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**Neighbor Helping Neighbor:  
Study Circles in Manassas/Prince William**

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[www.pwsc.org](http://www.pwsc.org)

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## Executive Summary

Study Circles are groups of 8-15 people who meet for up to six two-hour sessions led by two facilitators. Through trust-building exercises and dialogue, participants connect with each other, gain a greater understanding of issues and develop action plans.

**Section 1: Why Bring Study Circles to Manassas/Prince William.** The goals of the circles are: to build relationships and understanding between diverse neighbors, to find common ground on the issues facing the neighborhood and to develop and implement action plans that will improve the neighborhood for all residents.

**Section 2: Process and Outcome of the Circles.** A pilot circle with 14 participants was held at George Mason University, followed by seven circles in these city/county neighborhoods: Weems (7 participants), Wildwood (16), Georgetown South (15), Wellington (12), Point of Woods/Cannon Ridge (11), Lindendale (7) and West Gate (4). Dialogue and action ideas surrounded these seven themes: Attacking apathy - block events/neighborhood pride campaign; Communication - neighborhood info exchange/informing City Council/BOCS; Put in the time to fight crime - strengthening Neighborhood Watch/National Night Out; Neighbors helping neighbors – foreclosures/unemployed/seniors; Assimilating immigrants – women’s circles, language translation services; Involving youth – mentoring, activities, neighborhood job opportunities and Protecting housing stock - volunteer construction/maintenance projects.

**Section 3. Circle Evaluations.** Of the 86 people who participated in the circles, 39 returned their evaluations. Thirty-six rated the program as “very good” or “good” and “strongly agreed” or “agreed” they would tell a friend to participate in a circle. Only one of 39 said she would not tell a friend to participate in a circle.

**Section 4: Action Forum.** Organizers brought together all circle participants for a half-day forum at George Mason University. Thirty-nine participants attended. Results included: Formation of action groups/community partners; further identification of Week of Hope projects; a contact list to launch a neighborhood e-newsletter, and a waiting list of future circles.

**Section 5: Success Stories.** Actions taken in the neighborhoods since the circles met are detailed, and include a local church’s “tool drive” for youth in Georgetown South and a sharing agreement on pool privileges between two HOAs.

**Section 6: Facilitator Recommendations.** Facilitators recommend the circles continue and expand to all neighborhoods with a greater commitment by participants to attend all six sessions and more diversity in participants. The circles should be planned to take place before annual HOA meetings and town hall meetings in neighborhoods. This report should be shared with Manassas Park and Prince William County to encourage their participation and support, as well as to encourage school and church-based circles. The information should be shared regionally with other jurisdictions working on the same challenges.

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## What Are Study Circles?

Study Circles are groups of 8-15 people who meet for up to six two-hour sessions led by two facilitators. Through trust-building exercises and dialogue, participants connect with each other, gain a greater understanding of issues and develop action plans. Resources are available free of charge from [www.studycircles.org](http://www.studycircles.org), the homepage of which features an article about our May 30 Action Forum at George Mason University. Other Virginia jurisdictions that host dialogue-to-action programs include Lynchburg, Virginia (<http://www.ManyVoicesOneCommunity>).

*“We have to go up and knock on the door, even if it’s interrupting their supertime and introduce ourselves and not just drive to work and come home and shut the door.”*

*– A circle participant\**

### Section 1: Why Bring Study Circles to Manassas/Prince William?

George Mason University convened a National Issues Forum on Immigration in May 2008 to introduce dialogue-to-action in Prince William County. Participants of the forum organized a pilot one-day circle on the issue of immigration in September 2008, followed by an information meeting and a pilot six-session circle in October-November 2008. The result of that first circle was a call for more circles.

*“When I moved into my neighborhood, one of the neighbors said, “I see you’re Hispanic and your husband is Black. I hope we’re not going to have any trouble.”*

*– A circle participant*

Organizers shifted the focus to the common ground of neighborhood issues, and formed **Neighborhood Improvement Circles** in the City of Manassas to act as a “bridge” to keep residents engaged between the November 2008 Neighborhood Conference and the 2009 Week of Hope program that begins June 13. The pilot reactivated the City of Manassas Neighborhood Enhancement Task Force, and five task force members gave valuable input as circle participants.

The goals of the circles were: 1) to **build relationships** and understanding between diverse neighbors, 2) to **find common ground** on the issues facing the neighborhood and 3) to develop and **implement action plans** that will improve the neighborhood for all residents.

**Organizers:** City of Manassas Neighborhood Services Manager Kisha Wilson-Sogunro partnered with George Mason University (Charvis Campbell and ICAR), Prince William Study Circles (Cindy Brookshire), Unity in the Community (Dexter Fox), the Center for Voter Deliberation of Northern Virginia (Bill Corbett) and Everyday Democracy (John Landesman).

*\*Direct comments from circle participants are in italic throughout this report, and their names have been removed to protect their privacy.*

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**Funding:** Cost of the pilot was \$1,000 for facilitator training generously donated by George Mason University, and \$600 for circle supplies (wall charts, markers, name tags, etc.) and John Landesman's services at the Action Forum, which was donated by Unity in the Community and Jim Snow. The City of Manassas contributed refreshments and copying of facilitator guides and handouts. Prince William County's Neighborhood Services provided flyers, code enforcement booklets, 300 information discs and 150 bags for the county recruitment in West Gate.

**Facilitators:** Thanks to the donation from George Mason University, John Landesman, along with three graduate assistants from GMU's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), trained 17 volunteer facilitators in January 2009 (four couldn't fulfill the commitment).

*Thanks to everyone for these circles. It's been a "healing process" of sorts for me. I only want a great place to live and others involved for the good of the community.*

*– A circle participant*

**Participating Neighborhoods:** Neighborhood Services identified two City neighborhoods that generate a large number of calls for service relating to vacant homes, code violations, graffiti and other concerns. To take full advantage of the facilitator training, three additional circles were scheduled in the City, and two in the county. Eighty-six people participated in eight circles:

1. Georgetown South – City of Manassas – 15 participants
2. Point of Woods/Cannon Ridge – City of Manassas – 11 participants
3. Weems – City of Manassas – 7 participants
4. Wellington – City of Manassas – 12 participants
5. Wildwood – City of Manassas – 16 participants
6. Lindendale – Prince William County (Eastern/Neabsco District) – 7 participants
7. West Gate – Prince William County (Western/Gainesville District) – 4 participants
8. Pilot Circle – Prince William County/City of Manassas – 14 participants

**Locations for Circle Meetings:** Churches and elementary schools welcomed seven circles; the pilot met at George Mason. Organizers were unsuccessful in securing a location for a Manassas Park circle. We thank our meeting partners:

Grace United Methodist Church, Manassas  
Nativity of Our Lord Orthodox Church, Manassas  
Baldwin Elementary School, Manassas  
Weems Elementary School, Manassas  
Hope Lutheran Church, Prince William County (Western)  
Epiphany Lutheran Church, Prince William County (Eastern)  
George Mason University, Prince William Campus

**Recruitment of Participants:** Neighborhood and youth volunteers recruited diverse citizens by distributing flyers and cookies door-to-door, talking to parents walking their children to school, making phone calls and passing information word-of-mouth. Recruiters welcomed anyone, whether they lived in that particular neighborhood or not, to participate. The City's

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Neighborhood Services Manager also recruited citizens with whom she had frequent contact with over the past year, and whom she determined would benefit from the circle experience.

**Outcomes from Each Circle:** A summary and action plan for each circle is detailed in Section 2 of this report. The seven main themes are:

1. Attacking apathy - block events/neighborhood pride campaign
2. Communication - neighborhood info exchange/informing City Council/BOCS
3. Put in the time to fight crime - strengthening Neighborhood Watch/National Night Out
4. Neighbors helping neighbors – foreclosures/unemployed/seniors
5. Assimilating immigrants – women’s circles, language translation services
6. Involving youth – mentoring, activities, neighborhood job opportunities
7. Protecting housing stock - volunteer construction/maintenance projects

**Study Circle Evaluations:** Of 39 evaluations returned, 36 rated the program as “very good” or “good” and “strongly agreed” or “agreed” they would tell a friend to participate in a circle. Only one of 39 said she would not tell a friend to participate in a circle. See Section 3 for details.

**May 30 Action Forum:** Organizers brought together participants from all eight circles for a half-day forum at George Mason University’s Prince William Campus. Thirty-nine participants attended. Results of the Action Forum included:

1. Formation of action groups and community partners,
2. Further identification of Week of Hope projects,
3. A contact list to launch a neighborhood e-newsletter, and
4. A waiting list of future circle participants.

*Congratulations on the DC Examiner article! The dialogues generated some really amazing ideas.*

*– Carrie Boron, Everyday Democracy*

*BRAVO!*

*– Frank Blechman, Private Consultant, formerly with the Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University*

*I really enjoyed working with all of you on this effort. I look forward for more opportunities of how we can continue to work together.*

*– Kisha Wilson-Sogunro, City of Manassas*

*Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Neighborhood Action Forum. It is always a pleasure to join with citizens working together to improve our community. You all are doing great things.*

*– Manassas City Council Member Steve Randolph*

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## Section 2: Process and Outcome of the Circles

*“I never had a problem with race until I moved to Manassas.”*

*“But you grew up in Boston during bussing and war protests. Why were you aware of the war protests but oblivious to racial problems?”*

*“Because it didn’t affect me.”*

*– Two circle participants*

The **Pilot Circle on Immigration** met on six Saturdays in October-November 2008 at George Mason University’s Prince William Campus. John Landesman and the ICAR team of Ethan Finley, Jason King, RJ Nickels and Sandra Tavera facilitated the circle, which included 14 residents of the City of Manassas and Prince William County.

The main outcome of the pilot circle was to continue to provide study circles in the spring, with an Action Forum in May. One circle participant became a workshop presenter at the City’s November 2008 Neighborhood Conference and formed her own non-profit. She authored an article on immigration for a national publication and spoke at the May 30 Action Forum.

### ACTION PLAN FROM PILOT CIRCLE

#### Study Circles (Feb – Apr 2009: May “Action Forum”)

- Reach out to all local governments to participate
- Police sponsor circles and participate in circles
- Circle participants speak out/invite others at citizen’s time
- PWC Schools sponsor circles
- Circles on particular bullets from this list

#### Education

- Mutual education
- Mutual language (through public libraries)
- Know Your Rights seminars
- Educate the general public

#### Get to Know Each Other

- Relationship building
- Neighborhood/community events
- Newcomers organization / Welcome Wagon
- Police sponsor block parties
- Mentoring program
- Community Web site (YouTube channel, Unity in the Community, etc.)

#### Outreach

- Press Outreach/Media (i.e.: letters to the editor)
- Outreach to Political Leaders (i.e.: press release, written statement)

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*Going to City Hall from [our neighborhood] is like going to Mount Olympus.*

*– A circle participant*

### **City Neighborhood Improvement Circles.**

In February and March 2009, the **Weems Neighborhood Improvement Circle** met Tuesday nights at Nativity of Our Lord Orthodox Church on Weems Road. Lucille Comignani, Avery Austin and Tony Camp facilitated the circle which included seven people. The **Wildwood Neighborhood Improvement Circle** met Wednesday nights at Baldwin Elementary School on Main Street. Cindy Brookshire and Chris Pannell facilitated the circle, which included 16 people.

In March and April, the **Georgetown South Neighborhood Study Circle** met on Tuesday nights in the music room at Grace United Methodist Church on Wellington Road. The facilitators were Cindy Brookshire and Madeline Daley and the participants numbered 15. The **Wellington Neighborhood Improvement Circle** met on Tuesday nights at Grace United Methodist Church in the library. Chris Pannell and Audrey Sensale facilitated the circle, which included 12 people. The **Point of Woods/Cannon Ridge Neighborhood Improvement Circle** met on Wednesday nights at Weems Elementary School on Weems Road. Kathy Clark and Erin Clarke facilitated the circle, which included 11 people.

*How do we welcome and motivate renters and transients to take pride in their homes when they only stay a short time or move frequently within the neighborhood?*

*– A circle participant*

**Expectations.** Participants were asked to list their expectations at the first session. The ones mentioned most in the five City circles were:

- Improve communication and share ideas (8 times)
- Get community more involved, change attitudes, get to know neighbors, form relationships (6 times)
- Define problems, figure out solutions and work together to solve them (6 times)
- Make our community cleaner, safer (5 times)
- Develop a greater voice and leaders, serve the whole community (4 times)

They also wanted to engage youth, have more community activities, understand the role of HOAs better, and develop a plan that benefits non-HOAs.

*Drug pushers want a dirty place and crime.*

*– A circle participant*

**Vision:** Two City circles were asked to envision what their neighborhood would be like in 10 years. Features mentioned most often were cleanliness (7 times), community involvement (7 times), neighbors look out for each other (5 times), to take ownership and have a sense of

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community (5 times) and have mutual respect for property (4 times). They also wanted safety – mentioning police presence, regular patrols and “beat cops” several times.

*Painting over graffiti should come last – if you do that, they will put it right back on everything. Let’s get the needles and trash out of here so the kids can play on the [grass] and parents don’t have to be scared to let their kids play.*

*– A circle participant*

**Assets.** Four circles discussed their assets and resources, and what they are already doing.

**Weems’s** assets are long-term residents, a willingness to reach out, a neighborhood watch that bonds a 12-street area that has no HOA, the elementary school, Byrd Park and Nativity of Our Lord Orthodox Church.

**Wildwood’s** assets are its proximity to Historic Manassas’ arts & entertainment district, three shopping centers and schools K-12. The community is well-lit and children walk to school safely. Safety has improved with Neighborhood Watch and installation of a fence. Police and firefighters support Wildwood with a no trespassing initiative, free smoke detectors and installation, child safety education and free child safety seats to the needy. Wildwood has a neighborhood welcome package and a “take a photo and warn first before towing” parking policy. They speak to people first when a rule is broken. Everyone looks out for each other. They are a welcoming community with community-oriented teens. Residents belong to many groups: VFW, American Legion, Elks, Moose and other associations. Residents belong to churches that help the community. Residents have assets and wisdom that hasn’t been tapped yet, and that is encouraging to others. The residents view themselves as a success story.

**Georgetown South’s** recognized assets are 22 acres of greens, a community center with a clinic, community room, conference room, read-and-return library and police substation (not in current use); a pool (not currently open to resident use); a full seven-member HOA board, the support of Head Start, Northern Virginia Family Services, the Benedictine Sisters, Father Ramon Dominguez’s Don Bosco Center outreach program for at-risk youth, and day care. They have a community Web site, and are willing to work with the Ft. Belvoir housing office to promote Georgetown South as a housing destination. They have started a Neighborhood Watch with plans to involve block captains to break down the 860 homes into a grid of workable areas. They admit they need to support such resources as Father Ramon, and want to bring back the Spring Walk, where 200 people “took back the streets” by walking through the neighborhood with balloons and matching T-shirts. They want to increase partnerships with businesses in the adjacent shopping centers and see if NVCC or GMU students will do a resident survey.

**Wellington’s** circle participants listed many assets, from the high school clubs and Boys & Girls Club, local artists and neighborhood storytellers, Winters Branch Trail, the Animal Shelter, Prince William United Way, Hearth and Home and the Aviation School at the airport, to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Nissan Pavilion, OmniLink, Old Dominion Speedway, JE Rice Tru-Value Hardware, Northern Virginia Symphony, VRE and local banks.

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*The first contact residents have with their new neighborhood is they get their car towed because they didn't look at the packet of papers they got at settlement that included their parking pass.*

*– A circle participant*

**Issues/Problems/Barriers.** Participants were asked to brainstorm issues, problems and barriers. The five that were mentioned most in all circles were:

- Apathy, uncooperative attitudes, low expectations (15 times)
- How to get people involved (10 times)
- Hard to motivate with transient renters/absentee landlords (10 times)
- Bridging the communication gap (9 times)
- Crime, gangs recruitment, fear, safety – don't want to take risk (8 times)

They also said HOAs are unwelcoming and unresponsive, that they lose trust when planning gets no results, that there are racial tensions and language barriers, that people are polarized by politics, religion and economic wealth (“Old Town crowd”), that youth have nothing to do and there's no respect for privacy.

*This is like the movie “Groundhog's Day” because we've done this before. [Our neighborhood] was down, then it was up, now it's down again.*

*– A circle participant*

### **Neighborhood Improvement Circles in Prince William County.**

The **Lindendale Neighborhood Improvement Circle** began meeting on Thursdays in February at Epiphany Lutheran Church on Keytone Road in Dale City, but encountered several obstacles: low attendance, lack of diversity and facilitators who had family illness and other critical commitments. The circle disbanded, but several participants from one cul-de-sac continued to meet as an action group at the church and then moved into meeting at neighboring homes.

The **West Gate Neighborhood Improvement Circle** met for four sessions on Thursdays in May at Hope Lutheran Church in western Prince William County. Dexter Fox and Cindy Brookshire facilitated the circle, which included four participants and a child. The City supplied an activity bag and the City of Manassas Park contributed English/Spanish coloring books on “How to Be a Good Neighbor.”

### **Action Plans**

#### **LINDENDALE ACTION PLAN (ONE CUL-DE-SAC)**

**Action Idea 1: Increase Communication.** Neighbors want to concentrate their efforts on the challenges one cul-de-sac, which is near the street where a teenage neighbor is accused of murdering two people. They have a lot of unsupervised youth, ages 4 to 17 on their cul-de-sac, and fear that the violence could spread to their neighborhood. Two neighbors are going to go

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door to door and recruit neighbors, face to face, to come and meet monthly for “Community Action Group” meetings at local church.

**Action Idea 2: Plan Memorial Day Cookout on Cul-de-Sac.** Work out details for the cookout: paper goods, dishes to share and the main course: hot dogs and hamburgers. Make flyer to go out to the entire street. Invite police to cookout (to develop communications with new neighbors, youth).

**Action Idea 3: Put Up a Sign to Protect Children Playing in Street.** Explore setting out a sign for our neighborhood so that drivers are aware of the high number of children to watch out for in the cul-de-sac.

### **WEST GATE ACTION PLAN**

**Action Idea 1: Distribute a Bag of Basic Information to EVERY HOUSE in West Gate**

Step 1: Get “Top Five Zoning Issues,” schedule of county cleanups, bags, etc. from County Neighborhood Services. Talk to Neighborhood Leaders Group to see how a similar information drop happened in Lindendale.

Step 2: Contact City of Manassas Neighborhood Services to schedule Week of Hope volunteers.

Step 3: Approach neighborhood churches to partner their youth with Week of Hope and also provide a meeting space for future neighborhood meetings.

Step 4: Contact Clean Community Council to get donation of trash bags.

Step 5: Cook a meal for Week of Hope volunteers at Manassas Baptist Church’s Rock Center and co-olate bags, flyers, etc. Map out streets from Sudley Manor to Victoria to Manassas Drive.

Step 8: Deploy volunteers and pick up trash at same time with City of Manassas trash sticks.

**Action Idea 2: Pick up litter at West Gate Elementary School**

In the same week as the literature drop, work with school-age children and Week of Hope volunteers to pick up litter at the school.

Next meeting is Thursday, June 4 at circle member’s home to go over these ideas.

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## WEEMS NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT CIRCLE ACTION PLAN

### **Action Idea 1: Participate in Spring Cleaning Day on April 18**

Take part in City's Spring Cleaning Day on Saturday, April 18, by encouraging neighbors to spring clean at home, take trash to designated collection areas, and take recyclables (clean, used clothing, household items, towels for animal adoption center and rechargeable batteries and cell phones) to Old Town Manassas and enjoy the festivities there. Remind homeowners to take TVs, computers and other household hazardous waste to Manassas Transfer Station on May 2 and to call ahead to schedule pickup of oversize items at the curb (refrigerators, etc).

**Step 1:** Reserve two City courtesy trucks, one for Byrd Park and one for the parking lot of Nativity of Our Lord Orthodox Church. (Kisha arrange for free?)

**Step 2:** Create a "Weems Neighborhood Watch Supports Spring Cleaning Day" flyer in Spanish and English. Post flyer to Watch online group and ask each member to print and share it with four residents of the watch area.

**Step 3:** While sharing the flyer, ask residents about any needs they are aware of that volunteers could address. (church groups from DC, SD, CT and MN in April/May, Week of Hope June 13-Aug. 1). Permits may be needed if it is a handicap ramp or fixing a deck.

**Step 4:** On April 18, assign Neighborhood Watch volunteers to greet people at the two courtesy trucks – to ask them to join Neighborhood Watch and to make sure they don't put tires or hazardous materials (TVs, computers, paint, etc) in the truck, or overload it.

**Step 5:** After trucks leave on Monday morning, clean up any debris at Byrd Park/church lot.

### **Action Idea 2: Block Party for National Night Out on Tuesday, August 4**

Plan party early and register on <http://www.nationaltownwatch.org/nno/>. Decide, do you want to block off one street (Jackson Avenue)? Have it in a member's backyard with the deck? Partner with Nativity of Our Lord Church and provide entertainment for children?

### **Other Suggested Ideas**

Sponsor a Putt Putt Party for Neighborhood Children on Mathis Avenue, Ice Cream Social at Nativity of Our Lord Church, Christmas caroling from truck with bales of hay, bring back Fireworks on July 4<sup>th</sup> at Byrd Park.

Coordinate a city-wide Shopping Cart Amnesty Day. Arrange with stores to pick up their carts.

Go as a group to a City Council meeting and speak at citizen time about taking part in Neighborhood Improvement Circle, and talk about being invested in our neighborhood.

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## **WILDWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN**

### **Action Idea 1: Recreation Center/Kids Need a Place**

We will replace/upgrade existing playground equipment to provide youth a safe environment in which to play with supervision. Currently, there are three “squares” in the play area. We will make the center square more family friendly, to bring the neighborhood together. The center square will become a cabana area with a roof, barbecue pit and tables.

### **Action Idea 2: Volunteering**

If we get volunteers for a Spring Cleanup and Playground Upgrade, Home Depot will give us a deal of \$5,000 worth of materials/equipment for \$1500. This is a special arrangement for the Wildwood HOA president, not city-wide. To get the volunteers we need, we will:

1. Put a Plexiglas sign by the mailbox advertising the Spring Cleanup/Playground Upgrade
2. Communicate and invite people, giving them enough advance notice so they can schedule it in their busy calendars.
3. Talk to residents one on one. Have personal conversations about the project and establish relationships while doing Neighborhood Watch, walking dog, outside smoking or just knock on doors. Ask, “What would you like to see?” “What do you think of that?”
4. Don’t give them a way out – give them a choice. Example: “We need volunteers to pick up litter and others to dig the foundation for the new structure. Which can you do?”

Other ideas to get more volunteers:

1. Put up a suggestion box.
2. Plan and execute small “area projects” that people can see from their yards, and that will encourage them.
3. Work with Manassas City Police to have a block party during National Night Out.

### **Action Idea 3: Baldwin Closing?**

We need to request that the School Board hold a public hearing to solicit citizen comments and hold small group meetings about the possibilities that Baldwin Elementary School will close and school children will be bussed by grades to different schools, such as Kindergarteners to Jennie Dean, first graders to Weems, second graders to Round, etc.

We want more communication from the City on decisions that are being made, and we want to have input, like the Neighborhood Relations Committee in Oakenshaw had input on smart and green development.

Baldwin is a major selling point in our neighborhood because parents can send their children from K-12 right here in our neighborhood or close to it (Baldwin, Mayfield, Metz, Osbourn all within about one mile). We will:

1. Invite School Board members to Wildwood and Georgetown South HOA meetings.
2. Talk to residents one on one, and advertise the meetings in our newsletter and the GTS Web site to get full attendance at the meetings, especially parents.
3. Gather statistics on transportation costs, etc. and meet with school administrators.

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4. Enlist others interested in this issue.
  5. Keep going until we get an appropriate answer to our questions.

#### **Action Idea 4: Senior Citizens**

A member of the circle who used to see to the needs of others in her section of a retirement community in California (rides to doctor, pick up prescriptions, respite care or pressed for cash) volunteered to assess the needs of residents of in Wildwood. Another member of the circle agreed to help her.

#### **Action Idea 5: Talk to City Council**

A member of the circle suggested they “make a field trip” of gathering at least five residents to go to a city council meeting and talk to them at citizen time, whether it is to press for information about Baldwin possibly closing, or just to thank them for choosing Wildwood as a community for the pilot study circle, and what being in the circle has done for them.

#### **Action Idea 6: Youth**

The circle brought this up as an afterthought, but felt it was important enough to add as an action item, that they need to do something to build relationships with the youth of the community.

*“When you realize that our neighborhood, with 860 homes, is larger than Haymarket, that’s like running a small town.”*

*– A circle participant*

### **GEORGETOWN SOUTH ACTION PLAN: CLEAN NEIGHBORHOOD**

- Establish Neighborhood Watch
  - a. Identify block captains for every 20 homes.
  - b. Regular dog walks to increase communication and presence.
  - c. Complete tally of vacant homes.
  - d. Ask NOVA or GMU students to do a resident survey.
  - e. Offer concern to crime victims, invite them to get involved.
- Clean Every Green
  - a. Designate a GREEN DAY for every quarter.
  - b. Sign up youth to Adopt-A-Green.
  - c. Ask Sue Lhotka for Adopt-a-Green signs.
  - d. Order t-shirts, caps, solicit coupons for incentives.
  - e. Talk to property owner who wants to supervise youth to do yard work for money.
  - f. Trinity Episcopal Church will donate tools at “Bring a Tool Sunday.”
  - g. Youth/adults to pick up trash, remove tree stumps, abate graffiti.
  - h. Reconsider allowing activities (soccer?) on greens.
- Work with Verizon and Comcast to Bury Lines, Lock Boxes
  - a. Get word out to residents to push Verizon, Comcast to resolve problem at time of installation.
  - b. Let Verizon and Comcast know extent of problem with list and photos.

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- c. If no action, go to City Manager with list and photos.
  - d. After 30 days, still no action, speak at televised Council meeting with photos on screen.
  - Find and bother absentee landlords with “a personal touch”
    - a. Encourage immediate neighbors to hand write letters about chronic problems.
    - b. Take photos and mail letters & photos certified mail to landlords.
  - Use personal touch, courtesy and follow up to get more residents involved
    - a. Rearrange HOA board meeting layout as round table rather than “us” vs. “them.”
    - b. Greet newcomers to HOA/Neighborhood Watch meetings, follow up w/phone call.

### **Georgetown South: Additional Action Ideas**

- Ask All Saints Catholic Church, which has large native, Hispanic and Filipino groups, to reach out to residents of Georgetown South.
- Break down events like National Night Out into a single street block party. We are simple people who want events that are smaller with more warmth. Community center is cold. Go all out to promote an event and only 15 to 20 people show up. Only a handful show up at HOA meetings.
- Knock down barriers by breaking down events, communication, thinking into blocks (Neighborhood Watch) addressing people street by street.
- Make a larger effort to communicate expectations. Don't let the repetition of reaching out and communicating to “renters” and “transients” frustrate you. Each time you relay a positive message of welcome and neighborhood pride is important. A member of the circle explained that as a nurse, she repeats the same messages many times each day, and they are never without importance.
- Don't lay problems on one ethnic group. In 1973, Georgetown South's problems were the same – apathy and a disintegrating housing stock – and there were only about 15 Hispanic families in 860 homes.
- Start a Hispanic women's group. Then start another. Have them organize events around interests that bring people together – a large soccer game, a cook-off type cookout, Latin and African American music with a DJ or a battle of the bands. Music brings people together. Get sponsors to have a little piece of the event. Wal Mart to donate gift cards. Create a buzz. “Save the Date” so people get excited about it. Throw a fundraiser to support Father Ramon expand his efforts for youth (take them to Kings Dominion).
- Get out and walk and talk, one on one, on a regular basis, with people in the neighborhood. Patterned after the Guardian Angels' Red Hats. Help people one on one.
- Increase lighting, visibility on greens because of broken glass. Discourage loitering.
- Identify your core group of homeowners, established families and renters and focus on getting them involved as stakeholders in the community.
- Contact Ft. Belvoir housing office to promote GTS as a housing destination.
- Connect with other City Neighborhood Watches by E-mail.
- Use membership in Prince William County-Greater Manassas Chamber of Commerce (attend events to network with businesses that could support GTS, set up a media room on Chamber

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Web site that links to GTS Web site and promotes GTS's neighborhood pride/physical space/value as a place to live).

- Maintain relationship with local reporters, media.
- Replace playground equipment with standard equipment in future because of vandalism, add mulch.
- Open lot – future picnic pavilion?
- Either lobby for police officer to man substation in community center or convert space for WIC.
- Use ice cream/vendor trucks/push carts as a way to get news out, help make behavior changes?
- Reconnect with group that owns the pool.
- Bring in a soccer team to play a big game on the greens at Beach and Aspen.

*The circles aren't about resolving problems, they're about resolving attitudes.*

*– A circle participant*

## **WELLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT CIRCLE ACTION PLAN**

Topics of highest concern and potential plans of action:

**Dark areas of Wellington.** Need streetlights. Contact the City Electrical Department/Public Works for consultation and estimate. **Trash.** Need more of the proper public receptacles. Contact the City Public Works for consultation. **Drainage Pond.** The pond attracts trash and litter. Contact Neighborhood Services for Week of Hope volunteers. **Neighborliness.** Hold events for Wellington residents to get to know one another and socialize. Hold a block party or clubhouse events. **Trash Cans.** Units should use trash cans with secure lids. Contact Home Depot to sponsor reduced price trash cans. Wellington HOA could stencil unit numbers on cans for accountability. **Sheds.** Bring sheds into conformity with HOA requirements. Contact Home Depot to sponsor reduced price sheds. **Speeding Vehicles.** Speeding vehicles are a safety concern. Alert the HOA board of vehicles speeding in residential areas. Request they contact police. Contact police directly with date/time/license of speeding vehicles. Request police provide a portable speed indicator to place in high violation areas. **Housing.** Overcrowding or un-maintained homes are a safety and potential health hazard. Contact the City Zoning Department. Be factual in your description; take notes of activities, vehicle licenses, time of day, and pattern of behavior.

## **POINT OF WOODS / CANNON RIDGE CIRCLE ACTION PLAN**

The group represented several separate but nearby neighborhoods and the action plan they agreed on was to be of support to each other.

Point of Woods

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Circle members will organize a Community Yard Sale on MacKenzie Court on Saturday, May 16 from 8 am to 1 pm

- Distribute flyer to gain resident participation.
  - Ask newspaper to promote Community Yard Sale.
  - One circle member is willing to let them borrow stand-alone signs to promote sale.
  - Circle members will bring table and baked goods and work concessions stand.
  - Concessions money will go toward a Block Party.
  - Board members will meet & talk with as many residents as possible during sale.
  - Lee will bring a grill out.
  - One circle participant will contact Sue Lhotka to see if she can have leftover “poop & scoop” bags that the Girl Scouts made for Spring Cleaning Day to hand out.
  - Facilitator Kathy Clark will entertain children as “Mrs. C” the clown.
  - One circle participant will submit group photo of event to News & Messenger afterwards.
- Board meets quarterly; they will plan to host more frequent “meet & greet” social events in board member homes (residents invited) in order to bond as a board.

Cannon Ridge. One circle participant creates a “murder scene” at his home at Halloween each year. He will look into something he and his friends can do, whether it’s a “Ghosts of New Britain” mini haunted trail, or just a spontaneous free ‘scoop and go’ ice cream event this summer.

Weems. One circle participant will look into doing informal social gatherings with neighbors on the 8900 block of Fort Drive to get to know new neighbors, but also to gauge interest in doing a block party on Tuesday, August 4. Goal would be to do a block event on May 5 (Cinco de Mayo) and on National Night Out in August each year.

West Gate. One circle participant who lives in West Gate is going to try to get her neighbors interested in joining her in the West Gate Neighborhood Improvement Circle. She is using a City Neighborhood Enhancement Task Force member and the county Neighborhood Services Dept as resources to get an HOA management company to be more accountable and get work done.

Neighborhood Enhancement Task Force. Two circle participants continue as members of the task force.

All circle participants made personal goals on a sticky note and gave them to the facilitators, who plan to send the notes to the participants in a few months so they can see if they achieved those goals.

### **Other Action Ideas**

- Use pictograms/picture cards to show what to do, and what not to do about trash, etc.
- Use videos on TV government channel to show people what to do, what not to do.
- Broader – come up with basic dos and don’ts that every HOA could use.

- Get a volunteer to be a bilingual Hispanic liaison, like the parent liaison they have in the high school where one participant teaches ESOL classes.

Next Meeting: The circle decided to keep meeting as an action group in June.

### Section 3: Circle Evaluations

<b>Please place an X in the appropriate box.</b>					
	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
1. Overall I would rate the Study Circle program as...	19	17	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following by placing an X in the appropriate box.</b>					
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
2. The facilitators managed the time well	15	21	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The facilitators made me feel welcome	31	7	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The facilitators helped the group discuss different opinions	24	12	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The facilitators encouraged everybody in the group to participate in conversations	27	8	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The facilitators worked hard to keep the discussion on track	21	12	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I would tell a friend to participate in a study circle	22	14	2	1	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. **What did you like best about the way your facilitators led your Study Circle?** Allowed each person to speak and didn't control the conversations or direct to certain ends (3). Friendly, patient, committed, flexible, quiet, calm, polite, good listening skills, kind, compassionate, open, pleasant, encouraging. The gentleness, the effort. Very involved and listened non-judgmentally. Very concerned about our community. Very well organized – positive. They were able to get everyone talking. The weekly plan, keep things focused. Listened to everyone. Emphasized a

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free exchange of ideas. Put everything on wall charts & e-mailed info to us. I liked seeing our ideas on display. It's nice to see what ideas we came up with I sided with. Communication is very clear. Good ideas for discussion. Helped us think outside the box. Offered other ways to handle different situations. Motivated each other to find solutions to problems. Professional in all aspects especially in their dealing with the attendees. The best resources you can use or share with the HOA. New friends. Everything.

**9. What do you think your facilitators should do differently next time?** Nothing (12). Hard to tell, sometimes it's like herding cats. More diversity of circle members (2). Try to have citizens attend. Participants should be all from same neighborhood in order for outcomes. The people who attend is the luck of the draw – difficult group. A lot of participation dropped out. Stress the value of making a commitment to attend each week, support the established group rules by weekly review and enforcement when necessary, not allow participants to come and go, drifting in and out, and assertiveness towards group bullies and/or divisive dialogue. Focus on the real problem - getting to the real heart of why folks are afraid of change and why folks are feeling disrespected and what is behind the real issues of a highly populated illegal immigration in our communities. How we can assist in finding a solution to the problem. More work on solutions and what worked in other places. Start sooner working on neighborhood goals. Very negative attitudes prevailed. Since the city can be an obstacle to improvement, address better ways to deal with this situation. Try to not let people get too far off the subject. Spend less time with questions regarding race & ethnicity. Steer the conversation a little better to stay on topic. Provide an outline/agenda for each meeting to help guide & map out the course of each meeting. Help meetings get started with a better sense of direction. Longer time per session and not as long (maybe 2 or 3 4-hour sessions with same issues (2)). I would have preferred that we had been seated in a square using the cafeteria tables to take notes. Maybe a bit more forceful in enforcing the “over talking” rule. Don't let people like me run on....(smiley face).

**10. What was the most rewarding part of participating in this study circle? Why?** Meeting other people in my neighborhood (15) from different backgrounds who care about their community and this city. Our meeting will now make a difference in our community. I've made some important connections, learned a few ways to get other people involved, shared ideas, found out our problems aren't dissimilar (3). Listening and learning other's viewpoints and ideas (6) helped me learn. To see the open discussions. Getting to know my neighbors better (4) and the feeling like we're more concerned than I had ever thought. Knowledge about the community helps (2). New ideas (5) – we need them. Opportunity to voice opinions & concerns. We formed solutions to resolve the problems that we face in our individual communities. We formed a group to look closer at future concerns. I could say what I see. The action plan is realistic. It's nice to see our hard work come together. After 3 weeks of every homework question being built around racial ethnicity and focus on them, someone spoke up and asked why. Others agreed and the group took off with a free flow of ideas and working together. To understand through communication that race and ethnicity are NOT the issues that divide communities and neighborhoods are the component of what makes up a community. It was helpful meeting other active homeowners who are concerned about quality of life issues within their neighborhoods, sharing an exchange of ideas which encouraged all of us to continue moving forward with ways of improving our neighborhoods.

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**11. What was the most frustrating part of participating in this study circle? Why?** Nothing (11). Length of time for correcting issues that were raised. The beginning as each of us had frustrations in trying to meet our needs in resolving our problems. Reviewing the same problems. Small ideas, unwillingness or inability to look at greater issues. Learning of some of the roadblocks that are encountered by individuals willing to donate their time to make things better. Would have liked more diversity from all communities (3). Not enough people from the community participated – need to recruit more people from the actual community. Don't need as much feely touchy stuff. The sense that non-residents are outsiders and unable to be taken seriously. Having said that, residents had difficulty imagining what would work. I am still willing to volunteer or be available as needed (signed name). Lack of participation from a majority of the actual residents within targeted neighborhoods to find ways to dialogue together to come to find ways to remove the barriers within their own neighborhoods causing conflict. When outsiders are the participants and work towards decisions to “better” or “improve” a neighborhood with an action plan, disappointment and resentment arises due to ‘others’ deciding what the problems are in their neighborhood and how to solve them. Keeping people on subject. It took a lot of meetings to get going and deal with issues. While it was important to learn about each other first, it seemed like we talked a lot about cultural background and not a lot about the issues at first. Getting to the meat! Going through 3 weeks of ice breaker and silly formal handshakes when circles begin, after everybody greeted each other when they came in. It took too long to get to the goals. Too much time was spent on learning about each other. It took six weeks – not enough time focusing on issues and too much time breaking the ice. Would like to follow up/action or follow through. No tables to write on made it very difficult for note taking! Also it was very uncomfortable! It just interfered with my Bible Study meetings but it was still spiritually driven. That I couldn't go to all the sessions because of schedule conflict. I came in late, missed some meetings. People missing meetings. I will attend the Wellington circle to catch up and bring some West Gate people with me. Commuting makes week night meetings hard. School wouldn't let us walk inside – outside was rainy, dark. Had to leave right at 9 pm. Not enough parking on this side of building. Staying quiet. I wanted to talk. Over talking. Occasionally things did get passionate. It was not an adequate representation of the diversity of the community and the conversation was frequently stilted by that reality. Some participants specialized in adding color to the discussions but added little of substance and did not move the ball forward. An effective study circle will be populated by decision makers or decision influencers. Create study circles that are permanent in nature. Then invite subject experts or influential people into the discussions. I feel honored that I was selected to attend this wonderful event. I left with a lot of information that will be useful to me in working with the Hispanic community. Not focusing on the real issues.

## **Section 4: Action Forum**

On Saturday, May 30, the community was invited to an Action Forum at George Mason University's Prince William Campus.

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Manassas City Council Member Steve Randolph welcomed the 39 attendees. John Landesman of Everyday Democracy described the study circle process while a slide show of photos from the study circles and all City of Manassas neighborhood initiatives played.

Cindy Brookshire introduced the speakers: Leon Walker, Wildwood; Maureen Wood, Wellington; Susan Benfield, Weems; Lisa Johnson-Firth, pilot circle; Matt Stromberg, Georgetown South; Lee Morrison, Point of Woods/Cannon Ridge; and Grace Hogue, West Gate.

After each circle testimony, attendees broke out into the action groups for their neighborhoods with facilitators for each group: Baldwin Community (Wildwood) / Chris Pannell; Dean Community (Georgetown South) / Madeline Daley; Round Community (Wellington) / Audrey Sensale, Sandra Tavera; Weems, Cannon Ridge & Point of Woods / Kathy Clark and Prince William County / Pilot circle, Lindendale, West Gate / Dexter Fox.

The groups were asked to: 1. Reflect on what's happened since the circle met. 2. Review and revise action ideas from the circles – what has been done, what has not, and why? 3. Decide if the action group is adequately organized. If not, should it combine with another action group, seek additional resources, or do something else? 4. Set goals and milestones for accomplishing one or more action ideas. 5. Share how they can best use Week of Hope volunteers/resources. 6. Choose a chairperson for the action group. Then the groups then reconvened in Bull Run Hall Room 130.

Their work was exemplified best in the words spoken to the assembly by Lee Morrison. Organizers sent his comments to The Washington Post and on June 11, organizers were contacted by The Washington Post. An edited version of Lee's speech is expected to be printed in "Close to Home," the Post's section that features local opinions.

## **Section 5: Success Stories**

Here is a compilation of actions taken in the neighborhoods since the circles met:

### **WEEMS NEIGHBORHOOD**

- Youth volunteers loaded a City truck full of debris from an unkempt property.
- Neighborhood Watch members and Cub Scouts spread mulch at Weems Elementary School, raked up eight bags of yard waste and weeded the flower beds in front of the school. Two watch members repotted flowers in pots near the entrance that will be used by voters for the June 9 primary.
- Two more people joined Weems Neighborhood Watch, bringing the total members to 101.
- On May 22, Weems Neighborhood Watch won the national "2009 Neighborhood of the Year, Second Place" award at the National Conference on Neighborhood Concerns in Spokane, WA for their Landgreen Street Cleanup last year, in which they partnered with the City of Manassas' Week of Hope program. The prize was \$300, which watch members intend use for this summer's Week of Hope program.

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## **WILDWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD**

- Wildwood HOA made connection with Wellington HOA and now Wellington is allowing Wildwood residents the use of their pool this summer (a \$1,500 deposit will be returned at the end of the summer if there is no damage to the pool).
- Georgetown South webmaster is helping Wildwood start a Web site at <http://wildwoodcondosva.org>.
- Wildwood is installing two welcome signs, a suggestion box and a Plexiglas sign by their mailbox to improve communication.
- Wildwood's Community Cleanup Day included a pot-luck barbecue, a moon bounce and DJ. Prizes were awarded, including a one-month condo fee waiver, \$100 in gasoline and dinner for four. The City provided a courtesy truck which the community filled. The cleanup keeps the HOA from raising condo fees.
- Wildwood is applying for a state grant to pay off a loan for new vinyl siding that a previous management company had required. Once that loan is paid off, condo fees will be cut in half.
- Wildwood is taking on Comcast. Twice residents have tripped on exposed cables, leading one woman to break her hip.
- On May 22, a circle participant was one of 10 people who handed in an application to be considered for the open City Council seat vacated by Steve Smith (who was appointed a judge).

## **GEORGETOWN SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD**

- First Neighborhood Watch meeting with training by Officer Scott Stallard was held on April 23 with 10 residents present.
- Several residents have begun a regular Saturday 6 p.m. dog walk to communicate face to face and show a presence to deter crime.
- A real estate developer who owns three rental properties in Georgetown South, is partnering with the City and Trinity Episcopal Church to do a tool drive. June 14 is "Bring a Tool Sunday" at the church on West Street. All new and used tools, from lawn mowers to work gloves, that are donated will be used for youth in Georgetown South to earn money doing yard work this summer. The developer is willing to supervise the youth and train them on safety and basics of landscaping.
- Georgetown South's webmaster offered to help the City of Manassas Police set up a twitter page, similar to the county's. Captain Art Dennis, Assistant Chief of Police thanked him, but said they do not have the staffing to update the page on a regular basis to make it work as it would be intended.

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## **WELLINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD**

- On May 22, Audrey Sensale, a co-facilitator for the Wellington Neighborhood Improvement Circle, was one of 10 people who handed in an application to be considered for the open City Council seat vacated by Steve Smith (who was appointed a judge).
- Because of a new connection between the Wellington HOA President and Leon Walker of Wildwood HOA, the Wellington Board is allowing Wildwood residents the use of their pool this summer (a \$1,500 deposit will be returned at the end of the summer if there is no damage to the pool).
- Wellington residents met to discuss the possibility of a Teen Night. Outcome unknown.
- Five Neighborhood Watch signs were posted around Wellington. It is unknown if there are residents active in conducting Neighborhood Watch.
- Members made notes on which street lights are out.
- They have begun creating committees to serve on HOA Boards.

## **POINT OF WOODS/CANNON RIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS**

- Point of Woods 3 held their Community Yard Sale on Saturday, May 16 with help from circle members, and was successful in their objective to make it a fun event with a lot of face-to-face communication with diverse residents.
- A circle participant who lives in the county helped with the community yard sale in her Stonington neighborhood. She is also working with a member of the Neighborhood Enhancement Task Force to hold her HOA board and management company accountable for using funds to make repairs in the neighborhood.
- Manassas St. Thomas Church has agreed to “adopt” the Point of Woods and Cannon Ridge neighborhoods and partner with them on revitalization and socialization projects.
- A circle participant who is a professional nanny is recruiting youth in her neighborhood to form a club that picks up litter with work gloves she supplies with brownies/cookies for reward.

## **LINDENDALE/PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY**

- Members who were neighbors on a cul-de-sac continued meeting in each other’s homes.
- The members of the circle are grateful for the beginning in dialogue, and have done significant groundwork, but because of two robberies, they postponed the Memorial Day picnic until July 4 in hopes that things will be less confrontational.

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- Week of Hope volunteers will travel 13 miles outside the City of Manassas to help community activist Connie Moser of the county’s Neighborhood Leaders Group clean up Dale City Boulevard before the Independence Day Parade on July 4th.

## **WEST GATE/PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY**

- Week of Hope volunteers will help the West Gate Community do three projects the week of June 22-26: 1) distribute information bags to every home on every street; 2) clean up trash and litter at West Gate Elementary School and 3) clean up trash and litter at Stonewall Middle School. West Gate volunteers are working with the county to have dumpsters placed at the schools during the project and co-olate the information that goes in each bag.
- One member is looking into starting a group on Facebook such as “Welcome to West Gate of Lomond” or even “Wake Up West Gate of Lomond.”

## **Section 6: Facilitator Recommendations**

*“Our circle met in an elementary school. Outside the school building there were Hispanics, Blacks and Filipinos playing soccer, strolling with their babies, shooting baskets. But inside, in our circle, there was a majority of white people. Even a bribe of cookies with the flyers wouldn’t bring them in.”*

*– A Circle Facilitator*

Fourteen volunteer facilitators gave generously – more than 12 hours for each circle, not including the all-day training, prep work and follow up. Here are a few of their general observations on the circle process and the neighborhoods they spent so much discussing, as well as their recommendations for future circles:

- That any future circle efforts be prefaced by a well-publicized information meeting to gauge serious interest in being in circles.
- That participants commit to attending all six sessions and not be allowed to miss more than one session.
- That each circle be a diverse mix of people.
- That managed communities with community rooms be strongly encouraged to host neighborhood improvement circle in their facilities.
- That at least one circle facilitator be familiar with HOA issues.
- That when a circle is scheduled, make sure an HOA board member is in the circle, so that when they present their action plan to the board it isn’t a “you need to do this” confrontation.

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- That HOA Boards and other neighborhood leaders form a group to share information and resources.
  - That HOA Boards specifically need basic training that shows them where to get support, how to find resources in their own neighborhood, how to be welcoming to all residents, how to be more positive and say “yes I can” and not “we tried that before and it didn’t work” and how to develop proven strategies to motivate the apathetic and target messages to people who move frequently, sometimes within the same neighborhood.
  - That circles be scheduled to take place in the weeks before the HOA’s annual meeting.
  - That schools begin pilot circles in their facilities to bring together parents, teachers and students on issues such as bullying, racism, depression, low test scores, etc.
  - That churches sponsor circles in their facilities or in the neighborhood community centers that bring together native, Hispanic and Filipino residents.
  - That local city government sponsor circles in neighborhoods so that each one has a six-session circle before their Quarterly Neighborhood Town Hall meeting in Baldwin, Haydon, Dean, Round and Weems (#1 and #2).
  - That a grant be obtained that will help fund the circles for 2009-11 so there is enough money for 1) direction for the circles project, 2) facilitator training and 3) for circle supplies/copying.
  - That this information be shared with Manassas Park and Prince William County to encourage their participation and support.
  - That this information be shared regionally with neighborhood activists in Loudoun County who have expressed an interest in study circles to expand their new initiative, “Neighborhood Listens” (<http://novatownhall.com/2009/05/14/neighborhood-listens-project-just-launched/>; <http://www.loudountimes.com/letter/1599>; <http://www.loudounagreement.org/>; [http://loudounextra.washingtonpost.com/news/2009/jun/02/close-richard-cabellos/?a\\_and\\_e](http://loudounextra.washingtonpost.com/news/2009/jun/02/close-richard-cabellos/?a_and_e)). Cindy Brookshire is meeting with those organizers on June 13.

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