulders that her husband, Chris Jernigan, is smoking. You see Chris is not your average backyard chef. He actually enters competitive barbecuing events. "I saw it on the Food Network a few years ago and became hooked," he said.

Mandy jokes, "This is one of his hobbies he should have told me about before I said 'yes' to marrying him. He has a hobby that partially involves chopping wood and staying up all night!"

Unlike cooking on a grill at a high temperature for a short period of time, smoking is done at a relatively low temperature and over a

long period of time. Depending on the cut of meat, smoking can take up to 10 hours because the temperature is held to between 215 to 225 degrees.

Chris's cooker is a "piece of work" he admits. Another Forest Hill resident, Bill Morrell, called one day saying someone had a boat sitting out on the street for free. Chris laughed, "Let's get it!" And they did.

The boat turned out to be not so great, but the trailer became the base for his barbecue cooker. The cooker itself is made from an old oil drum. With pieces and parts donated from friends and by doing all of the welding himself, "I have about \$50 invested in the whole thing," he said. Donna and Lynn Newcomb, friends on Springhill helped out by sharing their knowledge. "No recipes, just knowledge," he stated.

Recipes are the big secrets in Competitive Barbecuing. Chris, who is a Richmond police sergeant,



Chris Jernigan shows off his homemade cooker which he calls "a piece of work".

participated in his first competition at work. The department hosted a family picnic and barbeque cook-off for the officers. Chris's team took first place.

From that event, Chris met Buz Grossburg of Buz and Ned's Real Barbeque on Boulevard. Buz was one of the judges. He and Chris became friends, and he asked Chris to join his competitive barbeque team. In early October, the team drove to Kansas City, Missouri to compete in the American Royal Barbeque Competition, which has been going on for 30 years and is the second largest in the nation.

Chris reported, "There were four hundred and eighty-six teams with about 40,000 people in attendance. It was fun, but we didn't win." Teams can compete in any or all categories which include brisket, pulled pork, ribs, chicken, beans,

and sauce. Chris only competes in the meat category and prefers North Carolina style barbecue, and no, he will not share his recipes.

In addition to barbeque, Chris is also very handy and has completed major renovations on their home. His daughter Bella is a pre-schooler at Good Shepherd Episcopal School. Mandy is a second grade teacher at St. Catherine's School. "We just celebrated Bella's fourth birthday. It was huge. Chris smoked 40 racks, staying up most of the night, and there wasn't one rib left over!," Mandy said.

If you are around New Kent and 43rd and smell something cooking on a grill, slip through the alley and you might find Chris smoking a few racks and hanging out in his garage. "I'm always looking for Guinea pigs to taste new sauces I've come up with," he laughed.



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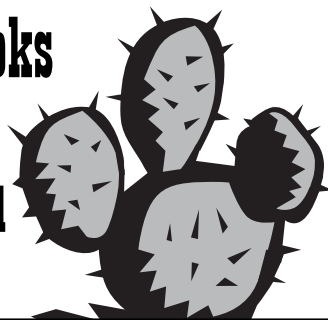
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## The Flyer Profile:

# Celebrity Pooch

### Who are you?

I am a black Labrador retriever. My name is Bay and I'm 11 years old.

### Who is in your pack?

My family is: Steve, Christine, Eva and Trigger (cat) Waldron. We live on W. 45th Street in my favorite part of the Forest Hill area.

### Where did you come from?

My mother responded to an ad that read:

*Lab Puppies for Sale – Mother is a Labrador retriever with papers.*

*Suspected father is also a Labrador retriever.*

I first lived in Forest View (Herbert Street), moved to a Mechanicsville subdivision (I hated it—it was depressing and I did nothing but lay around and eat!) and then my pack moved back to Forest Hill (I think my mom disliked suburbia and she wanted to live back in the city!)

### What are your favorite things to do?

I love to go on long walks and I enjoy swimming in Reedy Creek. I enjoy swimming all year long (as long as the weather cooperates!)

### Special qualities about you?

I love to chase squirrels and I am extremely tolerant of small children (as you can see from my photo), other dogs and cats. I also LOVE treats!



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## Second Self-Defense Class Will Be Offered on February 25, 2010

Did you miss the last Self Defense Class? Do you need a refresher course on how to defend yourself from danger?

The Forest Hill Neighborhood Watch is offering a class on basic self defense techniques. Residents of all ages, sizes, and athletic ability are encouraged to attend.

The class will be held on Thursday, February 25, 2010, from 6:30-8:30 pm at the Forest Hill

Presbyterian Church on Forest Hill Avenue.

Training will be provided by the Martial Arts World and costs \$10 per person.

Bring cash or checks made out to Martial Arts World with you to class. RSVP by Feb. 5th to Shannon Taylor at (804) 231-1789 or foresthillsafety@hotmail.com. Class space is limited so reserve early!



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## FRIENDS OF FOREST HILL PARK

## With Majority of Restoration Completed, Lake Site Shines

By Debra McClane

Around the middle of October the bulk of the Forest Hill Park lake restoration project was complete and the site was no longer a construction zone. The work was completed earlier than expected and under budget. Native trees and shrubs were planted at the southern end of the lake, which will serve as a wetland.

Items left to be completed by the City's department of public works include the reinstallation of lighting around the lake, and pathways and the replacement of benches around the lake. Repaving of pathways and roadways also will be undertaken. A separate contract will be procured to complete the construction of a new footbridge at the south end of the lake, thus completing the pedestrian circuit.

The Friends of Forest Hill Park are pleased with the project and attention to detail that the dredging company gave to the park and

the restoration of this historic element. The City's parks department is planning on a grand opening sometime in the spring.

In October, Forest Hill Park was the site of vandalism that included spray-painted epithets and symbols. Most of the painting was on concrete walkways, but some of the contractors' equipment was also vandalized. Police believe this vandalism is connected to similar defacement seen in Byrd Park and other city parks. City park staff quickly removed the vandalism and no other incidents have occurred.

Lieutenant John A. O'Kleasky, Jr., of the Third Precinct, Sector 312, has assigned Officer Stacy Rogers to patrol of Forest Hill Park. Please do not hesitate to contact him with any issues or events related to park activity. Precinct Phone: 646-1412, E-mail: Stacy.Rogers@richmondgov.com

The next FFHP meeting will be on January 26 at 7:00 p.m. at the Stone House.



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## ROUNABOUT

*continued from Page 1*

requires taking significantly more land from the park (about 600 feet) and taking the entire house on the corner of Roanoke and Forest Hill. This third alternative was not discussed in earnest at the presentation.

If you are interested in visiting a good example of a recently installed roundabout in the city, check out Church Hill at the intersection of 21st and M Streets. Overall, the city favors roundabouts (it received grants for four roundabouts throughout the city) because they are safer for pedestrian crossing and they lower the speed of cars.

Currently, pedestrians crossing the street must look in all directions to safely navigate across both lanes of traffic. The roundabout will create a pedestrian "landing" in between each lane of traffic, thus only requiring the pedestrian to look at one lane and one direction of traffic.

Roundabouts typically slow the speed of traveling cars to approximately 25 mph, although the average speed of cars going through a roundabout is 15-18 mph. Furthermore, roundabouts can significantly improve automobile and

pedestrian safety. The national average sees a 50% decrease in total accidents, a 76% reduction in injuries in accidents and 90% reduction in fatal accidents when roundabouts are installed.

Residential turnout for the Nov. 11th meeting was high, and included Councilwoman Graziano and NBC 12 news. Residents voiced several concerns with the roundabout proposal. The taking of any residential land would be problematic. All of the city's options would affect the layout and historic sanctity of the park. Other residents noted that the roundabout would not adequately address the other traffic concerns with Forest Hill Avenue such as the backup of traffic and the difficulties in crossing Forest Hill Avenue.

In some ways, a roundabout was seen to only make them worse. After lengthy discussions, the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association voted to oppose the city's installation of the roundabout. Overall the consensus was that the roundabout was not the proper solution to the neighborhood's problems which are apparent to its residents.

Despite the neighborhood's lack of support for the roundabout, the city administration can

still decide to move forward with the proposal. City council will have to vote on and approve of the measure to enact it. When approved, the city estimates that at the very earliest the designing can begin next year, bids can be solicited in the fall of 2010, and construction can be finished by the spring of 2011.

If you are interested in more information about the city's proposals, please visit [www.foresthill-neighborhood.com](http://www.foresthill-neighborhood.com), where images from the city's presentation at the Nov. 11 meeting will be posted, or contact Councilwoman Kathy Graziano.

## Comment on the Roundabout

**By Carolyn Paulette**

Both the Forest Hill Neighborhood Association (FHNA) and the Friends of Forest Hill Park (FFHP) voted to oppose the proposed roundabout at the intersection of Roanoke St and Forest Hill Ave. The FFHP opposed the roundabout because of its impact on the park and because less intrusive alternatives have not been sought. FHNA's major concerns were the impact on the park, on access to

Forest Hill Avenue during peak hours of traffic, and on the safety of pedestrians crossing Forest Hill Avenue.

Tom Flynn, the traffic engineer, mentioned other sites in the neighborhood which may require traffic calming devices: 47th and Reedy Ave., 48th and Reedy Ave. and an intersection on Dunstan. Because the intersection at Roanoke and Forest Hill was the focus of the meeting, no one asked for more details on these intersections.

Residents did request that a light be installed somewhere between Westover Hills Boulevard and Roanoke St. to slow traffic and to allow pedestrians to cross Forest Hill Ave. The record of accidents used to support the roundabout for safety reasons was 31 accidents at Roanoke St., Jahnke Rd. had 33, and Westover Hills Boulevard had 15. Flynn did not propose roundabouts at these intersections.

Forest Hill Park already has historic designation which requires the Department of Historic Resources review any federally funded projects. Mr. Flynn admitted that if the City decides to move forward with the proposal, it will be a long, involved process.



# Forest Hill Neighborhood Association

Welcomes all  
with holiday cheer  
as we celebrate and  
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