

Laurel Park News



April 2011

Wilda Taylor: Actor, Dancer, Designer

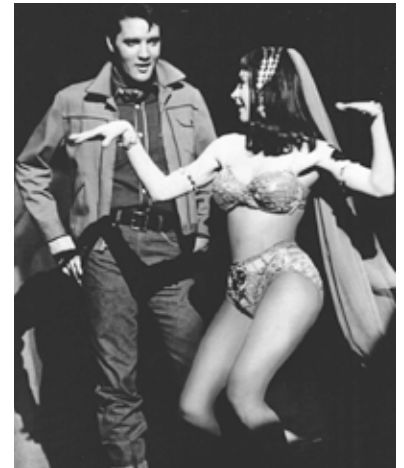


Wilda today

So many individuals here in our neighborhood, indeed as everywhere, quietly going about their daily lives, have very interesting and often unique experiences to share once the treasure trove of memory is opened. Wilda Taylor, who moved here from her home in the Los Angeles area about three years ago, has been immersed in and inspired by a life on stage – from the theater to the Silver Screen. She has acted, danced and designed costumes and in recent times, focused on collage.

Since childhood, her parents encouraged all five of their children to express and pursue their natural talents. Wilda's mother, a professional dancer who taught ballet for many years after retiring from the stage, and her father, an accomplished operatic singer in his early years, provided inspiration for their naturally gifted family.

See Wilda, page 4



Wilda and Elvis

MURT Dollars to Improve Neighborhood



Area of planned MURT improvements.

Laurel Park will soon be undergoing a renovation: the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County will be developing the Multi-Use Recreational Trail (MURT) along the southern edge of Laurel Park.

The MURT will ultimately connect different neighborhoods and areas of the city with a biking / walking trail. Some areas already completed include Bird Key Park and a strip from Marie Selby Botanical Gardens to Bayfront Park.

Although it will take years before the MURT is actually a continuous path, the improvement in our area will enhance the southern perimeter which is currently a stormwater ditch and scrub vegetation. (City staff has assured us they will retain as many of the existing trees as possible.) Money for this project comes from a variety of sources and has already been allocated.

The neighborhood association first heard details about this development at the February 15, 2011 General Membership Meeting. Alex Davis-Shaw, City of Sarasota City Engineer, explained that Laurel Park's portion of the MURT will begin at Washington Boulevard and extend west, on top of the currently open stormwater ditch along brother Geenen Way, cross Osprey Avenue and follow the Alderman Street right-of-way, ending on the west side of Hudson Bayou. A bridge will be constructed to give bicyclists and pedestrians the ability to cross the bayou.

City of Sarasota staff Bill Nichols, Project Manager, and Mike DelRossi from Engineering met with Laurel Park representatives to discuss the proposed route. The 10-foot wide pathway will be composed of brushed concrete. At the eastern end, for safety reasons, the trail will jog back towards the Whistle Stop so that customers parking cars will not be crossing the MURT. The trail will be built on top of the (See MURT, page 5)

Dates to Remember

April 9: Tunes in the Park

5-9:00 PM

April / May: Movie in the Park

TBA: watch for flyers

April 13: Planning Board,

Hearing on

Administrative Approval

6:00 PM, City Hall

1565 First Street

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Neighbors,

Thank you to our renewing and new members. We had a huge response to our annual membership drive. It was wonderful to see so many neighbors turn out for our general meeting on Feb. 15. We heard about a plan to preserve our streetscapes and a stormwater management / water quality improvement project soon to come to our area.

Please mark April 13 on your calendar: on that evening, the Planning Board will be considering modifying "Administrative Approval" to permit citizen involvement in decisions about major development projects downtown. (6:00 PM, City Commission chambers, 1565 1st Street.)

At present, City staff is permitted to approve developments in the downtown area – even very large projects – provided they meet established criteria. This policy affects Laurel Park on our east, north and west boundaries. The LPNA Board has requested that the City provide a "buffer zone" on our perimeter where citizen involvement is permitted.

We believe that residents have the right to a neighborhood meeting and public hearings for major projects across the street from our homes. Over the years, our experience in Laurel Park has been that citizen involvement improves projects, making them more compatible with the neighborhood, and facilitating development that is a win-win for everyone involved.

On a more practical note, spring has returned to Laurel Park and everyone is out enjoying the perfect weather. Thanks to all who participated in our March 19th yard sale and April 2nd neighborhood cleanup.

This is the perfect time of year to take a good look at your yard, clean up cold-damaged plants and install some new plants too. While you do this, please keep these things in mind:

- The City of Sarasota has a fertilizer ordinance that limits fertilizer application to the months of October through May. Find out more at: <http://www.sarasotagov.com/InsideCityGovernment/Content/CAC/PDF/City%20Code%20Ords/07-4768.pdf>
- A slow release fertilizer will require application less frequently. It is better for the environment and your plants, and will save you money.
- Automatic irrigation is limited to two days per week. Hand-watering and micro-irrigation of plants (other than lawns) can be done on any day and at any time. The regulations are posted on the City's web site: <http://www.sarasotagov.com/LivingInSarasota/Contents/PublicWorks/PublicWorksWaterConserve.html>
- When selecting new plants for your landscape, do a little research and choose the right plant for the conditions. Plants thrive in the proper environment and require less water, fertilizer and maintenance, saving you money and time.
- A wealth of information about Florida-friendly yards is available at: <http://www.floridayards.org/>

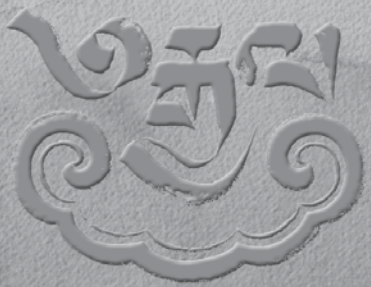
I hope to see you all at Tunes in the Park on April 9th.

Suzy Hagglund



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Tunes in the Park



Presents

Radio Free Carmela

And The Transmitters

April 9, 2011
Laurel Park
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.



Potluck Dinner
Bring a dish
to share
water, utensils, & dessert provided

Thanks to the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association & the City of Sarasota

**Make friends and help your neighborhood.
Become a neighborhood volunteer.**

Opportunities to participate in the neighborhood are many: every *Tunes* requires lots of people to help design and prepare decorations, arrange childrens' entertainment, set up before and clean up after the event, and manage. LPNA also hosts a holiday party and several movies in the park.

On the more practical side, there are clean-up days, preparation and delivery of the newsletter, historic preservation and management of relations with the City.

Working on any of these projects helps your neighborhood and also gives you the opportunity to get to know your neighbors.

Want to help?

Contact Jolie at 951-2468 or Kate at 362-9303

Wilda, continued from Page 1

From the early age of five, when she portrayed a young patient in *The Country Doctor*; she was a familiar face on many a Hollywood movie set. Later, the eighteen year old dancer would travel to Paris to appear at the Lido cabaret starring in a special act costumed by Pierre Balmain. Here, she was drawn to the world of fashion and art of costume design, learning much about the flow and molding of fabrics to enhance the human form in motion.

Focus on Dancing

Her main focus was still on dancing, and after returning from her European tour, she was the featured "Ballerina" at Gene Mann's famous Greek Theatre in Los Angeles. Other venues for dancing included TV variety shows like the Colgate Comedy Hour, dancing with Donald O'Conner, and the Liberace Show. Las Vegas called her to shows at the Riviera and the Dunes as well as lead dancing roles in Don Arden's productions of *Moulin Rouge* and *Ciro*. Some of Wilda's fond memories of her dancing days include her role as Little Egypt in the Elvis Presley movie *Roustabout* and in another of his movies, *Harem Scarem* as the seductive Amethyst, where she surely must have taught The King some new moves.

Wilda married in the 1950s and her two daughters became the focus of her life. One daughter, Tina, came to

Sarasota about fifteen years ago and bought the house on Columbia Court where Wilda now lives. The neighborhood's urban architectural charm reminiscent of Southern California first drew Tina, who became an active president of LPNA and soon married local architect Wm. Thorning Little.

Collage Artist

Although Wilda loves to spend cool afternoons tending her garden and keeping industrious squirrels at bay, she now dedicates most of her time and talents to creating artfully arranged collages of photographic fashion images displayed as wall-hangings and large, free-standing screens. She hopes to market prints of these soon.

Drawing has long been another pursuit: her fashion sketches from past designs (featured at Saks Fifth Ave. and I. Magnin) can be seen in postcard form at the Kennedy Studios on Main Street.

Her legacy of musical and stage talents have blossomed in her young granddaughter Olivia - Tina and Thorning's daughter. After

years of professional voice lessons and encouragement by her parents to nurture a natural talent, Olivia is now on the verge of a singing and recording career. Of course, it may not be surprising if she appears on stage someday in "Creations by Wilda".

Jack Notestein



Portion of a Wilda collage

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Cross Street Closure Proposed

A community workshop was held on February 17 to discuss a request by the law firm William Parker Harrison Dietz & Getzen that the city close or potentially vacate Cross Street. Currently, the city has plans to build a roundabout which includes Cross Street (see below).

The firm owns all properties on either side of the street, but stated they have no current development plans. Most of the community members at the meeting were from Laurel Park and expressed concerns about the potential closure of the street.

LPNA has taken no position on the issue but will notify the neighborhood of any developments or meetings.



Roundabout plan includes Cross Street.

If you are not on our e-mail list, contact Scott Stuart at laurelparkupdate@gmail.com

2011 • LPNA Membership Drive • 2011

Many thanks to all of you who have renewed your membership in the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association.

Renewals are due at the beginning of each year. If your name is not on this list, please send in the attached form. You do not need to contribute financially to become a member, but your contributions do fund *Tunes, Movies in the Park*, our Holiday party, publish this newsletter and pursue other activities. We appreciate your support.

Cathy & Don Baillie
 Thomas & Margaret M Ballard
 Roger & Sally Betts
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 Carol Butera
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 Evelyn & Mike Shade
 Barbara Southard & Greg DiBona
 Jim & Helen Miller (Spanish Oaks Apts of Sarasota)
 Kate Spinner
 Scott & Stacey Stuart
 Elizabeth Sublett
 Alan & Susan Tannenbaum
 Veronica C Tarnowski
 Sheila & Hannah Zachowski

MURT, continued from Page 1

drainage ditch currently on the north side of Brother Geenen Way. There will be a vegetative buffer on both sides of the MURT. We were informed that the city would involve us in landscape discussions.

Another exciting aspect of the MURT is that it will include elements that contain and clean stormwater before it reaches Hudson Bayou. This project is part of Sarasota County's Hudson Bayou water quality improvement and stormwater management project.

A pedestrian bridge will be constructed where the MURT crosses Hudson Bayou. At the base of the bridge a simple kayak launch will be built. Two south-facing parking spaces will be added just south of the lift station on Ohio Place to accommodate kayakers. At this time, final decisions regarding the composition of these elements have not been finalized.

The project is due to begin in fall of 2011 and will take between four and six months to complete.

Suzy Hagglund



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or Friend of the LPNA!

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ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

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Contribution
 \$25 _____ \$35 _____ \$50 _____
 Other _____

**PLEASE MAIL FORM AND
 CONTRIBUTION TO:
 LPNA
 P.O. BOX 1485
 SARASOTA, FL 34230**

The State of Real Estate

There are currently 5 residential properties listed for sale in Laurel Park. One property has sold since the last newsletter was published in January, 2011.

1709 Devonshire Lane	List Price	\$695,000
	Sold Price	\$600,000

Currently There are 9 sales pending:

1816 Morrill Street	List Price	\$100,000
640 Madison Court	List Price	\$120,000
642 Madison Court	List Price	\$120,000
1842 Hawkins Court	List Price	\$149,000
610 Madison Court	List Price	\$209,000
612 Ohio Place	List Price	\$335,000
1630 Laurel Street	List Price	\$395,000
1718 Cherry Lane	List Price	\$649,000
1647 Laurel Street	List Price	\$695,000

Several properties have seen a price adjustment since the January newsletter:

1855 Oak Street	\$650,000 to \$610,000
329 S. Osprey Ave.	\$715,000 to \$695,000
634 Ohio Place	\$599,000 to \$549,000

*Information Provided by Betsy Sublette, Realtor
Signature Sotheby's International Realty
Source: Sarasota Multiple Listing Service*

Special thanks to Laurel Park residents Bob and Teresa Stone, who own Minuteman Press on the corner of Fruitville Road and Lime Avenue. They are registered with the City as an authorized Neighborhood Association Newsletter printer and they always do a great job with printing our newsletters.



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and
Advertising Coordinator**

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