



Holiday Traditions in Greenbelt

By Megan Searing Young, Director of the Greenbelt Museum

The holiday season in Greenbelt has always been a festive time, from the arrival of early residents in October of 1937, to what are now known as GHI homes, right up to the present day. Early Greenbelt pioneers, as they were called, both brought traditions with them and developed new ones. Much of what we know about holiday traditions here we have learned from oral histories and photographs which are preserved in the archives of the Greenbelt Museum.

In 1937, holiday celebrations were tempered by the Great Depression which still gripped the nation. Greenbelt was built, in fact, to bring relief to the suffering. Upon their arrival, many residents immediately joined committees, clubs, and other groups. There were so many meetings, in fact, that in December of 1938, Dr. Linden S. Dodson suggested at a meeting of the Greenbelt Citizens' Association, that the last week of December should be "At Home Week in Greenbelt." There would be no meetings planned, so that residents would be able to spend time at home with their families.



A snowy day in Greenbelt, circa 1940. Postcard in the Greenbelt Museum Collection

Other traditions involved the belt of green space which surrounded the community. Designed to be a space for recreation as well as a buffer against encroaching development, the woods which comprised parts of the green belt, provided many families with holiday greenery. Cassie Mae Stone Snow moved to 7-A Southway with her family in 1943. "Around Christmastime Mama would go to the woods near our court and gather ground cedar to make into beautiful wreaths for us and some of our neighbors." (Oral history, July 1987)

Another much beloved tradition, especially for Greenbelt children, took place after the Christmas holiday. As Greenbelt pioneer Marty Madden recalls, "...every year on a Friday night in January, not too long after Christmas, they used to give a free ticket to the movie to every kid who would bring the family tree down to Braden Field. We'd hand in our trees and they'd give us our tickets, and that evening there'd be a big bonfire." (Oral history, August 1987)

Each year, museum staff decorates the Greenbelt Museum historic house at 10B Crescent to bring to life the atmosphere of holidays past. To reflect early Greenbelt's religious diversity, we have on display both a menorah and Christmas decorations from the late 1930s through the 1950s. The holiday display will be on view in December (open Sundays from 1-5 pm; \$3 admission). On Friday, December 6th from 7-9 pm, we have a free evening open house, Deco the Halls, which takes place in conjunction with the City's tree lighting. Come by to see how the house sparkles at night!

Happy holidays from the Greenbelt Museum!



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Kenny Grimes: Retiring After 39 Years' Service to GHI Members

By Brenda Lewis



Kenny Grimes

It really is so hard to say goodbye – especially when it is to someone like Kenny. It would be difficult to find a more perfect example of a hardworking team player. Kenny approaches every job with such a high degree of enthusiasm and efficiency. You may have had an opportunity to work with him over the years, as he started employment with GHI on April 8, 1974 as a carpenter's helper. He progressed steadily and served in many capacities in the Maintenance Department, finally settling in as the Contracts Administrator and Fee-For-Service Coordinator for the last thirteen years. He is retiring on December 31st, just shy of a 40-year anniversary.

We will miss his cheerfulness and dependability. Congratulations, Kenny, and thank you so much for your long and dedicated service to GHI members!

Member Announcements

2013 Community Beautification Awards

From May 1st thru Sept 12th, GHI staff performed over 2,338 Community Beautification Program inspections. Units passing the initial inspection rarely require follow up, allowing staff resources to focus upon other matters.

Therefore, rather than selecting the "Best Sunny Yard," "Best Shady Yard," and "Best Court" within the community, this year awards were given to the courts where all members passed their initial Community Beautification Inspection. **The winning courts are: 5 Crescent, 2 Hillside, 8 Research, and 58 Ridge.**

Congratulations to the 20 members of these four courts. While the individual awards are modest, heartfelt appreciation for their efforts is not.

Leaf Bags Available for Purchase

Most of the leaves have fallen, so it's time to bag them up and get them out of your yard. You can purchase 10 leaf bags for \$4 at the City Finance Office (25 Crescent Road). Local grocery and hardware stores also carry the bags. Once you have your leaves bagged, call 301-474-8004 by noon on Thursday to schedule collection. Have bags in your service side yard by 7 am Friday for collection.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

December

5	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
6	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
9	7:00 pm	Member Outreach Committee
9	7:30 pm	Marketing Committee
10	8:30 am	Yard Line Committee
11	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
12	6:45 pm	Investment Committee
12	7:30 pm	Finance Committee
13	12:00 pm	OFFICE CLOSED* (Staff Holiday Party)
16	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
17	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
18	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
18	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
19	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
20	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
23	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
25	--	OFFICE CLOSED* (Christmas Day)

January

1	--	OFFICE CLOSED* (New Year's Day)
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* Emergency maintenance service is available outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed. Call 301-474-6011.

Gutter Cleaning & Inspections

Nov. 18th through December



Weekly locations will be in the *Greenbelt News Review* and GHI's E-News each Monday. Please close your window shades to preserve privacy. Contact [Peter Joseph](#) at (301) 474-4161 ext. 141 with questions.

Guest House Rental: \$75 per night

To learn more visit <http://ghi.coop/content/guest-house-rental> or contact Member Services at 301-474-4161, ext. 147 to make a reservation.