



The Neighborhood Newsletter

Volume 12 Number 2

The Iced Tea Issue, July, 2005



SCISSORS GRINDERS AND ORGAN MEN

by Bill Berkowitz (*Pelham Terrace*)

The average American, we are told, moves every seven years or so. Few of us stay rooted for as long as a generation. So when you meet up with a neighbor who has lived almost three generations on the same street, and in the same house, you know you're talking to someone special. Ruth Tee of Devereaux Road is one of those special people, an irreplaceable neighborhood resource, and a link to a past we'll never see again.

Ruth was born in Everett and moved to her brand-new home on Devereaux Road in 1923, just before she was 7. From her window, all you could see then was farms. Eighty-two years later, she is still living there, together with Kirby, her husband of 60 years, who himself was raised just down Pleasant Street. It's a rare pleasure to hear Ruth tell stories and share a lifetime of accumulated wisdom.

What was it like to grow up back then? In some ways, it was the same – you went to school, you came home and played. And if you were a kid, you would test the limits of what you could get away with. “When we were little girls, about 7 or 8, we went down to James O. Holt’s store, where Cambridge Savings Bank is now. We

bought some penny candy, and said to the storekeeper, ‘Charge it.’ Mr. Holt called our parents and told them, ‘We’d better nip this in the bud.’ ”

But in other ways, the neighborhood was very different. Radios were just coming into their own, and not everyone had a car (a horse was kept in a barn down the street); so people had to make more of their own entertainment. Ruth remembers that neighbors would gather round and sing at their house – church songs, theater songs, whatever was traditional or popular. Ernest Benshimol, who lived on Gould Road, would come over to play the mandolin, while Ruth’s father or mother played the piano. When was the last time you spent the night singing?

When Ruth was growing up, you could swim more easily in Spy Pond, since there was a beach at the end of the street. People would swim across the pond as a matter of course. In the winter, hundreds of skaters would be out on weekends. Sledders were known to coast down the Kensington Hills, right across Pleasant Street. The ice houses on the pond were still in operation. So were the horse-drawn sidewalk plows, no longer maintained by our Department of Public Works.

And if you couldn’t get to the services you needed, the services would come to you – the milk deliverers, the ginger ale deliverers, and the meat and egg men; but also the scissors grinder, certainly a vanished trade. Even the mail was delivered twice a day. Then there was the traveling organ man, a

local favorite, who would come by the street on Saturdays, place the organ on a pole he carried, and crank out a few tunes.

Some neighbors, Deborah Goldsmith among others, wisely persuaded Ruth to write a book about her neighborhood experiences. And so she did – her booklet, “Recollections of Devereaux Road,” was completed in 2003, with historical maps and photos. Then, to celebrate both its publication and Ruth’s 80th anniversary of living on the street, there was a party (with a giant cake) for everyone on the block, hosted by Louise and Ed Tsoi next door.

Was it life better back then? That’s difficult for Ruth to judge. “Things have changed because I have changed.” You see the neighborhood in a different way when you are a child, or an adult, or someone in their 80’s. Yet this is a neighborhood that can sustain happiness at many different stages of life – especially since two of her three sons live nearby, one right on Jason Street. “I think it’s a special neighborhood, with the people here,” Ruth says. “It’s hard to think of moving now. I don’t know anything else....”

We are blessed with a few other long-term neighbors in their 80’s and 90’s, or headed in that direction. What a wonderful project it would be to get some of their memories down on paper (or onto audio, or video) while we can still easily do it.

Are there any readers who’d be interested in exploring this project further? Let us know.



SCHOOL COMMITTEE IN ARLINGTON: THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY

by Sue Sheffler (*Kensington Park*)

Hi neighbors: I thought the title might encourage you to read this article, even though many think of School Committee work as “drudgery dealing with bureaucrats.” And back in the day, or on another planet where educational principles are well understood, agreed-upon, and well funded, that may be true.

Here in Arlington, we suffer from exactly none of those boring attributes. I was elected to the School Committee in 2003 (by 16 votes), about a month before our town voted NOT to replace the millions of dollars pulled out of our “state aid to towns” in ‘03. So I went from naïve political campaigner to naïve Override campaigner. Many of us worked doggedly, and simply could not believe that a terrific town like ours would not pull together and support its youth and elder services, libraries, and public safety.

I learned a lot that first year – that was the “agony” part. We were forced to lay off 12 % of our teachers, cut the ratio of adults at Arlington High School to an educationally unhealthy low, and cancel programs that teachers and citizens (and my friends) had spent many years initiating and funding with grants; and still I often heard, “Well, the Override failed, and the sky didn’t fall in: What’s the problem?” Increased class sizes, and loss of library and Spanish and art teachers (for example) directly affected most students, teacher morale, and the high educational standards we hold dear in our community. And I could not figure out how to make this clear to the public.

But here is the interesting part: Despite the unfairness of (unfunded) federal and state mandates, despite the deep jolts to morale, and despite some-

times overwhelming workloads, staff and parent volunteers gradually pulled off a mini-miracle. Parents stepped in to teach art in the classroom, and to replace elementary Spanish with other programs. The ACE program was restored at Ottoson through parent fundraising; the 5th-grade science camp was available for every 5th-grade student, as always.

Let me be very clear: Parent (and other) volunteers were already doing a huge amount of volunteering; after the last Override failed, many started taking days and weeks off from their jobs and families to fill the gaps. So we are deeply indebted to these volunteers who stepped up to the plate, as well as to the school administration for working twice as hard with fewer resources, and to the staff who were willing to work out trusting relationships and good oversight for these programs.

And now to the good part: This time around, the most visible officials and citizens have agreed to work together to get decent funding established for our town, along with fiscal controls on spending. That is a major departure from the mess two years ago, and absolutely essential if we are to move forward with improved education and town services in Arlington, including fine libraries, solid public safety, and support for the neediest.

And even before [at this writing] we know the outcome of the June 11 election, I will share some unsolicited quotes from teachers that make all the sweat and toil worthwhile:

“We WANT to make a difference for students – good School Committees give us wings.”

“I am PASSIONATE about teaching – please just give me enough space and a little support, and I can change lives.”

And that is part of the “ecstasy” of this job. The other part is seeing schools and individual students succeed in our imperfect system and culture, and knowing that I gave some small assist, or removed a barrier. But I’ll save those stories for another time....

Epilogue, June 20 [after the passage of the Override nine days earlier]:

My faith in the community is not just affirmed, it is almost transcendent. The extraordinary effort of very diverse individuals working as a team this time around allowed us to keep Arlington on fiscal life support. We are blessed.

But whichever way you voted, or feel about the outcome, know that your elected officials now face the very difficult task of keeping to the 5-year spending caps we attached to the successful Override. In a world of medical expense increases of 15% annually, ever-increasing mandates on the school system, and other new challenges, we will need plenty of public support and goading. So demand accountability from your elected and appointed officials – of course including myself.

Here’s to a successful next few years for our community – Sue.



PLANTING GRASS ROOTS

by Mary Cummings (*Jason Street*)

About six neighbors gathered at an “election grief group” last December to share our frustrations with the presidential campaigns and the Bush administration’s policies and actions. We wined, whined, and consoled each other and then began to plant a very small patch of political grass. Could a small group of neighbors have an impact on national politics? It seemed worth a try.

Pooling our perspectives, experiences, resources, and ideas has made us feel at least a bit empowered. Most of us had some experience with various national political organizations such as Move On, Democracy for America, or Common Cause, which allowed us to broaden all of our information bases and identify the most effective routes for our efforts. We also shared some books and articles that

we hope to discuss at a future gathering.

Ours is primarily an information and opinion-sharing group, using e-mail to stay loosely connected and supportive. While we get together periodically to compare notes and brainstorm, each member has taken also action independently. Members might sign petitions, write letters to national media, organize meetings, make phone calls, or just pass along important alerts. For example, getting more Democrats in the Senate is a generally agreed-upon goal in the group. The Democratic National Committee frequently sends appeals for support for candidates in other states, and we share our knowledge and opinions about these candidates through e-mail.

The first few seeds are spreading their grassy roots. Our e-mail list has grown to about thirty members, and we hope to have a get-together over the summer to compare notes and books, brainstorm, and simply enjoy each other's company. Having an impact on the national government seems possible for this small group of neighborhood liberals.

We know we represent one of several perspectives in a diverse and interesting neighborhood. We'd love to hear about other perspectives or political action groups in which our neighbors participate, whether or not they are similar to our own. Please be in touch at jhitesnews@comcast.net.



REAL ESTATE UPDATE

by Judy Weinberg (*Venner Road*)

As a neighbor pointed out to me, two sure signs that spring has arrived (the return of the red-breasted robins notwithstanding) are the return of the trash barrels to Menotomy Rocks Park, and the For Sale signs that start sprouting up. This year has proved no different, and it has been another busy real estate season in Arlington. Mortgage rates have stayed low (less than 6% for a 30 year fixed loan with no points), which is a significant factor

in keeping the market so active. New buyers are entering the housing market, and homeowners are making moves to accommodate their changing needs.

Real estate is an ongoing source of interest and conversation everywhere. Cover stories discussing real estate graced the covers of both *Fortune* and *Time* magazines this spring, and *Money Magazine's* June issue was devoted exclusively to this topic. There are almost as many opinions about the direction of real estate as there are people to write about it; but historically, real estate value has only increased. If there is indeed a "bubble" in our area, it hasn't burst yet. Arlington continues to be an in-demand town.

Many homeowners have wrestled with the should-we-move or should-we-renovate conundrum. A *Boston Globe* article from earlier this year discussed home renovations, and how much of a return you can expect from different projects. Arlington's own Peter Feinmann, of Feinmann Remodeling, was quoted extensively. The general consensus was that it's hard to go wrong updating kitchens and bathrooms, or adding a family room. These renovations make homes more desirable, and help them sell faster and for more money when they go on the market. Finished basements will bring you the least return on your investment.

For those of you that missed the April *Boston Magazine*, it was their annual "Best Places to Live" issue. Of the 22 somewhat irreverent categories, the editors' subjective rankings placed Arlington a runner-up in four categories: The Foodie, The New Parent, The Empty Nester, and The Granola-Eating Liberal.

If you would like copies of any of these articles, or would just like more information, please feel free to e-mail me at judyweinberg@comcast.net.

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Real Estate in Our Neighborhood

The wonderful house at the top of Stony Brook Road has been going through extensive renovations, and has piqued the curiosity of many. The house, which was built in 1941, is on the inventory of architecturally significant properties in town, and the owners have taken significant steps to fit their construction plans into the architectural history and style of the house. The existing finished space was 4,938 square feet, and there will be 7,239 sq. ft. of finished space after completion. This information was garnered from the Statement of Proceedings from Arlington's Zoning Board regarding this project.

Following is a list of the sales in our **Newsletter** neighborhood from January 1st through July 1st, 2005. These are broker assisted sales, and do not show for-sale-by-owner transactions:

Single Family Homes

43 Bailey Road	\$536,000
9 High Haith Road	\$560,000
15 Monadnock Road	\$595,000
195 Pleasant Street	\$615,000
26 Morton Road	\$615,000
12 Lakeview Road	\$670,000
11 Lincoln Street	\$786,500
156 Jason Street	\$846,500
25 Norfolk Road	\$871,000
54 Irving Street	\$1,575,000

Condos

125 Pleasant St, #204	\$255,000
72 Gloucester St, #2	\$360,000
186 Pleasant St, #1	\$419,000
77 Bartlett St, #2	\$490,000
18 Hopkins Road	\$545,000
184 Pleasant Street	\$542,200
105 Pleasant Street	\$625,000
75 Bartlett Avenue	\$639,000
144 Pleasant St, #1	\$677,500
144 Pleasant St, #2	\$712,500

SERVICE REFERRAL ADDITIONS

See the whole list on our website!

Arborists

Arboreye Tree Care 777-4404

Handyman

Chaz Larzalere * (781) 454-9334



USING CAMERAS TO SEE CHANGE AT MENOTOMY ROCKS PARK

by John Pickle (*Venner Road*)

Many of us don't realize just how much our landscape changes every day. The Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park and Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation are creating a system to help us see and measure changes in our local parks. We have installed two *PicturePosts* in each park that help visitors take pictures of the same landscape each time.

The pictures may be submitted to a website (<http://picturepost.smugmug.com/>), and the accumulated sequence of images will be used in a variety of ways: to document the encroachment of invasive species as well as see natural changes and growth of plants; to share with scientists using satellite imagery in monitoring landcover change over regional, national, and global scales; and to make the images available to students before or after visits to the parks.

So what is a *PicturePost*? It is a secure post anchored in the ground, with a round disk and an octagonal plate attached to the top. It allows the camera to rest on a steady surface with the back edge of the camera supported by one edge of the octagon. Each post has specific information inscribed on it, so with the click of the camera, the location of the following set of images is automatically marked. In Menotomy Rocks Park, the posts are mounted right next to Hill's Pond, near the front and back park fields. For more information on post locations and about submitting pictures, as well as basic facts about the *PicturePosts*, see <http://picturepost.smugmug.com/gallery/635128>.

The *PicturePosts* have been the result of a number of participating groups and projects. The beginning discussions started through a NASA-funded grant at the Museum of Science, "Measuring Vegetation Health." The need to support remote sensing research using citizen sci-

ence efforts in local parks came about through discussions with scientists at University of New Hampshire, Boston University, and Brandeis University. Jean Rogers, Elizabeth Wylde, and Bob Forrester of the Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation, and Clarissa Rowe, Tom Gonsiorowski, David Bean, Ellen Reed, and John Pickle of the Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park worked together to take a basic idea and to overcome challenges in creating the present *PicturePost*. The current versions are made of wood, but we hope that if other park groups are interested, we can manufacture a number of posts made of metal or recycled plastic.



CLEARING OUR CLUTTER AND HELPING OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

by Marlene Alderman (*Hillsdale Road*)

We love our Arlington neighborhood and neighbors – so many of us have lived here a long time. Our lives are filled with great memories, but I must confess that my house is full of junk. Whenever I no longer need something, I just put it in the attic or the basement.

But during the last year I've noticed several articles on the virtues of clearing the clutter in our lives and on how to do it. For example, Mary Donius in Hingham rented a two-ton dumpster for a week for \$370 and filled it to its limit. Household items from the Kennedy family homes sold for \$5.5 million at a Sotheby's auction dubbed "Camelot's Attic" in February. And 1-800-GOT-JUNK? is a hugely successful franchise that hauls your stuff away.

There are 3000 members of the National Organization of Professional Organizers, including 125 in Massachusetts. On her web site, www.clutter-organizing.com, Stephanie Roberts, Feng Shui practitioner, promotes the

virtues of clearing your junk in fascinating articles entitled "*Clutter Clearing and Your Authentic Self*" and "*Clutter's Side Effects: How the State of Your Home Affects Your Life*." She says: "Clutter saps your energy and erodes your spirit. Clutter makes it difficult to get things done, enjoy peace and quiet, or spend time the way you really want to. It adds to your stress, slows you down and drains your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual strength."

Stephanie's enthusiasm suggests that clearing your clutter will make you happier and more balanced than a week of spa treatments at Canyon Ranch in Lenox:

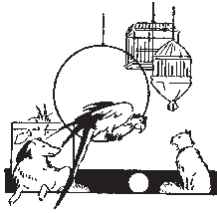
"Stop thinking of clutter-clearing as a tremendous chore, and start thinking of it as one of the most effective self-improvement tactics available to you. Every magazine you recycle, every book you give to the library, every item of clothing you release to a new owner creates space in your life for new insight, energy, joy, and experiences to come in!"

Personally, Neighbors, I am inspired to do some clearing of my clutter. If you are, too, maybe we can do something together. Sotheby's probably doesn't want our stuff, and we are a neighborhood of recyclers, so the dumpster isn't the best option. So how about a neighborhood tag sale to pass our treasures on to others? Two options would be a group sale somewhere near the park, or just having tag sales at our individual homes on the same day to draw buyers to the neighborhood.

If sellers in the tag sale are interested, we can benefit our neighborhood, too. We can donate individually, or pool a percentage of our "profits" from the sale of our items and give it to worthy neighborhood causes – the **Neighborhood Newsletter**, the Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park, the schools, Germaine Lawrence, etc.

If you are interested in this tag sale idea, please contact me at alderman@bu.edu or at 641-0911. We can then decide the most convenient way to organize the sale and the best date – probably in early Fall. Thanks for considering it!

THREE STORIES OF CRITTERS AMONG US



PETS – WHAT’S THE ATTRACTION?

by Cindy Starks (*Monadnock Road*)

Our neighborhood homes are full of pets. From cats to dogs, birds to lizards, hamsters to goldfish, we seem to have them all. The more I asked neighbors about what pets they had, the more I found! I started to wonder, “What is it about a pet that so attracts us?” At a very young age, well before we can read the studies telling us that pets are good for our health and drastically reduce our stress levels, we seem to be attracted to the idea of having a pet. I have yet to meet a kid who doesn’t want one in one form or another.

So I interviewed some kids in the neighborhood who had pets, to see if I could figure out the attraction. I spoke to Rachel Chasteen, Will Cates, and Morgan Hopeman, all 5th-graders at Bishop Elementary School. Between them they have two dogs, four cats, two lovebirds, a beta fish, a hamster, and a bearded dragon. The first thing that struck me was the obvious affection they had for each one of their animals. Repeatedly they told me how much they loved them, loved having them around, and loved everything about them. As they described their pets, they spoke with such pride you could have mistaken them for parents describing their gifted and wonderful children.

When I asked why they liked having a pet, they unanimously responded that their pets gave them someone to hang out with, cuddle up to, play with, and confide in. And like parents, they don’t play favorites with their pets. They may enjoy the company of one more than another at any given time, but those who had more than one pet denied that they liked any one better than

the others. The other thing that struck me about these young pet owners was the incredible sense of responsibility that they all felt towards their animals. They truly understood that these creatures depended on them for their food, exercise, and companionship, and they were more than happy to fulfill those needs. Again, a sort of pride in being able to care for something so completely came out as I spoke to each one of them.

Trying to find the chink in the armor, I asked if there were any drawbacks to having pets. Will couldn’t think of any; but Rachel told me that cleaning up after them sometimes got tiring, and Morgan confided that when her homework piled up, it was sometimes hard to find the extra time her puppy needed to walk or play. But each one of them made sure to tell me that every single minute invested in their pets was worth it tenfold.

So what attracts kids to pets? At first I thought I hadn’t figured it out, but then I realized that it has something to do with the pure, unconditional love that both children and animals have to share. Even at a very young age, kids have figured out that the affection you get back from a pet is everything you put into it – and so much more.



MAKE WAY

by David Wright (*Windermere Lane*)

I live at the end of Windermere Lane, where it dead-ends between Bartlett and Jason. On the morning of May 12 at about 8 am, I was home waiting for someone to come check the house for carpenter ants. When I opened the door, his first words were, “Hey, look at this!”

A mother mallard, apparently coming down Windermere Lane from who knows where, had just turned off the street, headed through the open gate of our wooden fence, and was marching up the brick walk toward the house, nine fuzzy

chicks in tow. This was clearly a duck on a mission. Paying no attention to the two of us, she made a sharp left turn when she got to the edge of our garden and headed east across the lawn between the Newell’s and Barry’s houses on Jason Street, with the chicks struggling to keep up. Watching them with a mix of amusement and admiration, we noted that some instinct seemed to be pulling them straight toward Spy Pond—and realized their course would first take them across busy Jason Street.

By the time we caught up to them, it was a scene straight out of “Make Way for Ducklings.” The mother was standing on the curb squawking at the passing cars, with the little ones running around her. I ran out into Jason waving two cars to a stop (though without Officer Michael’s style or finesse), and the fuzzy yellow line proceeded across. At the far side of the street, the mother and eight of the chicks jumped the curb and kept going, but the last chick made several futile leaps that sent it bouncing back into the street. In desperation it found a low spot in the curb, reached the top, and caught up with the pack.

The last thing we saw of them was their disappearing behind a house and under some bushes, still headed determinedly due east.



SAVING BERRY ROBIN

by Mary Cummings (*Jason Street*)

I found a little robin baby under my mulberry tree last week. His mother was on the job, feeding him and squawked loudly whenever I approached. I kept an eye on him all day keeping other critters (my dog Tess) far away. In the late afternoon, I noticed that he was covered with flies and his situation looked dire. I carried him over to Ellen Reed, a naturalist and neighbor, who knew exactly what to do. His left wing was swollen, infected, featherless, and covered with maggot eggs which Ellen deftly cleaned away. She expertly nursed him for the next few days, even taking him to work

with her so she could continue to feed him on schedule. We named him Berry after the mulberry tree under which he appeared. Thanks to Ellen, he will probably be able to return to the wild.

Ellen provided us with some pointers for dealing with fallen fledglings: At this time of year many birds are fledging – that means they are leaving the nest, but still depend on adult birds to feed them for a few more days. The juvenile birds will sit on the ground or hang around in a bush and seem to be unable to fly. They usually can, but are not confident enough to go far. Fledglings have a full suit of feathers, though their tails may still be shorter than adult birds. Baby birds that fall out of nests do not have nearly as many feathers, especially wing feathers. It is best to put a fallen baby bird back into its nest, as its parents can take better care of them than humans can. According to Diane Scuderi, Arlington Animal Control officer, it is their policy to let nature take its course. Most vet hospitals will not accept injured wildlife. Your best bet is either Tufts or The Animal Clinic of Lynnfield, at 1 Baystate Rd., 781-334-4161.

See a picture of Berry on our web page <http://jhitesnews.org>



A FRIDAY EVENING IN JUNE

...Out for a walk, on a Friday evening early in June. And experiencing the sights and sounds of a neighborhood that seems at ease and at peace with itself:

The usual dog walkers, almost certainly more connected to the neighborhood than those dogless others. . . . American flags on several houses, one mounted right next to a rainbow flag. Not far away, another flag with “Say no to the Bush agenda.”

. . . A “Save Tibet” bumper sticker – actually, two of them. . . Multiple yard sale signs hung on the phone poles at the corner of Jason and Gray, which is surely Yard Sale Central. . .

Signs for “Lori’s party” near Menotomy Rocks Park, with high-school-age kids hanging out and talking on the front steps; best wishes, Lori, wherever you may be. . .

A neighbor comes out onto his porch, cell phone in hand: “I found this new computer program...”; well, he’s still in work mode. . .

The park itself is unsurprisingly peaceful and also surprisingly silent, even though it’s not yet dark; the loudest sounds come from traffic on Route 2, but only if you pay attention. . . The bulletin board bursts with commercial ventures. (Though where are the neighbor-to-neighbor communications, or neighborhood thoughts for the day?). .

Oh, there’s a boy of about six with his grandma. He introduces himself proudly: “I found a caterpillar.” How many caterpillars live in the neighborhood, anyway. . . ?

Walking back toward home, getting darker now, a number of houses with giant plasma TV’s so prominently placed you can enjoy the show from the sidewalk. . .

Different sounds emerging from the Friends of the Drama on Academy Street; another show, a live one, is on the works. . .

....On this ordinary walk, two thoughts come to mind. There’s always a time to help make our neighborhood and wider world a better place to live, such an important part of what makes life worthwhile. Yet there’s also a time to step back and simply appreciate the comfort and security, the beauty and serenity, the small everyday graces that our neighborhood offers us daily. These themes are intertwined, perhaps – for acknowledging the one may enhance the other. . . - BB



THE ROVING REPORTER

by Ben Kuhn and Jessie Brown
(Jason Street)

Our question this time was, “If Jason Russell came back today, what would he find most surprising about our neighborhood?”

“The Unitarian Church.” Kevin Barbera, Lakeview

“Electricity!” William Gascoigne, Gray Street

“That his field and his house are still there.” Charlie Hoffstrom, Age 6, Bartlett Avenue

“That his house is the only thing still there.” Gene Benson, Hillsdale Road

“All the wheels and engines.” Annie Schwab, Bellevue Road

“All the Chinese restaurants.” Janet Gascoigne, Gray Street

“The lurid color of his house.” Joan Platt, Mount Vernon Street

“The apartment building across the street.” Donovan Robinson, Jason Street.

“Cell phones.” John Pickle, Venner Road

“No more blunderbusses!” MaryAnna Foskett, Brantwood Road

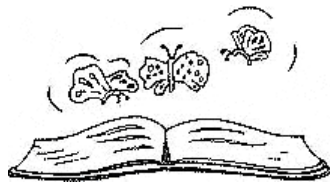
[And now for some views of residents a bit closer to the ground...]

“The advent of leashes.” Teeny, dachshund, visiting from Haverhill

“Fire hydrants. Of course I don’t use them myself, but Mr. Russell might be interested.” Winder, lurcher, Bartlett Avenue

“Paved roads – They’re great, but in winter, the salt hurts my paws.” Godot, leonberger, Brantwood Road.

Enter the contest on our new website <http://jhitesnews.org>



POETRY CORNER: OUR YOUNG NEIGHBORHOOD POETS

Compiled and introduced by Jessie Brown (Jason Street)

For some time now, we've hoped that this **Newsletter** could give a forum to youngsters as well as adults in our neighborhood. Poetry seemed an ideal medium, because of its brevity. So we posted signs at Menotomy Rocks Park and at Johnnie's Foodmaster inviting student work. In just one week, we received these poems. (In some cases, follow-up phone calls helped encourage contributions.)

The pieces below show how much talent, humor, and courage lie hidden in our young writers. Please let us know you and your children's responses. If it receives support, this first student poetry column may open the way for others.

MOTHER-OF-PEARL CLOUDS

*Pearly, pure, paradise, prismatic,
Sweeping, sunset, serene.
Pale, profound, polychromatic,
Off-white, opaline.
Luminous, lovely, lustrous,
Azure, alabaster.
Nirvana, nasturtium, nacreous,
Joyful, jocund, jasper.*

Steffi Klosterman, 11, Lincoln St.

THE SEPARATION OF PEN & PAPER

*Oh lovely paper,
I am your new friend, pen.
My name is short,
My name is Ben.
We will grow so close—you will learn
To love me, my pulpy dear,
For I had hoped to accompany you
For the rest of the school year.
So it is with great sadness
I tell you, my new-found friend,
It looks like our partnership
Has come to an unfortunate end.*

*But as Shakespeare said, my pretty papyrus—
Parting is such sweet sorrow'
Because you are home work,
For Mrs. G..... tomorrow.*

Rachel Dillon, 9, Bartlett Ave.

CAT

*The sun is a yellow cat
stalking over the horizon
after the mouse-like moon.
It slips its paws through windows
where an old black Lab lies
bathing in warmth.
Batting away a veil of clouds
it steps daintily over the water
and the last glimmers of warmth
fade away as its tail dips
over the horizon and
disappears.*

Ben Kuhn, 12, Jason St.

KENDRA'S ANTI-POTATO POEM

*One potato, two potato,
Three potato, four,
Five, six, seven, eight and
No more!*

Kendra Griesman, 7, Jason St.

THE STUPIDITY OF POLITICIANS

*is an asteroid shrieking
wailing through hostile cities,
slippery, silky, hurtling
into the ocean of power.*

Trevor Griesman, 11, Jason St.

SUMMER

*I love to play
in summer time
when everything's
abloom. I love to drink
in summer time, when
everything is hot. I
love summertime!*

Emily Kohlberg, Gray St.

I LOVE MY FAMILY

*I love my mom
I love my dad
I love my sister
I love my brother
And I love me.*

Emily Kohlberg, Gray St.

BIRDS

*Soaring, stealing, shrieking seabirds swoop
throughout the bay.
Solemn and slumberous spotted owls shelter
from a snowy storm.
Startled sparrows snootily scold a stealthy
serpent, so fey.
Social starlings stick side by side in a sudden
screaming swarm.*

*A solitary southern eagle silently soars over
striking sierras.
Slender swans sagely skim over shallow
silvery water.
Sable storm petrels saucily sidle up to each
other, so curious.
Sly and sneaky chickens may somehow
escape the slaughter.*

*Sepia swallows seek sapid seeds, some which
seem solid.*

*A soggy smoke-colored baby sanderling
suddenly shyly squawks.*

*Somber, stout snowy owls stare at me, so
stolid.*

*Through slimy, sandy, and steamy water, a
stately stork stalks.*

*Stocky shrieks suddenly scream, sounding
their sharp shrill call.*

*Secretive, suave sora rails stroll through their
snug swampy home.*

*Saffron spintails slowly build substantial
nests near a stone wall.*

*Scarlet ibises in sizable swarms will
sometimes together roam.*

Steffi Klosterman, Lincoln St.

LEAVES

*Leaves
twirling, dancing,
swirling and prancing.
In this pretty fall
weather, leaves slowly
blow far
away*

Rachel Dillon, Bartlett Ave.

COMING UP SOON...!

A survey to learn more about life in our neighborhood, soon to be mailed to a sample of neighbors. If you get a copy, please let us know what you think!

A NEIGHBORHOOD MARATHONER

by Colin Campbell (*Morton Road*)



Catherine and James Mansfield raised nine children in Newport Street in Arlington, six of whom still live in town. On April 18th, their youngest son Matt, our neighbor on Morton Road, ran the Boston Marathon. He finished in an official time of 4 hours and 21 minutes, not bad at all for his first time running this race, and for his first marathon ever!

But this run meant a lot to Matt in other ways. He ran the race for a very important cause – to raise money for the Alzheimer’s Association in honor of his mother, Catherine, who suffers from Alzheimer’s. To prepare for the event, Matt trained intensively for several months before race day. He performed a great number of maintenance runs each week, and long distance runs over the weekends. Despite an injury in February, he continued to train by swimming.

In addition to his running pursuits, Matt plays hockey in the winter and now enjoys swimming. When asked if he had any tips for aspiring marathoners, he said, “Realize it is doable.” He added that one must recognize that “You are going to spend a long time on it, and it takes a long time to train.”

Matt lives on Morton Road with his wife Gwen and his two young sons, Luke and Sean. He raised over \$9000.00 in his marathon effort to honor his mother and help her cause. Matt wishes to thank his supporters for their generosity to the Alzheimer’s Association; and we thank Matt as well.

Colin Campbell is a Sophomore at Arlington High



A NEIGHBORHOOD CAR SHOW

Are you ready to show off your vintage car, or to check out some of the older 4-wheeled beauties in the neighborhood? There’s some interest in putting together a neighborhood car show! – so if you’d like to hop in the driver’s seat, or get in on the action, contact Vern Brown at 24 Gray Street.

STORIES WE’D LIKE TO SEE...

There are plenty of stories we’d like to see in the Newsletter; unfortunately, we don’t always get around to writing them. Our reach usually exceeds our grasp, which isn’t necessarily a bad thing, except when we realize how much life in the neighborhood goes unchronicled. Wish it weren’t so.

So here’s our proposal to you: Can you think of a neighborhood story or article you might like to contribute, whether an offhand note or a full-length feature? Is there a special neighbor who should be profiled? A distinctive event that has occurred? An uncommon place in the neighborhood, some hidden gem few others may be aware of? Or just an idea you have, or something you’d like other neighbors to know about?

For most of you, we suspect the answer to at least one of these questions is “yes.” If so, let us know. Write it up, in your own style. Send it in. We’re ready to help and guide you whenever you wish. Whether it’s a simple suggestion or a polished product, we’re glad to hear – and we’d like to hear – from you. Contact us at jhitesnews@comcast.net.



GETTING THE NEWS OUT

The Neighborhood Newsletter is brought to your door by our steadfast team of distributors coordinated by Dolores Schueler and Ann Tulimieri.

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NEWS FROM OUR WEBSITE

by Mary Cummings (*Jason Street*)

Many thanks to Ken Lubar (*Gray Street*) for setting up our first website and single-handedly managing it for several years. Ken will continue to help us as a web advisor as we make the transition from www.neighborhoodnewsletter.org to <http://jhitesnews.org>.

I’ll be managing the new page for a while and hope to enlist a partner or two. The new site will feature an updated Service Referral List and back issues of the Neighborhood Newsletter in Adobe reader format. We can post pictures related to articles as well as a few other neighborhood snaps with the permission of any adults who might be in the picture. We will not post pictures of children and names of children will be deleted from articles for the web newsletter versions.

Please let us know if you’d like to join our website team. Volunteers are welcome!; contact me at jhitesnews@comcast.net. We’d also appreciate any suggestions you may have for the site, so that we can communicate with each other electronically as well as in print.

CONTACT THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

We always welcome your letters, articles or suggestions, as well as any donations you might be able to make. To contact Mary Cummings, Editor:

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The Neighborhood Newsletter relies upon your contributions. To make a contribution, please make checks payable to “Menotomy Rocks Neighborhood Association” and send to Bill Berkowitz at 12 Pelham Terrace Thank you for your support!