



# HISTORIC BELLE GROVE SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD

VOLUME 3 ~ ISSUE 11 ~ NOVEMBER 2010



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### Westminster Tree Lighting Ceremony and Holiday Parade

Sat., Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>

3pm "Miracle on 34th Street" Movie, at Carroll Arts Center

5pm Holiday Electric Parade, Mayor's Cup Award, Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony downtown



## Happy Thanksgiving!



More than two years ago, when we started organizing our neighborhood we knew that when we organized good things would start to happen to our neighborhood. As the months have passed we have seen our neighborhood recognized by the City of Westminster, seen improvements to our park, and been selected for the 2010 Holiday Home Tour coming right up on December 11th. As a result of our neighborhood's organization, Belle Grove Square was chosen by the city together with Willis Street to be considered for additional protections with new "neighborhood preservation" overlay zoning.

We held back this month's newsletter so we could include the latest information about the proposed zoning change after the City Council meeting November 8, 2010. Several weeks ago, we hand delivered fliers to every residence in our neighborhood reminding everyone of our regularly scheduled meeting October 21st

and about this issue, and that city officials were coming to the meeting to discuss the proposed zoning updates and answer any questions neighbors might have about what the new zoning means or what impact it might have. At the meeting, lots of questions were discussed and it turned out everyone there ultimately agreed it was a good thing once they heard what the city was trying to do.

Our neighborhood and those residences on Willis Street were chosen by the city officials as the first neighborhoods to try to help preserve their residential nature by stopping businesses from coming into areas that historically have been just homes. Marge Wolf, City Administrator, gave a short presentation, answered questions, and addressed neighborhood concerns. We were assured that the proposed zoning changes were developed to help neighborhoods like ours maintain their residential nature. The zoning overlay would prevent someone from buying a house in our neighborhood

and converting it into a business without living there. It would not prevent any existing home business or home office in our neighborhood. It doesn't address the buildings (like historic preservation would, which we don't have) - what it does basically is prevent a business from locating where there have always been just homes in the future. The neighborhood preservation overlay zoning simply makes sure our small historic neighborhood stays residential like it is and has been. After some discussion, we held a vote among those in attendance and there was unanimous approval to send a letter in support of the issue.

The proposed zoning was discussed at the council meeting held on Monday, November 8, 2010. Several Historic Belle Grove residents attended the meeting along with residents from Willis Street. The city council approved the new zoning in principle and will vote at a later meeting to decide the final map of neighborhoods like ours that can be included.

# Neighborhood News

## Veterans Day Commemorated

The annual Veterans Day remembrance service will be held on Thursday, November 11th at 4pm at the Westminster Armory (11 Longwell Ave.) For more information call the American Legion Post #31, 410-857-7953 or 410-876-0746.

## Home Tour Dec 11th

One of the traditional features of the home tour is the luminaries that line the sidewalks up to the homes.

We are collecting half gallon empty milk jugs for the luminaries - we need at least 400 milk jugs!

If you would like to donate empty milk jugs to our cause, please contact Melissa Hynes at 410-848-7967 or mhynes@westgov.com, or drop them off at 56 W. Main St. no later than November 19. Please make sure they are rinsed out first.

On November 20, 2010 we need volunteers to help us get the luminaries ready for our Holiday Home Tour. We will be meeting at the garage behind 1 Park Avenue to help assemble the luminaries. If you would like to volunteer to help, please call Melissa Hynes at 410-848-7967.



Luminaries line the home tour route the day of the tour.

## Decorating Contest

To help show off our holiday spirit for the Holiday Home Tour, we will be having a contest open to all neighborhood residents who are not stops on the tour itself. We will be giving a special prize to be announced next month to the home that is best decorated in the Victorian tradition.

## Local History Books Featured at Market

Join the Historical Society of Carroll County's Shop at Cockey's Tavern, Saturday, November 13 at the Farmer's Market featuring local authors from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.:

Don Riley, author of *Ghost of Legh Furnace*, and *David Shriver: Pioneer and Patriot of Piedmont Maryland*, 8:00 a.m. - Noon.

Jay Graybeal, author of *Carroll County and the Great War for Civilization*, and *Tours of Duty: Carroll County and the Vietnam War*, 8:00 a.m. - Noon.

Diana Scott, author of *The Forgotten Corner: A History of Oakland Mill*, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Cathy Baty, author of *Images of America: Carroll County*, and author of *Images of America: Westminster*, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

History makes a great present!

Don't miss this chance to pick up some wonderful books on Carroll County history and get them signed by the author.

## Westminster Parks & Rec.

Be sure to visit the Parks & Recreation Dept. online at [www.westgov.com/recreation/rec\\_main.html](http://www.westgov.com/recreation/rec_main.html) to see their full calendar of events! You'll be amazed at how much the city has going!

## Parade Nov 27th

On November 27, 2010 the city of Westminster will be celebrating the holiday season at 5pm with the annual tree lighting ceremony and holiday electric light parade. Everyone is invited to come downtown to enjoy the seasonal sounds of the Westminster Municipal Band, sing carols, and await the arrival of Santa. Plan on coming early to purchase a treat from the holiday bake sale and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate.

## Library News

On Friday, September 17th the Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Public Library unveiled the "Wild Imaginings" statue created by sculptor Bart Walter. The sculpture is the first addition to the Mary Lou Dewey Park.

## Neighborhood Plans for Next Five Years

Our neighborhood association is working towards a neighborhood plan that will be presented to city officials next spring. We have visited with some city staff and they are very supportive of our efforts to come up with a more concrete plan for our neighborhood's future.

The plan will outline some of the specific goals we would like to be achieved by our neighborhood in the next five years. Things such as park benches, lighting, and streetscapes will likely be included. A group of neighborhood residents met and came up with a rough outline of our future neighborhood goals. After the home tour we will focus more on the neighborhood plan and hope to have a final plan to present to the city early next year.



Workers are in the process of restoring the facade at 30 W. Green near Belle Grove Square in the weeks leading up to the home tour.

## Holiday Decorating Contest in Belle Grove Square

This December, the Belle Grove Square neighborhood will host a holiday decorating contest for area houses not a part of the home tour. Judging will be held in the days before the tour December 11th, prizes to be announced! Watch this space for more details next time!

# Victorian Decorating

by *Katya Kotic*

1. Use lots of greenery. Natural greenery like boughs of pine and fir played a major role in Victorian holiday decor - in fact, holiday parties centered around the hanging of the greens were a standard of the day. Pine and fir are traditional holiday greenery, and branches of shiny, long lasting magnolia and laurel leaves look lovely on their own or in combinations.

2. Raid the pantry. Fresh fruit was considered a treat in the midst of a Victorian era winter, and it was enjoyed for its beauty as well as its taste. Tuck a few sprigs of green and some ribbon bows into a sparkling glass bowl of shiny red and green apples or clove studded oranges for a thrifty dash of period charm.

Walnuts, almonds, chestnuts and hazelnuts were also traditional Victorian Christmas treats that look great in bowls or among the greens in centerpieces and floral arrangements.

3. Raid the sewing basket. The Victorians loved embellishment and added it wherever possible. Try pinning or hot gluing lace or fabric store fringe around the center of inexpensive satin Christmas tree

balls for period flare. Simple bows of cheap by-the-yard lace make delicate and lovely additions to the tree, and broad lace, ribbon, or lengths of fabric can be twined among the greens in arrangements.

More sewing room ideas: ropes of cheap pearls or beads sold by the yard or precut on cards are a perfect Victorian accent almost anywhere. Drape them on the tree, twine them into wreaths and greens, or wrap them around white candles. Cut them into four lengths and sew or glue several together at one end to create gorgeous tassels for on the tree or mantelpiece.

4. Use lots of candles. Though gas lighting was common during the Victorian period, candles were still used for elegant illumination. Groupings of long, slender tapers arranged among greens and flowers were typical of the day.

5. Think beyond the standard red and green. Deep jewel tones like burgundy red and forest green were popular during the Victorian era, and set off with accents of white, silver, or gold they add both elegance and period style. Plaids and paisley prints in tones of wine, deep greens, intense blues, and purple were also Victorian favorites.

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## Surprising Early crops in Carroll County

Although corn is the primary grain planted in our fields, corn wasn't the first major crop planted in our county. According to Nancy M. Warner in *Carroll County Maryland A History 183-1976*, tobacco was the major crop throughout Carroll County until Dr. John Stevenson, the "Father of Baltimore," influenced the wealthy Charles Carroll of Carrollton and others to switch to wheat and other grains. The cultivation of grains was less intensive than that of tobacco and more suited to the physical aspects of the soil. The growth of the port of Baltimore provided an outlet to ready markets. Before long many more mills were built to accommodate the increased grain production. As early as 1794 there were 31 mills in the area which would become Carroll County.



*Saturday, December 11, 2010, 3 pm to 8 pm*  
*Historic Belle Grove Square Neighborhood*

A rare chance to see inside some of Westminster's hidden historic treasures!

### *Tour Tickets*

\$10/person in advance (adult or child)

\$12/person at the door (adult or child)

### *Silent Auction*

hosted by Westminster Community of Shalom

### *Holiday Entertainment*

Homespun Ringers

Children's Chorus of Carroll County

Winters Mill High School Carolers

Westminster High School String Ensemble

Carroll County Celtic Music Group

Westminster Municipal Band

Mountain Dulcimer

Brethren Ringers

..and more!

*Tickets on sale starting November 8 at City Administrative Offices, City Hall, the Historical Society, the Hickory Stick & various Downtown merchants.*

*Questions? Please contact Melissa Hynes at [mhynes@westgov.com](mailto:mhynes@westgov.com) or 410-848-7967*



**WESTMINSTER HISTORIC  
DISTRICT COMMISSION**

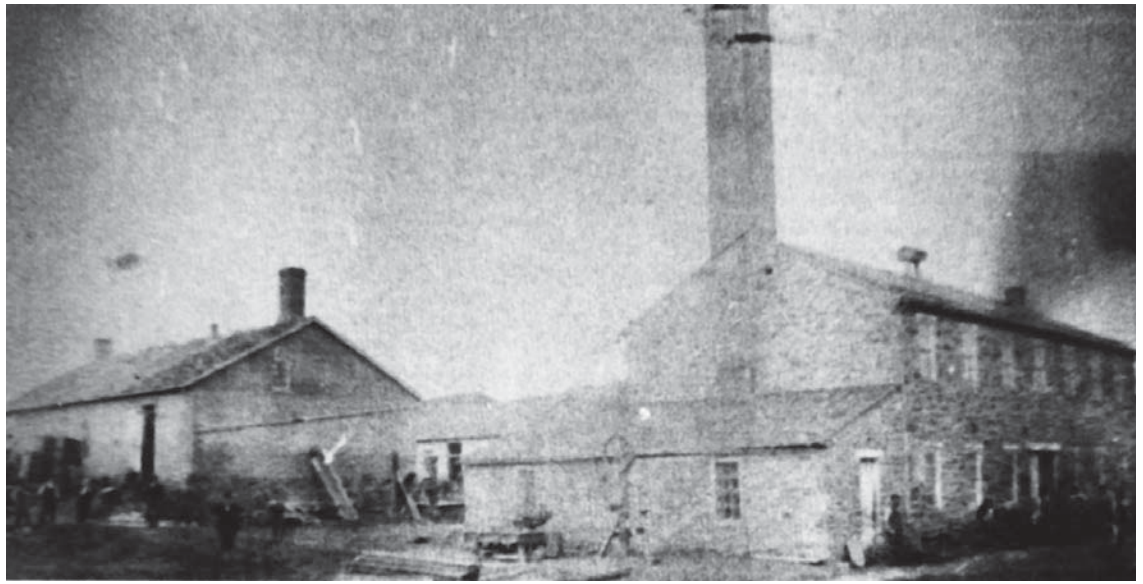


## The Storied History of 14 Liberty, cont'd

In our June 2010 newsletter we included an article detailing the early history of the building at 14 Liberty now housing O'Lordans Tavern. According to the "History of the B. F. Shriver Co." by Earl W. Meyers, Benjamin Franklin Shriver founded the first canning company in the area in 1869. The chief products at this time were peas, corn and tomatoes with some fruits and berries. In 1872 he adopted the "Blue Ridge" and "A No. One Brand" labels. His brother Mark O. Shriver developed and patented the first closed retort which was used in the pioneering stage.

The location at Union Mills proved inadequate to meet all the needs of the expanding operation. Plants were opened through the years at various locations around the area. He moved into the stone building at 14 Liberty building in 1881. The stone building was built by our neighborhood founder George Matthews between 1867 and 1870 and first housed a machine shop and foundry.

The Westminster plant operations continued at 14 Liberty until about 1904 when they were moved to the northeast of town along the Western Maryland Railroad. Eventually the company purchased farms throughout Carroll County and at by the 1950's had approximately 5,000 acres from which it supplied vegetables to the canneries. In 1969, 100 years after it began, the B. F. Shriver Canning Company discontinued canning operations and between 1975 and 1976 their farms were sold.



Pictured above is the B. F. Shriver Company canning plant on Liberty Street, Westminster, Maryland, at what was then known as the "Stone Building", now O'Lordan's Irish Pub, around 1885.

### Early Chase Street

In 1866 when George W. Matthews bought the land that would eventually become the Historic Belle Grove Neighborhood, the properties across Chase Street were not a part of his property. This property was owned by Judge Richard Baxter Norment. The Norment family was from King and Queen and Caroline Counties in VA, and originally settled in the Reedy Mill area before 1720.

Judge Richard Baxter Norment was born on August 23, 1823 in Caroline County, Virginia. The Norment property was a big parcel of land that stretched from Liberty street to Kings Lane and was undeveloped farm land. Judge Richard Baxter Norment and his family built a house that can still be found on Chase Street. The Judge also served as an instructor of Civil Law and Political Economy at Western Maryland College and served on the 1867 and 1888 Board of Trustees. In 1872 and

1881 he was the State's Attorney for Carroll County. His son Richard B. Norment, Jr. graduated with the class of 1876 and graduated from the University of Maryland Medical School in 1880.



### Report any suspicious activity

Do not hesitate to contact the Westminster Police about any suspicious activity you see happen - they want to hear from you!

You can make an anonymous report by calling **410-857-TIPS (8477)** or texting your tip to 847411 (tip411), or you can make an online report at [http://www.westgov.com/police/police\\_activity.html](http://www.westgov.com/police/police_activity.html).  
To report a crime currently in progress, call 911.



### Tip: Tired of throwing out red bags?

If you don't read the free papers, take just a moment to call the phone number inside the paper whenever you receive one and ask them to stop delivery to your address. Free papers laying around make the neighborhood look bad, and can invite crime by advertising when you may be away from home.

How to reach us:

Historic Belle Grove  
Square Neighborhood

443.293.7203

1 Park Avenue  
Westminster, MD  
21157

email: [newsletter@bellegrovesquare.org](mailto:newsletter@bellegrovesquare.org)

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

Letters to the editor are welcomed. Letters submitted may be edited for space or clarity.

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