



News

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WWW.GREATERFARMLAND.ORG

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Thank you to the 428 households that have joined or renewed their memberships in GFCA for 2015. This represents 44 percent of the 973 households in our community. Excluding the 79 rental households, most of whom have not joined but are eligible, 48 percent of the owner-occupied households are members.

If you are renting, you are welcome to join the civic association. You are part of our community, too.

Membership is open for this year up to Sept. 30. As of Oct. 1, all new memberships will be attributed to the next year. Log into AtoZdirectories.com/home, click the purchases tab, and pay with a credit card or Paypal. For login information, email directory@GreaterFarmland.org with your name and address.

If you prefer to send a check, make it out for \$25 to GFCA and mail or deliver to Emily Mintz at 6712 Sulky La. Your membership will be updated and the check will be handed to our new treasurer.

Again, many thanks to all of our 2015 members.

GFCA ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 18

The Greater Farmland Civic Association's third annual meeting is to be held on Wednesday, March 18, from 7-9 pm in the Farmland Elementary School cafeteria.

Members will be asked to amend the bylaws and elect new directors.

The proposed bylaws changes include:

- Replace co-presidents with a president and vice president
- Provide that the board of directors elects a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer
- Convert current officer positions to directors
- Provide for officers to serve a one-year term
- Enable the board to select nominating committee from among the membership
- Allow for electronic submission of absentee ballots
- Shorten the notice requirement for meetings to five days from 10 days to allow more flexibility in scheduling.

All of the proposed changes can be seen on the GFCA website at <http://greaterfarmland.org/bylaws.html>

GFCA members were encouraged to nominate themselves for the six open director positions by Feb. 22. The Nominating Committee's slate will be posted on the GFCA website and on the listserv on Sunday, March 1. Only GFCA members current in their dues will be able to vote.

Also at the annual meeting:

- Lou Scerbo, of Homes Are Us Home Inspections, will be talking about spring home maintenance tips, with a special emphasis on our 1960-era home concerns. Come with your home condition questions and hear from a professional with decades of experience.
- Oliver Janney, a Montgomery County Police Department community services officer in our district, will give a brief presentation and answer questions. He'll speak primarily about transportation-related and other safety concerns in and around our neighborhood.

REMEMBER: GFCA ANNUAL MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, IN THE FARMLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Clip and keep this list of useful phone numbers handy in case of an emergency:

Emergency: 911

Poison control: 1-800-222-1222

Non-emergency police (suspicious activity or a loose or injured animal): 301-279-8000

County 24-hour emergency preparedness hotline: 240-777-4200

County non-emergency fire: 240-683-6520

County general information and service requests: 311

County volunteer center: 240-777-2600

WSSC water/sewage emergency line: 301-206-4002

Pepco (report a power outage/downed wire): 1-877-737-2662

RAISING MONEY FOR ETHIOPIA

By Leo Blumberg-Woll

My life changed forever in 2010 when my parents and I adopted my brother, Aklilu, from Ethiopia. He was 6 years old, I was 12, and my life as an only child ended.

My world began to expand. Even though I had learned about Ethiopia in preparing for our visit, I was still surprised at the stark difference between Addis Ababa and the suburbs of Washington.

When I got back to the US, I realized that I missed feeling connected to Ethiopia. In 2012, we went to visit Aklilu's family in the rural southern part of the country. I returned to the U.S. committed to finding a way to more directly contribute to kids in Ethiopia. Tennis had always been a big

part of my life so I made that a focus.

I started a non-profit organization, Advantage Ethiopia: Kids Tennis and Education Initiative, to serve disadvantaged children in Ethiopia by providing support to charities there that give children access to sports and educational opportunities so that they are more likely to finish high school, obtain higher education and escape poverty. We want kids to have fun through structured, high-level recreational activities, plus access to educational enrichment.

The organization we are supporting right now is Tariku and Desta Kids' Education Through Tennis Development. The kids have a safe place to come and learn a sport, get tutoring to help them achieve at school, and eat a hot meal. The most amazing thing is that with only two

tennis courts available and with 60 kids moving through them nearly every day, the program has developed some of the best tennis players in East Africa.

While that is not the point of the program, it has helped to bring attention, to allow some of the kids to go to better schools, and even allowed one of the earliest participants to obtain a U.S. college scholarship.

Right now, we are raising money to upgrade the library, and to buy tennis equipment and clothing.

I hope you will think about donating to us via www.advantageethiopia.com or get more involved with our work.

Leo is a member of the Old Farm community and a senior at Walter Johnson..

Community Directory Coming Out In Print

The print version of the directory is ready to go. The board has voted to distribute the 2015 directory to all 973 households and you should get it by the end of March from your block captain.

GFCA members have access to the entire directory online and by Android or Apple app. Non-members can only view and update their own entries with cell numbers, email addresses, services they can offer, or other information. Each member of the community has a login and password.

Great thanks go to everyone on the membership/directory committee, especially to Pamela Levine and Wendy Perry for hours of data entry and proofreading.

--Emily Mintz, chair, membership/directory committee

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