



# THE YORK COURTS AT GUILFORD

*A HISTORIC COMMUNITY WITH MODERN IDEAS*

## WELCOME

Longtime residents of York Courts have seen many versions of a community newsletter over the years, but we've been without one for a while now. In this latest incarnation we hope to keep new and longtime residents in touch with what's happening in the neighborhood—with focus on communications and the community.

This month's issue includes a synopsis of the last York Courts meeting, including information on the new York Courts signs, the latest on the sidewalk issue, and Super Spring Sweep Thing 6.

Future issues will include a bio-column that will highlight a York Courts homeowner. If you'd like to let your neighbors know a little bit about yourself, please e-mail Michael Keevican, 34 York Court, [keevigan@yahoo.com](mailto:keevigan@yahoo.com). Please include a brief bio and picture. Also, Michael may contact you directly and invite you to share your story.

We hope you find the newsletter informative and useful. If there is something you'd like to see in future issues, please e-mail Michael Keevican or Phil Reely, [PhilReely@aol.com](mailto:PhilReely@aol.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

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## ARCHITECTURAL ISSUES REMINDER

If you plan on any external home improvements this spring – including roofing, windows, and doors – you must submit a request for approval to the Guilford Association in advance. Please submit your request to Howard Friedel, [hfriedel@bellatlantic.net](mailto:hfriedel@bellatlantic.net), or mail it to Guilford Association, PO Box 4677, Baltimore, MD 21212.

## SIGNS OF CHANGE

As you likely know, last year our resident architect, Laura Amos, presented preliminary designs for signs that would tastefully identify the historic York Courts, which were accepted and approved by the residents and the Guilford Association Board.



*The signs' preliminary design by Laura Amos, 16 York Court.*

The primary sign noting 'Welcome to Historic York Courts at Guilford,' along with the court number was designed for placement in Court 2. Smaller signs, with the court number only, would identify the other courts. Additional enhancements that were being pursued but failed approval included lighting to illuminate the signs at night. The funding is completely dependent on grants and programs offered by the Greater Homewood Community Corporation (GHCC).

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## **SUPER SPRING SWEEP THING 6 IS HERE!**

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2005

8:30 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.



The York Courts at Guilford have been registered to participate in Super Spring Sweep Thing 6. All residents are encouraged to participate by joining the courts on the day of the event. A couple of

the regular participants will be unavailable on April 23, which will make it challenging to achieve the same past success without your help! Please consider lending a helping hand to putting a shine on our surroundings!

Supplies and tools will be delivered on April 21, including rakes, brooms, gloves, shovels, and bags.

**Trimmers and clippers are needed!**

The city has roll-offs available, but they've not yet been allocated. If the Courts receive one, it will be positioned in front of Court 2 on the morning of April 23. Otherwise, it was requested that the city provide a truck (as they did last year) for debris and household disposables. No hazardous waste materials will be accepted including: paints, solvents, flammable liquids, computers, etc.

Refreshment donations are needed including: donuts/pastries/bagels, water, juice, coffee, sugars, creamer, napkins, and picnic-style foods for the afternoon.

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## **SIGNS OF CHANGE**

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At the April 1 York Courts meeting, Stephanie Allewalt and Julie Deibel presented details regarding the block grants available from GHCC and explained the scope of projects for which these can be used. The GHCC offers grants for funding community-backed projects and has several available immediately.

GHCC has provided the applications for the three signs (one for each court) and they are prepared to recognize each court as one block. This allows us to apply for three grants, which should cover the costs of the ironwork and signage.

Additional future projects could include:

- Restoration of balustrades to homes that do not have them
- Projects related to individual properties including trim painting
- Sidewalk lighting

Thanks to the support of homeowners in each court, we have met the requirements to acquire these grants:

- Each project must have a block captain
- 50% of the community must support the project
- Supporting community members must be present during the coordination of the project
- Follow-up celebration/gathering must be coordinated and attended by supporting community members at project completion

Laura Amos and Phil Reely are in the process of putting together the cost-analysis details and creating a couple of prototypes to insure adequate sizing for visibility, with plans to submit the applications to GHCC the week of April 17.



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## **SUPER SPRING SWEEP THING 6**

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### **Super Spring Sweep Thing 6 Plan of Attack:**

**8:30 a.m.**

Refreshments at 14 York Court hosted by Jenny and Brian Saccenti

**9:00 a.m.**

Cleanup at the corner of 39th and Greenmount, including trash removal, raking, sweeping, and bagging.

**10:00 a.m.**

Proceed north on Greenmount.

**11:30 a.m.**

Proceed west through the alley north of Court 1 for a sweep through the alley and walkways between the courts, including overgrowth trimming.

**2:00 p.m.**

Wrap up. Place bags on Greenmount at curb.

**2:30 p.m.**

Refreshments at 25 York Court

Please sign up to join us on April 23 by contacting Phil.

## **IMPROVED SECURITY EXPECTED**

The Guilford Security Patrol will now be provided by Crown Security. Improved services include key checkpoints in the alley that the security guard must access to record his passing through. The car is also monitored by a GPS reporting system and is required to make three passes through the alley during each shift.

All are encouraged to join the GSP. For information, contact Brenda Brooks, [bbrooks000@aol.com](mailto:bbrooks000@aol.com).

## **WHERE THE SIDEWALK ENDS**



The following proposal was recently communicated by Howard Friedel, president of the Guilford Association (GA), regarding the sidewalk repairs needed here at the courts.

“The Association is willing to split the cost on a 50-50 basis with York Court residents who want to replace broken sidewalk sections in front of their homes. We would be willing to work out a 1-2 year payment plan for those who may have a financial hardship in paying a lump sum.”

The word from the GA is that they will likely use the same contractor that installed pavement around 19 York Court, and that each interested individual should work through Howard Friedel to coordinate the individual resident sidewalk replacement.

The GA was approached four years ago regarding the issue of drainage and sidewalks. One year later the community coordinated a contractor to excavate York Court 3 and locate the historic drainage system, which was found to have collapsed. At one point it ran from each home to an underground main line located under the sidewalk and hedges that ran to the southwest corner of the court and emptied into the city system that runs down the alley.

Once this was identified, GA took the position that the drainage system belongs to the city. The GA has spent the last couple of years trying to convince the city of this fact, with the city refusing ownership and/or any proof of such.

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**APRIL 23 –**

### **Law Day for Seniors**

The Bar Association of Baltimore City is hosting this free event. Call 877/926-8300 by April 21 to make reservations.



**APRIL 24 – Spring Planting Party**

Belle Terre in Waverly will be sprucing up green space in the neighborhood beginning at 11:00 a.m. outside of 3212 Avon Avenue. Contact Joe Stewart for more details at 410/767-1354.

**APRIL 30 – Oakenshawe and Guilford Restoration and Renovation Club Spring Event**

Discuss your homes, home improvement projects, and federal, state, and city tax credit programs for our historic homes. Attendees are also welcome to bring relevant items for show and tell or distribution, such as cards of contractors they have used and recommend and information on where to locate hard to find items for our homes and gardens.

The Restoration and Renovation Club event will begin at 1:00 p.m. at the Oakenshawe home of Janet and Walter Stephens, located at 3517 North Calvert Street. RSVP at 410/889-1806.

**MAY 14 – Symphony Rocks**

Tickets for this BSO fundraising event are \$100, which gets you admission to the concert, food, drinks, and \$100 in gambling chips. Winnings can be used toward silent auction. Phil is working on the ticket sales committee and you can get further information and tickets for him, or visit [www.symphonyrocks.com](http://www.symphonyrocks.com).

## WHERE THE SIDEWALK ENDS

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There was an agreement made by our residents during this process stating that when a new drainage system is installed and/or the old one is restored, each homeowner would individually tap into the new system at their own expense.

At this point the topic of ownership for the drainage system has been overlooked, but a sidewalk replacement proposal has been submitted to us.

It appears there are really three issues that are experienced by our residents:

1. Decaying sidewalks
2. Poor drainage in the front of our homes (bypassing historic drainage system)
3. Basement flooding to homes that back up along the alley

If you are interested in meeting to discuss this issue, please e-mail or call Phil. The goal of the meeting would be to review the history, discuss the drainage and sidewalk issues, identify potential solutions, and develop a response to GA from The York Courts.

If there is no interest in pursuing further discussions, additional information will be provided for individuals wishing to contact Howard Friedel.