

# NORTHWOOD NEWS

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY THE NORTHWOOD-FOUR CORNERS CIVIC ASSOCIATION ■ FEBRUARY 2017

## Nominations Sought for New NFCCA 'Good Neighbor' Award

By Laura Hussey

The NFCCA Board is seeking nominations for a new Good Neighbor Award, to be bestowed by NFCCA annually to a neighborhood resident who has done something exemplary to make our neighborhood a better place to live, including, but not limited to, actions such as volunteer service on behalf of the neighborhood in local or county forums; simple neighborly

acts of kindness such as looking in on a neighbor in need of assistance; or taking responsibility for something that benefits other neighbors, such as picking up trash in the park or along the street. The winner of the first annual NFCCA Good Neighbor Award will be named at the NFCCA meeting on 14 June 2017.

To submit a nomination, send an email to [hero@nfcca.org](mailto:hero@nfcca.org) with the individual's name, address (or street), and a description of the actions that you feel make the individual a "good neighbor."

Nominees must be current residents of the neighborhood bounded by Colesville Road, University Boulevard, Caddington Avenue/Loxford Terrace, and the Northwest Branch stream valley park (see our territory map online at [www.nfcca.org/area.html](http://www.nfcca.org/area.html)). Nominations for the 2017 NFCCA Good Neighbor Award must be submitted no later than 15 May 2017. The NFCCA Board will determine the winner.

If you have questions or suggestions about this award, please send an email to the [hero@nfcca.org](mailto:hero@nfcca.org) address. ■

## Next Meeting on February Eighth

The next meeting of the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association will be held on Wednesday, 8 February 2017, at 7:30 p.m. at Forest Knolls Elementary School. The school is located at 10830 Eastwood Avenue, just off Caddington Avenue (there's no access from other sections of Eastwood). You can enter the All-Purpose Room directly from the parking lot.

Finding yourself drowning in clutter? Come hear Fiona Morrissey speak on how to get out from under our messes and simplify our lives.

All residents of the Northwood-Four Corners-Forest Knolls area are invited to attend and express their views. Please note that only paid members of the NFCCA are eligible to vote. (Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at the meeting.)■

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year, neighbors. The election's history—in more ways than anyone could have imagined—and the holidays are over. We're on the upward swing in the calendar towards spring and, as presidents are fond of saying this time of year, the state of our union, er, neighborhood, is strong. Our neighborhood association has money in the bank, a core group of dedicated volunteers, and the best newsletter in Montgomery County.

Ever since Northwood Park was platted and the first homes built in 1936, our neighborhood has had civic organizations devoted to building community and advocating on our behalf with county leaders. That's 80 years of community engagement that has been passed from one generation to the next. The newest leaders, yours truly included, always benefit from our predecessors whose indefatigable work has left its mark. I was reminded of this around Thanksgiving when we learned that longtime activist Jim Zepp suffered a debilitating stroke.

Jim is in rehabilitation now and folks from across the neighborhood have been visiting him and supporting Jim's wife, Carole Barth, with meals for him. NFCCA board member Kevin Harris created an online tool to register volunteers to help. It's people like Jim, Carole, and Kevin who remind me why I love this neighborhood. At the December membership meeting, several cards were passed around for Jim and folks were able to send their wishes for a quick and full recovery. I would like to underscore that sentiment here: Get well soon, Jim.

Also at the December meeting we heard from Councilmember Tom Hucker. Again, we gave him an earful about the lack of progress in resurfacing our roads and he assured us, again, that our roads will be fully rehabilitated in the 2017 construction season. I hope so. It's a promise that we've heard far too many times only to learn that it's as sound as the crumbling asphalt in front of our homes. I'm not reassured by the lack of progress made before winter forced the county's contractor to pack up for the season but I am still willing to give Councilmember Hucker and the DOT staff the benefit of the doubt. Stay tuned; construction season begins soon.

Speaking of winter, even though we've had some really warm days recently—70 degrees the second week in January—there's still lots of time for us get another Snowzilla-Icemedageddon or whatever the name du jour will be. In the last newsletter we announced the start of a Snow Angels program. It pairs willing snow shovelers with elderly residents who might need help when the big one falls.

Sidewalks that haven't been shoveled are dangerous and they're much more than a simple inconvenience. Obstruct-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

## Join NFCCA's Listservs or Nextdoor Page

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### Northwood Parents Listserv

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### Nextdoor/Northwood-Four Corners

Go to <https://nextdoor.com> and enter your street address.

See [www.nfcca.org/aboutus.html](http://www.nfcca.org/aboutus.html) for complete details. ■

## NORTHWOOD NEWS

*Northwood News* is published by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. The NFCCA represents the ~1,490 households in the area bounded by Colesville Rd. (Rte. 29), University Blvd. (Rte. 193), Caddington Ave., and the Northwest Branch.

Any resident of this area is eligible to join the NFCCA. Annual dues are \$10 per household and may be paid at any Association meeting or mailed to the treasurer.

The *Northwood News* is published five times a year—in October, December, February, April, and June. To place an ad or discuss a story, please contact the editor.

### Editor

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10603 Cavalier Drive  
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### Visit Our Website

[www.nfcca.org](http://www.nfcca.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

ed and icy sidewalks make it difficult for folks with mobility issues—the elderly and people who must use walkers and canes—and they make it unsafe for children walking to school or to bus stops. Plus, it's the law: Montgomery County code requires all sidewalks to be cleared within 24 hours after the end of a precipitation event.

No one is exempt: homeowners, renters, and businesses. Homeowners can be fined \$50; an amendment to the law last year created higher penalties for businesses, up to \$750 for repeat offenses. To report un-shoveled sidewalks, call 311 or 240.777.0311.

Finally, if you're reading this newsletter, then you're engaging with your neighbors and your neighborhood association. This newsletter is delivered to almost 1,500 homes in our neighborhood. But there's a lot more to NFCCA than what you read here or online. Wouldn't it be great to find out what some of us who write these articles look like? Or, better yet, discussing some of the subjects you read

about here with the county officials we entrust with our tax dollars? Contrary to neighborhood folklore, our meetings are much more than flogging sessions for the latest Montgomery County public enemy.

Why not take the next step and come to the next NFCCA meeting? Introduce yourself, have a snack, maybe win a prize, and help keep our organization relevant and one of the unadvertised amenities you get when you move to the neighborhood. Just like spring, the next generation of community leaders is just around the corner. All we need to do is meet you.

—David Rotenstein



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## NFCCA BOARD

The Board of Directors for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association serves for one year and meets every month except July and August. Current officers (until October 2017) are:

### President

David Rotenstein  
10217 Edgewood Avenue  
404.326.9244  
[president@nfcca.org](mailto:president@nfcca.org)

### Vice President

Edward Levy  
212 Thistle Court  
240.988.8200  
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### Treasurer

Sondra Katz  
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### Secretary

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### At Large

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Linda Perlman  
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301.681.3735  
[linda@nfcca.org](mailto:linda@nfcca.org)

Sam Salisbury-Jones  
10702 Glenwild Road  
817.774.7103  
[samantha@nfcca.org](mailto:samantha@nfcca.org)

### Immediate Past Prez

Laura Hussey  
10217 Edgewood Avenue  
240.463.1913  
[ipp@nfcca.org](mailto:ipp@nfcca.org)

## Upcoming NFCCA Meetings

**8 February 2017  
12 April 2017  
14 June 2017**

All meetings are held in the All-Purpose Room at Forest Knolls Elementary School off Caddington.

# The Silver Spring War and Rebirth: The Fall and Rise of an American Downtown—Location is Destiny

By Gus Bauman

## I. The Prelude

**June 1956**—Interstate Highway System Act signed  
**February 1960**—Wheaton Plaza (now Westfield Wheaton) opens  
**August 1964**—Capital Beltway final segment opens  
**Summers 1964–68**—Urban riots culminate in nationwide rioting after Dr. King assassination  
**1970s**—Middle class and business abandonment of cities becomes a flood  
**February 1978**—First Metro-rail Station in Maryland opens in Downtown Silver Spring

## II. The War

**24 August 1984** (Friday)—Demolition commences of 1938 Silver Theater and Shopping Center art deco elements (as County historic designation hearing is scheduled for September 5)  
**27 August 1984**—Montgomery County issues demolition Stop-Work Order  
**1985**—Silver Theater, last remaining downtown movie house, closes  
**December 1986**—Silver Triangle regional mall/office towers/hotel project proposed for CBD's core by local developer  
**September 1987**—Hecht's department store leaves downtown for Wheaton Plaza  
**29 September 1988**—Planing Board approves Silver Triangle project after contentious hearings  
**8 November 1988**—County voters defeat referendum

that would prevent fuding of County garage necessary for Silver Triangle

**December 1988**—Opposition citizens groups file lawsuit to overturn Silver Triangle approval

**June 1989**—Nordstrom backs out of Silver Triangle project; Macy's remains

**5 July 1989**—Circuit court overturns Planing Board approval of Silver Triangle project

**September 1989**—JCPenney, last remaining major retailer downtown, closes

**14 December 1989**—Planing Board approves Silver Triangle with revisions and conditions

**1980s**—Several office towers built near Metro Station (NOAA HQ consolidation completed 1993)

**11 September 1990**—County Executive loses in Democratic primary election to Councilmember over Executive's strong Silver Triangle support; Councilmember elected County Executive in November

**7 January 1991**—Maryland high court reverses circuit court, reinstates 1988 Silver Triangle project approval

**March 1991**—Planing Board holds hearings on Draft Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan

**June 1991**—JCPenney signs on with Macy's at Silver Triangle project

## III. The Truce

**December 1991**—County-initiated mediation leads to announcement by County, citizens, Silver Triangle developer of compromise

plan, Silver Triangle II, for radically revised project

**January 1992**—Macy's files for bankruptcy protection

**February 1992**—Urban Land Institute submits to County its Downtown Silver Spring report, evaluating the Silver Triangle sites

**April 1992**—City Place opens at Hecht's site

**August 1992**—County adopts 29-acre Urban Renewal Plan for CBD core (CBD encompasses 360 acres)

**April 1993**—County adopts CBD Sector Plan for the Revival of Downtown Silver Spring

**February 1994**—Per the Sector Plan, County places Silver Theater and Shopping Center on Historic Preservation Master Plan; JCPenney, in financial turmoil, withdraws from Silver Triangle II project

**December 1994**—Silver Spring Alternatives Working Group (21 members) issues Report to County Executive on retail development alternatives for east side of urban renewal area; Macy's emerges from bankruptcy protection

**January 1995**—Greater Silver Spring Committee (19 members) issues Report to new County Executive recommending termination of County's development agreement with Silver Triangle developer

**9 January 1995**—County and Silver Triangle developer terminate relationship

**May 1995**—County issues Request for Expressions of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

## HISTORY CORNER(S)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Interest for portion of east side of urban renewal area (14 acres)

**February 1996**—Silver Spring Redevelopment Advisory Board (48 members) recommends County negotiate with Canadian development company for American Dream retail/entertainment mall proposal

**November 1996**—County terminates development agreement with American Dream developer for inability to secure required private financing

**December 1996**—State designates Silver Spring Enterprise Zone, offering employment and property tax credits, administered by the County

**1988-96**—More than 220 businesses leave Downtown Silver Spring; office vacancy rate reaches 39% in 1996, store vacancy rate 25%

#### IV. The Reconstruction

**February 1997**—Silver Spring Redevelopment Steering Committee (31 members) appointed by County Executive to advise County and developers on concepts for urban renewal area

**May 1997**—Executive enters into exclusive negotiation with joint venture development team to craft “town center” project plan

**April 1998**—County signs development agreement with joint venture developers for town center concept, “Downtown Silver Spring,” on urban renewal area’s east side; County agrees to purchase, restore, and expand Silver Theater into film complex, AFI agrees to be the operator

**October 1998**—Discovery Communications agrees to move to Silver Spring on urban renewal area’s west side

**February 2000**—County adopts Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan, a refinement of the 1993 Plan

**August-October 2000**—Phase I of Downtown Silver Spring project opens with several retailers

**January 2002**—State designates “Silver Spring Arts and Entertainment District,” offering financial assistance and tax benefits

**March-April 2003**—Discovery Communications HQ opens; AFI Silver Theater and Cultural Center opens; Round House Theater opens

**2004-10**—New County, State Buildings:

- Silver Spring Innovation Center (2004)
- Court House; Fire Station
- Montgomery College Health Sciences Center, Cofitz Foundation Arts Center, Cultural Arts Center
- Civic Bldg. and Veterans Plaza/Ice Rink (2010)
- Transit Center (opens 2012); Library (under construction)

**June 2006**—Phase I of United Therapeutics HQ and labs opens (phase II under construction)

**September 2011**—Live Nation’s Fillmore Music Hall to open at vacant JCPenney building under public-private partnership agreement

#### V. The Outcomes

**2000-10**—Over \$450 million in public investments leveraged to support some \$2.0 billion in private investments

**2000-11**—Some 2,500 new residential units built; hundreds more under construction; some 1,500 more approved; Dozens of restaurants, three hotels open; more planned

**1995-2007**—CBD tax base grows 62%

**January 2007**—Maryland Youth Ballet moves to Downtown Silver Spring

**2007**—Silver Spring 20910 becomes highest median home price area of Greater Silver Spring’s eight zip codes

**2010**—Office vacancy rate second lowest in county (only Bethesda-Chevy Chase is lower)

#### VI. The Lessons

1. The community must coalesce on a vision and its master plan adhere to that vision, yet be ever nimble when opportunity comes calling.
2. Through governmental administration after administration after administration, never waver from the plan’s vision and creative multifront implementation.
3. There is no silver bullet for success, only dozens of bullets of every description and caliber.
4. Public investments and incentives are necessary to leverage greater private investments and achieve a healthier tax base.
5. Mix the old with the new, mix the uses, mix private with public facilities, mix transportation options, stir and shake, and watch the people come.
6. None of the above is politically sustainable with-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



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**Recent Sales in Northwood/Forest Knolls: Since July 1, 2016**

STATUS	ADDRESS	SALE PRICE	SELLER SUBSIDY	STYLE	BR	BA/HBA	DOM	LOT SQ FT	SUBDIVISION
Sold	503 Dennis Ave	\$799,000	\$5,000	Farm House	5	4/1	140	7,365	Northwood Knolls
Sold	117 Snowy Owl Dr	\$560,000	\$10,000	Colonial	4	3/1	16	6,269	Northwood Park View
Sold	10611 Margate Rd	\$535,000		Colonial	4	3/1	40	9,598	Northwood Park View
Sold	305 Marvin Rd	\$525,000	\$625	Cape Cod	4	2/1	9	5,769	Northwood Village
Sold	400 Royalton Rd	\$489,000	\$3,500	Colonial	5	2/1	6	8,188	Northwood Knolls
Sold	11113 Lombardy Rd	\$490,000	\$3,000	Rambler	5	3	25	7,599	Northwood Park View
Sold	301 Dennis Ave	\$496,000		Rambler	4	2/1	24	9,573	Northwood Park
Sold	311 Dennis Ave	\$475,000		Colonial	3	1/1	7	6,101	Northwood Village
Sold	10904 Hannes Ct	\$475,000	\$17,208	Split Foyer	5	3	40	6,204	Forest Knolls
Sold	814 Loxford Ter	\$450,000	\$1,500	Colonial	4	3/1	54	6,000	Forest Knolls
Sold	925 Loxford Ter	\$444,000	\$10,000	Split Foyer	4	2/1	54	13,691	Forest Knolls
Sold	10906 Hannes Ct	\$430,000	\$12,900	Rambler	4	3	35	7,374	Forest Knolls
Sold	10709 Edgewood Ave	\$425,000	\$3,500	Rambler	3	2	14	6,975	Northwood Village
Sold	211 Thistle Dr	\$397,500	\$600	Split Level	4	3	105	6,500	Northwood Park View
Sold	10708 Lombardy Rd	\$435,000		Bilevel	3	2	41	8,139	Northwood Park View
Sold	10834 Margate Rd	\$408,000		Rambler	4	3	62	13,960	Northwood Park View
Sold	1000 Loxford Ter	\$425,000	\$12,750	Traditional	4	2/1	10	7,200	Forest Knolls
Sold	311 Hannes St	\$420,000	\$6,000	Rambler	4	3	6	7,500	Forest Knolls
Sold	1117 Loxford Ter	\$419,000		Split Level	4	2/1	132	10,916	Forest Knolls
Sold	915 Playford Ln	\$417,000		Split Level	4	3	29	6,262	Forest Knolls
Sold	809 Whittington Ter	\$423,000		Rambler	3	2/1	4	8,578	Forest Knolls
Sold	409 Eisner St	\$400,000	\$11,000	Split Level	3	2	11	6,127	Northwood Park
Sold	1012 Chiswell Ln	\$399,900	\$2	Other	4	2/1	86	7,500	Forest Knolls
Sold	10603 Edgewood Ave	\$389,900	\$2,000	Cape Cod	3	2	156	6,601	Northwood Village
Sold	113 Southwood Ave	\$380,000	\$3,650	Rambler	4	2	127	8,750	Northwood Park
Sold	501 Royalton Rd	\$384,000	\$11,520	Rancher	3	2	38	7,493	Northwood Knolls
Sold	10616 Edgewood Ave	\$355,000	\$12,155	Rambler	3	2	174	6,830	Northwood Village
Sold	506 Eisner St	\$365,000		Split Level	3	2/1	10	8,155	Northwood Village
Sold	10509 Edgewood Ave	\$365,000	\$10,950	Colonial	4	3	36	5,446	Northwood Village
Sold	505 Kerwin Ct	\$359,900		Cape Cod	4	2	6	6,681	Northwood Village
Sold	37 Kinsman View Cir	\$340,000	\$10,200	Townhouse	4	3/1	6	1,500	Northwood Park View
Sold	10420 Eastwood Ave	\$315,000		Cape Cod	3	1	109	9,365	Northwood Park
Sold	921 Malta Ln	\$329,400		Split Level	3	1/1	6	7,200	Forest Knolls
Sold	10610 Cavalier Dr	\$330,000	\$9,900	Rambler	3	2	21	8,256	Northwood Park
Sold	10707 Edgewood Ave	\$295,000		Rambler	4	2	28	6,964	Northwood Village

Not all referenced properties are from my agent team or my broker. RETS data provided by MRIS as of January 15, 2017 is subject to change. For a real-time update go to Northwood Sales Report: [www.ciment.com/northwood](http://www.ciment.com/northwood)

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## HISTORY CORNER(S)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

out the engagement of a strong middle class base.

### VII. The Moral

Persist, persist, persist.

*[Gus Bauman is an attorney at Beveridge & Diamond, P.C., in D.C. From 1989–1993, he was full-time Chairman of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. He currently chairs, by appointment of the Governor, the Maryland Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding. Bauman led the effort to formulate and adopt the 1993 Central Business District's Sector Plan for the Revival of DTSS.]* ■

## Students Offering Skills, Services To Be Listed in Next Newsletter

*By Sharon Canavan*

The flyer on the back page of this newsletter describes the Snow Angels program for volunteers to shovel snow for our neighbors in the community who need assistance with this task.

NFCCA also wants to give students who would like to earn some extra money an opportunity to list their contact information in the newsletter. Any student with skills—such as tutoring or babysitting, or who would like to provide help with gardening, lawn care, snow removal, leaf raking, pet sitting or walking, or other household help (for pay)—should send

their contact information and a description of their skill or service to [editor@nfcca.org](mailto:editor@nfcca.org). It is suggested that any teen interested in being listed set up a separate email from their usual one (that can be deleted in a year or two) as the newsletter also appears online.

The April edition of the *News* will include a section for “Students Offering Skills and Services,” which will be periodically updated and included on the website. (Note: The June issue will focus on home improvement and include a directory of service providers; there will be a small fee for inclusion. See the April issue for details.) ■

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**NORTHWOOD SILVER SPRING 2016 SOLD REPORT**



503 Dennis Ave	\$799,500	10707 Edgewood Ave	\$489,000
10431 Edgewood Ave	\$640,000	311 Dennis Ave	\$485,000
117 Snowy Owl Dr	\$565,000	10823 Margate Rd	\$475,500
130 Woodridge Ave	\$549,900	10430 Mountain Quail Rd	\$469,000
10611 Margate Rd	\$549,900	401 Royalton Rd	\$449,900
305 Marvin Rd	\$525,000	10715 Glenwild Rd	\$449,900
400 Royalton Rd	\$499,000	109 Belton Rd	\$445,000
11113 Lombardy Rd	\$498,000	10625 Eastwood Ave	\$435,000
10211 Sutherland Rd	\$489,000	10709 Edgewood Ave	\$430,000

Source: MRIS

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# Maryland Keeps Track of All of Its 'Big Trees'

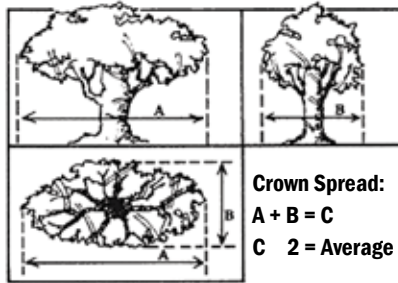
By Jacquie Bokow

Maryland's first State Forester, Fred Besley, compiled the initial "Noted Tree List" in 1925. As the list grew into a permanent, published record, Besley started an intensive search for big trees of all species growing in Maryland. A statewide contest was held, greatly increasing the number of nominations for Big Tree Champions. The search continues to the present time and the list changes constantly.

Although "The Big Tree Champions of Maryland" was published from 1937 to 2002, it is now compiled electronically and updated as a new champion or new species is identified. You can search the list yourself online at [www.mdbigtrees.com](http://www.mdbigtrees.com). There are currently 1,531 trees in the registry for Mont. County.

Due to the size of the database, limits have been established as to the size of trees that can be registered. There are three criteria: (1) trees must be at least 300 points, or (2) trees must be at least 70 percent of the current State Champion (largest of that species in the state), or (3) trees must be a county champion (largest in the county).

To evaluate the relative size of a tree, the girth (circumference) in inches and the height and crown spread in feet are added together to arrive at a number of points for each tree. This number is then used for comparison of tree sizes in each species. This system of measuring gives the trunk much better weight by giving the girth in



inches. The formula is: Total Points = Circumference (inches) + Height (feet) + 25% of the Average Crown Spread (feet, see diagram above).

I'd never heard of Maryland's Big Tree Program until one of my sisters had a tree of hers registered. She lives in Prince George's County and her Northern Pecan (see photo below) has 263 points.

Joli McCathran, Montgomery County Big Tree Co-



My sister's northern pecan tree (*Carya illinoensis*), with a height of 92 feet, a spread of 89 feet, and a circumference of 149 inches, has 263 points. She lives in a 105-year-old house in Fort Washington, in Prince George's County.

ordinator, measured all of the large trees in North Four Corners Park and two trees there have been added to the Maryland Big Tree database (only the largest known ones appear on the online list). First, of course, is the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*, 255 points) overhanging the new soccer field. But she was even more excited to find an "impressive" oak chestnut (*Quercus montana*, 257 points) near the rec center.

"The chestnut oak is the highest-pointing tree in the park," said McCathran. "It is located behind the building parking lot in the east corner of the property. There are two others [chestnut oaks] in Montgomery County which have more points. The state champion (in Anne Arundel County) is 406 points."

## No Reward Except Fame

The registration of a big tree confers no protection or restriction upon the property and its owner. There are no funds available to prune, mulch, cable, and otherwise promote the healthy growth and longevity of Maryland Big Trees.

On the other hand, the owner of a registered Big Tree retains all property rights of that tree, including the right to remove it at any time for any reason. Once a tree is measured and registered, it is assigned a number which it will carry forever (deceased trees retain their registered number and are listed in an electronic "deceased" file). The owner is mailed a certifi-

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# Md. Big Trees

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cate of registration, a letter of congratulations, a list of all the registered trees in Maryland of that species, a county-specific brochure explaining the program, and a bumper sticker proclaiming “Proud Owner of a Maryland Big Tree.”

The rules for measuring trees have evolved over the years. Volunteers from the Maryland Big Tree Program and local forestry board members are trained to follow



*North Four Corner Park's oak chestnut tree (Quercus montana, 257 points) near the rec center, surrounded by invasive plant material—English and poison ivy—is the tallest chestnut oak registered in Md. Pictured is Joe Howard, part of the team doing the official measurement, who was principal for many years of Four Corners Elementary School, which used to exist in our neighborhood where The Oaks is now situated.*

these rules; therefore, they recommend allowing their volunteers to perform the tree measurements. They also require written permission from the tree's owner in order to measure and register a tree. Citizens are encouraged to nominate trees in their communities. They must be given the owner's name and contact information before they can drive to a location to measure as they will not investigate the ownership of a property. Trees on public property usually can be measured and registered without written permission, although it is helpful to first check with the public agency in case the property is slated for a project that would affect that tree.

Only trees native to the U.S. are counted in the registry and the trees are re-measured every 10 years once they are registered. “Bicentennial Trees” are those identified as being alive in 1776.

Since the death of Talbot County's Wye Oak in 2002 (still the largest tree ever measured in Maryland), the largest tree in the state is in Mont. County: an American Sycamore (*Platanus Occidentalis*) in Dickerson Conservation Park. It has 475 points.

“There are many reasons why the program started and continues to this day,” said John Bennett, Volunteer Coordinator for the Maryland Big Tree Program. “First, it serves to reward those owners who care for their big trees. About 90 percent of our registered trees are ‘backyard trees,’ as opposed to forest-grown trees. Trees grown in backyards tend to have less



Photos on this page by Juli McCahran

*The black walnut (Juglans nigra, 255 points) overhanging the new soccer field.*

competition and receive more nutrients and water from the owners (lawn fertilizers often benefit the trees more than the lawn).

“Second, the program provides a reference for scientific studies. From time to time, I am contacted by researchers who are studying a particular species and need to know where the big examples are located. Third, the program provides a record over time of changes to species distribution. Thirty years ago, one would not find examples of Southern magnolias and crape myrtles in northern Maryland; today they are very common. The program helps to document these changes. Finally, the program provides locations of rare and unusual species for those who wish to improve their knowledge and identification skills.”

The Mont. Co. Forestry Board will be issuing the *2017-2018 Register of Champion Trees* in April. For information on how to register a big tree, contact John Bennett at [mdbigtreeprogram@aol.com](mailto:mdbigtreeprogram@aol.com) or call 410.287.5980. ■



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**Volunteers needed!**

*Sponsored by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association*