



OAK LANE COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION

April 2018

OLCAA of East Oak Lane

The East Oak Lane Paper

General Membership Meeting & OLCAA Board Elections—May 23, 7 PM

by Smiley Ferebee & Eric Brice

“Striving to build a better community” is the OLCAA mantra. We know that you are a part of this advocacy, as well.

OLCAA is an extension of you and your motivations for making our neighborhood as great as it can be.

On **Wednesday, May 23, 2018**, OLCAA will host its annual General Membership Meeting at the Oak Lane Presbyterian Church, 6637 N. 11th St. Doors will open at 6:30 PM for all who need to join or renew memberships. The meeting to elect new Board members will begin at 7:00 PM.

We invite all neighbors

with genuine passion for our neighborhood to join OLCAA and participate as a team player to serve our community.

Current OLCAA members in good standing for at least one year are encouraged to run for a seat on the Board of Directors.

If you have a volunteering spirit and are generous in the sharing of ideas, you are needed and welcome to help and make a difference.

To nominate someone for the fifteen-member OLCAA Board, or if you want to be considered yourself, please fill out an **OLCAA Board Nomination form** and mail it to

OLCAA by **May 18**. (The address is on the back page of the newsletter.)

Copies of the OLCAA Board Nomination form and **OLCAA Membership form** are included with this issue. Forms are also downloadable from our website.

Membership forms with dues can be mailed to OLCAA, or dropped off at the General Membership Meeting.

Any questions? Please contact Smiley Ferebee, the Election Chair, via the OLCAA Hotline or the OLCAA email account. Your neighbors thank you for your support!

New OLCAA website: www.olcaa.org New email address: olcaa.eol@gmail.com

Save a tree – ask OLCAA to send your newsletter *electronically* via email – in color!

Ellwood Elementary School hosts monthly meetings of its **SAC** (School Advisory Council). Call the office at **215-276-5268** for schedule times. All are welcome!

April 14 – Philly Spring Cleanup in East Oak Lane 9:00 AM–2:00 PM

April 14, 21 – TreePhilly free tree giveaway (See page 7)

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- *OLCAA's new website and email address!*
- *OLCAA Membership form & Board Nomination form*
- *You can be elected to OLCAA's Board on May 23*
- *Tree Tenders update & free tree giveaway*
- *At the Oak Lane Library — And All That Jazz*
- *Household hazardous waste collection startup*

Message from the President

by Bernadette Tanksley

As OLCAA approaches its annual General Membership Meeting, it makes sense to recognize the fact that our beautiful neighborhood is built upon the shoulders of an army of unsung heroes.

Especially commendable are past Board members, who have served in critical positions over the years, and committee chairs, who have consistently performed key functions.

Thankfully, as members rotate off the Board, others come forward to assume the leadership responsibilities that keep us going.

Over time, the OLCAA Board has been comprised of a combination of long-standing active residents and new faces who step in to contribute energy, talent, and vitality.

The secret to keeping OLCAA fresh, strong, and vibrant is our ability to respect our past, even as we shape our future to fit changing times. Board and committee membership and leadership can provide opportunities to learn new skills and to share skills with others.

Familiarity with QuickBooks, Microsoft Publisher, news gathering and newspaper formatting, bookkeeping, and grant writing would be valuable enhancements to our team at this time.

Let's organize an Oak Lane Day that encourages participation from the various age groups, family compositions, and interest areas of our neighborhood. Join us in planning. The day should be crowded with neighbors—we have over 1,700 households! Please watch our website for updates.

This issue of *The East Oak Lane Paper* contains information about our evolving use of electronic communication, upcoming Board elections, and recent OLCAA events that reflect our ability to have fun, and be of service.

Place an ad in our newsletter to mark your family's special life events, as well as your products and services.

I look forward to seeing every East Oak Lane household represented at the General Membership Meeting on **May 23** at 7:00 PM. Bring your completed membership form—and a neighbor!



THIS ISSUE

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OLCAA is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Kudos to the Snow Ball planning dream team, headed by
Chairs **Andrea Mayo & Eric Brice!**

OLCAA Has a New Website and Email Address!

by Vernita Hall

To improve our communications with you, East Oak Lane, OLCAA has redesigned and implemented a new website at www.olcaa.org.

Board meeting minutes will be promptly posted there, news and upcoming community events, scheduled meetings, newsletters, membership forms, and OLCAA policies and procedures. And all at a big cost savings!

We also have a new email account:
olcaa.eol@gmail.com.

You can even send us an email to our new email account via the website *Contact Us* page.

Need an OLCAA Membership form? Click on the *Become a Member* tab. Want info about the **May 23** General Membership Meeting? Click the *Board of Directors* tab. There's also a link to a

Board Member Nomination form, so you can nominate someone—or yourself!—to run for the OLCAA Board at the General Meeting.

Check it out—try it out—and send us your feedback, suggestions, and requests for content in the new site and newsletter! And always, send us your questions, comments, and concerns. OLCAA is at your service.

OLCAA's Snow Ball Hits a Frosty Home Run

by Smiley Ferebee

This year's **sold-out** Snow Ball was held at PASSi (Penn Asian Senior Services, Inc.), 6921 Old York Rd., on January 12, 2018. There were upwards of 200 guests from East Oak Lane and neighboring communities. Many claimed that this was “**the best Snow Ball ever**” because of the best neighbors ever.”

Attendees included: State Representative Stephen Kinsey of the 201st Legislative District, State Representative Isabella Fitzgerald of the 203rd Legislative District, Captain Ernest Ransom from the 35th District Police Department, Sally McCabe of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Councilwoman Cherelle Parker of the 9th District sent a representative from her office.

The revelers enjoyed engaging live music from **The Band**, dancing, and a wide range of pleasing light dining fare, along with an extensive wine bar.

The evening acknowledged East Oak Lane's “**Sheroes and Heroes**”—the very persons who are the backbone of our community, who generously con-

tribute to the well-being of their neighbors, like you and me.

Honored were: Charlie Philips (Tree Tenders), Connie Vales (6400 block of Camac Street), Lee and Barbara Wagner, Peggy and Jon Weston (the OLCAA Blood & Coat Drive), the Oak Lane Presbyterian Church, and Boy Scout Troop #19.

The night also showcased East Oak Lane's talent. Three resident authors were featured. Guests were treated to one-on-one conversations with: Mari-ta Krivda Poxon (*Oak Lane, Olney, and Logan*), H. Victoria Hargro Atkerson (*Enslaved*), and Sharon Wilson (*Mind Your Business! 5 Legal Documents to Preserve Financial Stability and Sanity*).

The event was beautifully coordinated by the Snow Ball committee: Eric Brice (co-chair), Smiley Ferebee, Martha Lewis, Al & Earlene Mitchell, James McKelvey, and Events Chair and OLCAA Vice President Andrea Mayo.



Special thanks also to superheroes: corporate sponsor Einstein Hospital & Leroy Howell, PASSi, the Captain & Crew of Trader Joe's, Deb Ahrens, Barbara Coffey, Kim McConahey, Dorothy Mora, Kelly & Robert Tyree, Barbara Wagner, Jon Weston, and Sharon Wilson.

The committee thanks all for your continued support!

To find out more about your “**Sheroes and Heroes**,” the featured authors, plus enjoy additional photos, visit our new website at www.olcaa.org.



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Thanks to Our Supporters—The Wind Beneath Our Wings

by Eric Brice, Chair of Crime, Safety, & Security committee

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Why You Should Support OLCAA

by Thurgood Matthews, Chair of Membership committee

The question was asked, “Why join OLCAA?” My immediate response is, “Why not?”

OLCAA is the neighborhood organization that, on the one hand, fights to keep East Oak Lane the beautiful, tranquil, often described “Hidden Jewel” in the upper east end of Philadelphia the vibrant neighborhood residents enjoy and, on the other hand, organizes community events, workshops, forums, and celebrations.

As a resident, you are a member of OLCAA. Truly, the only question is: Are you a dues-paying member? Regardless of your membership status, OLCAA represents you—a resident of East Oak Lane.

Some recent highlights that cannot be ignored are: the OLCAA newsletter, the annual Oak Lane Day, the annual Snow Ball, the bi-annual Members-

Only dinner, and OLCAA’s RCO (Registered Community Organization) designation.

Not to mention our standing committees: Beautification; Communications; Crime, Safety, & Security; Development; Housing & Zoning; Membership; and Quality of Life. All the named committees offer a place for your direct involvement and your voice to be heard.

So, why become a dues-paying member? You are already a beneficial member and a recognized voice to City officials. You can already enjoy many of the OLCAA-sponsored events. You can already access the website: www.olcaa.org or call the Hotline at 215-224-2777.

The short answer is: OLCAA needs your dues to continue to grow and serve the residents of East Oak Lane.

Household Hazardous Waste Events Startup

by Vernita Hall

The City has posted its schedule for the free drop-off of your home’s hazardous chemicals and other materials.

The first collection event occurs on Saturday, **April 28** at 8401 State Road in the Northeast. For the full schedule of 2018 events, see the Streets Department website at:

<http://www.philadelphiastreet.com/events/household-hazardous-waste-events/>

**Teamwork
makes the dream work.**

— **John C. Maxwell**

The 8th Annual Blood & Coat Drive—All Wrapped Up

by Peggy Runde Weston

Our neighborhood would not let a little cold weather deter them from coming out and participating in the 8th Annual Holiday Blood & Coat Drive on Dec. 6, 2017. Even though the holiday season is busy—on top of family, job, and social obligations—Oak Laners came out and supported our efforts. We applaud the generosity, humanity, and true holiday spirit of our neighborhood.

The American Red Cross reports, “Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.” It provides 40% of the U.S. blood supply through drives like ours. Since each pint can benefit as

many as three patients, the blood collected that day helped **45** local accident victims, cancer patients, or children with sickle cell disease who need monthly blood transfusions.

We collected **over 150** coats and two large bags of scarves, hats, mittens, and gloves. The clothing was delivered to the Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry, where it was distributed on Dec. 11.

We should feel pleased that our efforts made the holidays a little bit brighter and warmer this year for families in

Another Success!

need. Since its inception, our clothing drive has collected and donated **928** coats, plus winter outerwear.

OLCAA will be running the drive again next year. Please consider rolling up your sleeve and donating blood. And save your gently-worn coats and winter wear for our next drive!



News from the Urban Forest

by Charlie Philips, President of Oak Lane Tree Tenders

Retrospective

Since 2014 Oak Lane Tree Tenders has planted **96** trees in the neighborhood. This includes nine trees at the PASSi campus at 6926 Old York Road, site of the wonderful Snow Ball winter party thrown by OLCAA.

Have you noticed the wonderful mural on the face of their building?

Look this spring at the parking lot of the Refuge Evangelical Baptist Church across from the Oak Lane Library for the twelve white flowering crabapple trees we planted with members of that church in the fall of 2016.

Just up Oak Lane, across from the firehouse, are four new trees on Ellwood School's sidewalk. A few doors down the street from the firehouse, in front of a new child daycare, are four trees planted a couple of years ago.

The Oak Lane Library has been the recipient of about fifteen trees over the years. Last fall there were three overgrown yews that obscured the sidewalk, and we replaced them with six smaller shrubs.



Free Tree Giveaway

by Jon Weston

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* reports that the TreePhilly program under the City Parks and Recreation department is giving away free yard or street trees on **Saturday, April 14 from 11AM-1PM** at the Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Center. Pre-registration is recommended.

Registrants can pick up a tree for personal or public use. Tree species include: large shade trees, smaller flowering trees, and fruit trees. The event will also feature tree planting instructions and tree care demonstrations.

This is the main event for the tree giveaway program. Other dates across the city can be found on:

<http://treephilly.org/free-trees/yard-trees/>

The trees are supplied by a partnership with Fairmount Park Conservancy and TD Bank.

Want a tree for your yard this spring?

Treephilly.org is your best bet for up to two free trees to plant in your yard.

Once you access their website, click in the "Registration is open for the Spring 2018 Yard Tree Giveaway Program" box.

Scroll down to the **Saturday, April 21st** date, and click on the "Penn State Alumni Community Yard Tree Giveaway" link (runs from 9AM—noon).

The location is 2901 W. Hunting Park Avenue—less than five miles away! Sign up for one or two trees.

TreePhilly has fruit trees—apple, peach, sour cherry. Want winter beauty? Choose witchhazel, which blooms in February! (See the March 17 picture at right of the one in our backyard!)

Oak Lane Tree Tenders will have STREET trees this fall for those who sign up before **April 30**. Have a friendly Tree Tender visit you and sign you up. Email us at cphilips@temple.edu.

Join us by contacting us at that email to find our meeting dates and places. Our next workday is **Saturday, April 7**, for

cleanup at the Oak Lane Library and Ellwood School from **9 AM to 2 PM**.

We welcome your check, made out to "Oak Lane Tree Tenders," to help keep East Oak Lane green and leafy! Mail it to Sharon Dennison, 6701 N. 3rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19126.

We are soliciting \$15 memberships, but any amount—more or less—is welcome.

Charlie's bewitching witchhazel tree





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Thanks to a Good Samaritan

by Vernita Hall



Imagine: you're alone, without a cell phone, and your car has died on I-76. Luckily, it's daytime. That's how I felt on Sunday morning, November 19, 2017 when the Citizens Bank ATM at 5th & Godfrey froze on me mid-transaction, on the "Please remove your cash" screen. Just after I had made a cash withdrawal on a public city street.

The bank was closed. None of the machine's buttons worked. No posted aid instructions. No emergency call button to alert the bank that someone needed immediate help. A strong, cold wind was blowing. My PIN was still logged in, and that machine had my card. I couldn't leave.

I felt very exposed, unsafe, and had no idea what to do.

Another customer queued up behind me, a young Asian man. I explained how the machine had seized, still holding my card. He also tried the useless buttons. Then he pulled out his card, saw an 800 number on the back, and dialed it on his cell.

A maddening voicemail robot crawled me through menus and asked—four times—for my bank card's id number (inside the machine!) or my checking account number (yeah, I have that memorized). Finally (using my Social Security number) I got queued to a live person line—and waited some more....

After about ten minutes of this limbo, the ATM somehow decided to reboot itself. Only then did the hostage taker finally spit out my card.

The soft-spoken gentleman refused to leave me stranded, and stayed patiently through the entire ordeal. He politely refused when I tried to press money into his hand, saying he had family. He seemed embarrassed by my profuse thanks. He did give me his name—Huey(?)—and said that he lived in the neighborhood.

This episode reminds me of the true meaning of *neighbor*, acted out unheralded in small corners of the world, and also of one of the pillars of greatness of our country: its welcome to the immigrant.

To Huey, who clearly understands that building a bridge ultimately makes us stronger than building a wall—thank you, neighbor.

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WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE OAK LANE DAY MEMORY?

Whether it's a word, a phrase, or a story —
share it with us
for a forthcoming newsletter article.

Email us your memory
at olcaa.eol@gmail.com.

Use this phrase as your email subject line:

"My favorite Oak Lane Day memory"

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together.**

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At the Library—And All That Jazz

by Vernita Hall & Deb Ahrens, Branch Manager of Oak Lane Library



Check out upcoming and ongoing events at the *lively* Oak Lane Library!

Wed., April 11 6:00 PM Philly Celebrates Jazz. Free.

Celebrate Jazz Appreciation Month!
Program features vocalist Najwa Parkins.

2nd Mondays 6:30 PM Writer's Group. Free.

Meets from September through June.
Led by H. Victoria Hargro Atkinson
Mar 12: Sharon Wilson, Esq.
Apr 9: Marita Krivda Poxon
May 14: Devita Garfield
Jun 11: Susan Gross
Questions? Call 215-888-9018.

Monthly Meeting, Friends of the Oak Lane Library Wed., March 28 6:30 PM
Help us plan events for the community, and raise needed funds. Join our friendly and active group! For info, call 215-549-6531.

Tai Chi for adults with Darrel Bryant Thu. 1:30-2:30 PM First class is free!

Oak Lane Bibliophiles Book Discussions Wed. 6:30-8:00 PM Refreshments from 6:00-6:30 PM

- Apr 4: *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson
May 2: *Queen Sugar* by Natalie Baszile.
Discussion led by Freida Williams.
June 5: *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community* by Gary B. Nash
Jul 11: *The Supremes at Earl's All You Can Eat* by Edward K. Moore.
Discussion led by Freida Williams.
Sep 5: *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child* by Sandra Uwiringiyimana
Oct. 3: *Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue
Nov 7: *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar
Dec 5: Planning for 2019!

Branch staff will assist in obtaining copies of the books from the Free Library system.

For questions, or to sign up to lead a discussion, contact **Deb Ahrens** at 215-685-2848 or AhrensD@freelibrary.org.

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**To the dedicated staff
of the 35th Police District
and Fire Company 63:**

**You keep us safe.
Thank you.**



**Sincerest condolences to the family of OLCAA Board member Eric Brice
on the passing of his mother, Alice Brice (age 94), on March 20, 2018.**

**Contact us!
Join us!**

OLCAA of East Oak Lane

Oak Lane Community Action Association
P.O. Box 2926
Philadelphia, PA 19141

Phone: 215-224-2777
Email: olcaa.eol@gmail.com
Website: www.olcaa.org

Striving to build a better neighborhood

Report oversize truck parking to Officer Bennett, 35th Police District – [with photos](#)

Disappoint a thief. Remember – lock your car doors!

Where and Why We Beautify

by Kelly McShain Tyree, Chair of Beautification committee



The Beautification committee will once again join in the Philly Spring Cleanup event sponsored by the Streets Department.

On **Saturday, April 7th, from 9AM-2PM**, our local project will start at the Oak Lane Library, clean up trash and debris in the area of the Ellwood School playground, then work along the 66th Avenue corridor from N. Broad Street to N. 5th Street.

We are thrilled that our local Library Branch, a participant and partner in the Philly Spring Cleanup event, **is now open on Saturdays (September-June)**! This will allow for the use of restroom facilities, along with a hosting and refreshments table.

Any food donations to keep workers well-fueled would be greatly appreciated. Please share if you can join the cleanup efforts.

The winter wreaths and festive holiday ribbons were removed (and recycled) from the neighborhood planters and “Welcome” signs in February by volunteers. We received much positive feedback on this annual decorating tradition. Thank you for your continued support!

The newly planted evergreens from last fall are all in place, and the urns will be assessed for possible spring and summer flower additions.

Inspired by emerging grant opportunities, the committee is exploring playground improvement, greening, and beautification measures with the Philadelphia School District. Implementing fellow neighborhood “Best Practices,” our goal is to partner with our local experts, city agencies, and private funding sources to pursue a transformed experience for local school children and neighbors alike.

We also contract a landscaper to help **maintain public thoroughfares** such as: The Broad Street traffic islands, the Godfrey Avenue Great Wall, and the Cheltenham Avenue Underpass. This crucial service contributes to the beauty and safety of East Oak Lane.

Large and oversized commercial truck parking continues to be a visual blight—and safety concern—in East Oak Lane. Officer Bennett of the 35th Police District asks that affected East Oak Laners **send photographs of parked oversized trucks to him at: [Antonio.R.Bennett @phila.gov](mailto:Antonio.R.Bennett@phila.gov)** for follow up.

Look out for newly-sprouting daffodils and tulips planted by the committee throughout the neighborhood. The “Welcome” sign on 66th Avenue at N. Broad St. will bloom for at least a month. Please enjoy!

Your OLCAA membership funds these efforts. Thank you for your support!