

Commemorating Ashlawn's Beautiful Hill and Trees

We may not be able to stop the paving of Ashlawn's beautiful slope, but we can raise a lot of awareness so green spaces at other school don't suffer the same fate. We seek to be transparent, open, and honest about our efforts. All ideas are welcomed. The use of street theater, humor, and beauty are central to any public education strategy. Therefore, we offer the following ideas from children who play on the hill and interested parents:

- Put a huge message on the side of the hill using flower petals: "Good bye Hill. We'll miss you. – love the children".
- Host a wake - picnic to say good-bye to the slope, June 18th (one-month anniversary of the CB's vote) at 6 pm. County Board & school staff invited.
- Decorate the evergreen tree at the top of the hill (slated to be cut) with a pictures of kids sledding and playing on the hill.
- Encircle the trees with hearts and apologies for cutting them down. "Every tree has a soul and a personality. They are our ancestors", so say some of the students.
- Measure the age of the trees and turn the wood into furniture which can be sold as a fundraiser for the school. We know a dad in the community who does this.
- Invite author Lynne Cherry (she visited Ashlawn several years ago as part of GCP – Environment). She is the author of "The Great Kapok Tree". She inscribed a book with "Please help protect the rain forest and the natural places near where you live." She can sit on the hill and read her book, while asking that this wonderful natural area not be used for asphalt <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-j9RRSWS1U>
- Invite Joni Mitchell to come to Ashlawn to sing "Big Yellow Taxi" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t79hUuE2vul>
- Offer a children's petition to leaders against paving the hill, pointing out the contradiction between what they're taught about eco-systems in the classrooms and the tearing out of an eco-system right outside their window.
- Audio recordings of children laughing up in the trees so when the chainsaws come, the cutters will look around in bewilderment.
- "Ashlawn tickets" for parking offenders on 8th Road. Each infraction is equivalent to one hour of community service to the school. Every additional infraction will double the offenders service hours. PTA parents thought we might erect a wall of shame.
- Have a welcoming ceremony for the new trees, and involve our children in caring for them.
- After the old bus loop is filled-in as green space invite the Ashlawn children to redesign a play area or butterfly garden.

Please feel free to share other ideas and come to the picnic. Respectfully submitted - Barbara Wien