Town Council Hears Parking Complaints

By Julia Wilson

Parking Problems

George Atallah and Mark Steele, two residents from upper Bryn Mawr Ave., came to the Town Council meeting on June 11 to discuss the non-resident parking on their street. The Wild Bird Center has leased office space to a kitchen contracting company, and clients from both businesses are parking on the street, which is already crowded, instead of parking in the designated parking areas for the businesses.

George Atallah says residents have asked the owners of the businesses a number of times to ensure their clients park in the off-street parking but the problem has not abated. He asked the Council if it would be possible to put a “residents only” parking sign on the street.

Mayor Debbie Beers said she will write a letter to the businesses asking them to restrict their parking to their off-street site, and inform them the Town has the authority to mandate resident-only parking.

However, Mayor Beers told the residents, that it would require an ordinance to pass such a restriction, and residents would have to have decals and visitor passes issued. She said she strongly feels if the town decides to restrict parking in certain areas, it needs to be done officially and not just be putting up unenforceable signs.

Car Thefts

Two residents from lower Bryn Mawr attended the Town Council meeting and reported their unlocked cars had been broken into and items stolen, including an iPod.

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TOWN WEBSITE ADDRESS:
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Next Town Council Meeting:
July 9, 2012 at 8pm

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Matt Stiglitz, the town liaison with the Montgomery County police department, reported that this week there were car break-ins and thefts of cars early in the morning of June 11. For details of Matt’s report, see “Suspicious Characters” on page 4.

Energy Savings for Town Hall

As part of a continuing community block grant, all the fluorescent tube lighting in the Town Hall has been replaced by LED lighting. All the funds from the grant have now been used. With the funds, the town purchased a new computer, fax, refrigerator and LED lights.

Upcoming Events

The town picnic will be held July 15. There will be two ordinance meetings on June 25 and July 30. They are working meetings for the council to update ordinances so they can be posted on the town website.

Glen Echo Park Report

Polly Angelakis said there would be an after-action meeting about the Washington Folk Festival on Friday, June 15, at 2 pm in the Arcade Conference room. The purpose is to review topics and concerns from this year’s fest. She invited a Town Council Member to attend and share any concerns the town has about the festival so the group can discuss possible solutions.

Park administrators hired a National Park Service (NPS) carpenter for one month. He completed several historic preservation repairs including the removal of a rotted railing from the front porch roof of the Clara Barton House, repair of several floorboards in the Clara Barton House, repair of the Carousel’s band organ door and repair of a leak in the Candy Corner roof and painting to restore the walls of the facility.

The NPS recently received funding to remove hazardous materials from the Clara Barton House and to repair several rodent-chewed and water-loged phone lines at Glen Echo Park. They also received funding to clean out black mold that is growing in several storage containers at Glen Echo Park, and funding to replace the bollards on the main path with taller lampposts. They plan to seek further funding for a hazardous material assessment of Clara Barton House so there is a full understanding of all hazardous materials in the house.

The NPS planned to meet on Wednesday, June 13, to discuss the Environmental Assessment and funding for the geo thermal system at the Clara Barton House.

The Candy Corner repairs are now complete. The building will be used as an NPS Visitor Contact Station and exhibit space. It is a highly visible space and will enhance the NPS presence in Glen Echo Park.
Kevin Patti has returned from the US Embassy in Armenia, where he represented the NPS at several events that honored Clara Barton. He spoke at several events, accepted gifts from the Armenian government, and was featured on Armenian TV.

Local Events

Church of the Redeemer
Summer Music Camp 2012
Monday, August 6 – Friday, August 10, 10:00 am – 2:30 pm daily

A few spaces remain. The camp will be staffed by Redeemer’s Director of Music Tom Smith and award-winning music educators John Barnes and Laura Petersen. Lunch and a snack will be provided daily. Tuition for the week is $350. Scholarships are available for those in need. We hope your children will join us for a week of musical learning and fun! For more information and to download registration materials, please visit the music page of the parish website: www.redeemerbethesda.org. The deadline for registration is July 15, 2012.

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Events
Mule Drawn Barge Rides
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday
See www.NPS.org or call 301-767-3714

Launch Boat Interpretive Program
 Begins in Mid June
1057 Thomas Jefferson Street, Washington D.C.
See www.NPS.org or call 301-582-0813

Suspicious Characters

Matt Stiglitz, Glen Echo’s representative to the Montgomery County Police Advisory Board, shared a report from County Police detailing the increase in suspicious activity involving individuals seemingly intent on thefts from parked autos. Stiglitz sent the following information to those in the Glen Echo Yahoo Group.

“During the early morning hours on Monday 6/11, [a] series of events were reported in the Glen Echo neighborhood, primarily along Bryn Mawr Avenue. At approximately 4:00 am, three male suspects wearing black clothing were spotted walking though the neighborhood looking into vehicles with flashlights. The trio was scared off by a homeowner [ed. note: on Vassar Circle] and fled the scene, possibly in a van. At 5:30 am, two vehicles from the same neighborhood [ed. note: Bannockburn] were reported stolen (keys had been left inside both vehicles).

“Further Investigation by responding officers revealed a dozen more incidents including multiple thefts from vehicles and thefts of bicycles from yards and open garages.” Matt added that the Advisory Board was told of a burglary which occurred after someone went into an unlocked car in a driveway and activated the garage door opener found inside to open the door and entered the house.

During the May meeting of Bethesda’s 2nd District, which Stiglitz attended, crime trends were discussed. Glen Echo was said to be safer than a lot of neighborhoods. The situation changed in June, however, when items were taken from unlocked cars. About the general area, Stiglitz was told that “thefts from cars—and in particular UNLOCKED cars—are the #1 crime problem (70-80% of vehicle thefts) throughout the district.” MCPD provided suggestions for prevention that are summarized in the letter from Captain David Falcinelli to Mayor Beers (see page 9). The full list of recommendations, delivered at the May meeting, is as follows:

• Lock your car doors and close the windows completely—An unlocked door or open window is an invitation to a thief to take any property in your vehicle.
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• Take with you or lock in your trunk any electronic equipment—If a thief sees property in the car he will take advantage of the opportunity. Remove GPS systems.

• Do not leave electronic device accessories visible—Even though you have locked all devices in the trunk, a cigarette lighter plug or cassette adapter are tell-tale signs there are valuables in the car.

• Record serial numbers of any equipment you install in the vehicle—Although this will not stop a thief from stealing property, it will assist the police in recovering and identifying your property.

• Park in well lighted, populated areas—If a thief believes that he may be caught they are less likely to take the chance.

• Report any suspicious persons to the police—If you see someone looking into several cars or hanging around a parking lot call us immediately at 301-279-8000.

• Do not leave money in your vehicle—A thief will break into your vehicle even for a small amount of change.

• Install an anti-theft device that has a visible indicator—A flashing light or alarm stickers informing a thief of a device may be enough to deter a potential thief from selecting your vehicle.

• Install a tapered door lock button—A door lock that does not have a “head” that can be pulled up by a coat hanger may be purchased at most auto part stores.

• Do not hide a key on your vehicle—A potential thief could see you hide the key, and then use your key to gain entry into your vehicle.

• Park in your garage at home—If you have a garage at your house, use it; if a thief cannot get to your car he cannot break into it. If you have a driveway, do not leave any valuables visible.

Steps to Take After Discovering Your Vehicle Has Been Broken Into

• Touch as little as possible.

• Try to figure out what was stolen.

• Call Montgomery County Police at 301-279-8000; the report may be taken over the phone.

• Await the Officer’s arrival.

Information Needed When Reporting a Suspicious Situation

• Description of Person—Observe the person’s age, race, sex, height, weight, and clothing description.

• Description of Vehicle—License number, make, model, color, any noticeable damage, and direction of travel.

• What occurred—Provide as detailed an account as possible of the incident.

• Where incident occurred—Provide specific street numbers if possible.

The Emergency Contact number for the Police is 911.

C&O Canal Volunteers Needed:

An editor is needed for the quarterly newsletter Along The Towpath. Qualifications include writing skills and knowledge of grammatical usage. Ability to use (or learn) a desktop publishing program is desirable. Please contact Ned Preston (301-530-8153 or editor@candocanal.org).

If you would like to help the canal while you work at your own pace, consider joining the Level Walkers. We have 69 levels over the length of the canal, and many could use additional attention. Summer is a great time to start. For more info, contact Steve Dean at levelwalker@candocanal.org.

NPS has openings for volunteers who are interested in environmental education and in helping to build connections between students and the C&O Canal NHP by becoming part of the Building the Watershed program. The volunteers will deliver orientation talks to visiting school groups, assist with field study programs, and potentially lead students on guided hikes. For more on the program, visit www.bridgingthewatershed.org. Those interested may contact Hollie Lynch, the canal park’s Education Coordinator, at 301-491-0149 or hollie_lynch@nps.gov.
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CLASSIFIED ADS

Create a New You. Do something fun for yourself this year. Drop in for belly dance classes every Wed., 7:30 pm-8:30 pm, at the Clara Barton Community Center in Cabin John. $10/hr. For more info: email dawnoftheflower@yahoo.com.

Classified ads are free to Glen Echo residents. Fee to non-residents: $.75 per line of 50 characters or fewer. Display ads: $4 per vertical inch. Ads may be left with or mailed to the editor at 6103 Princeton Ave, Glen Echo, MD 20812. Make checks payable to: Town of Glen Echo. Deadline: 24th of each month.

Police Report
Between May 15 and June 10, off-duty police officers monitored stop sign compliance at University and Oxford and issued 58 warnings and 40 citations. Citations are up significantly from the 17 issued for the period between April 12 and May 14. The surveillance occurred on the mornings of May 26, June 9, and June 10.

Houses for Sale
6101 Harvard Ave (sold) $747,000
44 Wellesley Circle 995,000
12 Wellesley Circle 559,000

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LADIES OF GLEN ECHO
Ladies Night on Thursday, July 12, at 8 pm.
At the home of Diana Hudson-Taylor
16 Wellesley Circle
RSVP: 301-229-2163

GLEN ECHO TOWN HALL EVENTS

The Following Events Are Free to All Town Residents

English Country Dance
every Wednesday, 8 pm-10:30 pm

Town Council Meeting
July 9, 8 pm

Town Picnic
July 15, 5 pm-7 pm

Town Ordinance Review
July 30, 8 pm

C&O Canal Association Board Meeting
August 5, 1 pm

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Town Ordinances Under Review

On June 4, the Council met to review the Town Ordinances which have been collected and codified by the Town Attorney. The review is needed because over the years, ordinances were added, amended, and misplaced, so that no comprehensive copy of the up-to-date code exists. The Ordinances on the website are incomplete.

All members of the Council except Mark McCaffrey, were present for the meeting. The Mayor stressed that the intent of this review, which will be held over several weeks, is not to make major changes but to make sure all necessary ordinances are included and that certain provisions, such as penalties are relevant.

As the Council went through each ordinance, it became clear that some needed to be changed and rewritten. For instance, the animal control sections refer to Glen Echo’s Animal Control Officer and a local Animal Advisory Committee, neither of which the Town has appointed for some years. Steve Matney stated that what we really need is a Memorandum of Understanding with the County to define what the County will do to enforce their ordinances in Glen Echo.

Another Article that poses enforcement issues is Article 4 that covers grading, erosion and sediment control when earth is being moved. Basically, Glen Echo accepts the County Code and Enforcement on these issues, while the ordinance as written discusses inspections and enforcement by the Town, which is not practical. The Mayor said this article will have to be rewritten.

Additional meetings were scheduled for June 25 and July 30 to continue the review.
Letter From Montgomery County Police Captain

Mayor Debbie Beers forwarded the following letter she received regarding crime prevention.

Dear Residents:

As many of you are aware, the Bethesda District has experienced a rash of theft from autos and theft of autos recently. During the past few weeks, over 45 vehicles were reported as being entered overnight. Additionally, at least two cars were stolen because the homeowners left the keys in the cars. To date, there has been no evidence to suggest that force was used to enter any car. Similar to our favorite restaurant where we go back time and time again because we like the food and/or the service, these thieves return to our neighborhoods because they like how easy it is to get into vehicles and the ready availability of items to steal. Many thanks to those of you who do practice good personal crime prevention techniques, and I implore you to talk to your neighbors to make sure everyone is doing the same.

As is always the case, it is my job as commander to deploy my resources to those areas being most affected by crime. After reviewing reports and speaking to many of my community leaders, marked and covert resources were deployed to the neighborhoods experiencing the most problems, and very early this morning, a suspicious car was spotted by one of our plain-clothes detectives in a neighborhood off of Massachusetts Ave. Detectives began a surveillance of this car and its occupants and developed probable cause to make a stop and arrest.

Two 17-year-old juvenile males from Silver Spring were arrested. Additionally, a 20-year-old female from Bladensburg and a 19-year-old male from Hyattsville were also arrested. During this incident, evidence was recovered linking this group to recent thefts, as well as to the recovery of two of the stolen cars.

While I am confident that this group was responsible for most of the recent thefts, there will be more groups to follow and we may not be so lucky next time in making such a prompt arrest. I need everyone to step up to the plate and follow these very simple rules:

(1) Remove all valuables and anything that looks to be of value from your car or remove them from plain sight. These thieves are looking into your cars first to see if there is anything of value, and then trying the doors. Force is not usually used because it makes noise and draws attention to their activity.

(2) Lock your doors—this means car doors, house doors, garage doors and also your windows. Do not make it easy for these criminals to ply their trade.

(3) Never, ever, ever leave your car keys in your car. It may be convenient, but these thieves will take...
Glen Echo Park Activities

The Puppet Co.
Goldilocks
Until July 15
See www.thepuppetco.org
or call 301-634-5380

Adventure Theatre
If You Give a Moose a Muffin
June 22 - September 2
See www.adventuretheatre.org
or call 301-634-2270

Summer Concert Series
Bumper Car Pavilion
US Air Force Band “Singing Sergeants.”
Thursday, July 12 - 7:30pm - 8:45pm

Family Jazz Day concert
Sunday, July 22 - 3:00 pm (tentative) - 7:00 pm
Four jazz bands - a different band each hour
American songs and arias from stage
Thursday, July 26 - 7:30pm - 8:45pm
Washington Conservatory of Music’s vocal duo
Grace and Aurelius Gori
See www.glenechopark.org or call 301-634-2222

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your car if you provide the means and most of the
time you will never see it again, at least in the same
condition.

(4) Always call the police if you see or hear anything
suspicious late at night. If it’s not a normal occur-
rence for your neighborhood, let us know right away.
Oftentimes, it is your call that leads to the arrest.

As always, your police officers are here to serve you,
but we need to work together to keep our neigh-
borhoods safe. Help us help you by practicing good
crime prevention. Please call if you have any ques-
tions.

Captain David Falcinelli, Commander
2nd District Bethesda
301-652-9200

Town Picnic
Sunday, July 15
5 to 7 pm
Waterslide - bring a swimsuit and a towel
Food & drink provided
Please bring a dessert