



PUBLISHED SINCE 1948 FOR THE TOWN OF GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND ~ CHARTERED IN 1904 ~ NOVEMBER 2020

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The October 12 Council meeting was held virtually on Zoom. Present were the four Council Members, Mayor Polak, Town Manager Beth Boa, the Town's auditor Eva Webb, and a resident or two.

The Audit

Eva Webb of LSWG presented her audit of the Town's financials for fiscal year 2019-2020, which ended in June 2020. Ms. Boa and Mayor Polak prepared the materials for the audit, and Ms. Webb began by saying that everything was in order, "clean," and that Ms. Boa had been very responsive during the entire process.

The highlights are that the Town has approximately \$700k in usable funds; the post office's rental of part of the Town Hall building provides Covid-proof revenue (\$32k in the last fiscal year); income taxes collected were \$15k more than expected; and the Town's biggest area of savings came

from switching sanitation providers.

While Ms. Webb said that the financials showed the Town is in good shape, she did caution "a lack of segregation of duties." This is common in very small towns, like ours, but the person handling all the financials—Ms. Boa—should not be the signatory on checks. The Mayor and Council plan to change this as soon as possible. Ms. Webb said there was certainly no evidence of misuse of funds, but that this is a red flag for auditors. She said that the Council's regular review of money coming in and out, as evidenced by questions raised at Council meetings, is a deterrent to

malfeasance, but that the process as it stands must be changed. The Council voted to approve of the audit as presented. Once it is finalized, the complete audit can be requested by residents.


Odds and Ends

The Council also approved new rules for public access to archived materials—e.g., the Town Manager must be present, no food or drinks, and \$.25 per copy made. Council Member Costello reported that the results of the recent leaf blower survey showed little interest among residents to regulate leaf blowers in any way.

6101 Harvard Avenue construction had been temporarily halted pending a sediment control meeting with the County, but the Mayor reported that work would resume. Work on a side screened-in porch began in October at 4 Vassar Circle. At a variance hearing on October 6, the Council

LEAF PICK-UP SCHEDULE

TUESDAYS:
November 3, 10, 17, 24
December 1, 8, 15
Leaves should be raked to the curb.



unanimously approved a variance for 7316 University Avenue. At that meeting, owner presented case for permission to extend the house's side porch by 3 feet—9 feet beyond what is currently allowed. He noted that none of the vegetation would need to be removed. The variance was approved in part because a WSSC easement prevents building a deck in backyard, and simply bring-ing the deck up to current safety code would require a

THE ECHO

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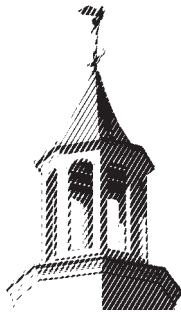
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Next Deadline: November 20, 2020

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: Nov. 9, 2020, 7 PM



*A new porch
for 4 Vassar Circle*

variance. The Council made it clear that the expanded deck on the Harvard Avenue side could not at any time be enclosed.

Ms. Boa said she had reached out to the County about the feasibility of a town-wide yard sale, but the rules—monitoring, restricting numbers of people, mandating safety protocols—made it too onerous for the Town. All Town-sponsored Halloween events are likewise cancelled this year. Ms. Boa is getting quotes for repairing the crumbling sidewalk along Susan Grigsby's prop-

erty on University (between Wellesley Circle and Bryn Mawr Avenue). And, finally, the new Sustainable Glen Echo website is up and running and is accessible from the Town's site. Discussed in detail at the September Council meeting, this site is part of the Town's efforts to become a Sustainable Maryland Certified Town.

Town Expenses

In October, the Town paid \$3,200 to Key Sanitation, \$2,500 to LSWG (auditor), and \$1,570 to Julia Sparacino (records retention specialist). —EMILY PARSONS

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November 26, 27, 28

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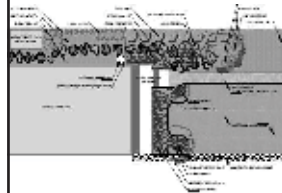
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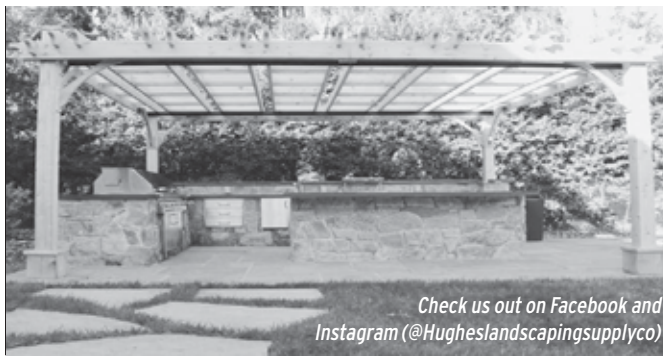
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 INTERNATIONAL REALTY

With many children learning at home, it would be fun and educational to undertake a plant or gardening project. The following are a few ideas which will encourage creativity, scientific observation, and a sense of accomplishment. Of course, the experience of caring for and watching your plant project prosper is priceless.



Make a Terrarium

Creating a terrarium is one plant project that works for a child of almost any age. A terrarium is a little garden growing inside a glass or plastic container—even large recycled beverage bottles will work well. Once planted, terrariums are low maintenance and lots of fun to observe. They teach children about the water cycle. As long as light and heat are present, water will evaporate from the plants and the soil. If you cover the terrarium, the water vapor hits the sides of the container and then condenses. As water builds up, the con-

HOLLY IN THE IVY

densation precipitates down the container and back into the soil. Thus, a terrarium is a mini-version of the earth's water cycle.

Here are the steps for making a terrarium:

1. Find a glass container—a one-gallon jar, an old aquarium, or goldfish bowl.

2. The first layer should be about an inch of pea gravel or pebbles; top the stones with a thin layer of charcoal (this prevents the roots from rotting).

3. Add 2–3 inches of potting soil.

4. Plant your small plants, after gently loosening the soil around the roots; many types of plants will work, such as ferns, ground covers, and spider plants. If you plant succulents, a sandy soil and an open container will work best.

5. Water until the soil is moistened; be careful, don't overwater.

It is fun to add little figurines to give your terrarium personality. Watch the plants to see when you might need to

add water. Spritzing is a good way to water gently. As the terrarium grows, you will need to prune some of the plants.

Grow a Hyacinth Bulb

Try growing a hyacinth in water in a glass container. It is exciting to observe the growth of roots and the plant itself. Use a glass container that has a narrow mouth for the bulb to sit in. Then fill the container with water up to just below the base of the bulb. A cold treatment is necessary if you do not purchase pre-chilled bulbs, which are a bit more expensive. To chill the bulbs, place them in a garage or shed for three months. The chilling area should have a temperature range of 35–45 degrees Fahrenheit and should never freeze. Then bring them inside to a warm, sunny spot and enjoy their growth and eventual flowering.

Change the water periodically and enjoy the intensely fragrant, colorful flowers. Once they are done flowering, the bulbs can be planted outside where they should bloom again in one or two years.



Create Festive Pomanders

Pomanders have a rich history. They have had a variety of uses such as a treatment for insomnia, antiseptics during the plague, a repellent for moths in closets, and as a way of getting rid of stale odors. Creating pomanders is a fun activity for children, and they make great gifts for Granny!

Pomanders can be made with oranges, lemons, limes, or even apples. I will describe making a pomander with an orange. You need plenty of whole cloves—they are cheaper if you buy them wholesale. Select a thin-skinned orange. First, pierce the skin with a darning needle or a bamboo skewer and then insert the cloves. Part of the fun is creating a pattern with the cloves. Place them close together. The fruit will shrink and ideally you won't see much fruit once it has dried. The fruit should be dry in about ten days, but the pomander will last for years.

Place the pomanders in bowls or stick a wire through the fruit, make a loop, and hang it in a closet with ribbon. —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**

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OUT AND ABOUT

As we turn to winter, in the midst of a pandemic, the dilemma of finding appropriately socially distanced activities during the holidays is a problem soon upon us. For the many of us opting to stay-cate and nix our travel plans, here are a few things to consider to bring some cheer to the season.



While the options to stream films straight from the cinema to your home now abound, movie lovers do have some other options. Drive-ins are back in a big way, with Loudon's Alamo Drafthouse and White Flint Plaza in Kensington featuring some

cult classics as well as new releases. Large screening chains like Regal and AMC are struggling, which has forced them to be creative and start offering private screenings. For as little as \$99, you and 19 of your closest family or friends can now rent an en-

tire theater at a local AMC.

While many of us have already exhausted Meadowlark Gardens and their walking lights tour, just a bit further away in Gaithersburg is the Winter Lights Festival at Seneca Creek State Park. The full festival

is a 3.5-mile drive of 450 light displays that kicks off on November 27—all easily enjoyed from the comfort of your own car.

With the Strathmore's doors shuttered for the time being, they have started a new series of free online shows with an array of artists. In collaboration with the National Philharmonic, on November 22 they will bring together some of the most renowned American composers of our time in concert. No need to rush to get a ticket or reserve your spot. All that's needed is to set a reminder to tune in and watch. —MONA KISHORE

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OUR TOWN PARK



Our Park remains active this fall, thanks to the work of the resident artists and GEPPAC program staff. A second set of art exhibitions opened in early October (running through November 15) in the Popcorn and Stone Tower Galleries. These two shows feature the work of three local artists: Preston Sampson in the Stone Tower and Ric Garcia and Fierce Sonia in the Popcorn Gallery.

Visitors enjoyed an outdoor art show and sale on October 17, which featured work of the pottery, art glass, and blown glass studios as well as small paintings. The Online Art Market remains an opportunity to purchase art by local artists.

The Park continues to make creative use of the Spanish Ballroom for meetings, training events, and live-streamed social dance concerts. The Bumper Car pavilion hosts various family events and receptions, as well as morning exercise gatherings for yoga and spin. The Aquarium is also doing more in-person

events on the weekends.

Online and in-person classes continue with the resident arts programs including Yellow Barn, Photoworks, Pottery, Art Glass, Glass Blowing, Silverworks, and the Washington Conservatory of Music. Adventure Theatre and Puppet Co. continue online programs. Repairs to the Dentzel Carousel have been completed since the vandalism which occurred last April. It looks beautiful! We are anticipating a grand reopening in 2021.

As we slowly reopen, we are very conscious of the need for health and safety. It is great to know that our Town families are using the park as a respite from the stresses of pandemic life! We are so grateful to Glen Echo families, led by Town resident Angela Hirsch, who are organizing a grassroots effort to raise funds for the Park. The board and staff are working on a new long-range plan to survive the Covid era and eventually add new facility upgrades, landscaping, and program offerings. —**MARTHA SHANNON**



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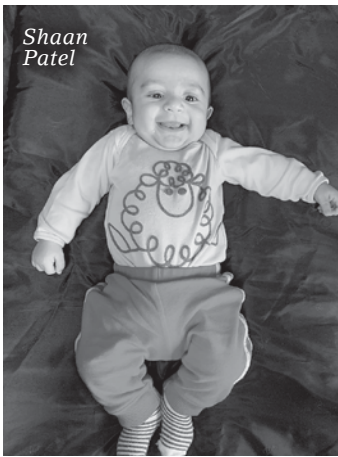
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A CORRECTION: In the October *Echo*, we ran incorrect birthday information for both of the **Spealman** children. Apologies! **Declan** turned 10 last month, and **Corrina**'s birthday is on September 19.

.....

And speaking of birthdays, we'd like to welcome **Shaan Patel** born July 21 in Georgia—that's the country, not the state—



and adopted by **Kavita and Chiraq** of Wellesley Circle. They traveled to Georgia in July to collect Shaan, which was no small feat with a

HAVE YOU HEARD?

global pandemic. Extra time for quarantining and canceled flights kept them there for a month, but Shaan and his parents are now settled happily back in Glen Echo.

.....

Wait, one more special birthday announcement! Long-term Glen Echo resident **Nancy Long** celebrated her 92nd in October at the nearby Sunrise Assisted Living at Fox Hill. While it's difficult to make plans these days, we can certainly hope for a dedication ceremony for the Nancy Long Bird and Butterfly Garden with Nancy next year.

.....

Council Member **Matt Stiglitz** reports from the latest **Police Advisory Board** meeting that this past summer saw over 100 protests and no arrests and that Montgomery County was already implementing

reforms—e.g., de-escalation training, limiting no-knock warrants—prior to the protests. Of note: the current class of recruits is the most diverse ever. Regarding next month's election, the drop-off boxes are monitored by video surveillance and voting locations on Election Day will have a police presence. While most crime stats are down, car thefts are up.

.....

Bannockburn's annual **Spring Show** is now available at www.springshow.org. Free to watch, but donations encouraged. And a sug-

gestion from the producers: "Crank your heater uncomfortably high, pour yourself a plastic cup of cheap white wine, and line all your worst lawn chairs up in the living



room to get the full Spring Show viewing experience right in your own home!"

Real Estate

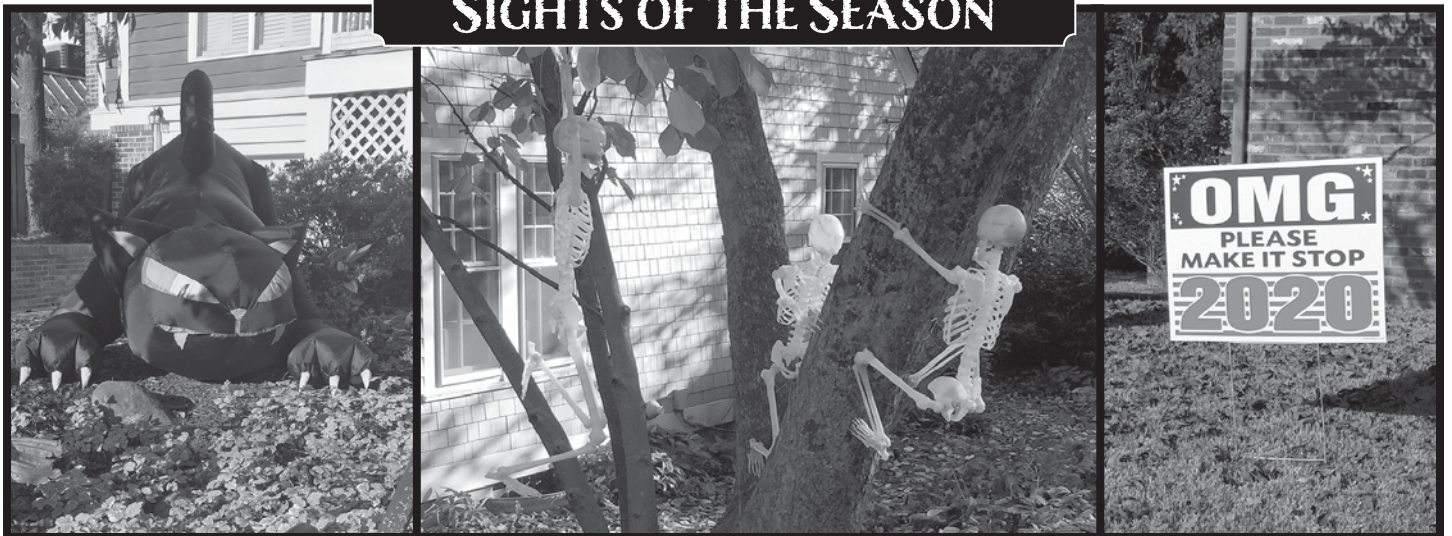
6005 Princeton, listed last month at \$1,069,000, sold quickly. 10 Vassar Circle is coming on the market soon.



They Say it's Your
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Nov. 18, **Kate Dobson**, 12
Nov. 19, **Cristina Hooper**, 10
Nov. 19, **Caroline Koonce**, 11

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