

The first edition -DECEMBER 2007
Union Hill Civic Association Newsletter

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter"
-Martin Luther King

This simple newsletter is for folks who live in Richmond's Union Hill Neighborhood.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNION HILL

This history blurb was taken from the ACORN website www.richmondneighborhoods.org... The Union Hill area of Church Hill is located on the high western bluff above Shockoe Valley. Houses of a remarkable mix are balanced along the irregular, picturesque and sometimes narrow streets that follow the curve of the hill. Those homes that line Jefferson Park have a clear view of downtown Richmond. Bordered on the south by Jefferson Avenue, on the north by Venable Street, on the west by 25th Street, and by Mosby on the east, Union Hill's history began early in the nineteenth century. The term "Union Hill" first occurs in 1817-- probably referring to the combination of several hills that were joined by fill and grading over the years. Union Hill's building lots were laid off in 1805, but it wasn't until 1845 that small tradesmen began to build in earnest along the cobblestone streets (many of which still exist today). These shoemakers, coach painters, tailors, carpenters, and mechanics built attractive one-story cottages, two-story dwellings with scroll-saw verandahs, and houses with extended wings and shuttered porches line the hilly streets of Union Hill. Annexed by the City of Richmond in 1867, Union Hill remains a living-history residential area located conveniently to downtown Richmond.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

Union Hill Civic Association, Lora Toothman, President, loratoothman@gmail.com
Residents working to make the neighborhood a better place to live. Meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Location TBA.

Friends of Jefferson Park, Bill Conkle, President, junkifunki@aol.com 649-3764 Actively advocating for and working in our neighborhood park. Meets the last Monday of every month.

Union Hill Old and Historic District Study Group: A group of Union Hill neighbors is exploring the possibility of establishing the Union Hill neighborhood as a City Old and Historic District. The group is currently soliciting questions, comments and concerns from local residents. For additional information on this study group, please contact: Elaine O'Dell Elaine@churchhillphoto.com or Kristen Friedline ruthie923@yahoo.com

ZONING Changes PROPOSED New zoning has been proposed by the City of Richmond for our neighborhood. A series of public meetings will be held to discuss this issue. Tarisa Griffith is the City Planner on this project. She can be reached at 646-6308 or Tarisa.Griffith@richmondgov.com

JEFFERSON PARK UPDATE: 29 New Trees will be planted in Jefferson Park during the month of December. Other 2007 improvements include: a community kiosk; accessible sidewalks; tree maintenance; water fountain, bandstand improvements, and vegetation control.

Union Hill Civic Association Update: 2007 Accomplishments include the planting of 25 Eastern Red Buds in vacant tree wells; commented on various zoning issues; communicated community concerns to law enforcement; improved neighborhood infrastructure; sponsored social events; and built community spirit/activism.

SLOW DOWN ON VENABLE! Neighbors are seeking signatures on a petition to promote stop signs and traffic slowing strategies on Venable Street. Petitions are available at Jumpin J's.

Police and Safety – Emergencies Dial 911

Police- First Precinct 646-3602
Non-Emergency Police 646-5100
Fire Station #1 – 646-4229
Church Hill Crime Watch 648-2710

Neighborhood Maintenance - City Website: www.ci.richmond.va.us

Citizen's Assistance 646-7000
Trash/Trees/Street and Sidewalk Repairs 646-0999
Street Light Repair/Sewers/Gas/Utilities 646-3000
Environmental Control 646-7448
Graffiti Hotline 646-1406
Truancy Hotline 646=ABCD
Housing Code Enforcement 646-6419

City Council Member, 7th District, Delores McQuinn 646-5429

School Board Member, 7th District, Keith West, 644-1081

Mayor L. Douglas Wilder 646-7970 wilderld@richmondgov.com

Neighborhood Website/Blog – Church Hill People's News www.chpn.net

RECYCLING

Call 646-7000 and request a recycling bin. You can put recycling in boxes or plastic bins until your official recycling bin arrives. Learn what can be recycled by calling 340-0900 or visiting www.cvwma.com Basically, you can recycle metal and aluminum cans, plastic and glass bottles, as well as mixed paper, newspaper and cardboard.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Church Hill Holiday Weekend - Don't forget to mark your calendars now for Dec 7, 8 and 9 for the Church Hill Holiday Weekend. Vespers/Candlelight Walk (Free) on Friday night at 7pm at St. John's Church, The Ball (\$40) Saturday night at the Masonic Lodge on 25th St. from 8 - 12am and finally the Church Hill Community House Tours (\$15/advance) on Sunday from 12 - 6 pm.

Parade of Lights - The 15th Annual James River Advisory Council Parade of Lights (Free) on the James River will be held this year on December 8th at dusk. Last year 20 boats participated in the event and this year efforts are under way to attract more decorated boats. Libby Hill provides a great view....

Jefferson Park Tree and Park Decorating (Free) will take place on Saturday, December 8th at 9am at the park bandstand. Please bring some decorations for the new holiday tree and park, as well as your morning coffee. The FOJP will have pastries to share. The group would like to have the tree decorated, as well as bows and wreaths for the various light poles in the park. Mike Onsel will be donating lights for the holiday tree. More information: 649-3764

Jefferson Park Tree Planting – Sat. December 15, Volunteers meet at 8:30am at the bandstand.

Thank you to City Public Works, Parks and Others Who Partnered With Us in 2007 ☺
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