



# PIMMIT HILLS NEWS

Thank you to our Fairfax County representatives Supervisor **Stu Mendelsohn**, and Planning Commissioner **Joan DuBois** for coming to our May PHCA meeting and answering questions about traffic, area development and other issues. They also asked us a question—they need your ideas and opinions on the perplexing County problem of some houses with too many cars parked at the residence. Their contact info is on page 30 if you have an opinion.

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Mendelsohn said that for those with frustrations with what a neighbor is doing with their property, the best avenue is to call the **Fairfax County Zoning Enforcement** Complaint line at 703-324-1300. It was re-emphasized that because Pimmit Hills does not have its own property covenants but is bound by County covenants, calling the PHCA to complain can do little.

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On Saturday, April 20 the PHCA hosted a **Community Yard Sale**. This event proved to be tremendously successful. We had over twenty participants offering wonderful treasures for sale and many, many folks stopped by. Thanks to everyone who bought a table. Thanks too to all of those who helped make this event possible, including **Beckyanne King** who helped with publicity and **Donnie** and **Mary Ellen Dick** who gave of

their time to staff one of the Association's tables. See our website, [www.pimmithills.org](http://www.pimmithills.org) for photos of the PHCA Yard Sale.

☞

On June 15, we'll have our **PHCA Taste of Pimmit Hills Community Picnic**. This is a new event and one that we hope will turn into an annual gathering. Basically, it's going to be a fun community picnic and everyone is invited. Our goal is to have residents **donate a favorite dish to share** so that we can offer a smorgasbord of tastes from all corners of Pimmit Hills.

## PICNIC

What is most important is that y'all come. PHCA will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, some soft drinks and paper products. We will gather at the **Tyson's Pimmit Regional Park**, located behind the Tyson's Pimmit Regional Library on Route 7. The date is **Saturday, June 15**, and the start time is set at **1:00 pm**. We will have a few planned activities, like the ever-popular relay race and egg toss, but mostly this is just going to be a chance for us to mix, mingle, and enjoy some great community fellowship. **IMPORTANT:** So that we know how much food to buy, you **must RSVP** to us via email at



**Pimmit Hills**  
Our Neighborhood  
Our Home

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# Pimmit Hills Citizens Association

## Pimmit Hills Citizens Association

1927 Pimmit Drive, Falls Church, VA 22043

EMAIL: [phca@pimmithills.org](mailto:phca@pimmithills.org), WEBSITE: [PimmitHills.org](http://PimmitHills.org)

## OFFICERS for June 2001 to June 2002:

President	Joe Baker	703-448-1394 <a href="mailto:president@pimmithills.org">president@pimmithills.org</a>
First Vice President	Bill Niland	703-356-8240 <a href="mailto:firstveep@pimmithills.org">firstveep@pimmithills.org</a>
Second Vice President	Raymond Bernot	703-893-8433 <a href="mailto:secondveep@pimmithills.org">secondveep@pimmithills.org</a>
Treasurer	Kim Rollen	703-761-7391 <a href="mailto:treasurer@pimmithills.org">treasurer@pimmithills.org</a>
Secretary	Jennifer Baker	703-448-1394 <a href="mailto:secretary@pimmithills.org">secretary@pimmithills.org</a>
Three Year Director	Martha Duggar	703-356-6508 <a href="mailto:director@pimmithills.org">director@pimmithills.org</a>

## WHO TO CALL:

PHCA Chairman for Volunteers *vacant*

Neighborhood Watch Bill Niland 703-356-8240

Fairfax County Police (non-emergency) 703-691-2131

*The Dispatch* Editor Cindy Kwitchoff 703-734-0402

Contact Information for Ads/Articles fax: 703-734-0779

email: [dispatch@pimmithills.org](mailto:dispatch@pimmithills.org)

mail: 1925 Cherri Drive



### Display Ad Rates:

\$25 for 1/4 page per month  
\$50 for 1/2 page per month  
\$75 for whole page per month  
Ads designed for free

### Classified Ad Rates:

\$5 per month; 40 words max

# PH Citizen Contact Information

**Supervisor Stu Mendelsohn**  
McLean Governmental Center  
1437 Balls Hill Road  
McLean, VA 22101

PHONE: 703-356-0551; FAX: 703-821-4275  
EMAIL: stuart.mendelsohn@co.fairfax.va.us

**Delegate Jim Scott, 53rd House Dist.**  
P.O. Box 359  
Merrifield, VA 22116-0359  
PHONE: 703-560-8338  
EMAIL: DelJScott@aol.com

**State Senator Janet D. Howell**  
P.O. Box 2608  
Reston, VA 20195-0608  
PHONE: 703-709-8283  
EMAIL: SenHowell@aol.com

**Congressman James P. Moran**  
5115 Franconia Road, Suite B  
Alexandria, VA 22310-1903  
PHONE: 703-971-4700  
WEBSITE: www.house.gov/moran

**Jane K. Strauss, School Board**  
10700 Page Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
PHONE: 703-246-4780  
EMAIL: jane.strauss@fcps.edu

**Pimmit Hills School**  
7510 Lisle Avenue  
FRONT OFFICE PHONE: 703-506-2344  
FAX: 703-506-2397  
To report safety, parking or behavioral concerns: 703-506-2318  
Beverly R. Wilson, Principal  
PHONE: 703-506-2315  
EMAIL: beverly.wilson@fcps.edu

**Most Requested Numbers**  
Area Agency on Aging, 703-324-5411  
Athletic Serice, 703-324-5533  
Animal Control, 703-830-3680  
Audit Hotline, 703-876-0526  
Cox Cable, 703-378-8422  
Clerk-Board of Supr, 703-324-3151  
Consumer Affairs, 703-222-8435  
Dept of Motor Vehicles, 703-761-8435  
Disabilities Svc Board, 703-324-5421  
Dept of Public Works  
Environmental Svcs, 703-324-5033  
Site Inspections, 703-324-1950  
Electoral Board, 703-222-0776  
Fairfax County Human Svc  
Health Line, 703-222-0776  
Fairfax County Public Schools,  
703-246-2502  
Gas Leaks, 888-223-9452  
Office for Children, 703-324-8100  
Office for Women, 703-324-5730  
Park Authority, 703-324-8700  
Pimmit Senior Center, 703-734-3238  
Planning Commission, 703-324-2865  
Police (non-emer) 703-691-2131  
Tax Administration, 703-324-8234  
Trash Collection/Recycling,  
703-324-5040  
VDOT Maintenance, 703-383-VDOT  
Virginia Power, 888-667-3000  
Zoning Enforcement Complaints,  
703-324-1300

**Joan Dubois**  
Fairfax County Planning Commission  
12000 Govt Center Pkwy, Suite 330  
Fairfax, VA 22035  
PHONE: 703-324-2865  
FAX: 703-324-3948  
E-MAIL: plancom@co.fairfax.va.us

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phca@pimmithills.org or by calling 703-734-0402 by June 10. If you can help out with the grilling or other stuff, please let us know. Do mark the date. We look forward to seeing you all there!

☪

Correction: In the May issue of the *Dispatch* there was a Letter to the Editor which was edited for length and other reasons. Unfortunately, the edit incorrectly implied that Mike McGuire was the focus of the complaint in the letter. He was **not** and the *Dispatch* apologizes.

☪

**Jennifer Baker** has been serving the Community as the PHCA Secretary for the past five years. She has done a tremendous job recording the minutes of the meetings, writing the *Did You Know?* column and organizing PHCA events. She has a true volunteerism spirit which has greatly benefited our Community. There will be a new Secretary next year as Jennifer is stepping down in order to devote time to obtaining a master's degree. We thank her for all the work and time she has donated in the last five years to making Pimmit Hills a great place to live.

☪

Two big thanks go to **Donnie Dick** of Nigh Road who also cares a great deal about our community. First, he volunteered to paint the doors and shutters on the PHCA house which were in pretty bad shape. Second, Donnie has written the *Heard on the Grapevine* column for many years.

We really appreciate his contributions to the *Dispatch* and his concern about quality of life here in the Hills. Read his announcement on page 18.

☪

The *Dispatch* has received word that **Ethel Kelley Boda**, a long time resident of Pimmit Hills, died on April 27 in Montross, Virginia. She was the wife of Ron Boda and a widow of Russell Kelley, Sr. She is survived by three sons, Vernon of Richmond, VA; Russell, Jr. of Pembroke, VA and Andrew of Lottsburg, VA. Russell coached Little League in the area for years and he and Ethel bowled and were active in St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Our condolences to the family.

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Do you have good organizational skills and would you like to meet others in PH? PHCA is looking for someone to be the chairman of our group of volunteers who assist the Association with PH events. Please contact phca@pimmithills.org or a board member.

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**Upcoming PHCA Meeting Dates:**

## June 4, 2002

We go on a break in July and August but see you in September!

**Sept 3; Oct 1; Nov 5; Dec 3; Jan 7; Feb 4; Mar 4; Apr 1; May 6; Jun 3**  
The meetings are at 7:30 pm on the first Tuesday of every month at the Pimmit Hills School on Lisle Ave. All homeowners and renters are encouraged to attend. ☪



# Did You Know?

By Jennifer Baker, PHCA Secretary

Well, I'm convinced. The Association's monthly meetings really are the place to go to get connected. Where else can you go on a Tuesday night to hear from and talk personally with those in the know? If you came out to the PHCA meeting on Tuesday, May 7, you'll know what I'm talking about. Attendees at that meeting heard from and talked with everyone from current elected officials (Supervisor **Stu Mendelsohn** and Planning Commissioner **Joan DuBois**) to prospective elected officials (**Dave Hunt**, a candidate for State Senate in 2003) to community activists (**Germaine Broussard** and others from the MCCA). And, it was all covered by a member of the local press (a reporter from the *McLean Times*). Many thanks go to those who arranged for the line-up of great speakers.

The meeting kicked off with **Dianne Cullum**, a Career Center Specialist from the Pimmit Hills High School asking for residents' input on the school's mission and values. The school is undergoing an accreditation review and, as part of that process, they are soliciting input from all their various constitu-

encies, including the community. She reaffirmed the school's commitment to being a good neighbor, citing the fact that progress has been made on issue like moving loitering students off of neighborhood corners. She also reminded attendees that they are always welcome to bring issues and concerns relative to the school to the attention of school officials.

The floor was then turned over to Supervisor Stu Mendelsohn and our representative to the County Planning and Zoning Commission Joan DuBois. Supervisor Mendelsohn brought residents up to date on the status of six issues that had been raised during his last visit to meet with members of the PHCA. During his talk, he provided updates and information on a range of topics, including the reason that bus shelters are only on one side of Magarity, the efforts to reduce speeding and cut through traffic in the neighborhood, and the status of plans to add easier and safer transit routes to the West Falls Church Metro. Supervisor Mendelsohn then spoke on the topic of the Commons Development and the plans

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**TUTOR**—Experienced teacher (certified K-8) is available to tutor students in her Pimmit Hills home. I have experience tutoring in beginning reading strategies, elementary math, and algebra. Call Stephanie at 703-827-8846. I can give you references from other Pimmit Hills residents.

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**YARD SALE**—Furniture, books, jewelry, household items, medicine cabinet, miscellaneous. Saturday, June 8 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. 2034 Griffith Road (near corner of Pimmit Drive).

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☎

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☎

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# Attention!

The *Pimmit Hills Dispatch* goes on a break in July and August. The deadline for articles, display ads and classified ads for the September issue is August 9.

During the summer, invoices will be sent to advertisers with the opportunity to renew their ads for the 2002-03 year. Reach 1,636 homes in Pimmit Hills with your advertisement!

We have one of the largest communities in Fairfax County and it is richly diverse with people from many countries. Our community is 52 years old and we warmly welcome all those in Pimmit Hills—those who've recently moved here as well as long-time residents—to attend our community meetings. Our next meeting is Tuesday, June 4 at 7:30 pm at the Pimmit High School on Lisle. Also come meet us at the Pimmit Hills Community Picnic on Saturday, June 15 at 1:00 pm at Tysons Pimmit Park behind the library (please RSVP to the picnic). See you there!



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for mass transit in the Tyson's Area. Commissioner Joan Du Bois added her insight on these issues as well. It would take more space than I have here to tell you everything they had to say. What I do have room to tell you is that it was all very interesting and worth hearing. It is clear to me that big changes lie ahead for our area and equally clear that exactly how those changes are implemented and when is not as set in stone as we might believe. I was also reminded that whenever we catch ourselves saying "What are THEY going to do about..." or "SOMEONE needs to do something about..." we ought to remember that the "They" and the "Someone" are really just those in our community who have taken the time to get involved. As citizens in this great democracy, I would suggest that the questions we really should be asking are "What are WE going to do about..." or "I need to do something about..." Because if we don't, then we are shirking our rights and responsibilities.

So, are you inspired yet? Your Citizens Association is on the move, but it can only stay on the move with the involvement of residents like you and me. I encourage everyone reading this to come out and get involved. Think about your reasons for not doing it. If you need transportation to get to the meetings, let us know; we can work with you to find a ride. If you are peeved with a particular position past or present of

the PHCA, let us know; we're open to feedback and committed to dialogue. If you don't want to get sucked into a big time commitment, let us know; if all you can do is make one meeting a month, that is fine. If you are concerned about being accepted or fitting in, let us know; our diversity is a strength that we want to embrace. There are many important issues facing our neighborhood, our county, and our state. Come out and let your voice be heard!

In closing, I just want to put a plug in for several PHCA events in June. First, a plug for the June PHCA meeting. We won't be having a speaker, so that we can focus on Association business. Now, now, I heard that groan. I promise you though it won't be tedious or boring. A vote for the new slate of officers is on the agenda, as are several other topics of interest, so you won't want to miss it. Next, a plug for the Taste of Pimmit Hills. This is a new event this year and one that we hope will evolve into a fun annual gathering. Please plan to join us! Finally, a plug once again for those who have come forward and agreed to be nominated for the 2002-2003 Association Board of Directors - thank you! That's it! As this is the last article before our summer hiatus, I also want to wish everyone a wonderful summer season. Take care, and stay cool!☞

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**Charity Baptist Church**  
 (Spring Hill at Lewinsville Road)  
 1328 Spring Hill Road, McLean  
 Pastor John Mitchell  
 Pastor Andy Giessman – Youth  
 703-893-2177  
 Worship 10:45 am; Adult and  
 children's Sunday School 9:30 am;  
 Home Bible Studies-weekday eves.



**Garfield Memorial Church**  
 (Disciples of Christ)  
 1731 Great Falls St, McLean  
 Pastor Kenneth W. Collins  
 703-356-7878  
 Church school 9:30 am  
 Worship service 10:30 am  
 Evening service 6:30 pm



**McLean Presbyterian Church**  
 1020 Balls Hill Rd, McLean  
 Pastor John Hutchinson  
 703-821-0800  
 Worship at 9:15 and 11:00 am;  
 Sunday school for children and  
 Adult Education classes at 9:15 and  
 11:00 am



**Idylwood Presbyterian Church**  
 7617 Idylwood Rd, Falls Church  
 Pastor Leonard B. Sirbaugh, Jr.  
 703-573-3027  
 Sunday School for children and  
 adult education class at 10:00 am;  
 worship 11:00 am; coffee hour at  
 noon.



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 Saturday 8:00 am, Vigil 5:00 pm;  
 Sunday 7:00, 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 am  
 and 12:30 pm. 6:00 pm service is in  
 Spanish



**Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean  
 703-356-3346  
 Pastor George Evans  
 Sunday school 9:45 am  
 Sunday services 8:30 am, 11:00 am  
 Praise Service 6:30 pm



**St. Luke's United Methodist Church**  
 "The Church on the Hill"  
 7628 Leesburg Pike (Pimmit Hills)  
 Rev. Gretchen A. Miller  
 703-893-9220  
 Sunday school 9:30 am  
 Worship service 11:00 am



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## PHCA Position on Commons Development

*This letter was sent by the Pimmit Hills Citizens Association:*

Dear Supervisor Mendelsohn:

I am writing you today to share with you the position of the Pimmit Hills Citizens Association (PHCA) regarding the proposed development of the McLean Commons property.

We, the members and the Board of the PHCA, have been closely following the proposal for this property since it first came to our attention last spring. We have met with representatives from the development group and with our neighbors from the McLean Commons Citizens Association. And, based on the information we have collected to date from all sides, we are quite concerned about the impact that this development as proposed will have on both our neighborhood and the surrounding environs. Our concerns center around three main issues – traffic, the environment, and quality of life.

As you well know, traffic in and around our neighborhood has increased dramatically over the past decade as Tyson's Corner has continued to grow and develop as a major business center. Navigating the byways that surround our neighborhood, including Route 7 and Magarity Road, is often a major challenge given the volume of traffic. With the advent of a high-

density development on the Commons property thousands of new cars will be added to our roads (up to 10,000 by some estimates). Such an increase would aggravate an already serious congestion problem.

Another concern is the impact that the development plan as proposed will have on our already fragile suburban environment. The developer will be clear-cutting trees to make way for high rise buildings, a process that has the potential to lead to a significant runoff problem. In addition, it is expected that there will be increased noise and air pollution from the ongoing presence of heavy construction equipment and the movement of major amounts of dirt and other construction materials during the long period that would be needed to complete such a large development.

Finally, there is the issue of our quality of life. A high-density development would essentially turn Pimmit Hills into a lonely suburban island in the midst of an urban sea. The buffer zone between our neighborhood and Route 123 would no longer exist, bringing an increase in cut through traffic and noise pollution. We trust that you, as a family man and community advocate, will agree with us that such a prospect is not acceptable.

Change is inevitable, and in many instances it is for the better.

*Continued on page 10*

## Pimmit Hills Citizens Participate in Local Christmas in April Project

Who would spend eight hours on a Saturday painting, plumbing, insulating and otherwise repairing a stranger's house? Volunteers for the Christmas in April charity event—including 11 from Pimmit Hills' St.

Luke's United Methodist Church—did just that on April 26.

Kenny Shrader, a Pimmit Hills resident who coordinated the project for the church, said that about 20 people, including the St. Luke's group, worked on a house in Falls Church for Christmas in April. Christmas in April is sponsored by the non-profit group Rebuilding Together. During the one-day, national event, volunteers do free repairs for homeowners who are low-income and elderly or disabled, or who are low-income families with children. Eligible homeowners must be unable to do the repairs themselves.

The owner of the home where the St. Luke's team worked is an elderly woman, Kenny said. Instead of taking on one or two major projects as in some years past, the team did many smaller jobs such as painting, installing a new kitchen floor, insulating the attic, doing



yard work and performing other tasks to improve the house off Sleepy Hollow Road.

This was the church's fifth year of participation in Christmas in

April, Kenny said. He added that volunteers don't need to have any home repair experience to participate. For the church, this kind of community service project is a concrete way to help local families, said Yvonne Cormier, St. Luke's outreach coordinator and a participant in the day's work. Local businesses helped too, contributing food for the volunteers. Domino's Pizza at Willston Plaza, Popeye's at Willston Plaza and Bagels Deli and Donuts on Broad Street all provided much-appreciated food, Yvonne said.

For more information about participating in Christmas in April next year as a volunteer or as a homeowner, contact Rebuilding Together at 1-800-4-REHAB-9 or [www.rebuildingtogether.org](http://www.rebuildingtogether.org). To find out more about St. Luke's, call 703-893-9220 or visit the church at 7628 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church.

*By Leigh Rivenbark, St. Luke's UMC*

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comb, the Cypress Vine (*Ipomoea quamoclit*) looks like a climbing fern sprinkled with white, pink or red starry trumpets. This and the closely related Cardinal Climber (*Ipomoea x multifida*) are also hummingbird favorites. Both are airy twiners that can be grown over a shrub or columnar evergreen or through a perennial vine such as a Clematis. On the more vigorous side of the fence are the Morning Glories (*Ipomoea nil* and *tricolor*). Though related to the two previous vines, the Morning Glories have much larger flowers, some as big as 5 inches across. As their name implies these unfurl their flowers with the sunrise and are gone by the sun's zenith. The colors range from pure white to pink, wine-red, light blue and deep purple. There is one, 'Rose Silk', with open trumpets the color of rosy milk chocolate with a white edge all the way around and foliage liberally splashed with white. And another, 'Mt. Fuji Mix', with variously hued blooms all rimmed and then spoked in white. I've seen these twiners get to the top of a telephone pole by way of the support line, so site these accordingly.

The Moon Vine (*Ipomoea alba*) is the one twiner I won't be without. This vine, with its large tropical-looking, heart-shaped leaves, grows quickly in the heat of summer, making it a great screen. But make sure that your patio furniture is on the sunny side of the trellis for the

best view of an evening show worthy of blender cocktails. As the day wanes and the cool of the evening creeps in, the long, pointed, cork-screwed buds will begin to open, almost as if in time-lapse. In a matter of minutes huge 6-inch, pure white parachutes open to perfume the evening air. One year I paired the white Morning Glory called 'Pearly Gates' with the night-blooming Moon Vine for an extended evening-to-noon display of silky white saucers. My folks plant Moon Vine at the base of their second story deck; the vines quickly climb the supports to ramble through the deck rails and provide an evening display high above the ground.

The Scarlet Runner Bean (*Phaseolus*) serves double duty. Its clusters of bright red blooms make for a lovely display, and its pods are edible (though maybe not the tastiest bean on the pole). And keeping the vine picked keeps the vine blooming. Along the same lines, but not nearly as tasty is the Purple Hyacinth Bean (*Lablab purpureus*). The thick foliage of this twining vine is suffused with purple, the upright clusters of flowers are two-tone purple and the large flattened pods are a rich red-purple. Remember, one can never have enough purple.

A small patch of earth or a good size pot, a few seeds and a string or pole, and stand back! You're going vertical with vines! ☞

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Continued from page 8

With this said, we have seen no evidence to convince us that the changes that will come with this particular development project will result in improvements to our community.

We appreciate your attention to our concerns. We are really looking forward to welcoming you to our upcoming meeting on May 7 and hearing your own views on this and other important community issues.

If you wish to contact me prior to this meeting to discuss this or any other issue further, I may be reached via email at [president@pimmit hills.org](mailto:president@pimmit hills.org) or by phone at 202-393-5174. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Joseph W. Baker  
President  
Pimmit Hills Citizens Association

### *Sunday Journal Extra newspapers cluttering your yard?*

In response to Pimmit Hills residents' complaints about the **unsolicited delivery of the Sunday Journal Extra**, the PHCA wrote to the Journal Newspaper to alert them to the problem and to garner their assistance with a solution. We let the Newspaper's Customer Service Department know that Pimmit Hills residents are frustrated because these newspapers that we did not ask for litter our neighborhood week after week, and those who have tried have been unsuccessful in stopping delivery of the publication to their homes. Just three days after sending our letter, the PHCA received a response from the Newspaper as follows, "If the residents do not want to receive the *Sunday Journal Extra*, please have them call the office at 703-846-8500 or email me ([theresa@jrnl.com](mailto:theresa@jrnl.com)) with their address. The paper will be stopped for a specific address." Joe Baker, PHCA President, has taken advantage of this offer and the paper has indeed stopped coming to his house. So, for all of you out there who want to have delivery of the *Sunday Journal Extra* stopped, call the number listed above or send an email to the address provided. ☺

Cc:

- Supervisor Gerald Connolly, Providence District
- Commissioner Joan DuBois, Dranesville District, Fairfax County Planning Commission
- Commissioner Walter Alcorn, At-Large Member, Fairfax County Planning Commission
- Commissioner Laurie Frost Wilson, At-Large Member, Fairfax County Planning Commission
- Commissioner Ilyong Moon, At-Large Member, Fairfax County Planning Commission
- Ms. Germaine Broussard, President, McLean Citizens Association

# MY CLIENTS WANT TO BUY YOUR HOME!

*Hello Neighbor! My name is Cynthia Bernal, and I'm a realtor with Long & Foster Realtors. I'm also a Pimmit Hills resident!*

Do you realize how HOT the real estate market is in our neighborhood? There are more qualified buyers than there are houses available for them to buy! What does that mean for you as a seller? Well, when supply is low and demand is high, prices go UP. You just might be amazed to know how much your little rambler is worth. Even the smallest Pimmit Hills homes are selling for *over* \$200K, and at a breathtaking pace—usually in just a few days!

Our neighbor's homes are not only selling fast, they're selling *above* list price. There are so many buyers that there are often multiple offers on the same home—and often, the buyers will offer more than list price in the hopes of "winning" the contract and having a home to call their own.

But of course, only one buyer will "win"—the others are still looking for a home to buy! Have you considered selling your home?

*Please give me a call,  
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# The Pimmit Hills Gardener

By Deanne Eversmeyer,  
Horticulturalist

Years ago, before I had a yard of my own, I gardened on a small cement slab patio, growing everything in big black nursery tubs. Not real attractive as pots go, but they were big and they were free. And once the plants filled out, the containers were hardly noticeable. Most of these pots housed annual vines. Guided up the side of the porch by string, they became a beautiful wall garden by mid-summer. I started plants from seed, adding a new variety each spring. Some became favorites and still annually decorate the deck railing out back.

Most flowering vines require lots of sun to perform well, but there are a few that do well in partial shade. One of the showiest of these is the Black-eyed Susan Vine (*Thunbergia alata*), a twiner that produces flat, round flowers of orange-yellow with a black center. This one also comes in a white flowered and an "eye-less" form. Cathedral Bells (*Cobaea scandens*), also known as Cup and Saucer Vine, has never been a vigorous plant for me. But, with its elegant purple or greenish-



white bells and delicate tendrils, it's well worth the effort. One of my all-time favorites, the diminutive Love-in-a-Puff (*Cardiospermum halica-*

*cabum*), is great for growing on smaller structures and shrubs. This tendril climber produces small sprays of tiny white flowers that become little green balloons. As the balloon matures and turns tan, this vine's common name becomes evident: each of the three black seeds within is branded with a tiny white heart.

If you're blessed with lots of sun, your vine choices really open up. A recent newcomer to the vine scene, *Mina lobata*, hasn't yet adopted a well-known common name. Handsome trilobed leaves tinged purple form a lovely foil for forked stems full of small banana-like flowers. The flower color is hard to pin down -- the buds at the tips start red, turn orange, then yellow and finally white as the banana blossoms just barely open. Hummingbirds find this vine worth fighting over.

With leaves cut like a fine-tooth

*continued on page 24*

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# Curb Appeal

By Cynthia Bennat,  
Anderson Road

The longer days and warm weather have drawn us outside, into our backyards and next to the grill. At least, that's where I've been! But don't forget about the front yard--those longer days provide hours of opportunity for improving your home's curb appeal!

Improving your home's curb appeal takes some planning, but it can be fun, and the results are well worth the effort. Start your planning by crossing the street to your neighbor's house. Turn around and take a look at your home. Do you need a dose of curb appeal? If you find it hard to be objective about your own home, take a few photos and show them to someone who's not afraid to be honest—you know, that friend or relative who's happy to tell you when you've gained a few pounds, or share their opinion of your new haircut!

Don't worry—sprucing up the front of your home doesn't have to cost much. The key to success is to not take on too much at once. Start small—plant flowers one month, paint the shutters the next. Hold on to your “before” pictures so you'll be able to compare and see your progress along the way—and to put next to the “after” pictures when

you're done! There are five major areas to focus on:

**Fences.** If you have a fence around the front of your yard, take a look at it from across the street and consider how much of the view it takes up. Probably a lot—which means it should have high priority on your curb appeal list. Make sure it's in good shape—does it need mending? Does it need paint? Or is it such an eyesore or require so much work that you'd be better off just replacing it—or even removing it altogether? There are as many different ways to “enclose” your front yard as there are houses—just a short walk through the neighborhood and you'll be full of ideas—a white picket fence? Or maybe hedges are more your style, or even a raised flowerbed—or maybe you love the look of an uninterrupted green lawn all the way to the curb.

**Vegetation.** This includes lawns, trees, shrubs, shrubs that have grown to the size of trees, vines, weeds, flowers, etc. Get out the pruners, clippers, edgers and mowers and show 'em who's boss! Trim shrubs down to below the windows and away from the doors. If you have trees with low hanging

*Continued on page 14*

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# PIMMIT HILLS Homes

By Grace Zultowski,  
Fay Place

Spring rains may have done more than bring forth the beauty of your landscaping. Rain in under-performing gutters and downspouts can damage your siding or force its way up under your roofing. It can also pool in an area causing basement leaks or it can seep into your crawl space where it provides a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

The best time to inspect your rain handling system is during the rain! Get out the umbrella and boots and walk around your home in a good storm, but not if there's lightning! Look for sagging areas in a long run of gutter where water is spilling over the top instead of running to the downspout. Could it be clogged with leaves and debris? Or has the seam or fastener given way? Also check the flow from the downspouts to insure it moves away from the house.

My Pimmit model has a triangle (gable) formed by the sides of the roof over the front door. Rain flowing down the roof valley had damaged the wood forming the corner of the house. When I had the gutters replaced, I added a corner gutter and downspout at the end of this gable. Now the water is caught and carried to the ground protecting the siding. I also changed the rear downspout location from the west corner to the east. Now it spills on the lower side of the lot and flows away from the

house. No more spring pond in the backyard!

Though you can install gutters and downspouts yourself, it's a two person job. Another negative is that the home stores don't carry a length to reach from one side of the house to the other without a seam. Seams invariably leak over time. My recommendation is to hire a contractor who specializes in extruded aluminum gutters. These are formed on your site to your home's exact measurements. Ask for 6" downspouts. They do a much better job of handling leaves and debris than the standard 4" size.

Will you add screens or not? Debris still gets into the gutters even with screens and they make the job of cleaning the gutters harder – or more expensive. But if you leave the gutters open, you'll need to be conscientious about cleaning them before a fall rain-storm makes it a much more difficult job.

A standard Pimmit house with a bump out addition and four 6" downspouts will cost about \$400-\$500 for the labor and materials to remove and replace all gutters and downspouts. This includes disposal of the old guttering. Planning to replace the siding or the roof? Hold off on replacing gutters. These come down as part of the siding or roofing work.

*Grace Zultowski is a licensed realtor*

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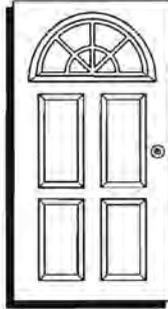
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branches that block the sidewalk in front of your home, trim them up. Edge the lawn along your sidewalk and driveway. If you haven't edged in a while, it may take two or more passes to get a clean edge, but the nice, finished look you'll have in the end is worth it! And finally, pull weeds and add mulch to flowerbeds and around shrubs. Not only does it look great, it will retain moisture and help your plants survive the hot summer months!

**Junk.** I'll admit it—I've got a few extra empty planters sitting around, and that definitely doesn't add curb appeal. What's in your yard? Broken toys, old cars, piles of cinderblocks, or that stray soda bottle some jerk carelessly tossed into your beautiful yard? Clean up the junk, remove debris, bundle up that pile of sticks you started last fall and get rid of it. Or at least hide it around back or in the shed so it won't interfere with your curb appeal!

**Fixtures.** Things like the porch light, your house numbers, and mailbox. If you've ever heard "it's the details that count," they were probably talking about the front of someone's house. It's amazing what a new light, new house numbers and a new mailbox will do for a home—and for relatively little investment. All are available at Home Depot for pretty reasonable prices—we got our new porch light for \$14!



(Although now I wish we'd invested a bit more and bought one of the motion-sensor ones!) You may even consider installing low-voltage lighting along the path to your door, or opt for solar-powered lamps that don't require any wiring at

all. Either one makes a big difference in your home's twilight and nighttime curb appeal, not to mention making the path a bit safer for you!

**The Entrance.** Your front door speaks volumes about you and your home, probably without you ever realizing it. Do you want it to say "neglected" or "fabulous"? You may not need a new door—if it's in good shape, a fresh coat of paint will do the trick. Consider adding shiny accessories, like a new brass knocker, or new handle and dead-bolt. We ended up investing in a new door—with a decorative window in it—and every day when I pull into the driveway, and walk through my new front door, I know it was worth the cost because I feel so good about how it looks!

And that's the fun part of curb appeal—creating a space in front of your home that makes you feel really good about how your home looks. Well, it's also pretty fun to hear the compliments and have your neighbors say WOW!!☪

*Cynthia Bernat is a licensed realtor*

Community with any useful or general information. Since starting my column, the Association has acquired an outstanding editor, Cindy Kwitchoff. She has upgraded the *Dispatch* and it now contains a summary of the Association's meeting minutes, a series of guest writers, and a Letters to the Editor section. All in all, we now have a meaningful and useful community newspaper.

My mission has been largely accomplished and I see no need for continuing *The Grapevine* after this issue. This is my final article. I have enjoyed trying to be a journalist. I look forward to reading the *Dispatch* in the future. My blockbuster announcement is more of thud than bombshell. Well there you have it.

*Donnie Dick lives on Nigh Road*



## Letter to the Editor

**Dear Pimmit Hills Citizens Association,**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to your organization on Tuesday, May 7th. I appreciate your warm welcome and truly enjoyed listening and talking with you. Your association provides a valuable service to the Pimmit Hills community. After listening to you, I am impressed with your dedication to solving the many issues facing our county and state.

If I am elected as your state senator in 2003, I will dedicate myself to providing you with full time representation at the state level. Our needs in Northern Virginia are large. We suffer from congested roads and crowded schools while we send \$2,000 per person more to Richmond than we receive in return.

As your state senator, I will be constant and visible voice in Richmond and will see that we receive a fair share of support from the Commonwealth.

Please contact me if I can address any of your issues and concerns between now and 2003.

Thank you and best regards,

**Dave Hunt**

Candidate for Virginia State Senate in 2003

P.O. Box 5372

Herndon, VA 20172-5372

Phone 703-450-5127

email: [dhunt@landonstark.com](mailto:dhunt@landonstark.com)



## Donnie Dick's Heard Through the Grapevine

I attended the PHCA Yard Sale on April 20th. While there, I noticed several broken windows in the Association's office building. I can only assume that this was done by local vandals. Parents, do you know where your children are? This



senseless destruction of Community property is an expense only to the residents of Pimmit Hills. Maybe someone living in that area has seen or heard something and could be helpful in apprehending the guilty ones?

In the May issue of the Grapevine, I was ruminating about the State Lottery and asked for help from our computer friends. Beware of what you ask for because you might receive it. Well I did. Irv Poole of Pimmit Drive downloaded a publication entitled Virginia Lottery General Information. For some reason, the Lottery Board has copyrighted the publication and I would need their permission to publish it. I therefore will have to paraphrase the information. Besides, it doesn't contain all of the pertinent data.

Virginia established a lottery in 1987. One-third of the lottery proceeds are sent to the Commonwealth and our elected officials determined how to spend it.

The money collected by the lot-

tery is divided up by the winners, lottery expenses and the Commonwealth (an average of 35% of the take). In 1989, the state's share has changed to be used for capital construction projects. Then from 1990 to 1998, the

proceeds were transferred to the General Fund. Finally in 1999, lottery proceeds were distributed to local public school division to be used solely for educational purposes.

The publication does not define what a local school division is or what constitutes an educational purpose nor does it show how much of the proceeds are distributed to each locale. In fiscal year 2001, the lottery turned over to the Commonwealth of Virginia \$1329.2 million. How much of this was raised in Fairfax and how much was distributed to the Fairfax School Board is not indicated in this publication. The Lottery Board also distributed \$97.7 million of unclaimed prizes to some entity named The Literary Fund. So there in a nutshell is what I found.

Now for the blockbuster I promised in the May issue. I started the "Heard Through the Grapevine" column because I thought the *Pimmit Hills Dispatch* was not providing the

*Continued on next page*



**Grace  
Zultowski**  
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Pimmit Hills

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If you are planning to SELL your home I'd be pleased to assist you. Be ready to move. The average days on market for Pimmit Hills homes is just fifteen! There are many buyers available who are interested in our wonderful neighborhood, our large treed lots and our closeness to the Beltway and the Metro.

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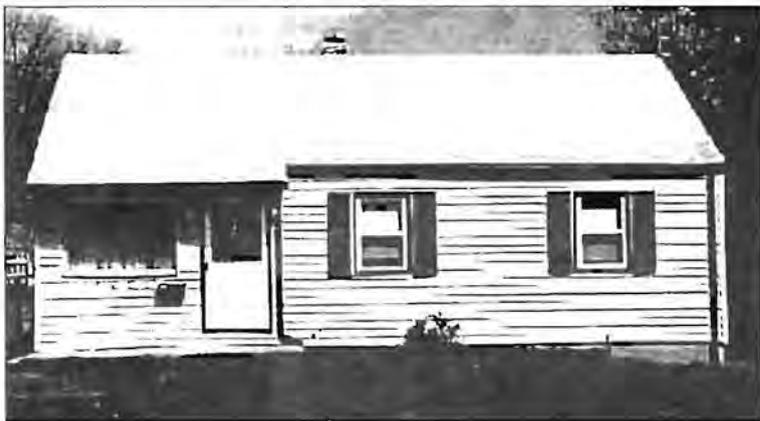


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