



In Remembrance: Dr. E. Andrew Whittington

On June 11, 2006, friends, family and neighbors gathered at the Whittington family residence on Oak Street to celebrate the life of Dr. E. Andrew Whittington. Dr. Whittington, who many knew simply as “Andy,” died unexpectedly of cardiac arrest at the age of 58 on May 25, 2006.

Andy Whittington was a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine who moved to Florida from Maryland in 1999 with his wife, Ginnie, his son, Adam, and his daughter, Amy.

In Laurel Park, “Andy and Ginnie” are a celebrated duo known for their beautiful family home, memorable get-togethers and enduring relationship. They met in first grade and were married for 34 years.

The memorial celebration started at 10 a.m. and lasted for hours. The numerous guests were spread throughout the Whittington’s jungle-like garden and spilled into all of the downstairs rooms of their house.

Ginnie, Adam and Amy made a video biography about Andy that was shown repeatedly in their living room. It provided a heartwarming account of Andy’s life with lots of pictures and testimonials. In the guest house, a television played Andy’s audition tape for Survivor. Andy was strongly considered as a contestant for both Survivor and Amazing Race television programs. A musician also played steel drums in the garden.

Andy was beloved for his caring treatment of animals, but in the



Andy and Ginny at the 2004 Cereus Chocolate Party

neighborhood, he was known mostly for three things: his garden, his fitness, and his parties.

Andy became the caretaker of the huge garden in the rear of his home, when he purchased the Dr. Walter C. Kennedy House. It is a 1926 Mediterranean revival and is the only Laurel Park home listed on the National Historic Register. Not only did Andy preserve the lush landscaping, he enhanced it. And, he had the unfortunate burden of cleaning up after the huge and messy Banyan tree in the

back yard. It is hard to envision him without a leaf blower in his hand.

When he was not working on his yard, Andy was likely engaged in some kind of fitness activity, often with his daughter, Amy. He had completed some of the world’s most famous marathons and challenging triathlons and just recently finished a triathlon in St. Petersburg.

Andy was probably most well-known in Laurel Park, however, for his social organization skills. He served on the LPNA Board from 2004 to 2006 and was Social Chairman. He and Ginnie organized many neighborhood events including the Holiday Tree-Trimming and the annual Night Blooming Cereus Chocolate Party. The latter is a party to celebrate a plant that blooms once a year at night with large, eerie flowers redolent of chocolate.

On the Friday preceding the memorial celebration, the Whittington’s large Cereus plant produced its annual profusion of night-time blooms. From now on, the chocolate-smelling flowers will be a poignant reminder of the friend we have lost.

– Chris Jaensch



*CEREUS obliquus gracilis, from the latter which comes from the...
— The Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings All,

As you will see in the accompanying story, the neighborhood has lost Andy Whittington, our stalwart party man. He and his wife Ginnie gave us champagne and chocolate under the night blooming cereus, holiday parties, and potlucks. We will do our best to still give you parties, but we can't replace Andy, and we will really miss him.

Your LPNA board has been involved in a number of issues that need reporting.

National Historic District: We have made good progress on this front. Thanks to the City of Sarasota, historic specialists from GAI Consulting will be working in Laurel Park this summer to complete the research needed for our application to become a National Historic District. Laurel Park residents have already been working to update the city's Master Site Files in order to simplify the consultants' work and Debbie Dart will be working with the city's Planning Department as volunteer "staff" to help make this happen. We plan to bring you more information on this project at our October General Meeting, tentatively scheduled for October 10. If possible, we will have the consultants report directly to you. Completion of the process should happen sometime next year (the application must be approved at both the state and federal level, a long process.)

Old County Health Building on Laurel: Sarasota County has agreed to let the Community Housing Trust and the Child Protection Center build a structure on Laurel Street that will assist abused children and provide affordable housing. Once these agencies have developed a site plan, a neighborhood meeting will be held for community input before the necessary rezoning can take place. No date has been set, but we will send e-mail notices when it is announced. The board has already been active in discussions about buffering the adjoining property, and also about traffic and safety issues, but it is important that residents speak up on this matter as well.

DCA appeal: The board has supported the CCNA (City Coalition of Neighborhood Associations) in its appeal to the State of Florida on two City Commission changes to the comprehensive plan: the affordable housing density bonus and the School Avenue project next to the Alta Vista neighborhood. In both cases, neighborhood concerns about height, density, and "downtown creep" were dismissed by the City. In addition, also in both cases, normal city procedures were either fast tracked or simply ignored. All comprehensive plan changes must be approved at the state level by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), making this the appropriate place to file a protest. The DCA response is expected soon. As you know, the State of Florida has rarely said no to intense development, but they do sometimes reject poorly designed comprehensive plan changes, or send them back with comments. In both of these cases, and for the future, we are hoping to convince the City Commission that residential neighborhoods deserve some buffer from the ever denser, higher city core.

These and other issues will be on the agenda at our October general meeting, so please plan to attend.

Kate Lowman

Welcome New and Renewal Members

LPNA cannot operate without the financial support of its members. The list below contains the names of people who have joined and/or renewed their LPNA membership in 2006 and made a financial contribution. Thank you for your support! If you are not on the list and would like to join and/or contribute to the organization, please use the form in this newsletter. Contributors will receive a Laurel Park T-shirt.

Pat Agnew
Martin Burzynski & Annie Lannigan
John & Debbie Dart
Violet Finger
Bob & Stacy Fletcher
Bruce & Teresa Franklin
Gaia & Damon Goldman
Danielle Green
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Historic Photos of Laurel Park Discovered

12 historic photographs of Downtown Sarasota dating back to 1926 were recently discovered in a storage closet at the Payne Park Auditorium. Three photos show properties in Laurel Park. We will be printing these photos in forthcoming issues. Shown above is a photo of Spanish Oaks Apartments, which were formerly called Terrell Apartments. The Washington Palms look newly planted and the neighborhood tree canopy looks pretty sparse. In the distance, one can see the Herald Square building.

Laurel Park Residents Complete Historic Property Survey

Members of Laurel Park’s Historic Preservation Committee and volunteers from the neighborhood completed a survey of all Laurel Park properties within the proposed national historic district in June. The survey was undertaken to:

1. Review and update the City of Sarasota’s existing files of historic inventory in Laurel Park, which was last updated in 2003.
2. Identify properties and structures overlooked or now of qualifying age (50 years or older) that could be added to the existing list of historic inventory
3. Identify income producing properties that might qualify for historic tax credits if and when a national historic district is created in Laurel Park.

LAUREL PARK PROPERTIES SURVEYED	
Total properties surveyed	237
Properties deemed as contributing (incl. local and national designations)	173
Properties deemed non-contributing (incl. demolished and moved)	45
Properties locally designated as historic	18
Properties listed on National Register of Historic Places	1
Properties eligible for historic designation (in current condition)	90
Altered properties (in most cases, alterations considered reversible)	71
Properties moved to another neighborhood	4
Demolished properties	10
Approximate number of individual rental units	402
Approximate number of income producing properties	150
Approximate number of income producing properties 50 yrs or older	104

Committee members and volunteers concentrated on Laurel Park properties that will likely contribute to the proposed historic district. It is possible some of properties or units within properties were overlooked.

SURVEY CONCLUSIONS:

- An overwhelming percentage of the buildings in

Laurel Park have historic integrity. A large number of buildings have been altered over the years but retain original character to contribute to and form a large historic district.

- Demolitions and removal of housing stock 50 years or older is on the rise since the 2003 survey was completed

depleting the number of multi-family rental housing units and replacing them with single family residences, most with an accessory living unit.

- 150 properties in Laurel Park were identified as rental housing, income producing properties for Sarasota. These properties provide between 300 and 400 individual and/or family housing units and a small percentage of office/professional units in our downtown.
- 104 properties would be eligible for a financial incentive (federal tax credits) to rehabilitate and continue to use the building as an income producing property IF Laurel Park becomes a national historic district.

Announcements

A General Meeting of the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association has been scheduled for Tuesday, **October 10, 2006** at the Payne Park Auditorium from 7-9 p.m.

Jolie McInnis reports that “there was a great turnout for *Tunes in the Park* in April, food was fabulous, good music, lots of fun. Thank you to everyone who helped set up and break down, more hands equals less work!” She thanks LPNA members for their financial support and Greg Dibona. She is planning the **next *Tunes in the Park* for November**. If you would like to help— hands on or financially— please call Jolie @ 951-2468.



Laurel Park Police Report Sarasota Police Department

April 1 - 2006 - July 15, 2006

Information compiled by Gaia Goldman, Laurel Park Neighborhood Crime Watch Coordinator

If you see crime happening call 316-1199

04/07/06	Theft from bldg.	318 S. Osprey Ave	05/27/06	Petty/Grand theft from vehicle	1765 Oak St
04/08/06	Suspicious vehicle	1850 Hawkins Ct	06/02/06	Accident – Hit & Run	Morrill St/S. Osprey Ave
04/09/06	Suspicious vehicle	1920 Laurel St	06/05/06	Special interest/mental person/baker act	Julia PI
04/09/06	Burglary – vehicle	634 Ohio Pl	06/05/06	Motor vehicle accident	S. Osprey Ave/Oak St
04/09/06	Motor vehicle theft	1637 Oak St	06/06/06	Special interest/mental person/baker act	Julia PI
04/12/06	Burglar alarm	711 S. Osprey Ave	06/07/06	S.P.D. field interview	1725 Laurel St
04/18/06	Criminal mischief	1870 Laurel St	06/08/06	Suspicious person	312 Julia PI
04/23/06	Deceased person	730 S. Osprey Ave	06/13/06	Special interest/mental person/baker act	Morrill St
04/25/06	Found animal	627 S. Osprey Ave	06/14/06	Homeless trespassing	1912 Morrill St
04/30/06	Battery-Non serious injury	628 S. Osprey Ave	06/14/06	Burglary – structure	1644 Dolphin Ln
04/30/06	Noise Violation	641 Columbia Ct	06/15/06	Burglar alarm	711 S. Osprey Ave
05/03/06	Suspicious unknown	1840 Morrill St	06/18/06	Criminal mischief	1736 Morrill St
05/03/06	Poss. Of open container	1725 Laurel St	06/19/06	Loitering/Prowling	1736 Morrill St
05/04/06	Disorderly conduct	1840 Morrill St	6/22/06	Special interest/mental person/baker act	Morrill St
05/04/06	Deceased person	628 S. Osprey Ave	6/23/06	Accident-pedestrian-fatal	1675 Cherry Ln
05/04/06	Suspicious unknown	1678 Cherry Ln	06/24/06	Motor vehicle theft	324 Julia PI
05/07/06	Lost property	730 S. Osprey Ave	07/03/06	Burglar alarm	711 S. Osprey Ave
05/09/06	Controlled subst. poss.	Oak St/Rawls Ave	07/05/06	Burglary – structure	1630 Morrill St
05/09/06	Animal nuisance	1767 Laurel St	07/06/06	Burglary – structure	730 S. Osprey Ave
05/16/06	Repeated harassing telephone calls	527S. Osprey Ave	07/09/06	Tresspass –occupied struc.	1720 Morrill St
05/24/06	Noise violation	308 Ohio Pl			
05/24/06	Burglar alarm	711 S. Osprey Ave			
05/25/06	Violation of probation	527 S. Osprey Ave			
05/25/06	Burglar alarm	711 S. Osprey Ave			
05/25/06	Battery-non serious injury	1652 Oak St			

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Later this year, The Bank of Commerce will move to its new downtown headquarters at the corner of Ringling Boulevard and Links Avenue. From this new location, The Bank of Commerce will be a convenient banking alternative to residents and businesses in the Laurel Park neighborhood.

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If you are interested in volunteering in the areas listed or in any other areas, please email the LPNA president

Kate Lowman

lowmancarter@verizon.net

LPNA BOARD CONFIRMS ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS NOT SUBJECT TO IMPACT FEES



Laurel Park property owners who have chosen to build accessory dwelling units have run into some difficulties with the city's building department. They have been denied the right to put kitchens in the accessory units unless they pay impact fees of thousands of dollars.

As defined in the city zoning code an accessory dwelling unit is "A dwelling unit, for use as a complete independent living facility, located on the same zoning lot as a detached single-family or attached single-family dwelling. The second unit is created auxiliary to, and is always smaller than the detached single-family or attached single-family dwelling." Accessory dwelling units include garage apartments, granny flats or a separate mother-in-law suites.

Laurel Park's RSM9 zoning allows for single-family homes to have an

accessory dwelling unit on the same lot. This is unique to RSM9 zoning and Laurel Park, and was created as an incentive to build additional housing units in the neighborhood. The LPNA Board felt that the imposition of an impact fee would be a disincentive for construction of accessory dwelling units and sought clarification from the building department.

Fortunately, the building department recently confirmed in writing that an impact fee would not be imposed on Laurel Park property owners seeking to build or add an accessory dwelling unit to their property. Even accessory dwelling units with kitchens are exempt from impact fees. Should you encounter difficulty in the future with the building department on this issue, please contact LPNA. Thanks to Board Member Deb Dart for her efforts to resolve this problem.



Newsletter Editor: P. Christopher Jaensch
2198 Main St., Sarasota, FL 34237

Email: Chris@VisaAmerica.com • Website: www.VisaAmerica.com

Advertising Coordinator: Barbara Southard
barbarasouthard1840@hotmail.com

Newsletter Layout & Design: Irena Yardley
msyardley@comcast.net

Phone: 941-365-8472, Ext. 23 • Fax: 941-951-0677
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What Happened to the Color in My Newsletter?

You may have noticed that the latest edition of the Laurel Park News is printed in black and white. The last three issues were in full color. If you prefer to read the newsletter in color, you can download a color version from the download section of our website: www.HistoricLaurelPark.org.

Our generous newsletter printer, Minuteman Press, has been subsidizing the cost of full color printing since we switched to that format. Unfortunately, the cost of printing has increased to the point where full color is no longer feasible.

The LPNA will be discussing future options for the newsletter at the next LPNA General Meeting. These include switching exclusively to internet-based communications, reducing the number of print issues per year from four to two, and continuing to print four issues in black and white or two colors, instead of full color.

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Modular House Moved Into Laurel Park

In recent years, several homes have been moved out of Laurel Park to make way for new construction. But, this is the first house to be moved into Laurel Park in decades. The new house, located on Laurel Street, was essentially transported in sections and assembled in a day. The photos below show the progress.



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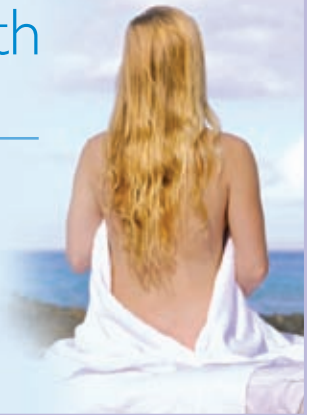
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The State Of Real Estate

by Gaia Goldman

April 1st ~ July 15th

Laurel Park experienced a slowdown in sales this past spring. Only one sale and one contract were posted since April 1st. The first for 1680 Oak Street, which sold for \$775,000; and the second for 636 S. Osprey Avenue, which is currently under contract with an asking price of \$1,000,000.

On the listing side, there currently are 16 properties offered for sale, ranging from a vacant lot at 1859 Laurel St for \$374,000 to a move-in ready new home at 1871 Laurel St offered at \$1,495,000.

A whopping 16 properties in Laurel Park were withdrawn from the market or expired without selling. Out of those, only five were put back on the market, indicating that most would-be-sellers are opting to take a break during the summer months. In some neighborhoods (although not yet in Laurel Park), the number of available homes has actually decreased because disappointed sellers are not re-listing. This shrinking inventory results in fewer choices for buyers. Coupled with recent hikes in interest rates, this new trend may soon start to even out the playing field, this time in favor of sellers. Stay tuned.

Listing and sales data obtained from the Sarasota Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service.

Listing and sales data obtained from the Sarasota Association of Realtors Multiple Listing Service and provided by Gaia Goldman, Broker Associate, Michael Saunders & Co.

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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