February, 2014

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!
Polar vortex aside, January is actually my favorite month of the year. The cold slows me down a bit and I get the time to reflect on the past and make plans for the future. For our organization 2013 was a banner year for donations. Betsy Hedeman made a very generous donation in memory of her late husband, William Hedeman and friends and family of Greg Senkus donated generously to honor his commitment to the preservation of the Town Hall. We also had quite a few people who added to their membership fees and one person who donated towards the bake sale, but never bought a cake. All of these donations are tax deductible since we have the 501c-3 status. If anyone did not receive a letter for a donation made during 2013, please contact Rob Mintz or me (numbers above).

While being financially solvent is a wonderful thing, it is bittersweet. We lost some of our most dedicated members. I have never been to a general meeting or Relay event where Jackie Hedeman, William’s niece, was not present. Sadly she lost her battle with cancer last November. The Hedemans were, without question, a family dedicated to the community, whether it was a commitment of time or money. In that spirit, I ask you to take a minute and fill in the membership form. You can send it to the P.O. Box, bring it to the next meeting or drop it off at my house. In February everyone in the community gets a copy of the newsletter either in paper form or via email if you have selected that in the past. After this newsletter you will only get the newsletter if you join RIA for the year.

Spring is just around the corner. How do I know for sure? The chickens have started to lay.

All the best for 2014 to everyone.

UPCOMING EVENTS
February 3 – RIA Agenda Setting Meeting
February 10 – RIA General Meeting
February 16 – Covered Dish Dinner (Hergenhan)
February 19 – Bookies
February 20 – Men’s Club
March 15 – Relay History Day
March 16 - Covered Dish Dinner (Trevey)
March 19 – Bookies
April 11 – Newsletter submissions deadline
April 13 – Covered Dish Dinner (McKean)
April 16 - Bookies

RIA AGENDA SETTING MEETING -
Monday, February 3 at 7:30 PM
If you have a topic you would like to add to the February 10 RIA General Meeting agenda, please come to the Town Hall on Monday, February 3 at 7:30 PM. Any member is welcome.

RIA GENERAL MEETING – Monday, February 10 at 7:30 PM
The guest speaker at the next Relay Improvement Association meeting on Monday, February 10 is Bryan Sheppard, Special Assistant to the County Executive Kevin Kamenetz. Mr. Sheppard will
give an update on plans for a new elementary school in Relay and take questions from members about that project.

Our sincere thanks to our previous speaker in November, Charles Bury, Special Agent with CSX, who shared cautions and safety tips for pedestrian railroad safety. We are all more mindful now.

The RIA remains committed to Maryland Food Bank collection, especially during this cold season. A box for non-perishable foods will be at the front door of the Town Hall before the meeting. Thank you to Lucy McKean for taking the food to SWES. Please also check out the article in this newsletter that tells more about SWES by our very own Barbara Reeves.

During the February meeting, we will also discuss and vote on a bylaws amendment. Some information is as follows:

As per article IV of the bylaws we will maintain a distinct “memorial” savings account.

1) Funds would only be used for maintenance and preservation of the Town Hall and its grounds.
2) Funds would not be used for community activities nor additions to the building.
3) Any funds spent from this account must be approved by the membership at a General Meeting. [9/14/09]

The executive board suggests that a fourth stipulation be added to this stating that three signatures will be required to withdraw funds from this account. The three signatures should be that of the current president, vice-president and treasurer. This was suggested as an additional safeguard to prevent the funds being used for purposes other than those for which they were intended. Please be prepared to vote on this amendment at the February meeting.

UPCOMING COVERED DISH EVENTS WILL BE:
- February 16 from 5:30 – 7:30 PM at Mary and Al Hergenhan’s house – 1808 Sutton Avenue
- March 16 from 6-8 PM at Kathy Trevey’s house - Arlington Ave.
- April 13 from 6-8 PM at Lucy and Paul McKean’s - 403 Gun Road

As usual, please bring something to share. Hosts of covered dishes are asked to supply a main dish. Kindly note that providing alcohol is at the discretion of the host. If you would like to have an alcoholic drink when attending a covered dish, you are wise to bring your own.

Looking for hosts and hostesses! If interested, please contact Laura Vetock at jermvetock@yahoo.com or 410-242-5329.

RELAY BOOKIES- Wednesday, February 19, March 19, April 16
The Relay Bookies continue to meet on the third Wednesday evening of the month. Our thanks to Doreen DeSa for hosting the December Bookie meeting at her home. Our selection for February is Following Atticus: forty-eight high peaks, one little dog, and an extraordinary friendship by Tom Ryan.

MEN’S CLUB – Thursday, February 20
Men’s Club meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month. For information, contact Bruce Packal at 443-413-3057.

RELAY HISTORY DAY- Saturday, March 15, 1-5 PM
Our history is a big part of what makes Relay and St. Denis special places. Please come to the Relay Town Hall to learn more about it. See historical photographs and hear a talk by Ray Chism at 2 PM. Admission donation requested is $5 to benefit the Relay Town Hall Maintenance Fund.
COOKIE EXCHANGE
Many thanks to those who participated in the 2013 Cookie Exchange. Participants were (left to right): Linda Kacur, Faith Hermann, Lucy McKean, Theda Mayer, Sheryl Snyder, Rose Gloth and Connie Englehart (not pictured).

RELAY CLEAN-UP DAY-
Thanks to Rob and Beth Mintz for organizing another successful community clean-up day.

SUPER SENIOR LUNCHEON
Many thanks to the organizers for a 10th Anniversary Senior Luncheon that was a blast. Thanks to everyone who made the event possible.

As Theda mentioned in her presidents letter, we were grateful for the generous gift from Betsy Hederman, pictured below.

BRICK DRIVE AND STEPS AND RAILING UPDATES
Our brick drive officially ended in June. The stencils are ready to go and our own Relay resident, Kim Fahrenbach, will be doing the engraving. We are just waiting for that one special day, not too cold, not too wet, to get the job done. Those who have participated in the brick drive will be called when the bricks are engraved so they can admire their inscriptions in clay. While we’re on the subject, have you seen the new steps from the parking lot to the Town Hall? They look great and are easy to climb. Money from the brick drive as well as money donated in memory of Greg Senkus enabled us to complete this project. Again, when the weather breaks we will have a railing and lighting at the bottom of the steps. A huge thank you to Diana Chism who donated the money to pay for the railing.

HAVING A PARTY? NEED CHAIRS?
The Town Hall is offering a great deal on used folding chairs. We are ordering new chairs and we want them to match, so here’s the deal. You can purchase the old chairs for $5 each. We have about 40 to sell. If you are interested, contact Richard Gloth at 410-242-4627.

OUR HISTORIC HOMES – A PROFILE
Nearly every community event will find a small gaggle of folks happily musing about the history of their house, the area or the world in general. It seems that every other person in our neighborhood is an amateur historian in the true sense of the term; we truly love the history that’s all around us. The following is offered as a history of our house. You’ll no doubt find believable and possibly controversial facts presented. If nothing else, I hope you find it entertaining. Maybe you too would care to share your story. We’d love to hear it.
Sometime around 1850, Mr. John Joseph Hellman built our house at 1808 Sutton Avenue on land conveyed to him by Samuel Sutton. The enterprising Mr. Hellman constructed the building at the confluence of what was one of several "rolling roads" in the county, the nascent B&O Railroad, the still navigable Patapsco River, and the Washington Post Road. It was sure to provide respite for weary travelers, as well as those wishing to escape the bustle and smell of 19th century Baltimore summers.

This Italianate brick structure is said to be one of the few surviving houses of its kind in the county. The building retains much of its original historic fabric, with its summer kitchen, coffin door, root cellar and widow's watch. This antebellum house is said to have been a stop on the Underground Railroad, and owing to its location during the Union Army's occupation of the area, would likely have been a favorite haunt for soldiers during the Civil War. Speaking of haunts, there are several residents who swear the house is still occupied by the ghosts of those Union soldiers, perhaps still unwilling to leave the tavern.

The house, pictured above in her holiday finest, is the home of Mary, Al, Peter, and Kathleen Hergenhan. If you want to investigate further with the Ghost of Christmas Past, a detailed historical record is on-line at the Maryland Historical Trust Inventory of Historic Properties. Look for Hellman House. Or please come on over for the February 16 covered dish dinner.

RIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Howard Wellman, representing the Relay Historic Preservation Committee, was asked by the Baltimore County Landmark Preservation Commission to participate in a meeting of the Tax Credit Task Force. This Task Force has been assigned to re-write the instructions and application forms for the Historic Preservation Tax Credit program. The old forms can be found at: [http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/historic_preservation/forms.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/historic_preservation/forms.html)

The major changes will be to make the forms easier to use and fill out, with an updated FAQ (frequently asked questions), examples and sample forms. The other major change will be that Landmarks will now charge a $50 administrative fee to process the Parts I and II forms (refunded if the project is denied).

On November 18, a dozen Relay residents (several of whom have used the Tax Credit Program) met to discuss the new forms and instructions with Howard. After a lively hour or so, a list of comments and questions was drawn up and submitted to the Landmarks staff in advance of the Task Force meeting. Landmarks responded promptly, and said that several of our comments would be incorporated into the final version.

On November 26, Howard was one of several people who attended the final Task Force meeting to discuss the proposed changes. Relay’s comments and questions were added to the mix and favorably received. The proposed changes will now go to a public hearing (date to be announced) and then adopted some time in 2014.

When the changes are adopted, the Historic Preservation Committee will try to arrange a visit from Landmarks staff to talk to the community, and perhaps organize a workshop to help Relay residents fill out the forms for their proposed projects.

Gardening Tips

What, are you crazy - it’s too cold! But don’t fret, bulbs are only just breaking out of the ground now, but you’ll be complaining about mosquitoes soon enough. To keep those happy thoughts of warmer weather going, we’ll be putting together our best batch of gardening tips from Relay residents for Spring and Summer.
AN INTERVIEW WITH SOUTHWEST EMERGENCY SERVICES (SWES)

One January evening 32 years ago, in the small, cold basement of the Catholic Community at Relay, Betty Okonski and Mem Quaid met with 5 volunteers from area churches to see how they could more efficiently and effectively serve those in need in the 21227 zip code community. They resolved to find one central location where churches could refer those who came to them with requests for help. That night Southwest Emergency Services (SWES) was born. Initially, the Catholic Community at Relay provided a space in the basement. Outgrowing that space, they moved to Arbutus United Methodist Church, and then through the generosity of Ed St. John of St. John properties, they were able to build one addition and then another as donations and needs continued to grow. Today, Betty, Mem, and a cadre of volunteers serve the community from this expanded facility.

SWES has a distribution system that helps meet the physical needs of hundreds of people in the community, especially families, each month. Requests are fulfilled mostly through the generous donations of the 19 churches that support SWES and through other people and businesses in the community. Sometimes it is a request for monetary assistance - rent, electricity, mortgage, heating oil. Each person or family can be helped financially only once a year and proof must be provided - an eviction notice, a BGE letter that the heat or electricity will be turned off, a prescription that needs to be filled.

Food, clothing, furniture, and household items are distributed through vouchers to those in most need, but clothing is also now sold to anyone who can pay the very minimal cost. The thrift shop model was adopted two years ago to address the problem of some people cleaning out the racks of free clothing and selling them the next week at flea markets. This turned out to be a wise move because the proceeds from the items sold are recycled right back into resources to meet the needs of those who come for help. SWES now even has a shower for the homeless to clean up before looking for work.

This past December, SWES invited 255 families that have been referred by the area schools, churches, the health department or social services. SWES gave out 77 live Christmas trees, bought by Delegate Jim Malone, 65 artificial trees, 170 turkeys bought through the Maryland Food Bank and boxes of food for Christmas dinners, 55 boxes of fixings for baking and vouchers for $25 worth of brand new toys, and hats, gloves, and underwear. It was a wonderful event.

Betty Okonski takes very little credit for the organization’s success. “When you look at its humble beginnings and see all the obstacles that have been overcome, you have to see the hand of God in it,” says Betty. “I work for Him.”

So how can we as a community help? Betty identifies these areas:
• Monetary donations are the number one need, says Betty. Keeping clients in their homes and safe and warm is the highest priority. 93% of all money that comes in to SWES is used to help the clients, and, since SWES is a 501c3, all monetary donations are tax deductible.
• A direct donation of food to SWES is important because any food from the Maryland Food Bank must be purchased. The best donations are canned tuna, peanut butter or mac & cheese.
• Clothing needs include gloves - brown work gloves, winter coats, old clean towels, toilet paper or toiletry items.
• Volunteers to work at the facility are needed, even one day a week, and people with trucks (and muscle) to help load or move items.
• The community is also encouraged to shop at the thrift store when possible. Most items are high quality and very low cost, and the proceeds are all recycled back in to helping clients.

For more information, please contact SWES at 410-247-8154.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR RIA MEMBERSHIP!
Please encourage your neighbors to come to meetings and enjoy the benefits of belonging to a community for $15 per year. Just fill out the following form at the end of this newsletter and return.
WILD IN RELAY

Snowy Owls
This winter has seen a rare influx of a bird not normally seen in Maryland – the Snowy Owl. These large white owls typically live in the Arctic Circle, and are associated with places like Russia, upper Scotland and northern Canada (ok, and Hogwarts, as Harry Potter famously owned a Snowy Owl).

Why have these interesting birds come so far south and in such numbers? Such events are called irruptions and are typically tied to overpopulation caused by a peak year of their favorite prey – lemmings (small rodents from the tundra). Lots of lemmings allows for lots of Snowy Owls, but when populations return to normal, the Snowy Owls must fly south to find food and living space.

This particular irruption has caused multiple sightings up and down the east coast. Although no Snowy Owls have been reported in Relay, there have been sightings in Baltimore, at the Bay Bridge and even at Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI). As the large, low-flying birds of prey are considered a possible threat to incoming airplanes, the snowy owl at BWI was captured and released in a less dangerous hunting ground.

What to look for: snowy owls are big - the size of a red-tailed Hawk or twice the size of a crow. Unlike other owls, snowy owls are prone to hunt in the daytime. They prefer open fields - farms, beachfronts, playing fields - and they will prey upon mice, rats, squirrels, or rabbits. For more up to date sightings, numerous Baltimore-based bird-groups post notices online [try looking up Maryland/DC on http://birding.aba.org/]

How often do such irruptions occur? They follow no known cycle and are impossible to predict. The Baltimore Sun reported sporadic years boasting sightings dating back to the mid 1800s, but they are rare. Current bird spotters claim this year will likely be a once a lifetime occurrence. So keep your eyes peeled.

Bluebirds

Bluebirds are becoming more and more common throughout Relay and have been observed overwintering here as well. These birds do not eat seed and will most likely not visit your feeders. Bluebirds are often called ‘the gardener’s helper’ for they are active insect and larvae eaters. Why are more of these beautiful birds being seen in Relay? One of the reasons is that they are easily attracted to nest in bluebird boxes, and several of these can already be seen throughout Relay.

Maryland is towards the northern edge of the bluebird’s range, but they will begin looking to start new nests in March and April. That’s plenty of time to find a suitable location for a bluebird box in your yard.

For great information about bluebirds in Maryland, check out: http://www.mdbluebirdsociety.org/

HAWAIIAN FOOD IN ARBUTUS?

If you’re not up for cooking, check out a new family owned restaurant called ‘Taste of Aloha’ at 1405 Sulphur Spring Road in downtown Arbutus at that serves the best Polynesian/Hawaiian comfort food, in an enjoyable atmosphere for customers & employees.

They make delicious, flavorful interesting food. My husband and I have been a few times and always enjoyed our meals and the relaxing atmosphere. Check it out! www.taste-of-aloha.com
CONTRACTOR RECOMMENDATIONS!
A number of avid RIA newsletter readers are also tenacious home renovators. A few have asked to see an updated list of contractors with personal recommendations by Relay residents which we initially shared a year ago. We would love to expand this list. If you have more recommendations, please send in your contacts to Howard Wellman at hashfossil@comcast.net.

Window Rehabilitation
Bleak Hill Restoration Inc
Josh Lewis - 202-438-0754
* Recommended by Howard Wellman

Painters
Hands on Painters - 410-242-1737
* Recommended by Jeremy Vetock and Stephen Potter
Jon Sheets - 443-386-1925
* Recommended by Bill Herman, Richard Gloth, Ray Chism

General Contractors
Angler Carpentry
Mike Smith – 877-459-6462
*Recommended by Howard Wellman
Terra Tech Builders
Mark Gregory - 410-935-7670
* Recommended by Jeremy Vetock
Coastal Builder, Inc.
Richard Campbell – 410-461-9908
* Recommended by Theda Mayer

Roof Work
Ruff Roofers
Gavin Stringer - 410-242-2400
* Recommended by Jeremy Vetock and Howard Wellman

Air Conditioning (small-duct systems)
Sila Heating and Air Conditioning
John Trancucci - 410-760-2121
* Recommended by Howard Wellman

Hot Water and Steam Radiator Repair
All Steamed Up
Frank and Gordon - 410-321-8116
* Recommended by Howard Wellman

Plumber
Marino Plumbing & Heating
Tony - 410-747-5615
* Recommended by Theda Mayer

Masonry
John Greco - 443-250-6214
* Recommended by Sheila Muccio

Asbestos and other Hazard Testing
K and K Environmental
Kwesi Morrison - 410-686-8800
* Recommended by Howard Wellman

CONDOLENCES
On November 22, 2013 Jacqueline R. Hedeman “Jackie” passed away. She was the devoted daughter of the late Harold & Dorothy Hedeman. She was the dear sister of Randy Hedeman & his wife Mary Jane, along with family from Alberta, Canada and Rick & his wife, the late Jo Ann Hedeman along with family from Baltimore, MD and Martinsburg, WV. Jackie is survived by other loving family members & friends. We will miss our friend and neighbor.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Jackie's name may be directed to the Hope Presbyterian Church, 4748 Selbourne Rd., Arbutus, MD 21227.

THANKS TO NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS!!
Thanks to Al Hergenhan, Theda Mayer, Laura and Jeremy Vetock, Sheila Muccio, Bill and Faith Hermann, Barb Reeves and Howard Wellman.

Please contact caroline.wellman12@gmail.com or 443-799-4042 by April 11 to get into the next newsletter. Join the team!
Relay Improvement Association Contact List

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<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Town Hall Manager</td>
<td>410-536-0389</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Zoning</td>
<td>410-737-0230</td>
<td><a href="mailto:boxesenkus@erols.com">boxesenkus@erols.com</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Membership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Nominating / Yard Sale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
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<td>410-242-4134</td>
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<td>Karen</td>
<td>Bookies</td>
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<td>Laura</td>
<td>Covered Dish</td>
<td>410-242-5329</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jermvetock@yahoo.com">jermvetock@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>John and Linda</td>
<td>Wine &amp; Cheese Party</td>
<td>410-247-9530</td>
<td><a href="mailto:victorian_rose@comcast.net">victorian_rose@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>Doreen</td>
<td>House Tour</td>
<td>410-242-3218</td>
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<td>Howard</td>
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<td>Caroline</td>
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2014 Relay Improvement Association Membership Form

Voting Membership is available to adults (18 years of age or older) living within or owning property within the boundaries of the Relay Improvement Association (RIA). Boundaries are Route 1 and Herbert Run to the East, Patapsco River to the South, I-95 to the North and Selford Avenue above I-95 to the West, including homes on both sides of Gun Road to the State Park property line.

Dues are $15.00 per member. RIA membership provides the right to vote on matters presented at the RIA General Meetings and discounts to RIA sponsored events. RIA members in good standing will receive a 50% discount on all Town Hall rentals. An Associate membership is available to anyone who lives outside our boundaries. Associate members will receive the newsletter and discounts on RIA sponsored events. Associate members cannot vote on matters presented at the RIA General Meetings and pay regular rates for Town Hall rentals.

Please complete the following form and return it with your check made payable to the RIA. Please do not send cash through the mail. Dues paid now are for the calendar year 2014 (January 1-December 31, 2014)

Please send check and form to: Relay Improvement Association, P.O. Box 24046, Relay, MD 21227

| Name| Street Address| Phone Number| E-mail| Donation for maintenance of Relay Town Hall:
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