



# HISTORIC BELLE GROVE SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD

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## Neighborhood Meeting

**Thurs., July 21<sup>st</sup>  
7:00pm - 8:30pm  
at St. Paul's UCC  
Bond & Green Sts.**

**w/ Westminster  
Police Chief Jeff  
Spaulding & Capt.  
Nancy Yeager**

**Join us and meet your  
great Belle Grove  
Square neighbors!**

# Sesquicentennial Anniversary

*by Mitchell Edmondson*

Historic Belle Grove Square can trace its beginnings back to 1866 when George W. and Maria Matthews bought the land that would eventually become our neighborhood from John B. Boyle for \$3000.00. George Matthews laid out 30 lots, with most of them fronting the square. In 1893 a fountain was added to the center of our park.

As most of you know, we have been working on a comprehensive plan for our neighborhood. We have held several neighborhood meetings to discuss neighborhood concerns and possible improvements. In 2016 our neighborhood will celebrate its 150th birthday. As a part of our neighborhood's 150th anniversary, it has been suggested that our neighborhood's plan aim for 2016 as a completion date for the park and other neighborhood improvements. Since this is several years away, it gives neighborhood residents and city officials plenty of

time to plan and devise a method to help some of our neighborhood goals to be reached.

When local residents met to discuss our neighborhood plan, possible park improvements included new historic looking light fixtures, park benches, and trash cans. The light fixtures found in our park match those that can be found in the Westminster City Park and around city hall. They are contemporary fixtures that appear to have been installed around the time of the nation's Bicentennial. The park benches are very low to the ground and have wooden slats that require a lot of maintenance. The revitalization of the bricks surrounding the fountain was also discussed as a possible part of this plan. As a part of street repair projects, the exterior sidewalks in the park were replaced; however, there may be a need to address some problems with the sidewalks that radiate out from the fountain.

Sidewalk replacement in our neighborhood is a concern.

Most of the sidewalks that are in our neighborhood have been replaced and paid for by home owners. The exception to this is the sidewalks along W. Green Street. They were replaced during the W. Green Street project. The sidewalks along Chase Street and on Bond Street remain in need of repair. The sidewalks in front of the homes on Bond Street near the Church of the Brethren are especially bad. Due to numerous utility cutouts and street work, they are uneven and slightly dangerous. The sidewalks at the corner of Park Avenue and Chase and Bond Street and Chase Street are not wheelchair friendly. It is hoped that we can somehow find a way to replace these sidewalks.

We also discussed neighborhood traffic problems, especially related to the alley between Park Avenue and Liberty Street. Speeding drivers on Bond Street was also noted as an area of concern that needs to be addressed. In the last two weeks, there have been two traffic accidents at the corner



of Bond Street and West Green due to drivers racing through red lights. The first accident just narrowly missed a young girl who was walking on the sidewalk in front of St. Paul's. The second accident caused a vehicle to hit the

utility pole.

In the future months, we will gather again to discuss the possibility of aiming for 2016 as the ultimate completion date for some of our neighborhood projects.

## Neighborhood News

### Police Dept. meets with Neighborhood

Earlier in July, our neighborhood board members met with Field Service Bureau Commander Captain Nancy Yeager to discuss ways in which local residents and the local police department can work together to help keep our neighborhood safe and free of crime. The Westminster Police Department will be working with neighborhood president Bruce DeVault to try to identify trends and issues before they become a problem. Several times a month or as needed, Ofc. Ensor will be visiting with Bruce to discuss neighborhood issues.

As always, the most important way of preventing crime and dealing with crime is to contact the local police. If you don't report problems/incidents to the police,

the city police department will not know that certain events or issues are a problem in our neighborhood.

### National Night Out

On August 2, 2011, our neighborhood will be participating in National Night Out by holding our second annual "ice cream in the park celebration". National Night Out is a community-police awareness-raising event held the first Tuesday of August.

The event has been held annually since 1984 and is sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch in the United States and Canada.

The event is meant to increase awareness about police programs in communities, such as drug prevention, town watch/ Neighborhood Watch, and other anti-crime efforts.



McGruff the Crime Dog meets with neighborhood kids at Belle Grove Square park on National Night Out in August 2010.



**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.



Revelers gather at Westminster City Park for summer concerts.

Neighborhood residents along with local city and law enforcement officials will gather under the shade trees at 6:00 to share some delicious ice cream. Local residents are encouraged to bring a favorite topping and join us as we enjoy an evening of sweet treats in our historic neighborhood park.

neighborhood association vice-president Laurie Walters.

The tables were loaded down with delicious dishes prepared by residents and lots of fun was had by all who attended. Much thanks to all who participated in this event. Events such as our picnic remind me how lucky we are to live in a neighborhood in which we all know and care about each other.

### Picnic Update

On Thursday, July 7, 2011, Historic Belle Grove Square residents celebrated summer with our third annual picnic in the park. Over 40 local residents and friends gathered near the fountain to share hotdogs and hamburgers prepared by grill master extraordinaire Wayne and his trusty side kick and

### Fall Halloween Ball

Since we are a neighborhood that likes to get together and have fun, our neighborhood will host its first annual "Haunted Manor" - Halloween Costume Ball (name subject to change) at 1 Park Avenue

### 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!



on Friday, October 28, 2011. Since the event is several months away, you will have plenty of time to start working on your costume. If you would like to be involved in the preparation for the costume ball, please call 443-293-7203 or email newsletter@bellegrovesquare.org.

## Westminster Parks and Recreation News

July is National Parks and Recreation Month. Westminster has 18 different facilities to suit all recreational tastes. Take in a concert during the Month of Sundays Summer Concert Series at City Park, watch a ball game at one of the field facilities, swim at the Municipal Pool, workout at the Family Fitness Center, ride the half pipe at the skate park...whatever your into, Westminster's has the place to do it.

In celebration of the Westminster Family Fitness Centers 15th birthday, the Westminster Parks and Recreation Department is giving away prizes to 15 lucky members on the 15th of each month through September. Stop by the Westminster Family Fitness Center, 11 Longwell Avenue or call 410-751-5501 for details.

A special thank you goes out to Jolly Shows of Annapolis and TownMall Westminster for donating \$500 of their proceeds from the Westminster Carnival held in June to the Friends of

City Parks, a non-profit arm of the Recreation Department, that accepts donations towards local park improvements. We sincerely appreciate their generosity and thoughtfulness in helping Westminster have the best parks around.

## Live Music That's Right at Home

Every Thursday evening during the month of July, the Songs at 6:30 Concert Series - Library Stage - will occur from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. All concerts will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on stage outside the Westminster branch of the Carroll County Public Library, 50 E. Main Street, Westminster. Rain location is the lower level of the Longwell Parking Garage along Locust Lane.

## Carroll County Arts Council Exhibits

The Art is Inside You exhibit features the work of artists who find inspiration from mystical, magical and spiritual experiences, mythological symbols and a profound sense of the creative act. On view now through August 13 in the Tevis Gallery.

The Four Seasons: Art from the Carroll County Artists Guild features painters of the Carroll County Artists guild who present their vision of an artistic tour



June Horner, Ed and Judy Gaver accept a proclamation from Mayor Kevin Utz on behalf of Belle Grove Square's St. Paul's United Church of Christ declaring Westminster's first Diversity Awareness Weekend June 24-25, 2011.

through the four seasons of nature. The imagery is captured in watercolor, oil, acrylic, gouache and mixed media in styles of realism to abstraction. On view In the Community Gallery until July 30.

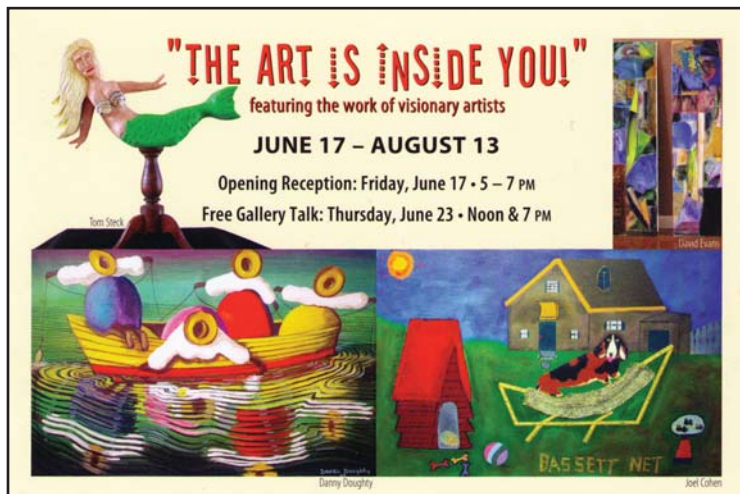
In addition to sculpting the marble mantels found in Westminster's City Hall, he also sculpted the main doors of the U.S. Capital in Washington DC

According to artcyclopedia.com and askart.com, Rinehart's sculptures, neoclassical in style and mostly of human figures, are in public collections such as those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York City), the National Gallery of Art, (Washington, DC), the Walters Art Museum (Baltimore), the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Brooklyn Museum of Art (New York City), the Carnegie Museum (Pittsburgh), and Ohio's Columbus Museum of Art, among others.

## Carroll County Famous Son

William Henry Rinehart was born near Union Bridge, Maryland on September 13, 1825, where he attended school until he was nearly eighteen. He then began to work on his father's farm, but also became the assistant of a stone-cutter in the neighborhood. In 1844 he began an apprenticeship in the stone-yard of Baughman and Bevan on the site of what is now The Peabody Institute in Baltimore, and studied sculpture at what is now called the Maryland Institute College of Art.

He is considered the last important American sculptor to work in the classical style.



Workers install cleats on the roof of Westminster Church of the Brethren on Belle Grove Square to protect against falling ice.





## From County Town to County Seat

During the mid 1830's, there was much dissatisfaction with existing county boundaries. Frederick County included the entire western half of present day Carroll County and Baltimore County claimed the rest.

Petitions were drawn up and eventually on March 2, 1833, the General Assembly passed a bill that created a new county to be named in honor of the recently deceased Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Carroll had been the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence. A provision of the legislation required that a majority of the voters in each segment had to agree to the creation of the new county.

Looking back on the events of the time, it is very clear that one man contributed more than any single individual in the organization

of Carroll County. This man was Colonel John K. Longwell. Longwell was born in Gettysburg and moved to Taneytown in 1832. Longwell established a newspaper that he used to help promote the establishment of the new county. He published the newspaper for about a year and then moved to Westminster.

On June 28, 1833 the Carrolltonian was first issued and for four years Longwell lobbied for the creation of the new county. The bill was eventually ratified and the county was created on January 19, 1837.

After achieving his goal of establishing a new county, Longwell married and purchased a tract of land called "Resurvey of Bedford" from Charles W. Carthause. In 1842 he built a house and named the place "Emerald Hill." After its construction, the home was considered one of the most elegant private residences in the county. It sat on a rise overlooking the city of Westminster



The Longwell Mansion was called "Emerald Hill" when built by John K. Longwell in 1842. This fine example of the Pennsylvania farmhouse is now the Westminster City Hall and is one of the most recognized and well-documented historic structures in the city.

between what is now Longwell Avenue and Locust Street. In 1908, after the death of Longwell's daughter the house was sold at auction. The city of Westminster purchased the house in 1939 and opened it as city hall on August 17, 1942.

As reported in the local newspaper, the more than century-old City

Hall in Westminster needs extensive repairs and renovations to keep the building in stable condition.

City officials began discussing the fate of City Hall earlier this month, and will continue exploring options throughout the summer. Let's hope the city decides to preserve the historic home on "Emerald Hill."

## Baseball: Early Westminster Entertainment

Despite its reputation of being a quiet, rural community, early

Westminster residents enjoyed a wide array of summertime activities. In the mid 1800's, before radio, television, or the internet the individual or community was responsible for entertainment. Activities such

as baseball, skating, bicycling, horse racing, shooting, camping, tennis and even jousting matches were enjoyed by local residents. Of these, Baseball was the most popular with the mention of games in the local newspaper as early as 1866, the year our neighborhood was founded. When the "Olympian" club of Westminster played the "Calvert Club" of Calvert College in New Windsor in 1866, a special train provided transportation to the game and back for 50 cents.

It is believed that our park hosted baseball games before the fountain was added in 1893.



Color print of early Baseball game. Legend reads, "Base Ball. Aquarelle print by L. Prang & Co."

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are welcomed. Letters  
submitted may be edited for  
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## Anonymous Police Tip Line

To send an anonymous tip via text message to the Westminster Police Department, text the keyword TIPWPD and your tip to 847411 (tip411) or call the Tips Line, 410-857-8477.