



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

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The full Council met April 12 on Zoom along with Mayor Polak, Town Manager Beth Boa, and advisor-to-the-Mayor Jean Sperling. A couple of residents also joined for a fairly short meeting.

Town Budget

Continuing a conversation from the last meeting, the budget hearing, and the March 29 meeting introducing the fiscal year 2022 budget, the Council discussed a line item called “Wynne Repayment.” Because of a 2015 Supreme Court decision, municipalities in the state need to repay some income taxes. The question facing the Council was whether to have the funds withheld quarterly for the next 20 years or simply pay the lump sum, which is under \$7K, in 2021. While there was some debate about how to designate the payment—should it come from the reserves or another line item

with a surplus—the Council did agree to pay it in full and get it off the books. Ms. Sperling argued that pulling the funds from a particular budget line item confuses the original intention of the budget (i.e. \$15K for roads that was not spent in FY 21). Bottom line, the Town pays for it either way, but tampering with the budget muddies the record keeping.

Again, continuing an ongoing debate, the Council touched on the “Community Contribution” line item. Council Member Stiglitz proposed reducing the amount to \$2K and giving that amount to the Glen Echo Park Partnership as we have in the past. The rest of the Council did not agree, opting

instead to keep it at \$3K with the additional \$1K to go to Glen Echo Fire Department or possibly split with Cabin John Fire Department. Ms. Sperling encouraged the Council to reevaluate all the donations and ask the recipients for proposals for the use of the funds.

Ms. Boa asked the Council if they wanted to sign on with other municipalities to a Tax Duplication Resolution that is being proposed to the County Council. The resolution asks that the County repay towns for tax money withheld for road maintenance. Since we maintain our own roads, the funds haven’t been spent on Glen Echo by the County. The difference for last year would be about \$7K. The Council agreed to sign on.

Council Member Spealman noted that the Net Revenue has been declining (\$87K in 2020; \$77K in 2021; and \$55K projected in 2022) and

warned that the Council needs to keep an eye on this. The surplus needs to be maintained, so they can plan for future capital projects. The budget will be passed at the May 10 meeting with a new Mayor and Council.

Odds and Ends

The sidewalk at Harvard and University Avenues has been repaired for



\$7,750. Ms. Boa reported that someone gathering information for the Denzel Carousel’s 100-year anniversary used our newly organized archives to find a *Washington Post* photo of Nancy Long that they couldn’t find through the *Post*! There was a short update from the

THE ECHO

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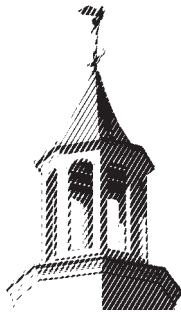
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Next Deadline: May 20, 2021

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: May 10, 2021, 7 PM

Environmental Committee (see page 6 for details on what they are planning and how to get involved).

There was a discussion about fenced yards in Town and the fact that many fences may not be within the property line or even on it, but rather in the right-of-way. The owners of 7326 University Avenue want to fence their front yard, and the Mayor and Ms. Boa were wondering if a variance would be needed. Plans haven't been presented yet, so the Council decided to table the discussion. On the one hand, what's a couple of inches, and on the other, as Ms. Sperling said, "The Council is the steward of the

Town's right-of-way."

Ms. Boa reported that the Inspector General has told the post office that a security camera should be installed on the outside of the building due to reports of mail being stolen from the outside mailbox. It would focus on that mailbox but wouldn't be monitored at all times. The post office is waiting to hear if it will get funding for the camera.

Town Expenses

In April, the Town paid \$6,910 to Comptroller of Maryland (Wynne repayment), \$3,200 to Key Sanitation, \$1,575 to Joe Toomey, and \$1,341 to Bolt Legal. —EMILY PARSONS



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MAYORAL CANDIDATE
Rita Pin Ahrens
6106 BRYN MAWR AVENUE



I've always been a dreamer and change-maker, following

Gandhi's advice to "be the change you want to see in the world."

I grew up in conservative Idaho, as a refugee from Cambodia, a country most haven't even heard of — but I represent the ever changing face of America. I use my unique perspective to tirelessly advocate for children and families, working at the national and state levels to increase educational and economic opportunities, while fighting injustice and discrimination. My focus is uplifting those who feel they don't belong or have a voice in their government.

Diving into the details of my work, you will find that I am deeply familiar with negotiating regulations and analyzing public policy. I've spoken up against the recent increase of anti-Asian hate, pandemic-related bullying, and Census tampering. I've written about improving schools, data use, and technology access. I've also served on a local condominium board, was elected Vice Chair for the DC Ward3 Democrats, and led a national nonprofit.

SEE YOU AT THE POLLS

Monday, May 3 is Election Day in Glen Echo! From 5–9 PM, residents 18 years and older can cast a ballot upstairs at Town Hall for two Council Members and the Mayor. Safety protocols will be in place, but anyone is welcome to request an absentee ballot from Jan Shaut at jshaut@gmail.com. The deadline to return the absentee ballots to Town Hall is April 30. First-time voters may be asked for proof of residency.

Residents will have two choices for Mayor: **Rita Pin Ahrens** and current Council Member **Dia Costello**. For Council, there are two candidates for two spots: current Council Members **Dan Spealman** and **Matt Stiglitz**.

Following are brief statements from the candidates.

The common thread has always been how to improve lives in an equitable and inclusive way.

I can help our town continue steadily improving infrastructure and town services to enhance the quality of life in Glen Echo. However, I also offer the opportunity for us to be different than we have been — to look further into the future and think about the legacy we want to leave behind. We need a strategic plan and vision. We also need to ask the hard questions of how involved we want to be with the growing concerns outside our town — to the calls for substantive action against racism and for creating a more fair and equitable society.

Choose me for mayor of Glen Echo, and we can explore how to be the change we want together.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE
Dia Costello
6100 HARVARD AVENUE



It has been my honor to serve on our Town Council for the past six years

and with your support, I am excited to run for mayor. As a councilwoman, I am encouraging and responsive to citizen's ideas and concerns, promote resident's projects to council, lead progressive measures related to our environment, support infrastructure planning and am proactive in solving issues. I am continually inspired by how much we all care about Glen Echo. I will balance embracing change to enhance our town and preserve the special nature that has drawn us here.

As a member of the

council, I have been an active contributor in robust discussions as well as detail oriented implementation for important matters and decisions. I understand the complexities of our town laws and how they interact with those of the county and state. In the past I have worked with issues regarding stormwater problems, assisting in updating town ordinances, researching trash and recycling options, assessing safety of roads and sidewalks as well as keeping current with our neighboring towns. My participation at the Maryland Municipal League has enabled me to bring fresh perspectives and ideas to the council.

On a more personal note, I was raised on Capitol Hill by a single mother who believed service to one's community was a fulfilling part of life and I find this to be true. Professionally, I have worked in large hospital systems, community health services and successfully run my own business as a social worker. I am confident in helping others and understand personal dynamics. We have lived in Glen Echo for over 22 years now, first on Bryn Mawr Avenue then moving just a block away to Harvard Avenue in 2009. We have raised our family here, care deeply about our neighbors, and continue to be grateful to live in such a wonderful and eclectic community. I

promise to bring my energy, commitment, and analytical problem solving skills to the mayoral position.

COUNCIL CANDIDATE

Dan Spealman

7325 UNIVERSITY AVENUE



I want to start by saying thank you for electing me to serve on the Town

Council four years ago. Despite the unanticipated challenges we've run into, I hope that I've done so ably, and that I can count on your support for another four years. As a Councilmember, I've tried to always keep an open mind to all perspectives, approach issues respectfully and constructively, and seek compromise and consensus when possible. I've also tried to strike just the right balance so that we have strong policies and oversight practices that are not too expensive or burdensome. It's tough to

know exactly where to draw the line, but that's a key part of what I keep in mind while trying to represent your interests. I hope I can continue to be a thoughtful, creative, moderate voice on the council.

More specifically, I've tried to focus my efforts on creating opportunities for wider involvement in town governance and more engagement within the community. This included leading the launch of a committee structure that has led to many avenues for participation on key town issues. I'm very glad that the Environmental and Livable Town Committees are thriving under their respective leaders, and that all of the volunteers involved are working together to make the town an even better place. I've also worked with others to develop and run town events like Founders Day and Winterlude, and facilitated the return of movies at the Town Hall, including the preview of a documentary on

the history of discrimination in the Park. And I've helped to organize town volunteer efforts like the clean-ups of Minnehaha. As we emerge from lockdown, I hope all those opportunities for coming together as a community can reemerge, as well, and that I can continue to help facilitate them.

COUNCIL CANDIDATE

Matt Stiglitz

7306 UNIVERSITY AVENUE



Dear neighbors, I am running for reelection as a member of the Town

Council. For those of you who don't know me, I live in the brown house on the corner of University and Princeton with my wife Susan and daughter Kate, and next month will mark our 12th year in town. In addition to serving on the council, I've represented the town on the District II (Bethesda) Police Advisory Board for the past 10 years.

As the longest-serving member of the council and its only attorney, I believe that I bring an institutional knowledge and methodical thought process that serves the town well when considering the issues of the day. I don't have a particular platform. When I first ran for the office in 2013, I made the promise to "actively seek input and ideas from the town's citizens and to vote after careful consideration of all sides of an issue, and in a fiscally prudent manner." I believe that I've lived up to that promise - whether leading the effort (first proposed to me by one of our residents) to have the crosswalk signal installed by the county on MacArthur Blvd. or helping to navigate the lengthy and complicated issues surrounding the development of Vassar Circle.

If reelected, I will continue to take a reasoned approach to solving problems and voting on matters in a thoughtful and transparent fashion. I hope that I can count on your support.

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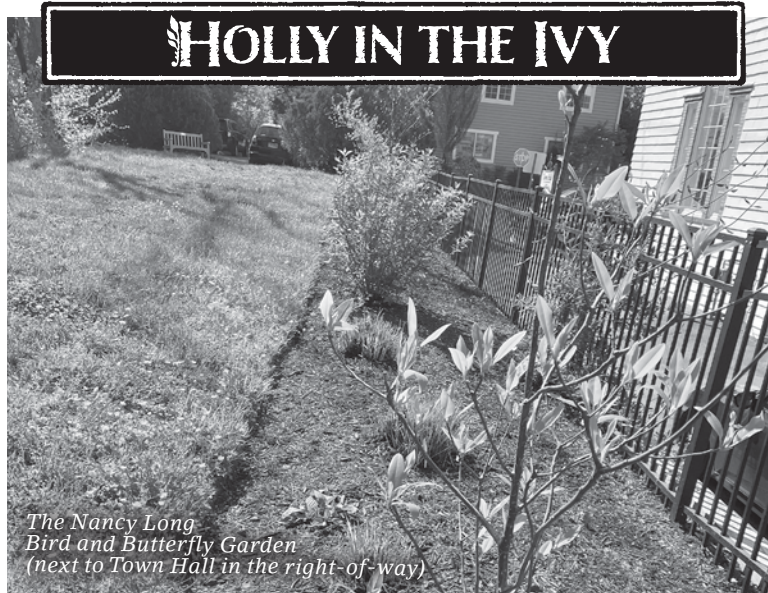
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The Glen Echo Environmental Committee (GEEC) had its spring meeting on April 7. We welcomed our newest member, Justin Ellis. In an effort to attract more residents to join the committee or participate in our activities, here are some of our upcoming plans. Look out for our next meeting and come check it out!

Glen Echo anticipates approval as a

Sustainable Maryland Town in June 2021. Town Manager Beth Boa reported on our current status. She mentioned some of the completed work, which includes the new Town Sustainable Website and the ongoing project to measure the Town's carbon footprint. In order to attain more



points, we are considering some new projects, including creating an insect hotel, creating pesticide regulations for the Town, and applying to the National Wildlife Federation for certification of the Nancy Long Bird and Butterfly Garden.

Robin Kogelnik reported

on the **Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns** Grant Program Application. It was completed and submitted with help from Beth Boa. We should hear the results by late June. If the grant is received, it will provide \$15K to fund a conceptual plan that will determine how the Town

should implement green, environmentally sensitive techniques and solutions to better manage our stormwater issues.

Speke Wilson is heading the **Tree Committee** and will be working with Mary Parsons. We encourage residents to take advantage of the various free tree programs in Montgomery County. GEEC will provide "tree mentors" to give information on how to plant, water, and generally care for new trees.

Efforts to design and create an **Insect Hotel** have just begun. It will be placed on the right-of-way near the pollinator garden. An insect hotel is a created structure that is made with natural materials and will

TREE RESOURCES

The Glen Echo Tree Committee urges everyone in Town to PLANT MORE TREES! To that end, here is a list of resources to make it easier. **Tree Montgomery** is a free program that plants shade trees across Montgomery County, with the goal of increasing our tree canopy. They do the planting for you, and according to a neighbor in Bannockburn, "the tree stock is very high-quality and much more mature than I was expecting." The program

is popular and there is a waitlist, but you can sign up at www.treemontgomery.org/request-a-tree. The website also has lots of useful information about tree planting if you decide you want to do it yourself.

Reforest Montgomery will plant free shade trees for urban homeowners (Glen Echo qualifies). Applications for fall plantings are accepted



starting February 1 of each year, while applications for spring plantings are accepted starting October 1. After your application is submitted, a site evaluation will be scheduled to confirm that your property can accommodate one or more shade trees. Just Google Reforest Montgomery to sign up. They also offer a coupon you can download to receive a \$40 discount on the purchase of qualifying trees.

TREE-MENDOUS MARYLAND, a program of the Maryland Forest

Service, has a website that provides information about tree planting, offers volunteer opportunities, and has a \$25 discount coupon for tree purchase.

The **Arbor Day Foundation** will send you ten trees when you become a member. The membership fee is \$15, but be warned, the trees you receive in the mail are tiny sapplings.

Please don't forget, due to the pending cicada emergence, it's better to put off planting new trees until the fall. —MARY PARSONS

provide shelter for a variety of beneficial insects such as native bees and lady bugs. Troy Etulain is leading the way and is requesting materials from residents. These include: untreated wood (bees are sensitive to the chemicals in treated wood), particularly planks or blocks, bricks with small nooks and crannies, smaller, termite-free firewood rounds, no longer than 12", large pine cones (again, untreated, without perfume), spare roofing material, and chicken wire.

Insect hotel



The GEEC is considering creating **Pesticide Regulations** for the Town. Other Maryland Towns have

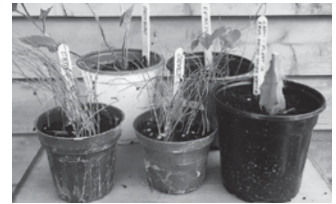
created their own regulations about pesticide use as a way of making their communities safer and healthier.

GEEC will apply for certification of the Nancy Long Bird and Butterfly garden through the **National Wildlife Federation**. The garden will need to provide food, water, cover, and places to raise young and use sustainable practices. We need a water feature which could be as simple as a bird bath. In addition, we encourage residents to consider applying for this certification. www.national-wildlifefederation.com

A plaque that lists the residents who have donated to the **Nancy Long Bird and Butterfly Garden** and other improvements on the right-of-way will be ordered. There is still time to donate and be recognized on the donor plaque. There will be a garden work and planting day in the Garden in May, and we hope many residents will participate. —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**

TOWN PLANT SWAP

Who could have guessed that a year from our last plant exchange we would still be wearing masks?



This year, again, we ask that everyone take appropriate precautions and maintain a 6-foot distance when participating in the exchange, even though many residents have been vaccinated. Gardening can be a calming and fulfilling activity in this ongoing pandemic.

The plant exchange will take place on **SATURDAY, MAY 8**, from 9:30 AM until 4 PM at the site of the Mini Farm Stand on University between Harvard and Yale Avenues. Participating neighbors were pleased with last year's exchange, filling yards with Mexican sunflowers, euphorbia, daylilies, and elephant ears. Seeds can also be exchanged. You can bring as many plants and seeds as you like and take whatever you wish: This is an uncurated free exchange. If possible, mark your plants with their names and sun/partial-sun/shade preferences. Online apps such as PlantSnap and FlowerChecker can help with identification. On Friday, May 7, we will put out the table (after the trash pickup!) with extra pots/containers and markers if you need them. If you don't have any plants to exchange, you're still welcome to come after 1 PM and take whatever is still available. This is a great way to add interest to our Glen Echo yards and gardens! —**CAROL BARTON**



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OUT AND ABOUT

As the summer sun begins to shine, and the rain of April dries out, the weather invites us to spend more time outdoors. Here are some of the best ways around us to do so.

Throughout May and June, go back to your summer camp days by reserving a table at **Calleva** for their **Pizza Nights on the Farm**. A gourmet menu, local wines, and the opportunity to overcome your fear of heights through ziplining all await you.

Keep to the two for one theme and bundle an outdoor yoga class with a flight of wines at



Rocklands Farm Winery, led by expert instructors from **Clarksburg Yoga**. Reservations are available late afternoon every first and third Wednesday from May 5. Following each vinyasa flow yoga class, enjoy a wine or cider tasting and a complimentary glass of wine from the Rocklands

selection.

For a more laidback atmosphere, head to **Normandie Farms** in Potomac for the return of their evening

music and indoor dining by fireplace. The lineup of performers can be found on their website with someone singing almost every Saturday night to accompany their famous popovers.

If you're looking to stay at home, enjoy a lowkey evening by ordering in

from one of the many new Indian restaurants to open in the last few months. From our family's favorite, **Viraaj** in Bethesda, to the quick casual takeout option **Tikka Masala**, or curbside pickup from the Tex-Mex fusion restaurant **Mama Tigre** in Virginia. Couple it with a night of education and mind broadening with the Smithsonian's **Mother Tongue Film Festival** running until the end of May. On May 14 at 5 PM with a free rsvp, you can attend the online roundtable on The Healing Power of Storytelling. —MONA KISHORE

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Michelle Brafman of Oxford Road will again be conducting several **college essay writing workshops** in June, July, and August. If you have, or know a rising high school senior looking to hone their voice, develop or refine their Common App essays, and learn strategies to strengthen their overall writing, email michellebrafman@gmail.com. At least one of the workshops will be conducted virtually, so students do not need to live in the D.C. metropolitan area to participate.

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With **Patty Sieber** moving to Cabin John after 13 years in her house on Princeton Avenue, we are not just losing a great



Vassar Circle construction has accelerated in the past month: at left is #14, #10 at center, the basement of #20 in the foreground, and the completed #4 on the far right.

neighbor, we are also losing one of the key people who makes *The Echo* possible. Patty has been ably handling the **Echo's advertising** for years, but the time has come to pass the job on to another capable Glen Echoan. Please consider volunteering a minimal amount of your time to help us create this

neighborhood newsletter. You won't need to bring in new advertisers—they come to us!—and Town Manager **Beth Boa** has streamlined the invoicing process, so the job is fairly simple: reminding vendors to pay! And the perks are plenty, especially for new folks in town. Get to know a large

group of engaged neighbors, get invited to the annual *Echo* holiday party, get a set of *Echo* coasters! Email TheEchoEditor@gmail.com to get involved.

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When prompted to reminisce, **Patty Sieber** shared this: "My favorite pastime is sitting

OUR TOWN PARK

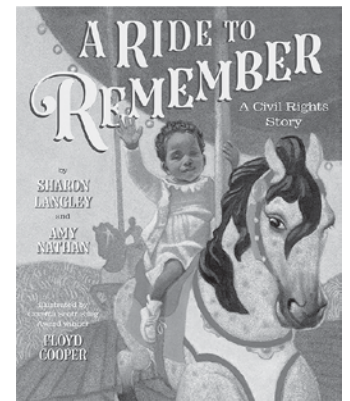
May will bring a number of events to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Dentzel Carousel. A special live-streamed ribbon cutting on the morning of May 1 will honor the work done to restore the carousel and feature special remarks by local officials and major supporters. We will also open the carousel to riders. Rides will be \$5 per person for a 2-hour window. Given our current Covid restrictions on numbers of riders, the Park will feature

cutouts of riders. You can join the "crowd" for a donation of \$100.

A great lecture by noted historian Barbara Fahs Charles was offered on April 14. Check the park website to watch a recorded version of this lecture which covered the complex history of the two carousels at Glen Echo and the artists who created them. The next special lecture will be July 14 and feature the history of the carousel's Orchestrion. That is the music-making machine also known as a band organ. Ours is very special!

On May 15 at 9:30 AM,

the Park is hosting a virtual story time. The true story of how a ride on a carousel made a powerful Civil Rights statement, *A Ride to Remember* tells how a community came together—both black and white—to make a change. When Sharon Langley was born in the early 1960s, many amusement parks were segregated, and African-American families were not allowed entry. This book reveals how in the summer of 1963, due to demonstrations and public protests, the Gwynn Oak Amusement



Park in Maryland became desegregated and opened to all for the first time. Co-author Sharon Langley was the first African-American child to ride the carousel. This was on the same day of Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on

on my front porch saying hello to neighbors. I already miss that! Everyone was so welcoming when I moved into Glen Echo. I was a crazy single mom with preteens who would lock themselves out of the house, with packages piling up on the porch, who was always borrowing eggs, milk, or something for a recipe. The neighbors always stepped in to help! I loved pulling into my driveway and seeing some of the ladies drinking wine on Phyllis's [Fordham] porch. They always poured me a glass and made me feel welcomed. I love how everyone stops to chat and truly cares about the beauty and safety of the town. The community events at the Town Hall are priceless, and I hope they will be back

after this darn Covid. Glen Echo is a special place and is so dear to my heart!"

Real Estate

6109 Princeton Avenue, listed at \$949,000, has a contract pending, and 14 Vassar Circle is also under contract. Glen Echo has not been immune to the local real estate boom! 10 and 20 Vassar Circle are listed now with a price increase at \$1,599,000. The Wild Bird Centers at 7370 MacArthur Boulevard has a reduced price of \$2,290,000. The listing says it is zoned for Residential or Bed and Breakfast, Day Care Facility, Medical, General Retail, Professional, Recreation, Religious Facility, Restaurant/Bar, School, Grocery Store, Vet/Kennel.

Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Langley's ride to remember demonstrated the possibilities of King's dream. This book includes photos of Sharon on the carousel, authors' notes, a timeline, and a bibliography.

As part of the carousel's anniversary celebration, take advantage of a special opportunity to own a limited edition colorful print created by local artist Joseph Craig English. These prints are available on our online art market in a limited edition of only 100 signed and numbered copies. The 16"x21.6" image

comes museum matted and framed in a 24"x30" Nielson gunmetal frame for \$550 or unframed for \$400. The artist will donate 50% of all proceeds from this special offer to the Partnership! You can also get carousel-themed notecards, mugs, and tote bags online or at the Popcorn Gallery during open hours. The online store also features books on the history of the Park and the carousel.

Finally, look out for more details about our Carousel Family Day back in person this year on May 22 from 11 AM-3 PM. See you there!
—MARTHA SHANNON

GOINGS ON

Glen Echo Town Events

May 3 5-9 PM, Town Election

May 8 9:30 AM-4 PM, Plant swap

Glen Echo Park Events

May 1 10:30 AM, Carousel ribbon cutting (virtual)

May 8 11 AM-4 PM, outdoor pottery sale (in person)

May 15 9:30 AM, Carousel Story Time (virtual)

May 22 11 AM-3 PM, Carousel Family Day (in person)



THE MINI FARM STAND

I've been busy at the farm, planting early crops such as beets, radishes, lettuce, and carrots. The tomatoes and peppers I started from seed are doing well and are about a foot tall. I've been watching a number of Youtube videos on peppers and tomatoes, picking up a few new tips to help ensure a good crop—there's always something more to learn. The stand will again be featuring Nick's farm-fresh organic eggs once the hens start



laying after their winter break.

The farm stand on University between Harvard and Yale Avenues is not up on a set schedule but is open depending on the weather and when we have a chance to harvest. Residents are notified of the stand's operation by email, so if you are not on the email notification list and want to hear when the stand is up, contact me with your email address. 301-312-2966 (text) OR cbarton@mindspring.com —CAROL BARTON



They Say it's Your BIRTHDAY!

May 9, **Sophie Polak**, 10

May 12, **Aran Bragan**, 9

May 23, **Alice Parsons Amdur**, 6

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