

# IDLEWYLDE\*NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE IDLEWYLDE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

“Community Commitment since 1947”

August 2019

## Idlewylde Community Association FALL GENERAL MEETING



**Friday, September 20 at 6:30 PM**  
*Idlewylde Hall, 6301 Sherwood Rd*



**NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!**  
**OLD MEMBERS WELCOME BACK!**



We will elect officers for 2019-20 and conduct any other business.



**THE ICA WILL PROVIDE PIZZA AND DRINKS**



*This meeting is for members of the ICA. If you aren't currently a member, you'll be able to join or renew at the door.*

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

**At the meeting, members will be asked to approve significant changes to the ICA Bylaws. The proposed changes, which have been approved by the ICA Board, include revising or deleting outdated provisions, adding provisions that allow for the use of modern technology, clarifying provisions that appear to be unclear, and adding some provisions that are standard for non-profit organizations.**

**The text of the proposed changes will be posted on the ICA website ([www.idlewylde.org](http://www.idlewylde.org)) and will be available for review at the meeting. Any ICA member who would like to receive a copy by email in advance should contact DANA REED at <[danareed802@gmail.com](mailto:danareed802@gmail.com)>.**

## Your community association

Soon the annual ICA dues mailing will go out, inviting you to join the association or renew your support for another year. Here are some of the things the association has been involved in lately.

- *Blair House at Stoneleigh, aka 812 Regester.* The ICA has been on this since 2008, when the then owners applied for a zoning variance to operate the former Armacost Nursing Home as an assisted living facility. The applicable zoning is for single-family homes, and the Special Exception under which the nursing home operated had expired. Still, a double lot with a big old building on it didn't look like a good candidate for residential development, especially once the Great Recession hit, so the board hired a lawyer and negotiated a variance agreement that included various protections for the neighbors and restricted the facility to 15 residents. (The nursing home had housed more than 40.) Subsequently, the ICA has interfaced with successive owners to make sure they were mindful of the agreement. It took a while for an owner with the necessary resources to turn up, but finally the project has come to fulfillment. (NB: they didn't consult us about the name.)
- *6401 Sherwood.* Earlier this year, the ICA was back before the County zoning tribunal, this time to foil the absentee owner's attempt to cram a second house onto this property, thereby turning a home with a decent yard into two homes with tiny yards on a street too busy for kids to play in – not ideal for a community that attracts families with school-age kids.
- *New Sherwood Market/Express Mart.* See Jamie Kass's article over the page. The board is currently pursuing this issue with the Lottery Commission and Del. Lafferty,
- *6301 Sherwood, aka Idlewylde Hall.* The ICA has secured state funding to rehab this building so it can continue to serve our own and neighboring communities and to make it more neighborhood-friendly: e.g., by installing external security cameras.

– Paul Romney

## Update on the Express Mart (the former New Sherwood Market)

When I moved to Idlewylde, over 20 years ago, the Sherwood Market was a friendly neighborhood grocery store. It was common to send children to the store to pick up a missing ingredient for dinner, a loaf of bread, or a gallon of milk.

Then the owners retired and sold the store. It went through several hands, becoming less and less a neighborhood grocery and more of a convenience store. Eventually the property was bought by an absentee landlord, Joonahn LLC, with tenants running the store as the "New Sherwood Market." (Joonahn also owns the barber shop building next door.)

For several years after that, our neighborhood had to deal with an increasing presence of criminal activity. The store owners were fraudulently exchanging USDA-issued food stamps for half their cash value and pocketing the other half, and the parking lot became a hangout for drug dealers. When the owner and his partner were arrested and sent to prison, his son, "Sonny," who had been managing the business all along, continued to run it.

Because of the food-stamp fraud and ever-present drug activity, the Maryland Lottery Commission pulled the store's lottery license. Sonny tried several times, in various ways, to get it back. He applied in his own name, as the "new owner." He changed the store's name to Express Mart and sold (or "sold") it to someone who promptly applied for a license. She turned out to live in a property owned by his family. Another questionable sale (or "sale") followed.

During this period, our community association board and various community members worked diligently, with the support of Delegate Steve Lafferty, to block reinstatement of the lottery in an effort to stop crime in and around the store. The Lottery Commission undertook not to grant a new license without consulting the community.

Late last year, the business was sold to new owners, who are operating it as One Stop Convenience Mart, though they haven't changed the sign yet. They met with the ICA board and discussed their plans. The board told them that it would not support a lottery license application for any successor business until the business had shown itself to be viable and a benefit to the community.

They applied for a license anyway, and to the community's surprise it was granted without any

consultation. The board quickly contacted Delegate Lafferty, County Councilman David Marks and the Lottery Commission, and the machines disappeared.

Subsequently the owners met with the board again, this time along with their landlord, Sangjoon Ahn. Mr Chang, who is running the store, spoke about the difficult transition from the old business to their new business model and the challenges they have faced in "cleaning up" the criminal activity outside the building. He has installed security cameras, and he and his employees continue to call the police to report any criminal activity.

Mr Chang stated that he's getting good response times from the police and now only requires police help on rare occasions. Creating a safe and inviting space for customers is his focus, as he would like to earn more neighborhood business. He's made some physical improvements inside the store and hopes to make more, inside and out, once he has the profits to fund those improvements. Mr Chang is petitioning for a lottery license as he feels he needs it in order to bring in more customers and turn a profit.

The store primarily sells snacks and sodas but also carries bread, milk and household items similar to the 7-11. Some in the community may have hoped for a different business in the old Sherwood Market building. However, the new owners have been making the effort to work with the community to fight criminal activity and create a safer environment.

The question remains as to whether the community will support this new convenience store and a Lottery license in the Express Mart. I encourage you all to check it out for yourselves. Stop by for a visit, talk to the owner and/or employees, and let the Board know what you think.

— *Jamie Kass*

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### IDLEWYLDE NEWS

P.O. Box 66106, Baltimore, MD 21239

*Editor:* Paul Romney (410-377-0748)

*Director of Distribution:* Jamie Kass

Submit articles, announcements, ads, etc. to the editor at [idlewylde@yaho.com](mailto:idlewylde@yaho.com), or phone editor.

#### *Advertising Rates*

¼ page: \$25 members, \$50 non-members

½ page: \$35 members, \$75 non-members

Full-page insert: one-sided \$200, two-sided \$250

Classified listings are free for members of the ICA.

*Payment.* Send check payable to "Idlewylde Community Association" to ICA at PO Box above.

*Idlewylde News* is the newsletter of the ICA. 755 copies are printed bi-monthly for door-to-door distribution, and each issue is posted on [idlewylde.org](http://idlewylde.org).

## Communications chaos

Fifteen years ago, this newsletter was the only way to speak to the whole Idlewylde community.

It still is. But nowadays the proliferation of online groups creates a situation in which groups of neighbors are talking to each other without necessarily remembering that they're not talking to everyone.

The first online group was an email listserve: some neighbors may recall *idlebuzz@yahoo.com*. This turned out to be hard to manage, but a neighbor had started a community Yahoo group and the ICA took it over as a successor to *idlebuzz*, promoting it in this newsletter and on the annual dues form.

Then came Facebook, and the whole world split into FB users and the rest. So it was in Idlewylde, where someone set up a community chat page.

But that wasn't the end of it. Along came Nextdoor.com, a California-based commercial platform masquerading as a community chat room. If you sign up for "Nextdoor Idlewylde," you find yourself in a group covering the whole of south Towson and a chunk of the City as well. You can turn off any or all of the 29 communities surrounding "Idlewylde," but the default is full coverage.

Why the scare quotes? If you live in Idlewylde west of Banbury, you can't join Nextdoor Idlewylde – the view from San Francisco is that you're in Anneslie. Other bits along Idlewylde's southern edge have been annexed to Glen Oaks and Idlewood.

There are also two official ICA online forums, but neither has functioned satisfactorily so far.

The website *idlewylde.org* has been run by a succession of volunteer webmasters in an arm's-length relationship with the board. Recently it was transferred to a new, supposedly more user-friendly, platform in a process which left it largely dismantled. The board has decided to bite the bullet and sign on with a well-credentialed professional service.

There's also an ICA Facebook page, but it went moribund after its managers cycled off the board and is just now being revived by board member *Jessica Brown*.

Probably nowadays the ICA needs a "communications tsar" – a board member who will liaise with the *idlewylde.org* webmaster and also make sure our message gets out to all of Idlewylde's online "communities."

– *Paul Romney*

## Idlewylde Community Facebook page

Neighborhood chatter happens in many places these days, perhaps across fences and certainly online. You may be aware that there are several places neighbors have conversations these days: the Yahoo! email group, the ICA's official Facebook page, the unofficial Idlewylde Community Facebook group, and Nextdoor.

The Idlewylde Community Facebook group, a useful, albeit imperfect, tool, seems the most active of these. Here are some of the topics being discussed there in the first half of July.

- Portable classrooms have been installed at Stoneleigh Elementary School.
- Plans have been filed to build a Burger King drive-thru restaurant near the Panera in the parking lot of the Anneslie Shopping Center.
- There was an attempted robbery at the 7-Eleven the weekend of July 6.
- After a lack of response from the County, neighbors installed a "SLOW DOWN" sign on the crosswalk at Overbrook and Regester as well as a few others on signage around the neighborhood.
- Rumor has it mail carrier Robin is out for a time due to foot surgery.
- One hot summer day, our neighborhood's trash was collected by one man who both drove the truck and emptied the cans by himself.
- A series of car break-ins occurred in the neighborhood in early July.
- There is interest in installing additional swings (non-infant) at Overlook Park.
- Concerns about speeding cars and illegal passing on Walker Ave.

In addition to these topical discussions, there are always lots of people asking for recommendations, selling things or giving them away, advertising lemonade stands, searching for owners of lost pets, and sharing news of local events.

– *Jessica Brown*

### Join the Idlewylde Community Yahoo Group

1. Go to [https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/-Idlewylde\\_community/info](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/-Idlewylde_community/info)
2. Click the "Join Group" button.

## ***Your community needs YOU***

A past president of the ICA said something that bears repeating from time to time: *The ICA does battle for Idlewylde.*

The ICA *represents Idlewylde* in dealing with officials such as Delegate Lafferty and Councilman Marks, and public agencies such as the State Lottery Commission and the County Office of Administrative Hearings, which rules on zoning cases. And because we do that, we want *you* on board. We want to know you care.

And we want you to come out to general meetings. For one thing, we need a quorum to do business — like revising the by-laws, for instance. But that's not all. We want you to be interested in your community. We want you to be concerned.

We're all volunteers, most of us with day jobs, and the more the hands, the lighter the work. That's why we're always looking for people to join the board.

But it doesn't have to be the board. Several members of the ICA are currently serving on a committee to set priorities for rehabbing and re-furbishing the community hall and to devise an efficient management structure. And there are the volunteers who turn out every two months to distribute this newsletter.

It doesn't even have to be the ICA. For the past few months, **Susanna Elliott** and **Tim Johnson** have independently taken on the task of keeping the business district tidy by picking up trash and whacking the weeds along the curb.

This isn't a one-time thing: they've been out there regularly, not just cleaning up but also documenting patterns of littering to help devise a long-term solution to a perennial problem. They've also contacted the public schools to arrange service hours for middle and high school students who pitch in.

Now the board is working with them, contacting business owners to get them to contribute financially and do more to clean up around their premises, including install their own trash cans.

The board may be out in front when the ICA does battle for Idlewylde, but it prefers to be a facilitator. Bring it an idea — for a community block party, event at the hall, park cleanup, or whatever — and the ICA will chip in. **Diane Christopher** showed the way last year with her Limit Alley cleanups.

The ICA is the Idlewylde Community Associated for community action. **Join us at the hall on September 20!**

– Paul Romney



**Jim Craig**

**410-377-6100**

6609 York Rd - Anneslie

[jimcraig1@allstate.com](mailto:jimcraig1@allstate.com)



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## **IDLEWYLDE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

*PO BOX 66106, Baltimore, MD 21239*

### **BOARD (2018-19)**

Pete Ismay, *President*, 410-459-6638 [pcismay@hotmail.com](mailto:pcismay@hotmail.com)  
Duncan Keir, *VP*, 410-409-5231 [duncankeir76@gmail.com](mailto:duncankeir76@gmail.com)  
Dana Reed, *Treasurer*, 443-869-3670 [daanrd@comcast.net](mailto:daanrd@comcast.net)  
Paul Romney, *Secretary*, 410-377-0748 [paulromney03@aim.com](mailto:paulromney03@aim.com)

#### *At-large members:*

Jessica Brown, 412-491-3318 [Jessica.Hoptay@gmail.com](mailto:Jessica.Hoptay@gmail.com)  
Diane Christopher 410-318-9735 [dianechristopher12@gmail.com](mailto:dianechristopher12@gmail.com)  
Michelle List, 410-377-5244 [classylist@hotmail.com](mailto:classylist@hotmail.com)  
Peggy Squitieri, 410-377-5722 [pashannon@verizon.net](mailto:pashannon@verizon.net)

### **OTHER OFFICERS**

Citizens on Patrol

*Director:* Katie McCabe, 301-922-2743 [ktmccabe2@gmail.com](mailto:ktmccabe2@gmail.com)  
[idlewylde.org](http://idlewylde.org)

*Webmaster:*

Membership Secretary  
Paul Romney, 410-377-0748 [paulromney03@aim.com](mailto:paulromney03@aim.com)

Members of the ICA are welcome at monthly board meetings (usually second Tuesday), but please contact a board member to confirm time and place.