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Column: Greenbrier Garden Club sows seeds of community pride

My Towson Neighborhood

By Mary Katherine Scheeler
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Greenbrier Garden Club is a community club consisting of 24 women who live in the Greenbrier neighborhood of Towson.

Years ago, a small memorial garden was created at the corner of Stevenson Lane and Greenbrier Road to remember club members who had passed away. Each year, the garden club spent several Saturdays cleaning up the garden, weeding, transplanting and removing debris.

But it was time for a new plan, and last October, the club decided to revitalize the garden. It was in need of an overhaul.

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With the help of member Shirley Carl, the Greenbrier club approached NeighborSpace of Baltimore County for help. NeighborSpace of Baltimore County is a nonprofit that works with partners to promote livable communities by acquiring land to serve as small parks, gardens and natural areas.

This was Greenbrier's only remaining "green" space and it was owned by Black and Decker. NeighborSpace approached Black and Decker and negotiated an easement to expand the garden. This easement permits the Greenbrier Garden Club to develop and maintain the memorial garden and protect its future existence.

Revamping the garden was a huge project and money was needed. Jack Lattimore, board member of NeighborSpace, donated time and landscape design skills to draw a new plan for the garden. The club also partnered with David Holland, 15, who was trying to earn his Eagle Scout designation. David adopted the revitalization of the garden as his Eagle project and contributed by fundraising, purchasing plants and organizing Scouts to help.

Hollins Organic Products Inc. was generous in donating compost and mulch for the garden.

This garden has truly been a community effort. Club members have put in hours of labor and love, and the project has been supported by NeighborSpace, Hollins Organic and Greenbrier's own neighbors.

Residents are invited Saturday, Oct. 10, 10 a.m., to the corner of Stevenson Lane and Greenbrier Road for the ribbon-cutting ceremony to thank those who helped throughout this journey and to see the transformation of a small neighborhood memorial garden.

For more details, contact Page Birney at 410-296-4986 or pagebirney@yahoo.com or Michele Frome of NeighborSpace at 410-727-3245 or Michele.frome@verizon.net.

Bernard Trueschler, retired president of BGE ("from the good old days" of BGE), has always been proud of his sister Josephine Trueschler. Today, he brims over with pride. The College of Notre Dame of Maryland has recognized her with the Distinguished Alumna Award for 2009.

"Jo" Trueschler, a beloved faculty member who taught English at the College of Notre Dame for 39 years, received the award at the school's Honors Convocation.

A member of the Class of 1949, she joined the English department in 1959 after teaching in Baltimore City for 10 years. She inspired generations of Notre Dame students in the study of literature and writing.

While a member of the English faculty, Trueschler received four key awards -- the Sister Meletia Teaching Award in 1967, Mullan Distinguished Teaching Award in 1985, SSND Mission and Ministry Award in 1998 and the President's Medal in 2007.

Two interesting programs are coming up in October and November at Hampton Mansion, 535 Hampton Lane, Towson.

It starts with Harvest Day and Hampton Hallows on Oct. 18, 1-5 p.m. and 5:30-7:30 p.m. Help the park staff bring in the harvest and watch the blacksmith make old-fashioned tools. Then stick around for Hampton Hallows, a candlelight retelling of local stories.

Then, come back Nov. 8, 1-4 p.m. for "Wade in the Water: Slaves and Spiritual Songs." Spiritual singer Jim Thomas will transport visitors to the time when slaves worked in the fields and the mansion at Hampton.

Thomas uses songs to narrate the slave experience. Be sure to mark this on your calendar to enjoy the beauty and the history of slave songs that once were heard at Hampton.

The lives of slaves during these early times are not only interesting, they are critical to the history and preservation of Hampton Mansion.

There's also a final chapter; the untold story of how blacks have left their stamp on Hampton Mansion. Perhaps this story should be entitled, "Free Black Citizens Write a Lasting Chapter." Maybe we'll celebrate this soon?

Additional news from West Towson Neighborhood Association spokesperson Louise Teubner-Rhodes:

In its garden contest winners, the first prize for curb appeal went to Robert and Janet Powell, 518 Charles St.

I know it's a bit last-minute, but here's a reminder that from Martha Hopkins that the Baltimore Town and Country Committee has called a business and social meeting for Wednesday, Oct. 7, hosted by Ina Hubard, 313 Brightwood Club, followed by a luncheon.

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