

West Lanham Hills Citizen

JULY 2025

No WLHCA Meetings July & August
Next Meeting: Thursday, September 4 at 7pm
Park Building (7700 Decatur Road)

Highlights in this Issue:

- **Back to School Bash**
August 22 - submit school supply request form by **July 11**
- **Proposed Neighborhood Logos** will be discussed at the September association meeting
- **History of the Hills** - a new part of our monthly newsletter!
- **Summer reminders** - be safe in the heat, no fireworks permitted, and look for invasive lanternflies

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By: Michael Chodos, WLHCA President

I'm proud to welcome **Amanda Karem** as our **new Member-at-Large** — a key role that helps ensure every neighbor's voice is heard. Amanda brings great energy to the board, and we're excited to have her with us.

As I begin my term as President, I'm focused on three priorities: **empowering** our members, **modernizing** how we operate, and **strengthening** connections across our community.

Thank you to everyone who's come out to our recent events—it's been inspiring to see so much engagement and spirit. Wishing you a safe, fun, and relaxing summer. We'll see you at our next community meeting on September 4!

Tues, July 8

Game Night

Park Building
7-8:30 PM

Games & Snacks Provided

Our June game night was a hit! We celebrated June birthdays with cupcakes and lots of cheer. Neighbors played games, danced to Just Dance, and enjoyed Xbox tennis and Minecraft together. The night was packed with fun and laughter!

Join us for more fun in July - all ages welcome!

Wed, July 23

Public Hearing: Proposed Zoning Change for RST Development

Wayne K. Curry Administration Building
1301 McCormick Drive, Largo, MD 20774

9:30AM | Hybrid

A hybrid public hearing will be held regarding a request to rezone 4.29 acres at 7591 Annapolis Rd (former Lincoln Dealership), Hyattsville, MD 20784. The proposal, submitted by RST Development, LLC (ZMA-2024-003), seeks to change the zoning from Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) to Neighborhood Activity Center Planned Development (NAC-PD) to allow for the development of multi-family residential and commercial uses. Residents are encouraged to attend or speak at the hearing. **To participate** or learn more: call 301-952-3644 or email ZHE@co.pg.md.us.

More information at: <https://www.pgccouncil.us/175/Office-of-the-Zoning-Hearing-Examiner>

Additional Information Available at:

Website: www.westlanhamhills.com | **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/westlanhamhillsmc
Email: westlanhamnews@gmail.com

Back to School Bash: August 22 | 4–8PM | Park Building

Come for the Supplies,
Stay for the Fun!

While you're picking up school supplies or dropping off donations, stick around and enjoy some **free food, snacks, and games!** It's a great chance to relax, have fun, and **get to know your neighbors.** We're building community while getting ready for the school year—hope to see you there!

Event Reminders & Requests:

- **School supply forms due July 11** (paper forms to 7749 Emerson or submit online using QR code)
- **Lend a Hand (and a Tent, Table, or Chair!)** Have a tent, table, or chair to lend for use at this event? Email denniam17@gmail.com to coordinate.
- **Uniform Drive:** Donate gently used school uniforms **Jul. 13 - Aug. 15** to support local families! Drop-offs can be made in the tote bag at 7776 Emerson.
- **Plant Swap:** Bring seeds, seedlings, or cuttings to exchange—hosted by the Garden Committee!



Thanks for helping us make this event a success for our community!

Help us Choose a Neighborhood Logo!

We've got fresh new logo designs for our neighborhood—and we want your opinion! See the options and share your thoughts at our September meeting. Sneak peeks here, with **color versions** posted on our facebook page and at the Back to School Bash.



Got design skills or feedback? We're still accepting submissions and feedback! westlanhamnews@gmail.com

In Honor of Rose Adams

We pause to honor the life and legacy of Rose Adams, who recently passed away. Rose was more than a beloved wife and mother — she was a kind neighbor and a loyal friend whose presence quietly shaped the lives of those around her. Her warmth, generosity, and steady spirit touched many, and her memory will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew her. Our deepest condolences go out to her family during this time of loss. May they find comfort in the love that surrounds them and in the lasting legacy Rose leaves behind.

Summer Safety Reminders

Fireworks: Illegal in Prince George's County—enjoy local public displays instead.

Heat: Stay cool, hydrated, and limit outdoor activity during peak heat.

Pets: Provide water and shade; never leave pets in cars.

Lanternflies: If you spot one, squash it! These invasive pests harm local trees and crops.

History of the Hills: A Little City in the Woods (1940s)

By: Kay Rager and Alicia Denning

In 1940, nestled in what was then a wooded stretch of land, homes in West Lanham Hills were advertised for just \$2,750 — four rooms and a bath on a 8000-square-foot lot. But buying a home was just the beginning. Moving in meant hauling water in pails from a fire hydrant, using a borrowed wrench from the real estate agent. Eventually, neighbors pitched in to purchase a 300-foot hose to bring water directly to their homes. Electricity, gas, and sewer systems were often missing in those early days. Residents carried five-gallon containers of oil from the real estate office to fuel their heaters, or converted them to wood stoves and chopped firewood from the surrounding woods. Streets were unpaved, and deep mud was a daily battle. Yet, the spirit of community ran deep. In 1941, 71 residents gathered for the first Citizens Association meeting—held in a garage, because no buildings existed yet. They passed a hat and collected \$5.25 to start addressing issues like roads, streetlights, and sanitation. Street addresses weren't even assigned yet—residents listed their homes by "job number."

Committees sprang up for everything from securing bus service and sewer connections to handling trash collection and street signs. Volunteers paved Garrison Road themselves, earning two years of free association membership. A truck was purchased to mount fire equipment, laying the groundwork for the future fire department.

Education was a priority even then. Kindergarten was held in the basement of a private home. First graders took a bus to a school on what is now the police station on Princess Garden Parkway for a year until they were bussed to the elementary school. Older kids attended Lanham Elementary, Bladensburg and then Glenridge Junior High, and eventually Bladensburg High School.

During World War II, blackout drills were enforced by air raid wardens wearing gas masks. Residents used blankets to cover their windows to keep the neighborhood invisible from enemy planes. The community banded together to support one another—organizing turkey shoots, raising money for war efforts, and even helping the wives of deployed soldiers until their government checks arrived.

Grocery trips were a community affair. On Saturdays, families carpooled to Rhode Island Avenue stores because most women didn't drive. For everyday needs, the Busy Bee Market at the top of the hill offered neighborhood kids a favorite treat—nickel pickles from a big barrel.

Despite the struggles—flooded roads, frozen hoses, and faulty septic systems—residents built a vibrant, cooperative neighborhood from the ground up. Their efforts laid the foundation for the strong community spirit that still exists today.

To be continued... The 1950s next month!

Neighborhood Roots, Heartfelt Returns

By: Stanley Iwuh

Growing up in this neighborhood has been a true blessing for me and my family. From neighbors who looked out for us and helped with home upkeep, to using the steep Garrison hills as my personal gym, the support here has shaped so much of who I am today. During high school, this community helped me secure volunteer hours and even provided school supplies—something that made a big difference for my mom, who was raising three kids on her own. I'm proud to now be a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, and working full-time, but no matter how busy life gets, I've made it a priority to give back to the place that gave me so much. I look forward to being even more involved in upcoming community events and doing my part to uplift the next generation.

New Archive & History Project

Help us preserve our neighborhood's history and the stories of those who have lived here! Share your stories, photos, documents, or recipes with Sarah Tsubata at 785-341-5042 or sarahtsubata@gmail.com, or drop them off at 7752 Decatur Rd.