Town Council Notes

Mayor Polak, Matt Stiglitz, Dia Costello, and Nancy Long were in attendance at the November 12 Council meeting. Also attending were Town Manager Nicole Ventura and consultant-to-the-Mayor Jean Sperling.

LED Lighting for Town Hall and Street Lights
Pepco’s Government Affairs Director Tony Ruffin and Lockheed Martin representative Fran Philips met with the Council to discuss two separate lighting upgrade programs. The Pepco Energy Savings for Business Program provides incentives to small businesses or municipalities to help lower energy costs and save money through energy efficient equipment. Lockheed Martin has been contracted by Pepco to implement this program. If the Council decides to proceed, Pepco will perform an energy audit of the Town Hall and provide a quote to upgrade lights, HVAC equipment, and kitchen equipment.

The program pays up to 70 percent of the cost for these upgrades with the Town paying the difference. The quote will include an assessment of the energy saving the upgrades would provide and an estimated time for return on investment. In some cases, the cost of the upgrades will be offset by reduced power bills in less than a year.

The second program is run by Pepco and is focused on street lights. Glen Echo has about 56 street lights that it pays to light the Town at night. The street light program provides incentives to upgrade those lights to LEDs to reduce power consumption and energy costs. This program is just getting started, so details were less clear, but Ms. Philips offered to provide a cost savings estimate to the Town based on our current street light power bills and some insight into the types of lights currently used in Town.

Some concerns about the specific styles of lights and the brightness of the LEDs, including Kelvin temperatures, were discussed. The Council expressed an interest in having a few different types of lights installed as demos for residents to see and provide feedback before making a final decision.

While no decision to proceed was specifically made during the meeting, it appears the Council will gather more details and perhaps request the demonstration street lights for installation and evaluation. Mr. Ruffin also wanted to remind all residents that Pepco provides individual home owners energy audits and multiple incentive programs to help reduce energy cost. Details can be found at https://homeenergysavings pepco.com/residential/energy-assessments.

Variance Hearing
The ongoing story about the recent construction at 7315 University Avenue has been covered in the last three issues of The Echo. We are pleased to report that the variance hearing was held on November 7, and the Town prevailed. Mr. David Brown from Knopf and Brown represented the Town, and residents Aaron
Hirsch and Tisha Anderson attended. Because a permit was not approved for either the most recent kitchen expansion nor for the screened-in porch that was replaced, the hearing board found in favor of the Town.

The hearing board will issue a written position within 10 days of the hearing, and the homeowner will have 30 days to appeal the decision. If no appeal is made, an order to demolish the addition will follow. Resident Renny Springuel expressed appreciation to the Council for taking decisive measures to defend the Town against non-permitted and uninspected construction. The Town is hoping this sets a precedent to avoid conflicts like this in the future.

Odds and Ends
Currently, the Town pays for a portion of the right-of-way along MacArthur Boulevard to be maintained, including mowing, and the County pays for the rest. However, there is an argument that the County should be responsible for maintaining all of the right-of-way. The Town Clerk is looking to resolve this and reduce Town maintenance costs if possible.

The Town is considering hiring an engineer/arborist on an as-needed basis to consult for various road and tree maintenance issues. Larger issues, such as road improvements around 2 Vassar Circle, and smaller issues, such as which road cracks should be filled and which trees should be removed or trimmed, may be handled more effectively with this consultant when compared to a more expensive lawyer or the advice of a contractor looking for work.

Speaking of 2 Vassar Circle, permit applications for home construction and for road improvements have been submitted and construction is expected to start in the next couple months. The roadwork will be executed concurrently with the construction of the first house. The last step on the road—the final topcoat—would come after all four houses are built.

Some of you may have read on the listserv about the unfortunate situation of candy sellers taking advantage of one of the Town residents. The Council, spurred by this event, discussed the current No-Solicitation policy. The Town currently maintains a “no solicitation” list, and Town ordinances require solicitors to obtain a copy and to not solicit from those on the list. Currently the list is opt-in, meaning you must contact the Town Manager to be added to the list. The Council is considering making the list be opt-out, meaning all residents would be included on the list, and those residents (continued on page 4)
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5:00 pm—Family service
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10:30 pm—Choral Eucharist
www.redeemerbethesda.org

Sunday Services
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wanting solicitors to come to their door could request removal from the list. The Council recognizes most solicitors will not follow these rules, but hope they will empower residents to tell solicitors, “Sorry, I’m on the no-solicitation list; please obtain a copy from the Town Manager first.”

**Town Expenses**
In October, the Town paid $9,685 to Dennis Alexander (audit), $3,100 to Elegant Recycling & Refuse Services, and $2,000 to Knopf and Brown. —BILL VINCENT

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**TOWN HALL RENTAL CHANGES**

The Mayor and Town Council are considering making some changes to the Town Hall rental policy for resident and non-resident use. The Town Hall working group, led by Council Member Dia Costello, will submit their proposed changes at the December 10 Council meeting, so this is the period for resident feedback. Send your comments to Ms. Costello at dia@diacostello.com.

In the past, residents were permitted two free uses of Town Hall per year. Because daily expenses are very high, the group is proposing that residents (and groups that benefit residents, like the fire department, the C&O Canal, NPS, the Scouts) pay a nominal $25 fee for a 5-hour block and $10 for each additional hour for personal use, which is defined as an event where no admission is charged by the resident for attendees to participate—like a party. Residents using the space for a professional purpose, as in an event where attendees pay a fee to the host—like a workshop—would pay $50 for a 5-hour block and $25 for each additional hour. There is no change proposed to non-resident rental of Town Hall, which remains $50 per hour with a 3-hour minimum. However, the group does propose that the security deposit for all renters of Town Hall increase from $150 to $200. The increases will help cover the expense of basics like soap, paper goods, and cleaning services.

An updated calendar of events at Town Hall is now available at GlenEcho.org. This is useful for both seeing if desired dates are available and what events for residents are happening. The calendar is maintained by Town Manager Nicole Ventura. The rental application and agreement paper work is in the process of being simplified.

If you have any questions or concerns about these proposed changes, let Ms. Costello know, and feel free to attend the December Council meeting where it will be discussed further. —EMILY PARSONS
English boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’) is a favorite foliage for making beautiful, long-lasting holiday decorations. The attractive greenery, rich texture, and persistent leaves make boxwood a perfect choice for a centerpiece or wreath. Not surprisingly, boxwood is a symbol of immortality. If you are lucky enough to have some growing in your garden, I urge you bring some sprigs inside to enjoy.

A welcoming boxwood wreath hung on the door is easy to make yourself. One of the best aspects of this project is that your boxwood plants benefit from being plucked at this time of year. Plucking is pruning by hand, not using any pruning shears. Break off tip branches of boxwood plants—they will break crisply and easily. Plucking will open up the interior of the boxwood which allows light and air to get into the center of the bush. The result of plucking is more growth on the interior of the plant. Your boxwood plants will thrive and look healthier and fuller.

**Supplies needed include:**
- a wreath frame (different sizes are available)
- rubber bands for holding the bases of boxwood tips together
- floral wire for wrapping around the boxwood-filled frame to hold it in place
- • a boxwood wreath makes a nice centerpiece for your holiday table

**Steps for creating the wreath:**
- Gather plenty of boxwood greens, approximately the same length (around 5–6 inches).
- Cluster boxwood into bunches and place the rubber bands around the base, making little bouquets.
- Wire the first bouquet into the wreath frame and then lay the second one so that it covers the base of the first. Wire the second bunch and then continue around the frame in the same fashion.
- Once all the boxwood bundles needed have been laid into the wreath, make sure it has a full appearance and fill any gaping holes.
- Create a hanger with the wire if you plan to use it on a door.
- Trim the tips if needed.

Once you are happy with your wreath, you can have the fun of decorating it. The possibilities are endless—nuts, pine cones, bows, or any kind of adornment that appeals to you. Usually the floral wire works well for attaching the ornamentation. Floral sticks with wires can also be used for attaching ornaments.

Periodically spray the wreath with water to give the boxwood greens moisture. This will help them remain green for a longer period of time. If you do not have boxwood in your garden, ask a neighbor who does if you can pluck their bush. Of course, you can use a different evergreen foliage. This project is a great way to get in the holiday spirit! —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**
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Birds have different preferences about what—and where—they eat. For example, grosbeaks are sunflower-seed lovers and like it served well above ground in hanging or post-mounted feeders with wide ledges. On the other hand, juncos like their white proso millet spread on a flat tray near the ground, as do mourning doves, various kinds of sparrows, and towhees. Striped sunflower, larger and with less oil content, is easily eaten by birds such as cardinals and blue jays, which have the capability to crack open the hulls with their strong beaks to extract the seed. Sunflower chips, which are hulled seeds, are more expensive, but they are completely edible, which means no waste under your feeders. Nyjer or thistle seed is imported from Southeast Asia and several African countries, and is in no way related to the thistle that grows along North American roadways. Particularly attractive to gold finches, this seed should be served from a tube feeder designed with tiny feeding portals.

NOTE: The Glen Echo community has generously supported the Wild Bird Centers for over 33 years, 22 of which we have happily maintained our HQ at 7370 MacArthur. The building is now for sale (the owner, George Petrides, Sr. is inexplicably getting older!), but hopes to maintain the company in its current location for many years to come. Thank you, Glen Echo! — THE WILD BIRD CENTERS
It’s simply unavoidable this month. All things revolve around the holidays. Here’s to hoping the snow doesn’t get too much in the way of enjoying these local events.

What’s better than decorating a tree? Decorating a boat! That is, if you have one. This December 1, deck the boat deck and enter to win a slew of prizes in both DC’s and Alexandria’s boat parades kicking off at 5:30 PM. Boats are encouraged to enter both parades, with fireworks and fire pits for spectators who plan to watch from the docks of The Wharf.

While no longer the largest menorah in the world (we got beat by NYC), the DC National Chanukah Menorah may still be the most well known, attracting people of all faiths far and wide. You can see its spectacular lighting December 2 from 2:30–5 PM on The Ellipse opposite the White House.

On December 7, get transported to Monaco with the European Holiday Ball at the Embassy of France. From the French Riviera to the sparkling lights of Paris, this holiday party aims to bring the life of an expat right to our very own shores.

After all the jubilation of the ball, take it easy on December 8 with a workshop on the Healing Art of Crochet by the Smile Herb Shop in College Park. Come one and all. No prior knowledge or equipment required. The workshop will focus on smaller projects for those looking to quickly churn out handmade holiday gifts. And all material will be available for a modest fee.

For those looking to spend instead, there’s no shortage of holiday markets. From the Dupont Circle Holiday Pop-Up market (Dec. 1) in partnership with the Heurich House Museum’s Christkindlmarkt (Nov. 30–Dec. 2) and the 7th annual Winternational Embassy Showcase at the Ronald Reagan Building featuring wares from around the world (Dec. 6) to the Unique Market at Union Market (Dec. 9) and the traditionalist 14th annual Downtown Holiday Market (Nov. 23–Dec. 23), there’s a gift for everyone.

— Mona Kishore
The Washington Post’s forecasters are predicting above average snowfall this year, up to 30 inches in areas north of the District. With that in mind, here are a few of our Town’s snow shovelers awaiting your call: Renz Johnson on Princeton Avenue at 301-767-6277; Philip Macy on University and Bryn Mawr Avenues at 301-661-1050; and Hank Malmgren on Wellesley Circle at 301-456-4388.

Our family holiday traditions are what make this time of year so special. The Bragans visit the lights at the Mormon Temple; the Hewitts make a traditional plum pudding to serve on Christmas; the Parsons-Amdurs screen It’s a Wonderful Life each year. That many of us look forward to is the annual visit from Santa care of the Glen Echo Fire Department. This year, it is scheduled for Monday, December 17, and thanks to our fire board rep Gloria Levin, we are at the early end of the route. The trucks will leave the station.

OUR TOWN PARK

A fter closing for renovations several years ago, the Clara Barton House at the corner of Oxford Road is now open for limited tours on Friday and Saturday afternoons (tours at 1, 2, 3, and 4 PM).

Curious about the work completed and future renovations of this National Historic Site, I recently toured the home with National Park Service Ranger Kevin Patti. It is truly an unusual building with an interesting history! The home was built to the specifications of Clara Barton and her close associate Dr. Julian Hubbell. Barton was encouraged to live in Glen Echo by the town founders Edward and Edwin Baltzley who were hoping to attract new residents to this lovely development on the Potomac.

Clara Barton had achieved renown many years prior to her move to Glen Echo. Known as the “Angel of the Battlefield,” she was instrumental in establishing relief efforts for Civil War soldiers in Washington DC. Her humanitarian efforts were international in scope and she eventually chose Glen Echo as the national headquarters of the American Red Cross, which she founded in 1881. For several years, the Barton house served as a warehouse. Barton was 75 when she took up residence in 1897 and remained at the house until her death at the age of 90.

Visitors to the house will learn more about Barton and her work. All furnishings (about 3,000 items) remain in Park Service storage until the renovations of the structure are completed. That may take another two years as funding relies on federal appropriations. Despite the lack of furniture, the building is very interesting. The three-story home includes offices, a parlor, kitchen, extensive supply storage, and ten bedrooms. Interestingly, the ceilings were covered with cotton cloth, similar to that used for bandages. Gazing out the windows, Barton would look down on her gardens and farm animals along with the several homes being built in the town. It is said that she especially loved seeing the moon from her bedroom and parlor which faces the Potomac River. After she died, Dr. Hubbell inherited the house. Later it was a boarding house, until becoming the property of the federal government in 1974.

— Marthia Shannon
at 6:30 PM, and Glen Echo is the second stop. Santa and his entourage will do a loop around the Irish Inn and then enter the residential side of Town on Cornell, loop around Vassar Circle, loop around Wellesley Circle, coming down University and exiting at Oxford. So line the streets and bring gifts for Santa and his elves, if desired, in the form of checks or baked goods, and enjoy one of our shared holiday traditions. Gloria will notify the Town if the plans change—you never know when Santa, er, the GEFD, will get an emergency call.

Here’s a bit of happy neighborhood news: resident Patty Sieber married Mike Barcus on November 10 in Kansas City surrounded by their families. While Mike has long been Patty’s date to Glen Echo functions, he’ll now officially be a resident. Congratulations to you both, and welcome to Glen Echo, Mike!

Glen Echo has been notified that its trash collection contract with Elegant has been transferred to Goode Companies. The Town is reviewing its options on remaining with Goode or looking for another trash vendor.

Real Estate Report
6001 Yale Avenue closed in November at $1,015,000, while 30 Wellesley Circle remains active with a reduced price of $1,059,000. The properties on Vassar Circle are still listed at $1,399,000. Finally, George Petrides Sr., the owner of The Wild Bird Centers building at 7370 MacArthur Blvd. is looking for a buyer.

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

They Say it’s Your BIRTHDAY!
Dec. 10, Gabriela Hooper, 11
Dec. 11, Lara T Epanchin, 4

GOINGS ON

Glen Echo Town Hall Events
FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, Dec. 5, 12, 19, 26 8–10:30 PM, free to Town residents
Dec. 4 7:30–8:30 PM, Great Native Plants for Glen Echo presented by Holly Shimizu
Dec. 8 10–11:30 AM.

Glen Echo’s Annual Holiday Brunch
for residents, catered by Mr. Omelette

Local Events
Dec. 2 1–5 PM, Clara Barton Holiday Art Craft Show at the Clara Barton Community Center
Dec. 8 12–6 PM, open house at The Journey Space on Oberlin Avenue
Dec. 12 1:30–2:30 PM, Richard Harris of “Matter of Fact” discusses the challenges of reporting in turbulent times, Little Falls Library, for seniors
Dec. 27 1:30–2:30 PM, Paul Vogelzang on retirement and regeneration, Little Falls Library, for seniors

Glen Echo Park Events
Dec. 1–30 Holiday Art Show & Sale, Thursdays–Sundays all month long
Dec. 7, 14, 21, 28 11:30 AM, Animal story time at the aquarium, for ages 2–5, standard entry fees apply
Dec. 8 4–7 PM, Winter’s Eve, holiday activities throughout the Park, free

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

No Ladies Night in December

Adventure Theater MTC
www.adventuretheater-mtc.org; 301-634-2270
Fancy Nancy’s Splendiferous Christmas, through January 6

See you next year!
YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS HERE

Come to our
HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE
on December 8th
from 12pm - 6pm

Workshops Coming Up:

Dec 3, 2018 11:00AM - 12:30 PM Mon
Free Journaling and Mindfulness (donation accepted)

Dec 8, 2018 12:00PM - 6:00 PM Sat
Free Holiday Open House

Dec 10, 2018 11:00 AM-12:30 PM
Free Journaling and Mindfulness Class (donations accepted)

Jan 5 - Jan 6, 2019 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM Sat Sun
2 Day Introductory Workshop Biodynamic Crainosacral Therapy

Jan 6, 2019 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM Sun
Free Circle of Compassion & Moving Meditation
(donations accepted)

Jan 8 - Jan 9, 2019 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM Tue, Wed
2 Day Introductory Workshop Biodynamic Crainosacral Therapy

Jan 12, 2019 12:00PM-6:00 PM Sat
New Years Open House

Jan 31- Feb 3, 2019 8:30 AM - 6:00 PM Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun
Alchemical Alignment

Feb 2, 2019 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Sat
Cacao & Imbolc Ceremony

Feb 5 - Feb 6, 2019 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM Tue, Wed
2 Day Introductory Workshop Biodynamic Crainosacral Therapy

Feb 10 - Feb 11, 2019 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM Sun
Free Circle of Compassion & Moving Meditation
(donations accepted)