

News & Views

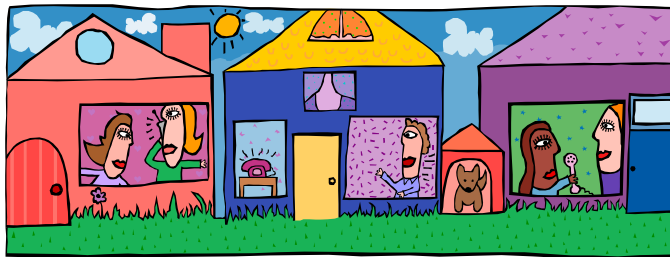
October 2007

Come to the Annual Neighborhood Halloween Parade and Party on Sunday, October 28, 2007

The parade starts at 1:00 at the Barney Road pool parking lot and ends at the Locust Lane pool clubhouse. After the parade stop by the Locust Lane clubhouse and join us for some Halloween treats and activities. Please help make this a fun and safe event for our children in Clifton

please contact us if you have any Halloween talents (DJ, magician, face painting) and are willing to donate

your time. Due to declining membership in the CKMCCA, and thus a shortage of



Knolls (young and old). Volunteers are needed.

Donations of treats (cookies, brownies, cider etc.) are welcome.

If interested in helping with traffic safety, set-up, decorating, clean-up, etc.,

please call or email Linda Collet (371-6250)

lncollet@nycap.rr.com or Amy Sangaline (383-3106)

asks38@aol.com evenings. Also

funds and involved residents, there have been some changes made to the way this festivity was held in the past.

We are thankful to those of you who volunteer to help, and this year we are

especially appreciative of the several residents who have stepped up to coordinate this fun event.

Without such residents, the few remain-



ing Board members would no longer be able to host these neighborhood events that many enjoy.

CKMCCA Officers

President:

Ray Misiewicz

Vice President:

Amy Sangaline

Treasurer:

Bryon Backenson

Secretary:

A publication of the Clifton Knolls/MillCreek Civic Association
www.cliftonpark.org/ckmcca

2007 Leaf Pick-Up Schedule

The 2007 Leaf Pick-Up Schedule will begin on **October 22, 2007** and will continue through **November 30, 2007**, depending upon the weather. There will be **no pick-up** on Tuesday, November 6, 2007 (Election Day), Monday, November 12, 2007 (Veterans Day Observed), Thursday, November 22, 2007 (Thanksgiving Day), or Friday, November 23, 2007. **No extensions beyond November 30, 2007 are to be expected.**

In general, Clifton Knolls will be broken up into four sections, with each of the four machines working continuously through an entire section. However, depending upon the availability of equipment, this could change somewhat. The sections are as follows:

Section 1

Beechwood Dr., Beechwood Ct., Hemlock Dr., Aspen La., Pinewood Dr., Birchwood Dr., Locust La., Rosewood Dr., Cedar La., Chestnut La., Payne Ct., El Lobo Ct., Madrid Ct., Castillion Ct.



Section 2

Barney Rd., Cordoba Ct., Par Del Rio, Palo Alto Ct., Balbina La., Midland Ct., Secada Dr., Leaconia Ct., Casablanca Ct., Santa Lucia Ct., Barcelona Dr., Sevilla Dr., Torrero Dr., Bilboa Rd., Majorca La.

Section 3

Juniper Dr., Tamarack La., Laurel Oak La., Hickory Dr., Silver Maple Dr., Belmonte La., Broadleaf Dr., Broadleaf Ct., Eldorado Dr., Greenlea Dr., Colina La., Brookwood Dr., Zamora Ct.

Section 4

S. Barney Rd., Valencia La., Nina Ct., Rodriso Ct., Almeria Dr., Caceras Ct., Guadalupe Pass, Granada Dr., Valdepenas La., Cortez Ct.

Residents are reminded that piles of leaves on the pavement surfaces pose a safety hazard for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. Branches and sticks must be removed or broken-up or reduced in size to 6-inches or less in length and less than 1/2-inch in diameter to prevent clogging of the leaf vacuum machines. Please **DO NOT** move leaves into the street, but pile them only on the edge of your property. Also, leaves should not be moved into the center islands. Suggestions about pick-ups or situations requiring attention should be reported to the Town Highway Superintendent at 371-7310. Calls made within 24 hours of a problem can be addressed quickly, so take an active role.

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Remembering Tom Howley & Phyllis Winkelman

The Clifton Knolls/Mill Creek Park District Advisory Committee is proud to announce the dedication of two plaques to honor two very special residents who gave of their time, expertise and talents to help improve the lives of our community residents.

On Saturday, October 20, at 11:00 a.m., Tom Howley will be remembered as we dedicate a plaque installed in his honor at the Maple Tree planted in his memory on the Beechwood Drive side of The Locust Lane Field. Tom originated and supervised the Clifton Knolls Day Camp for 30 years. Many of our residents and their children still remember with great appreciation all those wonderful outdoor experiences which Tom's camp provided: archery, swimming, tennis, arts and crafts, and games, as well as the lasting friendships which were formed there.

At 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 20, Phyllis Winkelman will be acknowledged as we dedicate a plaque installed at her favorite

Upcoming Deadlines for News and Views Publications

December 2007 - Copy deadline by November 15th

February 2008 - Copy deadline by January 15th

Any questions? Call 383-0722 and mention the News and Views. Thanks!

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tree, the Purple Rivers Beech, planted in her honor on the Valencia Lane side of the Barney Road Field. Phyllis, fondly known as The Tree Lady, was instrumental in protecting and beautifying the environment of Clifton Park. She fostered love of the outdoors and nature through Arbor Day Contests. She was presented with the Environmental Stewardship Award by the Town of Clifton Park in May, 2001.

**PLEASE COME TO ONE OR BOTH
OF THESE EVENTS.**

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE
SERVED.**

(If you would like to speak at either of these events, please contact Judy Hughes @ 371-9541)

Board of Directors Message

We hope you all had a wonderful summer. Please join us at our first CKMCCA event, the **Halloween Parade and Party on Sunday, October 28th**.

Check out our **new web site** which can be accessed at cliftonknollsmillcreek.org or ckmcca.org and you'll find our tentative **2007-2008 calendar of events and publications**. This season we'll sponsor the Halloween Party in October, the Wine & Cheese Party in March and the Scholarship Award and Garage Sale in May. We may do an Earth Day pond cleanup in the spring depending on what we find once the snow melts. Five issues of the News & Views and the 2008 Directory are also planned. All these items are supported by your dues and some advertising revenue.

Costs to do all that have gone up, especially for printing and mailing expenses. Your Board of Directors found it necessary to **raise the membership dues this year to \$18**. In addition, we're holding the scholarship award at \$500, publishing 5 instead of 6 issues of the News & Views and reducing the budgets for the Halloween and Adult Parties.

With **only 8 active board members** we're fortunate in having volunteers from the community step forward to take on the job of publishing the 2008 Directory and organizing the Halloween party, adult wine & cheese party and the garage sale. We've instituted a new advertising policy for the News & Views and Directory because of the limited number of board members. Ads must be prepaid before they will be run in these publications. We no longer have the capacity to do billing after the fact and could **sure use some additional help on the CKMCCA Board. Come to our next meeting on November 13th if you're interested.**

We closed out the **2006-2007 membership at 365 households**. While not the lowest membership level over our 45 year history, we were down about 8% from the 2005-2006 season. We hope you'll accept the need for increased dues and support us with your

membership for 2007-2008. While not a homeowners association (i.e. we don't set community standards for maintenance or neighborhood appearance for example), the CKMCCA has been this communities' representative to the Town of Clifton Park and other government entities over the years on many issues, including our parks, our pools, leaf pickup programs, water and sewer problems, etc. **Without the CKMCCA we would have no organized voice in the Town** to represent your needs and opinions when the next such problem or issue arises. In the meantime, we continue to bring you a sense of neighborhood and community with the event and publication structure currently in place.

Let us know if there are other activities or problems to be resolved that the CKMCCA could help you with. Contact any board member. Our contact information is available elsewhere in the newsletter.

2007 Membership Form and Advertising Rate Information

Each issue of the News & Views will contain an inserted form for 2007 CKMCCA Membership and 2007-2008 News & Views/Directory Advertising printed back to back. The 2008 Clifton Knolls Mill Creek Civic Association membership drive is now underway. Your membership dues of \$18 support the many activities sponsored by the CKMCCA and help offset the cost of publishing the News & Views and Directory. Your membership runs on a calendar year basis from Jan. to Dec. 2008. Please fill out the front side of the enclosed form to renew your membership. Some new features on the form include a request (strictly voluntary) for your e-mail address so we can better communicate events to you. Also, if you're out of town over the winter, let us know and we'll hold the Directory until you get back. Our bulk mailing does not forward the Directory to addresses not on the prescribed mail routes. Finally, take note of the revised Section for volunteer efforts (strictly at your discretion) for events sponsored by the CKMCCA.

On the back of the form is a signup sheet for business advertising in the News & Views and Directory, including the rates and description of the publications.

Please, if you know anyone that you think might be interested in advertising give them a copy of the form for their consideration. Our advertising base has been shrinking over the years but remains necessary to defray some of the costs in publishing the News & Views and Directory. By the way, if you're running your own business and live in Clifton Knolls or Mill Creek this is a great way to advertise to your neighbors. Consider the Directory if you're a service provider since the Directory remains in our homes throughout the course of the year. Or, try us out by putting your business card in the News & Views and gauge the response you get from the neighborhood. In any case, help us out if you can by supporting the local community in which you live.

Classified Ads are published free of charge to any resident of Clifton Knolls/ Mill Creek. Contact Jon Barry for more information, 383-0722

Our Local Public Library

Here's a sampling of some of the events offered this fall at the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library. Please call the library (518-371-8622) or visit their website (www.cphlibrary.org) for details and registration.

- Inside Track: Librarian's Favorite Websites – discover specialty sites that Librarians find useful. Offered Sept. 21, Oct. 1 and Nov. 21.
- Ask an IT Professional – about hardware, software, Internet Providers, etc. Offered Sept. 27 and Nov. 1.
- Guided Tour of the Library Homepage & Electronic Resources – Offered Oct. 23.
- PJ Story Time – Children ages 2-6 with adult. Tuesdays in Sept., Oct. and Nov. at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm. Drop-in, no registration required.

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Happy Housing



By Genie Bassett

With all the national media reports on the mortgage market ills, everyone is well aware that the real estate industry is going through a tough time.

We are fortunate to live in a stable area like Clifton Knolls and Mill Creek as we are not dramatically impacted by some of the most dire predictions about sinking home values. But that does not mean we are immune to the pressures of this volatile market.

To sum up the current housing market in the Capital District, consider that there are currently 7,230 homes on the market, which is approximately double the number on sale a year or two ago. While I can't put a number on how many buyers are out there looking, I can tell you that the number of showings my partner, Bob Sanderson, and I have seen of our listings is down.

But I don't want to sound gloomy. Homes are still selling and we have not seen any dramatic drops in sale prices.

Simply stated, we are now in a buyer's market instead of the sellers market we have enjoyed for the last several years which saw prices going up month after month. And with more houses to choose from, today's buyers are a lot more fussy than they were a year or two years ago.



Now is the time when all of the advice I have offered in this column over the years comes to bear. If there are two similar homes available, buyers are going to make an offer on the one that has an updated kitchen, has refinished hardwood floors or the bathrooms that have been refurbished.

Even if you not now in the market, and do not anticipate selling in the immediate future, the lesson to be drawn from the current market situation shows why constant and proper maintenance is necessary to protect your property values.

Where have you heard this before: Do it now and enjoy it instead of doing it later for
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someone else to enjoy it.

Here are the keys to protecting your investment: Keep the shrubs trimmed and maintain the lawn properly; paint the trim on your house; freshen interior paint; refinish the hardwood floors; update the baths; update sidewalks and patios. This list will sound daunting if your realtor hands it to you as you are preparing to list your home for sale. But it's not so hard if you keep up over the years.

Well, I've now prompted a list of things that Chuck and I have to take care of in the remaining days of fall.

Happy Housing!

Genie

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The View From Here

By: Ray Misiewicz

This column is about regional issues influencing our lives in Clifton Knolls and Mill Creek. It also provides a glimpse back at CKMCCA activities from our beginnings in 1962. Please send any feedback on issues you think need to be addressed by calling or sending me an e-mail.

Current Events: The Saratoga County Water Authority appointed William Simcoe of Albany as its first Director and construction of the first section of



pipng from the upper Hudson River above Moreau to the Luther Forest Technology Campus some 28 miles away has begun. The \$67 million project funding comes from various state agencies (\$33 million), a loan (\$10 million) from the Saratoga County Economic Development Corporation and issuance of Construction Bonds (\$24 million) by the Water Authority.

The proposed AMD chip manufacturing plant at the Luther Forest site would be a primary water user. AMD has had some financial problems but must start building by July 2009, if it is to receive the \$1.2 billion incentive package promised by New York State. AMD announced it may need a partner to build and operate such a facility.

The \$150 tax rebate from the Town of Clifton Park was approved. It will go to all property owners as well as all renters, since the majority of the Town's budget surplus was amassed from the sales tax. Renters will have to apply but property owners will not have to file any paperwork and should start receiving checks by the end of September.

The Town of Clifton Park will receive an additional distribution of almost \$900 thousand from the County sales tax surplus. Right now the Town does not have a specific plan on what it expects to do with that money.

There is an enhanced STAR tax rebate program for property owners coming from the state again this year. This year most of us will have to apply for it, expect a mailing to homeowners in Saratoga County sometime in late September. The only people who will not need to apply are seniors 65 years or older who receive the enhanced STAR exemption. Remember, this rebate is in addition to the property tax relief you already receive through the STAR program as shown on your school tax bill.

The Town of Clifton Park is asking residents for input on what the new town park on the north side of Route 146 between Waite and Wing Roads should look like. The 151 acre site is twice the size of Clifton Commons and is envisioned to include wooded open space, trails, picnic pavilions and of course athletic fields. Watch for public meetings to discuss the park's configuration with actual work to be completed by the spring of 2009.

The plans for development along Route 146 west of Vischer-Ferry Road continue to evolve. The town homes proposed for the 21st Century Park and across from Sterling Heights are already before the Planning Board. The Brookhaven and Waite Meadows Subdivisions near the Waite Road intersection with Route 146 have either been approved or are under review. Department of Transportation plans to further improve Glenridge Road at the railroad underpasses would open up Route 146 to even more traffic. Town planners would like to create a Route 146 Transportation Improvement District to help offset the costs of road improvements in this area.

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The Department of Transportation is considering installing roundabouts at the intersection of Riverview Road and Balltown Road as well as the intersection of Aqueduct Road and Balltown Road (located on the north and south sides of the Rexford bridge), as a long term solution to the traffic problems experienced there. Interim bridge work in 2008 includes some turning lane improvements that may provide some near term traffic relief.

The Town of Clifton Park held a public hearing on a new "junkyard law" directed at better defining the numbers of undriveable/unregistered cars a property owner can store on their lot in a residential neighborhood. This resulted from complaints in Country Knolls West about a house with old cars, pallets of lumber, piles of old lawn mowers and other machinery sitting under tarps in the front yard.

The former Mobil Station at the corner of Route 146 and 146A is being environmentally cleaned (gas tanks removed) by the Exxon-Mobil Corporation and the property will be sold.

A Staples retail store is proposed on Maxwell Road Extension at Southside Drive in the space adjoining the restaurants across from the Public Safety Building.

Joe Riley, a former Town of Clifton Park Supervisor (1989-1991), was killed in an auto accident over the summer. Some of his accomplishments included creating a town wide water system, building the Public Safety Building, establishing Clifton Park's summer theater program and hosting our first 4th of July celebration.

Last but not least, for those of us who have lived in the area for a while, we can remember Smith's Feed and Grain Store in Elnora which closed in 1993. The old farmhouse and adjacent barn have seen a number of different uses over the years and remain a fixture in that community. The landscape is about to change however with the proposal to build 20 upscale homes on the land. The developer has agreed to preserve the farmhouse and barn by implementing a deed restriction or easement.

Recollections: In 1978 your civic association had 480 members and 17 people served on the board of directors. Over 100 folks attended the civic association annual meeting that year to hear reports on issues reflecting the growing pains in our community.

Water quality was a major concern with low pressure, discoloration, odor and mineral content. The civic association worked with the State Department of Health and the Public Service Commission in an attempt to address those problems. The policies of the Country Knolls Water Works were amended particularly in their water main flushing programs.

This was the first year the Saratoga County Sewer District took responsibility for processing sanitary waste. So residents were surprised when they were billed by both the County and the Country Knolls Sewage Disposal Company for those 1978 services.

The civic association worked with the Town of Clifton Park to establish a new rate from that private company which had retained ownership of the sewer mains and laterals.

Dog complaints continued to pour into civic association board members. Freely roaming unleashed dogs and habitual barkers seemed to be the top complaints. The civic association worked with the Town of Clifton Park for better enforcement of existing statutes, including procedures to file a complaint directly to the local Town Justices.

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In 1978 Saratoga County initiated a formal reassessment of all properties to their full market value. The civic association organized an informational meeting with the counties' contracted appraiser to inform the membership about the process and their rights during the reassessment inspections that were to take place.

Vandalism was a major problem with damage at St. Edwards Church, the Barney Road Clubhouse and area mailboxes. 1978 was the first year the civic association tried to put entrance signs at our four major entrances. All were stolen, replaced and stolen a second time in just 4 weeks. In November the civic association held a special general meeting with the New York State Police where it was reported that 90% of all area vandalism was occurring in Clifton Knolls.



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When you gave someone directions to Clifton Knolls in 1978 from exit 9, west on route 146 and to turn left at Moe Road, they got lost. There was no street sign on the corner of Moe Road and Route 146 until the civic association worked with then Town Supervisor, Charles McCloskey to get one installed.

All that in addition to the full schedule of social events and programs made it a very full year for the CKMCCA. One last item is the classified ad I found in the News & Views of particular interest to those of you who own Stans Colonials. For sale was a full compliment of aqua-marine wall to wall carpeting with matching colonial style custom drapes for a Stans. Times and fashion do change!

Fall Update from your Park District Advisory Committee

The Clifton Knolls/ Mill Creek Park District is responsible for maintaining the park-like setting in The Knolls, all the playground equipment, playing fields, shrubs, trees, flowers, pathways, and ponds. We are a separate entity from The Clifton Knolls Civic Association. We are a committee of ten residents who meet each month on the evening of the fourth Tuesday in The Clifton Park Town Hall. We invite residents with an interest to join us. (Phone 371-9541 for further information.) We are grateful to so many of you who let us know how pleased you are with the appearance of your park environment.

Again this year, Aquatic Control Technologies treated the ponds. We attempt to control the various weeds and algae which build up each year on our very shallow ponds.

This summer, we planted several trees at the Valencia Lane and Barney shore of the Barney Pond and are in the process of hydroseeding the lawn area. In the future we will install benches on the southern shore of the pond.

Two large, hollow trees from the Locust Lane side of the Locust Lane Field were removed and will be replaced with two Linden Trees to match the line of Lindens already there. We will move two benches to keep the alignment. We will also be installing two Crab Apple Trees on Locust Lane Field to replace ones that died.

Our two summer help young men, residents Brian and Gary Soeller, have done a fine job for us. They completely remulched all the pathways around the ponds, trimmed some shrubs, reapplied stone dust around the perennial garden pathways, worked on removing the scrub brush from the area west of the tennis courts and began removing the sod from under the benches and applying gravel. We hope to finish that project before winter. Our residents will then be

able to sit on the benches and rest their feet in comfort.

The perennial gardens have been contracted out this season and are being well maintained by Kathy of Rainbow Gardens. She helped us out several times this summer by watering the dehydrated plantings. Perhaps you have seen her throughout the summer attending to the gardens in all kinds of weather.

Our tree and shrub maintenance is being ably handled by Cliffside Landscaping.

A special thank you to Ed Hughes for trimming all of the pine trees along the Locust Lane Field on Beechwood Drive to enhance the appearance of the area. Visibility and safety have been improved.

Our goose chaser, Eric Johnson, continues to do a fine job for us. We have had very few geese this season, unlike some of our neighboring areas. Eric is able to keep the numbers to a manageable and healthful number.

And The Clifton Knolls/Mill Creek Park District Advisory Committee is very proud to be dedicating two plaques in memory of former residents of our community: Tom Howley and Phyllis Winkelman. The event will be held on Saturday, October 20th. (Please see accompanying invitation in this publication.)

With all best wishes for a happy fall and winter,

Judy Hughes, Chair, Clifton Knolls/Mill Creek Park District Advisory Committee.

Park District Committee

Members:

Joyce Savage, Vice Chair

Marlys McGinnis, Finance Chair;

Ranette Bell, Secretary;

John Laviano;

Loretta Parsons;

Sheila Suozzo;

Ron Johnson;

Tom Sargent;

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