



PUBLISHED SINCE 1948 FOR THE TOWN OF GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND ~ CHARTERED IN 1904 ~ FEBRUARY 2021

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The four Council Members, Mayor Polak, Town Manager Beth Boa, and Town lawyer Ron Bolt met January 11 on Zoom for the monthly meeting. A couple of residents joined in.

Building Permit Protocols

The Council returned to Resolution 20-07, which had been much discussed, but not introduced, at the December meeting. This resolution would allow the Mayor and Manager to attach a set of standard protocols to any permit issued, so that expectations are clearly spelled out and developers (or residents) can be held accountable for the state of their construction sites. Going hand-in-hand with this is Ordinance 21-01, which allows the Mayor to take action—like granting a permit or issuing a stop-work order—without consulting the Council. However, a hearing before the Council can be requested

by any of the affected parties. Council Member Spealman returned to one of the questions raised at the December meeting. Namely, when the permissible amount of street dirt is at the discretion of the Town Manager and Mayor, Mr. Spealman hopes a little mud that will wash away with the next rain will not make a project subject to a stop-work order. The Mayor assured the Council that a contractor would hear from him if there were large clumps rather than the reasonably expected amount of dirt tracks.

The ordinance gives the



Mayor most of the authority, but in practice everything goes through Ms. Boa first since she would prepare the permits for Mayor Polak's approval. In the event that the Mayor isn't available for more than a couple of days, the Council's Vice President Council Member Costello would be able to sign off on any permits.

With the edits made since the last meeting, the Council was comfortable with introducing both the resolution and the ordinance. They will vote to approve them at the February meeting. Council Member Stiglitz asked how any permit requests should be handled in the interim. Mr. Bolt said that the Council could have any permit requests held until time of adoption or the Council could instruct the Mayor to attach the draft protocols to any permits issued in the next month. The Council agreed to the second option.

Odds and Ends

Jo Anne Murray of 6004 Princeton Avenue spoke next about an upcoming project at her home. She is awaiting a variance from the County to replace her porch and dormer. She may need a variance from the Town if she decides to put in a second driveway and a new curb cut is needed. Mr. Bolt stepped in and said that the Council was actually prohibited from giving advice about a possible future variance request. However, Ms. Boa and the Town engineer Joe Toomey are available to look at her property and weigh in on what's feasible.

Ms. Costello and Council Member Wilson created a set of Town Hall safety protocols during the pandemic. Ms. Boa is working from home more, and the Mayor has a workspace set up in the upstairs of Town Hall. Ms. Boa reported that she and

THE ECHO

Distributed free to Glen Echo residents. Subscriptions for non-residents: \$12 per year (to subscribe call the Town Manager). Copies of *The Echo* are on file at Little Falls Library. Also provided online at www.glenecho.org. Total circulation: 190.

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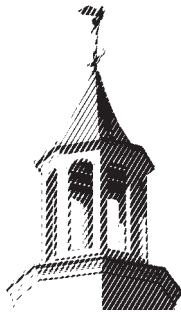
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Next Deadline: February 20, 2021

Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be signed. Articles for publication are also solicited. Please send comments about *The Echo* to the editor, the Mayor, or any Council Member. Volunteer reporters are always needed.



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Next (Virtual) Council Meeting: Feb. 8, 2021, 7 PM

the Mayor were starting to work on the 2021-2022 budget and hope to meet with the Council on it in March or April. That means that the Council will need to make some decisions about whether to budget for any charitable giving next fiscal year—a topic at the December meeting. Most small towns in the area seem to either give nothing or about what we've historically given, which is \$1,000–\$2,000 to the Glen Echo Park Partnership. Mr. Bolt mentioned that under Maryland law charitable giving by a municipality must be for a legitimate government reason and must benefit the residents directly. The Council is going to continue to discuss this at the February meeting with the hopes of establishing a set policy.

Trestle Demolition

The Mayor and Ms. Boa are currently in meetings with Washington Metro (WMATA) to discuss the particulars of the removal

of the old trestle bridge in the woods beyond Radcliffe Lane. Details regarding access, staging area, parking, noise control, insurance, truck traffic, and tree removal will be discussed at an upcoming public meeting. Mr. Spealman asked if this was really necessary—and Ms. Wilson remembered playing on the trestle as a girl—but the structure is unsound and too unsafe to leave in place. WMATA is removing other remaining parts of the train trestle in the area. The Council wondered if there was anything worth saving or if we could commission a few nice photos of this bit of history before it comes down in early 2022.

Town Expenses

In January, the Town paid \$8,250 to Hughes Landscaping, \$3,200 to Key Sanitation, \$2,800 to Rolling Acres, \$2,056 to Bolt Legal, and \$1,650 to Blue Crab Contracting (Wayne Fowler). —EMILY PARSONS



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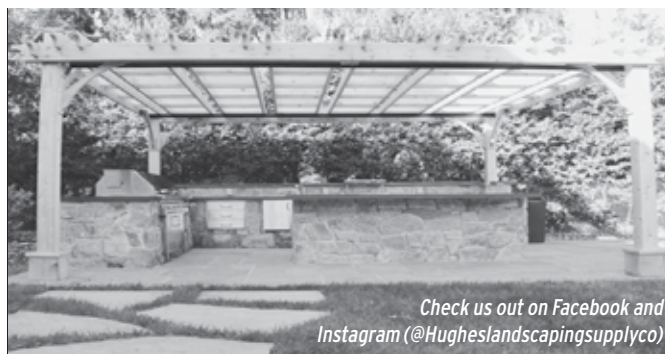


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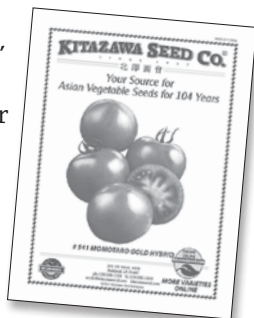
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In order to find the most exciting or specific varieties of seeds that are difficult to locate at local nurseries, it is sometimes necessary to order your seeds online. Since it is more affordable to grow plants from seed, ordering online provides excellent opportunities to experiment. Here are some of the seed sources that offer a variety of interesting food, flavor, and flower seeds. I suggest you order now as many sites are selling out!

Kitizawa Order online or request a catalog at Kitazawaseed.com

Based in Oakland, California, this is the best source for Asian vegetable and unusual seeds. Many of the Asian vegetables are distinctive selections and, therefore, it is best to get them from a reliable Asian seed source. For example, the Asian eggplant is more delicious than other kinds. You will be amazed if you go to the section called Chef Specialty Gardens. They have many interesting collections: Asian Herb Garden, Tropical Garden, Japanese Heirloom Garden, Tsukemono Favorite Pickling Garden, Stir Fry Garden, Juicing Garden, Thai Garden, Microgreens, Korean Cuisine, and more.



Select Seeds Order online or request a catalog at selectseeds.com

Based in Union, Connecticut, this is an outstanding source for a variety of vegetable and flower seeds, many of which are heirloom, organic, fragrant, and open-pollinated. They have some interesting varieties of plants such as amaranth beans, cleome, a black-flowered columbine,



a sunset-colored foxglove, and Malabar spinach. The Moon Garden Seed Collection has a variety of evening blooming, white fragrant flowers.

My own order will definitely include lavender-blue Queen Anne's lace, ultraviolet cornflower, and Jewel of Africa nasturtium.

Adaptive Seeds Order online or request a catalog at adaptiveseeds.com

I learned about this seed source based in Sweet Home, Oregon, from a person who grows herbs to make beauty products and medicines.



HOLLY IN THE IVY

They offer selections of plants that are rare, heritage, highly nutritious, and others that are higher in certain beneficial compounds. For example, they offer calendula cultivars that have higher amounts of resin in them. I ordered from Adaptive Seeds last year and the seeds were of the highest quality. They all germinated well and grew into strong plants.

Terroir Seeds Order online or request a catalog at underwoodgardens.com

Based in Chino Valley, Arizona, Terroir Seeds won me over when they offered Espelette/Basque Hot Pepper seeds. I was in France and discovered a most incredible spice that French chefs treasure called Piment d'Espelette. After quite a search, I finally found a source for the spice online. Then, to my surprise, I found the seed available on Terroir Seeds' list. Seeds sell out quickly, so don't wait. Among the many other excellent




seeds available, they also have some fun collections such as Salsa Seed Collection, Time for Tea Collection, Feed the Bees, and Butterfly Collection to name just a few.

Hudson Valley Seed Co. Order online or request a catalog at hudsonvalleyseed.com

Based in Accord, New York, Hudson has the most artistic seed packs—they feature beautiful garden-themed contemporary art with seed stories. Many of their seeds, grown on a sustainable farm, are unique, rare, and hard-to-find. For example, they offer an Andean heirloom purple Peruvian potato, mother of Pearl poppy, many kinds of dahlias, and even a collection called Sow in the Snow.



This is my list of sources for 2021. There are other seed nurseries that are great including Johnny's Seed, Seed Saver's Exchange, and Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds, to name a few. Fresh seeds will provide better germination results. If you have extra seed, think about exchanging with gardening friends. —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**



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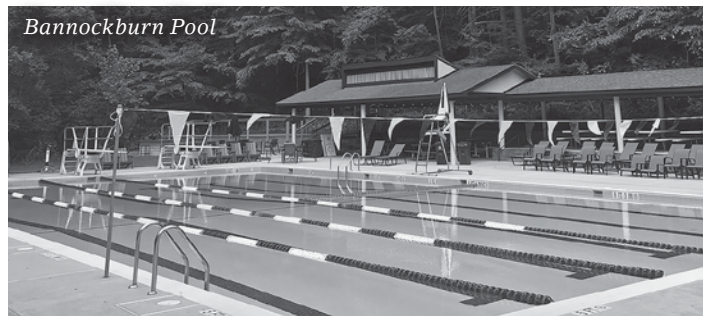
OUT AND ABOUT

Technically, you can keep cool in the middle of summer without joining a local pool. Some combination of air conditioning, popsicles, and garden hoses gets the job done, even on the hottest July day. But the luxury of having a lovely, social, and refreshing pool nearby is undeniable.

For newcomers to the area, the pools can be a little bit mysterious. They are tucked into neighborhood streets and don't advertise. They're private clubs, which sounds fancy—I always feel a need to apologize and explain that they aren't *that* kind of private club. All have a baby pool, a shallower recreation pool, and a competition pool with lap lanes and diving boards.

Membership policies vary, but all of the pools encourage members to become permanent or shareholders by paying a bond (generally in the neighborhood of \$1,500) that is refunded if you eventually leave. Members also pay an annual membership fee.

Last summer's Covid restrictions affected the pools, like everything else. They opened about a month later than usual and restricted the number of guests at any given time through online reservations for both general swimming



and lap lanes. There were no regular swim or dive meets or events like float night. It was a bummer, but the general consensus was that it was still awfully nice to have a pool to go to. This year's situation is, of course, anyone's guess.

There are three main pools that folks go to. **Bannockburn Pool** is a lovely spot surrounded by woodlands at the bottom of Laverock Lane. There are grills and a newly renovated cookout area in the back—it's great to bring dinner and cook while the kids splash around. There is no snack bar, but the ice cream truck is an extremely reliable presence and there are often food trucks. Its proximity to Glen Echo is a great benefit when older kids can head over by themselves. Bannockburn Pool also includes Glen Echo in its boundaries. That may well be a significant advantage this year, since last year's Covid

restrictions resulted in a membership backlog. If you're willing to sign up as a permanent member, you jump ahead of anyone on the waitlist who lives outside the boundary. New members will be contacted starting in mid-February, so sign up via the website soon.

Merrimack Pool is a bit further up the hill, tucked among Bannockburn neighborhood streets where Pyle Road and Callender Drive dead end. It has a small playground and a snack bar. Bannockburn and Merrimack offer reciprocity on weekdays, so if you are a member of one pool, you can join friends at the other



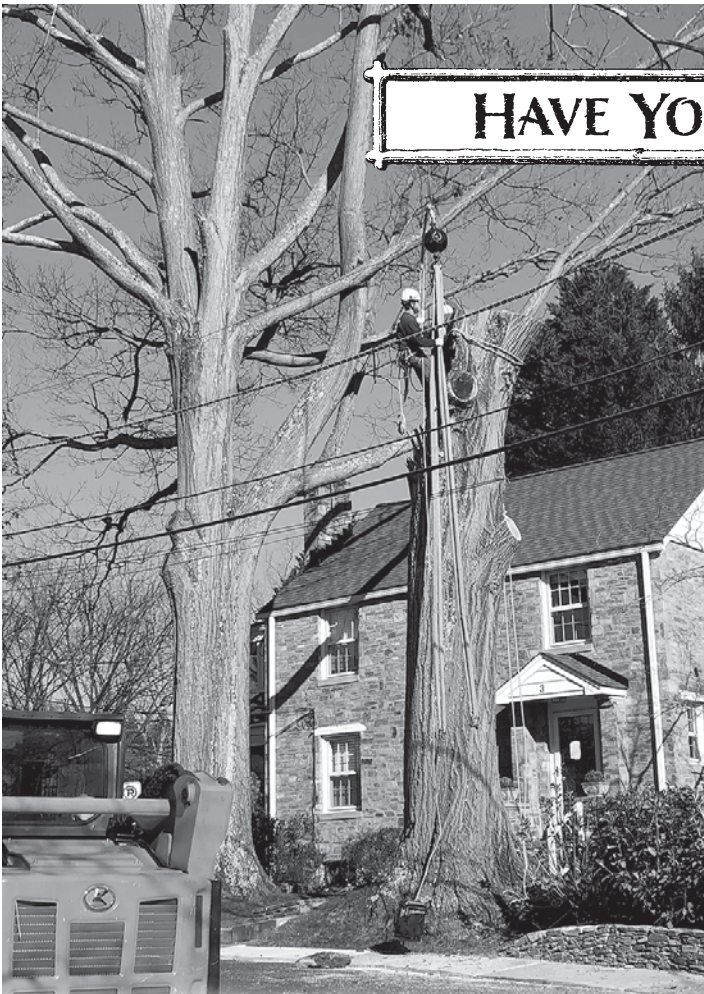
one without paying a guest fee. This is particularly nice for extended playdates that meander around the neighborhood over the course of the day.

Palisades Pool is across the one-lane bridge off Seven Locks Road. It has multiple pools, tennis courts (with really good



lessons that are also open to non-members), a café, a waterslide, and a summer camp. Katie Ledecy, the Olympic phenom, was a longtime member of the Palisades Porpoises swim team. By all accounts, it's fantastic. So fantastic, that the wait list runs about eight years. Parents of small children: Plan ahead for the teen years!

All the pools have swim and dive teams that—in normal years—compete in the Montgomery County leagues. The practices and meets provide a little bit of structure on lazy summer days, and the season is pleasantly compact, ending in mid-July. —ANGELA HIRSCH



After a large branch from one of the oaks in the front yard of 3 Vassar Circle came down last July, arborists determined that the tree could not be saved. It was taken down on December 29.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

The Echo will provide space in the April issue to any **candidates** for the Mayorship and Council seats. Statements from the candidates will run in the April issue, so that residents will have sufficient time to read them prior to the May 3 election. That means that the deadline for statements (and a photo) will be March 20. Please contact TheEchoEditor@gmail.com if you plan to run for office to get the details.

.....

The Glen Echo **Environmental Committee** will be hosting two **Zoom programs** this month. On February 17 at 7 PM, Dr. Doug Tallamy will present an overview

of his latest book, *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard*. A recent UN report predicts that as many as 1 million species will soon disappear because of human activities. Many of these are insects. Nearly all species are at risk, including humans, and all rely on insects.



So how do we create beautiful landscapes brimming with the life that runs the ecosystems we depend on? Tallamy will remind us of the essential roles insects play, and describe the simple changes we must make in our landscapes and our attitudes to keep insects on the ground, in the air, and, yes, on our plants. (This program was presented at the Scott

OUR TOWN PARK

Check out the newly redesigned Glen Echo Park website at GlenEchoPark.org. The new site illustrates and organizes access to the Park's programs, special events, classes, and camps. Links to the programs of our resident arts, music, dance, and nature partners are also included. The website also features virtual programs and the popular online art gallery. Coming up this spring are various new classes, camps, and

workshops. In these stressful times the Park programs are more important than ever.

A new Strategic Plan was approved by the Park Partnership board in January. The priority will be to recover from the impact the pandemic has had on our programs, staff, resident partners, and patrons. We suffered a significant drop in revenues over the past year. Although we were fortunate to receive federal, state, and County relief funds, as well as gifts from generous donors, we still face shortfalls. The Park

will be looking at ways to continue building on the strengths of our world-class programs and unique historic and natural setting to foster creativity and community well-being through the power of the arts and nature. Major goal areas include:

- Becoming a premier arts and cultural destination in the region and a national model.
- Increasing our capacity to serve a broad and diverse population reflecting the demographics of our region.
- Developing and maintaining the Park to be eco-

nomically and functionally sustainable.

■ Continuing to offer and support innovative programs that serve the greater community.

In the near term we will be developing the facilities Master Plan for site improvements, creating a Diversity and Inclusion policy and plan, and piloting new program areas. The Partnership will also be increasing our fundraising activity to support the new plan.

We look forward to offering programs both

Arboretum on January 11. It is being reprised for us with permission.)

On February 24 at 7 PM, Dr. Sara Via, a professor and climate extension specialist at the University of Maryland, will speak about sustainable landscaping and stormwater management. She developed this talk specifically for Glen Echo with a focus on our landscape challenges. She will discuss the ways that climate change is affecting us locally, how we can increase the biodiversity

of our own outdoor spaces, and how we can be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

The links for joining these Zoom meetings can be found on the Town website.

.....
On January 6, as many of us watched the terrifying events unfolding at the Capitol from the comfort of our homes, the staff and volunteers of the **Glen Echo Fire Department** were on the scene. They were able to help treat Capitol police officers and other

first responders who had been injured. Glen Echo firefighter, Lt. Victor Graves, said it was “something none of us expected to see, certainly something we hope never to see again. But it was exactly what we train for.”

.....
The next **Zoom Ladies Night** will be Thursday, February 25, at 8 PM. Login details to come.


Real Estate

Last month there were two sales: 6000 Bryn Mawr Avenue closed at \$1,029,000, and 7325 University Avenue closed at \$1,100,00. Currently on the market are the next Vassar Circle home listed at \$1,499,000 and the commercial property at 7370 MacArthur Boulevard listed at \$2,750,000.

TOWN ELECTION UPDATE

On May 3, 2021, the Town of Glen Echo will hold an **election for Mayor and two Council seats**. This is a great opportunity to get involved in the community. The terms are four years. If you are interested in running for any of these open roles, you must be at least 25 years old, a resident for at least one year, and a registered voter in the Town. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen. Anyone who would like to run for these offices must file a written declaration of candidacy by April 13. Candidacy letters should be delivered to Jan Shaut, Supervisor, Board of Elections, 6004 Harvard Ave., Glen Echo, MD 20812.

Given the current Covid considerations, the election is expected to be held outdoors with safety measures in place. Details will be available closer to the election. Residents 18 years and older may vote, and you can register when you come to vote—proof of residency may be requested. Absentee ballots will be provided to anyone who requests one. To request an absentee ballot contact me at JShaut@gmail.com prior to the election.
—JAN SHAUT



They Say it's Your BIRTHDAY!
 Feb. 4, **Siena Belinkie**, 7
 Feb. 15, **Rafe Parsons Amdur**, 9

in-person and online to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Dentzel Carousel. In particular, we look forward to getting the green light to safely reopen the Carousel for ridership.

Thanks to the efforts of Bannockburn resident Barbara Martin, the Park will see a vegetation clean up and new plantings in the area of the old Putt Putt fountain. This spring, work will begin to replant the area with native trees and shrubs. The plan was developed by board member Ana Rasmussen,



The old fountain and environs, remnants of a miniature golf course, are due for sprucing up

Barbara Martin, and Bevan Shimizu. We look forward to this much needed renovation. Ms. Martin raised the funds for this project in honor of her

friend, Stephanie Beeler who passed away this past year. The area will add much needed beauty to an underutilized part of the Park. —**MARTHA SHANNON**

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