Glen Echo Park Report

Although the National Park Service liaison Aaron LaRocca was also absent, he provided detailed notes via email, which Mr. Matney read into the minutes.

The year 2016 marks the Centennial of the National Park Service, and to properly honor this centennial year across the country, the NPS funding level is the highest ever, $2.85 billion, a 9% increase over FY 2015. Congress increased support for the NPS Centennial Initiative by $132.9 million.

The following are line items that could impact Glen Echo Park and Clara Barton NHS:

- An increase of $5 million for NPS roads, bridges, and transportation systems, an increase from $240 million in FY 2015. All money well spent.
- Some Park safety concerns are being addressed by the Park, GEPPAC, and the U.S. Park Police, including car break-ins and speeding in the upper parking lot. Visitors are reminded to leave nothing of value in their cars. Cars continue to speed through the upper lot to avoid the backup at the three-way stop near the Irish Inn, creating safety concerns for those using the bike path, park visitors, and Irish Inn patrons. The Park is working on a speed hump plan to discourage using the trolley right of way as a high-speed cut through.
- An increase of $2 million to fund Centennial Volunteer Ambassadors, while also raising the Volunteer-In-Parks (VIP) appropriations cap to $7 million.
- In the recently passed Transportation Bill, Congress also allocated $268 million for NPS roads, bridges, and transportation systems, an increase from $240 million in FY 2015. All money well spent.
- There are no updates on either the Clara Barton Rehabilitation Project or the Glen Echo Park Partnership Agreement.

Town Business

The bulk of the meeting concerned town maintenance. In a nutshell, speed bumps were discussed, the need to post town permits as well as county permits at construction sites was verified, and Town Hall maintenance is needed. Parking lot pavement is scheduled to begin after April 15. The need for a new elevator which can accommodate newer, larger wheelchairs and scooters was examined since it will be a major,
though necessary expenditure. Council Member Stiglitz reminded everyone that the Town Hall could use a new paint job, and no one present could even remember the last time it was done. It will be another major expenditure. And the finials for the wrought iron fencing garnered their fair share of attention as well, since some need replacing.

The street striping issues which need remediation, and additional sidewalk sanding of the new replacement sections by Cooley Stonework had the floor for a bit. So did the Pepco trees: As it was pointed out, it would be nice to know what was planted, and when. Council Member Costello also mentioned the ongoing need to water and, if necessary, replace them. Council Member Long commented what a great Town Hall renter the English Country Dance group is, taking immaculate care of the floor, and even keeping the piano tuned. On a less upbeat note, she is also looking into the Goldsboro Project of 19 townhouses at our end of Goldsboro road. This could impact area traffic, already wretched at certain times of the day.

The idea of putting up a Little Free Library in one of the two small Town parks was considered, with Mr. Stiglitz offering to be architect-of-record and builder, and Ms. Costello, librarian and caretaker. (For those not in the know, Little Free Libraries are currently trending all over the nation: small waterproof book boxes placed on both public and sometimes private property, essentially free book exchanges.)

Police Report
Mr. Stiglitz delivered the police report, and as of January 7, all countywide crime stats were down. Theft from autos continues to be the biggest County crime, so once again, remember to lock your car and hide your belongings.

Traffic enforcement in December by off-duty Montgomery County police at University and Oxford netted 20 warnings and 4 citations, in a total of 7 hours, costing the Town $280.

Town Expenses
Town expenses for the month of December totaled $27,778.45. — Ellen Leary
A storm on January 22 and 23 delivered over two feet of snow to Glen Echo, and many days of digging out and sledding.
Let’s talk about real estate along MacArthur Blvd.”

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Late winter is a great time to prepare for spring by setting up a suitable place in the basement to start growing plants from seed. I make an effort to try unusual and interesting plants but you might want to sow seeds for the plants that have grown happily in your garden year after year. Choose the vegetables, herbs, and flowers that are your favorites!

The three essentials for seed germination are heat, humidity, and light. For heat, use a seed-starting heat mat with a built-in thermostat that maintains the mat at 15–20 degrees above the surrounding room temperature. The ideal temperature for most seed germination in soil is between 75–80 degrees, so the room temperature should not be too cold. A temperature of approximately 65 degrees is good.

The second key to successful seed growth is keeping a consistent humidity level. If the seeds become too dry, they do not germinate, and if they are too wet, they will rot. It is possible to make a mini-greenhouse using bent coat hangers and clear plastic. This structure creates a humidity dome. Open it periodically to allow for good air flow as this will help to prevent disease. Otherwise, keep the tray covered with plastic or glass. A mister can be used—be sure to spray frequently and consistently. And lastly, use a grow light with a timer. It should be set to remain on for 14 to 16 hours a day and turned off at night. At first, seed trays are most effective when placed 6 to 8 inches below the lights. Then raise the light as the seedlings grow.

A seed-starting soil mix is the preferred growing medium because it is a relatively sterile mix. Moisten the mix and then fluff it with your hands and spread it evenly over the seed sowing trays. It is important that seed not be sown too thick because seedlings are apt to crowd each other out. Place the seed in your palm and sprinkle carefully, especially for the fine seeds. Read the seed packet for instructions on the specific seed you are working with—hard-coated seed can benefit from a soaking in hot water or nicking with a file to slightly open the seed coating, whereas fine seed barely needs to be covered for successful germination.

Once the seeds are sown, mist the surface with slightly warm water. Water the seed tray by placing warm water in the base of the tray (I use a cookie sheet) or use a gentle sprinkler (I buy sprinkler tops to use on plastic bottles). Make sure to label each grouping of seeds with the date, name, and source (I use wooden popsicle sticks or plastic labels). Cover the tray with plastic or glass, turn on the heat mat, and place under the light. Your seedlings will appear in no time.

It is exciting to see the emergence of seedlings responding to the conditions you have created. If the young seedlings are kept too moist, they can become diseased—this is called damping off. If this should happen, it signals a need for more air circulation. Be sure the conditions are moist, not wet. Once you have two or three sets of leaves, the little plants can be either transplanted into the garden or transplanted into a small pot for further growth. There is an important period called hardening off, which is necessary for most seedlings. During this period, your plants need to gradually transition from ideal conditions to a semi-protected place before being planted into your garden. A porch or deck is perfect so the plants can acclimate to the changing conditions. They need to toughen up for the real world. This transition takes approximately five days.

So, have fun, try a few “new” plants, and plant extras in pots to share with friends and neighbors!
—Holly Shimizu
W e tend to think about our senior neighbors’ welfare during storm emergencies, but seniors’ needs are year round. In recognition of this, seniors (age 50 and up) all over the U.S. are organizing grassroots “senior villages” to enable them to “age in place” within their neighborhoods. Services frequently include transportation to appointments, but can also involve changing a ceiling lightbulb or attending social events to prevent social isolation. The first village was formed in Boston 14 years ago; the Burning Tree village was formed in Boston 14 years ago; the Burning Tree village was formed in Montgomery County. Local governments support these grassroots efforts so as to maintain community stability and postpone the entrance of seniors into assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

Montgomery County is a model in nurturing the village movement. It’s the only jurisdiction in the U.S. employing a full time Village Coordinator—the highly regarded Pazit Aviv—to assist the formation and development of senior villages. The County currently has 9 in-development villages and 16 active villages, many of which are adjacent to Glen Echo. For example, there is Bannockburn’s seven-year-old, all-volunteer, non-profit Neighbor to Neighbor group, led by Miriam Kelty, who is also the president of Washington Area Village Exchange (WAVES). There is a more informal effort in Cabin John, where senior requests are matched with volunteer offers. The Little Falls Village, which encompasses all of zip code 20816, charges dues (up to $700/year), has corporate support, employs a paid Executive Director, and hosts an active social calendar. Its boundary ends at Goldsboro Road, but has been extended beyond Goldsboro on occasion.

If you’ve noticed certain Glen Echoans appearing fitter, better rested, and more self-aware lately, you’re not imagining things. Ok, actually, you are imagining things, but several members of my family have begun using various models of FitBits to track our fitness and physical activity. You may read about FitBits and dozens of other devices in the “wearable technology” category elsewhere, but where but in the pages of The Echo will you find a highly-subjective account of how these devices perform in Glen Echo, Maryland?

The promise is a fuller picture of your current activity, and a goal for improving. Some villages have partnerships with churches or organizations serving seniors. An oft-repeated slogan is “If you’ve seen one village, you’ve seen … one village.” That is, each is a unique model. Phyllis Fordham, Jim and Sally McGunnigle, and I are in early discussions about forming a village in Glen Echo. Because of our small population, we could ask to join an adjacent village or we could opt to form an informal network, matching seniors’ service requests with volunteer assistance.

Ms. Aviv said that Glen Echo is well positioned by its existing infrastructure, including a meeting place, a
Most home cooks have a marinara sauce. The jarred stuff is not great and a marinara can range from super simple to very complex depending on your mood. My sauce was always pretty good. It used to be really very spicy, a challenge to guests’ stomachs, but I can’t handle spice anymore, so my marinara had a bit of an identity crisis.

Now after a year of self-exploration, it has found itself. I can say with confidence that my marinara has reached the next level of tastiness, and I know exactly why. You could probably add any one of these steps to your own marinara and see immediate results.

1) Use anchovy paste. 2) Use homemade chicken stock. 3) Use fresh tomatoes rather than canned. 4) Serve over pasta with a layer of fresh mozzarella and a layer of uncooked baby spinach.

In a sauté pan, brown two pounds of meat, either all ground beef or a mix of ground beef and sausage. If you’re using sausage, the meat doesn’t need any seasoning. If you’re using just ground beef, be heavy handed with the salt, pepper, oregano, and basil (and if you want some spice, red pepper flakes). In a tall soup pot or dutch oven, sauté chopped onions, garlic, and anchovy paste in olive oil. Add two cups of homemade chicken broth, two cans of tomato sauce, the browned meat, and at least two pints of cherry tomatoes, halved.

If you are using sausage, then add some dried oregano and basil at this point. Bring the sauce to a boil and then simmer 20–30 minutes.

Layer in each bowl: hot, salty pasta, a handful of fresh baby spinach, diced fresh mozzarella, and a scoop or two of the hot meat marinara. Open a Chianti and enjoy! —EMILY PARSONS

models that provide different information. We bought one of the basic models, the Fitbit One ($95), for my father-in-law, hoping to get a better understanding of his sleep problems. Rather than a wristband, it is a clip you can attach to your belt. The battery life is longer than other models. Unfortunately, unlike other models, it requires more hands-on work. He would have had to activate the device when he was going to bed and insert it into a special sleep wristband. The Fitbit One is getting returned.

My teenage daughter was desperate to receive a Fitbit Flex ($85), (I think) mainly as a fashion accessory. Indeed, the regular rubber bracelet comes in a rainbow of colors and can even be swapped out for designer options. It tracks steps, sleep, stairs climbed, and active minutes, but does not monitor heart rate. One of its fun features is challenging your friends (who also have FitBits) to be more active. That’s some peer pressure I can get behind.

My husband opted for the more full-featured FitBit Charge HR ($139). It adds heart rate monitoring and a small display screen, where you can see the time (imagine that!), your steps, and, when paired with a smart phone, caller ID.

I watched an interview with the President a few weeks ago and noticed that he was sporting a FitBit Surge ($240), which adds GPS tracking and various other features. Unfortunately, President Obama did not respond to The Echo’s request for an interview about his FitBit. —ANGELA HIRSCH
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SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE
Holy Eucharist, Rite II 8:00 a.m.
Adult Forum 9:15 a.m.
Nursery Care 9:15 a.m.
Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:30 a.m.
Church School for All Ages 10:30 a.m.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS
Ash Wednesday Services at 7:30 a.m., Noon, and 7:30 p.m.
Holy Eucharist with the Imposition of Ashes
Sunday, February 14, at 5:00 p.m.
Choral Evensong for the First Sunday in Lent
Sunday, February 28, at 5:00 p.m.
U.S. Navy Sea Chanters in Concert

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Victoria Lyon, daughter of Chris and Maire Hewitt of Wellesley Circle, gave birth to baby girl Rowan on January 15—two days shy of her wedding anniversary to Richard Lyon one year ago. Baby weighed 6 pounds, 10 ounces and is a redhead. Mother and baby are both doing well and grandparents are “thrilled” and relieved that Victoria delivered a couple weeks early, missing the first big snow storm of 2016. Congratulations and welcome Rowan!

A decades-long special friend of Glen Echo, Mark Peyton, died of cancer at the age of 71 on December 22. Mark was our all-purpose guardian—snow plowing, regular street cleanups, and removing tree debris after storms. His Catholic funeral in Potomac was attended by Mayor Debbie Beers, Council Member Nancy Long, former Clerk Treasurer Cathie Pollak and resident Jan Shaut, although many others regretted that they had missed it and the obituary which appeared on Saturday, December 26.

The company of Mark’s son, Lee, has been contracted by the Town to perform many of the same services that Mark had long performed for us. For years, we delighted in Mark’s engaging, quirky personality and his great stories.

Regular walkers near Glen Echo Park have reported multiple sightings of a chicken, which one fast-acting, smart phone-equipped neighbor later confirmed via audio recording to be a rooster.

It has been seen in the bushes between the Clara Barton House and the section of parking lot closest to the parkway. We’ve learned that chickens are able to weather cold temperatures but have trouble in strong winds. Here’s hoping this guy finds a protected roost as the winter wears on.

Our hardworking neighborhood UPS man, Howard Lightcap, was out of commission for two and a half weeks in January after getting bitten by a border collie over on Elgin Lane. The bite required six stitches. And our very dependable paper distributer, Agung Sucayho, was in a serious car accident in January. So far 2016 has delivered bad luck to folks who deliver things to Glen Echo.

Glen Echo Park is currently looking for a new vendor to operate the cafe by the playground. Delicious Gourmet, the last operator of the cafe, was there for about two years and has already closed up shop.

Fingers crossed for a tenant with higher ambitions than “internet-cafe ambiance.”

The Little Falls Library will close in March for renovations—new carpets, paint, furniture, and library materials. They are purging books that have not circulated for a long while, sending them to recycling or to the library department’s used book stores. Staff will be redeployed to nearby libraries and patrons will be advised of one specific library where they’ll be able to pick up holds. When Little Falls reopens (probably September), there will be much more seating, the wire book shelves will be gone, the information desk will be moved to the circulation desk, and, most exciting, the shelves will be repopulated with new books that will have been ordered during the months that the library is under renovation.

There’s a lot of development in the works in these parts. The developers of 6789 Goldsboro, located between us and Massachusetts Avenue, have applied to the
HAVE YOU HEARD?  
(continued from page 9)  
Wetlands and Waterways Program of the Maryland Department of the Environment for a permit to construct a 19-unit residential townhouse project called Goldsboro Place and to relocate and restore approximately 675 feet of an unnamed tributary to Minnehaha Branch.

Equity One, developer of the Westbard Center and surrounds, is attempting to gather signatures in support of its proposed development (the shopping center and between 500 and 700 new residential units). Mailers have gone out to residents in the area asking for support, and Equity One hires have been approaching shoppers at the Giant for the same. The community group Save Westbard says the developers are worried about local opposition, which “has been so great that the Montgomery County Council added a second public hearing.”

The C&O Canal Trust is looking for volunteers to help maintain Lockhouse 10, which is (one of six) available for overnight rental. It was restored by the National Park Service and furnished by the Canal Trust to reflect the 1930s when the Army Corps of Engineers and Work Progress Administration worked to repair flood damage to the Canal. Volunteers will receive training and typically commit to twice a month visits to the lockhouse on dates and times they choose for inventory, keycode changes, or minor repairs. The Trust is especially interested in volunteers with basic home repair skills as well as volunteers who live near the lockhouse and are willing to respond to guest emergencies. If interested, please contact Becky Curtis, program manager, at Curtis@canaltrust.org. To learn more about the Canal quarters program, go to www.canaltrust.org.

2016 is the Centennial of the National Park Service. In honor, here’s a little C&O Canal history. From a 1954 Washington Post editorial arguing that the river would be easier enjoyed by car than by foot traffic along the canal: “The renewal of official interest in the proposed parkway along the old C and O Canal between Great Falls and Cumberland will stir the enthusiasm of many Washingtonians … By utilizing the old canal—no longer either a commercial or a scenic asset—it is estimated...
that the parkway could be built for $100,000 a mile. The lovely Potomac Valley could thus be made available to sightseers, campers, fishermen, and hikers with little distraction from its beauty …” Later that year, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas led a hike challenge down the C&O canal path, consisting of a group of 58 conservationists, scientists, locals, and press to raise awareness of the importance of the Canal. Seventeen years later, it became part of the NPS.

Michelle Brafman (of Oxford Road) has a new book, Bertrand Place, which will be published by Prospect Park Books in September 2016. Bertrand Place intertwines seventeen narratives about the compulsions and secrets of the residents of a fictitious D.C. area suburb, that, according to Michelle “is not Glen Echo, swear to God!”

Since we have so many newcomers in Town, here are a few pieces of useful information: Be sure to join the Glen Echo listserv by sending an email to Dan Macy at danielmpmacy@gmail.com. Don’t forget to register to vote (find forms at www.777vote.org). The deadline is April 5, and the primary elections are April 26. Glen Echoans vote at Bannockburn Elementary School. And if you’ve got kids under 14, send their names and birthdays to TheEchoEditor@gmail.com, so they can see their names in print!

Real Estate Report
37 Wellesley Circle, listed at $1,498,000, is under contract, due to close at the end of January.

Glen Echo Park
activities

The Puppet Co. www.thepuppetco.org; 301-634-5380
Len Piper’s Pinocchio, through February 21
Beauty and the Beast, February 25–April 10
Tiny Tots, select Weds, Sats, and Sundays at 10AM

Adventure Theater MTC www.adventuretheater-mtc.org; 301-634-2270
James and the Giant Peach, February 14–April 4

They Say It’s Your Birthday!
February 15, Rafe Parsons Amdur, 4
February 24, Audrey Bohi, 11

Send children’s birth dates (up to age 14) to TheEchoEditor@gmail.com.

Classified Ads
Classified ads are free to Glen Echo residents and $1.50 per line for non-residents. Send your ad to TheEchoEditor@gmail.com.

The Echo seeks meticulous, responsible high school student for an editorial internship. If interested, please email TheEchoEditor@gmail.com.

Trusted helper. If you need help with cleaning, babysitting, dog walking, driving, French tutoring or house sitting, please call Denise Noah at 240-421-3997 or email at noah5dns@gmail.com. For a recommendation you can call Holly or Osamu Shimizu at 301-229-3011 or email at hollys579@aol.com

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Goings On

Glen Echo Town Hall Events
FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24
8–10:30 PM, free to Town residents

February 1 8 PM, Town Council special hearing on the 2 Vassar Circle development

Local Events
February 5 9 PM, Tom Helf’s band Cravin’ Dogs will be playing at Villain & Saint in Bethesda

February 27 9 AM–1:30 PM, resident Michelle Brafman participating in Temple Sinai’s Authors’ Roundtable (see Have You Heard? item)

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MedGen Urgent Care is proud to be serving the Glen Echo community’s urgent health care needs.