The Echo

Glen Echo Park Report
The meeting started as usual with a report from Aaron LaRocca, the National Park Service representative. His first update was that repairs to the Union Arch Trail (by the one-way bridge) have been completed. Some residents reported already having enjoyed the cleaned up route to the tow path. In roofing news from Glen Echo Park, the phase 1 roof reconstruction for the Clara Barton House is nearly complete, and the NPS has the funds secured to replace the roof on the Spanish Ballroom. Plans to update the fire detection system and the band organ room at the carousel are in the works, but still not funded.

Town Maintenance
The Town Hall has also seen its share of recent repairs. Its painting has been completed in time for upcoming events, including the Town Holiday Brunch on December 10. Unfortunately, the Town Hall’s elevator is currently out of service, but bids are being sought to repair it, as well as for painting a number of rusted signs around Town. The Council also requested a survey of a portion of the upper part of Wellesley Circle in order to establish a formal private use agreement for the area. The right-of-way is shared by three adjoining properties and will be leased by the Town to their owners once the survey has been completed. Matt McFarland, one of the owners, said he’d take care of it.

Town Ordinances
A substantial amount of the meeting was focused on a comprehensive recodification of the Town’s ordinances. The last time the Town had a complete codification was in 1986, and since then, the ordinances have become quite discombobulated as changes have been recorded in different ways over the years. A recodification will confirm all of the ordinances of the Town and ensure that they’re properly documented so that they can all be placed on the Town website for public access and bedtime reading for the Town’s children. At the same time, the Town Council has decided to ensure that any municipal infractions result in fines instead of a misdemeanor charge. That way no one can get thrown in jail because their rainspouts spill out into a neighbor’s yard. Instead, all infractions would only be punishable by a $100 fine (with a possible $200 fine for a second offense within a 12-month period). In addition, the article pertaining to snow emergencies will be amended to say that cars must park on the lower side of University Avenue, in-
The rest of the meeting dealt with an inventive proposal from resident Matt McFarland to create a park at Vassar Circle. Montgomery County has approved the replacement of the crumbling church in the circle with four houses, including road-widening and other Town-requested stipulations. Given that some Town residents had expressed a preference for three houses there, Matt suggested that the Town purchase one of the lots and turn it into a park—either at Cornell Drive as a welcoming site upon entering the Town, or as a pleasant bookend to our main street of University. Anticipating that the Town had insufficient funds to purchase the land outright, Matt proposed selling Town-owned land near the Irish Inn that is currently being used for commercial parking. Matt even generously offered to provide the landscaping for the park at his own expense. The Town Council raised several concerns, including potential delays in construction at 2 Vassar Circle, the likelihood of finding a buyer, the tax base, and the best use of the land near the Inn. There seemed to be at least potential ways to address those concerns.

Rendering of one of the proposed 2 Vassar Circle houses

but it was agreed that more research was needed. Matt volunteered to do the necessary leg work to develop the idea into a full proposal, including investigating commercial interest in the plots currently owned by the Town and gathering signatures to gauge Town interest. So look for Matt on your doorstep soon.

Town Expenses

During the month of October, the Town paid $2,380 to Royal Painting and Light Construction, $1,150 to Lee’s Tree Service, and $360 to Ryan Gryzbowski, off-duty police officer watching the stop sign on Oxford Road. —Dan Spealman
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A beautiful indoor centerpiece, door hanging, or mantle piece in winter is especially lovely when it reflects the season and comes directly from your garden. The price is right too.

It all begins by taking a walk outside into your yard to see what is there and consider what might look beautiful if brought indoors. You can use seed pods, pine cones, holly or heavenly bamboo berries, lovely leaves like greens of boxwood, foliage of evergreens such as grasses or lavender, stems of red twig dogwood, or even aged flowers that have some elegance such as hydrangeas. Once I have assessed availability of materials then I start thinking about size, what I want to create as well as the container or materials needed.

The first thing I want to make is a centerpiece for my dining room table that will last a long time using just plants from my garden. The first plant I always like to use is boxwood, because it has a gorgeous texture and color and lasts a very long time indoors. Moreover, the plant benefits from being plucked. This is the process by which you go inside the plant and break off small branches. Boxwood benefits from being plucked because this allows more air and light to get into the center of the plant which encourages interior growth. I also use boxwood greens to make wreaths which are very easy and then can be placed on the table as a round centerpiece or hung on a door, inside or outside. The wreath frames, tape, and wire are available at craft stores or garden centers. If you want to add color, cut some colorful berries from the garden.

**HOLLY IN THE IVY**

Here are plant materials cut from my garden. They include aucuba (1), nandina (2), boxwood (3), hydrangea (4), and Hakone grass (5). In the middle is my container (6) with a heavy wire base inside it.

**OUT AND ABOUT**

Setting foot into Montgomery Mall or Target is the fastest way to suck the merriment and brightness out of the season. And shopping local often leads to eating, drinking, and playing local—all good ways to get into the spirit.

Good shopping is worth driving for, and Baltimore has so much to offer. If you pick one day to go, make it December 10. **Holiday Heap** is a fantastic-looking craft market sponsored by the Charm City Craft Mafia, which should be an indication of the prevailing aesthetic. The market runs from 10 AM to 5 PM at 2640 St. Paul Street. If you haven’t shopped ‘til you’ve dropped, head to the **American Visionary Art Museum’s Sock Monkey Saturday**—just bring two pairs of (clean) socks and a pair of scissors.

Okay okay. Baltimore isn’t exactly local. I’m also really excited to check out the **Weihnachtsmarkt** at the German School in Potomac on December 3. There will be German food and Glühwein, hand-crafted goods from the “Erzgebirge” region in Saxony, children’s activities and handmade crafts. There will also be a “cake buffet”—which sounds far more delicious and appealing than a plain old American bake sale.

If you hit the cake buffet too hard, consider a jaunt on the **Kensington Fall Colors and Holiday Lights Seasonal Walk**, sponsored by the Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volksmarch Club. Trails are two 10km loops and two 5km loops that take walkers through Historic Kensington, Howard Avenue Antique Row, and up to the Mormon Temple Visitor’s Center to view its elaborate holiday light decorations and displays in December. Trails start from the Safe-way parking lot in Kensington, and since the walk is self-guided, you can do it whenever you choose. The trail can handle strollers. For a less vigorous jaunt, visit the Garden of Lights Walk-Through Holiday Light Display at Brookside Garden. More than a million dazzling colorful lights are shaped into hand-crafted, original art forms of flowers,
or you can use fruits or whole nuts such as pecans, walnuts, or small pomegranates, fresh or dried.

Let me walk you through the process as I create a centerpiece for my table—no more than 10 inches tall. Make it too tall and you cannot see the people across from you!

- Cut a variety of plant branches, leaves, fruit to work with and strip off the lower leaves.
- Place them in water to give them a good drink so they last longer.
- Soak oasis in water and then place in the base of your container or you can use a spiky frog (or some type of heavy plate with upright fixed needles) to hold the branches in place.
- Begin layering the plant branches to start forming the base, moving up, and getting shorter as you move toward the middle.
- Once I am happy with the basic textures, shapes, and variety, then I can start adding in berries, seed pods, taller stems, or taller grasses. The taller grasses can add a wonderful fine texture into this blend and some might arch over giving a lovely cascading feeling.

—HOLLY SHIMIZU

The finished product: an arrangement with many layers

animals, and other natural elements. Stroll from garden to garden enjoying twinkling tree forms, fountains, sparkling snowflakes overhead and more. It’s open every night except December 24 and 25.

The season wouldn’t be complete without a performance of The Nutcracker, and Strathmore has a couple options on offer. Traditionalists will enjoy the Moscow Ballet’s Great Russian Nutcracker December 21 to 23.

If you’re looking for something different, go for the The Hip Hop Nutcracker on December 16. Tchaikovsky’s classic score is set in contemporary New York, and reimagined through explosive hip-hop choreography, a dozen all-star dancers, an on-stage DJ and an electric violinist.

The Washington Ballet’s Nutcracker, with performances at the Warner Theater and THEARC in Southeast DC, isn’t particularly local, but one of its cast members is Téa Costello takes to the stage on pointe as one of the Little Butterflies. Ask Dia Costello if you want to be sure to catch one of her shows. Finally, if you have small children, introduce them to the holiday show at The Puppet Co. in Glen Echo Park, where The Nutcracker will run November 25 to December 30. —ANGELA HIRSCH

Fifty-one people responded to last month’s online survey about a Town flag and parking issues. While more than 70 percent of respondents supported some type of Town flag, they were evenly split about how to go about choosing one. The big winner on parking was “I don’t think there’s a parking problem.” It’s still to be determined how the Town Council will respond to the survey or otherwise move forward on either of these issues. Neither were raised at the November 14 Town Council meeting.

Should Glen Echo have an official town flag?
- Yes (adopt proposed flag design). 37.25%
- Yes (with a town-sanctioned flag design competition). 35.29%
- I don’t support a town flag. 27.45%

How would you like parking problems addressed?
- Install new, county-compliant parking signs around town. 11.76%
- Install additional green and white script no parking signs and pay a Town “code enforcement officer” to write tickets. 19.61%
- Do not install any new signs and pay a Town “code enforcement officer” to write tickets. 9.80%
- I don’t think there is a parking problem. 58.82%
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On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service, a new federal bureau in the Department of the Interior responsible for protecting the 35 national parks and monuments then managed by the department and those yet to be established. The National Park System of the United States now comprises more than 400 areas covering more than 84 million acres in 50 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, Saipan, and the Virgin Islands. These areas are of such national significance as to justify special recognition and protection in accordance with various acts of Congress.

Glen Echoans happen to live right in the middle of some of this protected land, and its significance is not lost on us! Whether you walk or bike the tow path, enjoy the many cultural activities provided at Glen Echo Park, or simply watch the leaves turn color and drop with the peace of mind that comes from knowing that your view of the Potomac River won’t ever be blocked by a new housing development, take a moment to be thankful. From the Town of Glen Echo: Happy 100th Birthday, National Park Service!

Little did I realize that I was “living the dream” when I moved into Glen Echo. The trees, the light, the river … That the United States has set aside some of the most spectacularly beautiful parts of our country has been a HUGE gift to Americans and to the world. A day like today with the clear blue sky and the trees turning colors, I am grateful for this peace and piece of heaven. —SUSAN GRIGSBY

I am thankful for the NPS because of the Junior Ranger program they run to help kids connect with and understand the natural world around them. —KRISTI MAASJO

I am grateful for the expanse of natural space, the noise of the stream, the area for dogs, the wonderful park women and men, the music, the art and their snow plows! —MITCHELL STRAUS

I am grateful that the National Park Service has protected our Glen Echo Park and, together with the partnership, protected the site from being developed. Having Glen Echo Park in our neighborhood greatly enhances our quality of life by providing a place outdoors for our children and dogs to play, a place for us to dance, enjoy art shows, performances, and to learn from outstanding teachers. Glen Echo Park is a cultural treasure that conserves, protects, and provides wonderful activities for the people of this region. —HOLLY SHIMIZU

The National Park Service has a huge impact on the quality of life of our nation … and any one who visits will quickly understand what I mean. From the Statue of Liberty to the National Mall to our own precious Glen Echo Park and surrounding C&O Canal, the Park Service has provided us learning, inspiration, and pride. —MARTHA MORRIS SHANNON

And what do the children of Glen Echo think of our very special environs?

I like the National Park Service because they guard the trees around Glen Echo and the Potomac River. That means we have pretty colors on the trees in the fall. —COLBY EPANCHIN

National parks mean so much to our family that it will be difficult to compile their significance into one paragraph. National parks are a perfect place to spend time with family. Every other summer, we go on a long trip to national parks and have a blast. We hike, camp, and have unique experiences every day. These trips are so special because they give us insight on how the world could be if we looked after it better. They are a reminder of how humans and the world may be able to live together in harmony because they preserve some of the most beautiful places on our Earth. They serve as protection for many endangered species, plant and animal alike. National parks mean family time and the preservation of our world. Finally, we love and appreciate having Glen Echo Park and the C&O Canal as our back yard and playground. —ZOE AND ELSA VINCENT
This year’s Holiday Craft Show at the Clara Barton Center features the work of local artists, artisans, and authors, including jewelry by Lynn Dworsky of Columbia Avenue and homemade preserves from Jan Shaut of Harvard Avenue. You can stock up on one-of-a-kind gifts like these December 4 from 1 to 5 PM.

A renovation has been visible for months now at the home of Julie Hotes at 6104 Bryn Mawr Avenue, where workers have been busy and a McFarland Woods truck is a permanent fixture out front. The renovation, which involves a reconfiguring of the interior, not an expansion, is expected to be completed in January. For now, you can track the progress on Instagram @thebungalowbabe.

Speaking of renovations, the Little Falls Library is still set to re-open in January, though an exact date has not been set. You can expect new … everything—roof, heating/cooling systems, bathrooms, carpets, shelving. We can’t wait! The Bethesda Library has not been a satisfying replacement in the interim.

The December show at Adventure Theatre of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe sounds a bit unconventional. The story will be told in one hour by just two actors using magic and puppetry and “a few extra

Booze Blues
The beer and wine sales license of the Glen Echo Center’s 7-Eleven was revoked in November by the Montgomery County District Court in response to the challenge by Talbert’s Ice on River Road. The court ruled that a review was needed to establish whether the 7-Eleven is a chain store or not, whether it demonstrated there is a community need for a local outlet to sell beer and wine, and whether the impact on other nearby outlets was properly taken into account.

Girma Hailu, who operates the 7-Eleven, is going to fight the ruling and has collected over 600 signatures on a petition that he will bring to a Board of License Commissioners hearing scheduled for December 15. “Glen Echo is underserved,” Hailu told The Echo. He hopes many more local residents will come by the store to sign the petition before the hearing.

But Talbert’s owner, Peter Frank, who filed suit to revoke 7-Eleven’s license, agreed with Associate Judge Steven G. Salant, who ruled the license should not have been granted in the first place and that it be remanded to the Board of License Commissioners. Frank maintains the state law prohibiting chain stores and supermarkets from selling alcohol applies to the Glen Echo 7-Eleven. Hailu has argued that his 7-Eleven should not be considered a chain store because it’s a franchise. Frank says the Board never received a copy of the 7-Eleven’s franchise agreement which he believes will show the 7-Eleven is, in fact, a chain store because, among other things, it would be required to increase its payments to the chain from any alcohol sales.

Frank repeated what he told The Echo last summer: “If it walks like a duck, talks like a duck, it is a duck.” —LELAND SCHWARTZ
surprises." The show runs from December 2 through December 31 and is good for all ages.

Praline at Glen Echo Park has new winter hours: Friday–Sunday 10 AM–10:30 PM; closed Monday–Thursday.

When you next come to Town Hall, perhaps for the December 10 holiday party, look out for a festive display of names and “Wish Lists” of children and families in homeless or transitional housing that Glen Echoans can help out this season. The program through So Others Might Eat was such a success last year that this year’s list will also include household gifts for families in need. For more information, email Patty Sieber at sieber.patty@gmail.com or call 240-743-7194.

Real Estate Report
The McGunnigle’s house at 15 Vassar Circle is still on the market for $1,195,000, and the rental at 32 Wellesley Circle for $2,300/month is still available. The Briggs’ house at 6105 Bryn Mawr Avenue will soon be on the market.

Glen Echo Town Hall Events
FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays. Dec. 7, 14, 21, 28 8–10:30 PM, free to Town residents

December 10 10–11:30 AM
Annual Town Holiday Brunch for residents; catered by Mr. Omelette, volunteers needed for clean-up, call 301-320-4041 or email townhall@glen echo.org if interested.

Local Events
December 4 1–5 PM, Clara Barton Holiday Craft Show, for locally made gifts, at the Clara Barton Center

December 10 4–7 PM, Winter’s Eve celebration, crafts, sing-alongs, and hot chocolate!

The Puppet Co. www.thepuppetco.org; 301-634-5380
The Nutcracker through December 30
Tiny Tots select Weds, Sats, and Sundays at 10 AM

Adventure Theater MTC
www.adventuretheater-mtc.org; 301-634-2270
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe December 2–31

No Ladies Night in December. See you next year!
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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.
and Sunday School

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS
Advent Service of Lessons & Carols, December 4, 6:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Services at 5:00 p.m. & 10:30 p.m.
Christmas Day Service at 10:00 a.m.
New Year’s Day Service at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Services are available on our website!
http://www.redeemerbethesda.org/worship/service-recordings/

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