



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

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The virtual meeting held October 14 was attended by Mayor Costello, Town Manager Beth Boa, three Council Members—Council Member Stiglitz was absent—and a couple of residents. The meeting began with a presentation by the Town’s auditor Eva Webb.

Town Audit

Ms. Webb reported that the audit was once again “clean”—the financial statements provided by Ms. Boa were sound. Glen Echo has almost \$1.6M in assets, and in the last fiscal year the Town saw expenses decrease about \$47K (due to reduced engineering and legal consultations) and revenues increase by about \$40K (due to income taxes). It should be noted that regarding the Town’s assets, property like the Town Hall and the plots over by Oberlin and Tulane are valued at their purchase price rather than current market value. Ms. Webb said the Town’s financial picture is positive

despite the pandemic year, and this is before taking into consideration the \$266K coming from the American Rescue Plan. Like last year, Ms. Webb noted that it is difficult to maintain proper financial division of labor with one paid employee—an issue that most small towns face—so it is very important that the Council continue to be engaged in reviewing the monthly financial reports.

Environmental Committee News

Resident Holly Shimizu reported that after reviewing the analysis of the Town’s stormwater issues created by Greening Urban, she

has asked them to prioritize their recommendations and include cost estimates. After they resubmit, she will present their findings to the Council for discussion. This work is being paid for by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. There is hope that funds from the American Rescue Plan will be able to finance some of the recommended stormwater runoff mitigations. The Town may also choose to apply for more grants. Greening Urban’s plan includes per-

meable pavement, swales, raingardens, improvements to current drains, and adding gutters along existing sidewalks.

The Committee’s big news is that Glen Echo has been certified as a Sustainable Maryland town. The idea to go for this came from a Montgomery Municipal League event that then-Council Member Dia Costello attended five years ago. Ms. Shimizu took the lead, and with the collaboration of Ms. Boa and the



The new insect hotel in the Nancy Long Bird and Butterfly Garden was dedicated September 30.

THE ECHO

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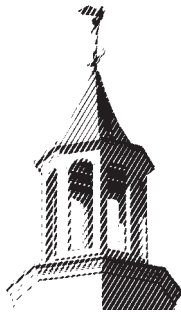
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Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be signed.

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 Council Meeting: November 8, 2021, 7 PM



Beth Boa, Holly Shimizu and Mayor Dia Costello were on hand to accept the Town's Sustainable Maryland certification.

participation of many Town residents, the designation is now ours. Creation of the Bird and Butterfly Garden and the insect hotel, switching to dual-stream recycling, using solar power at Town Hall, and adopting a non-toxic pesticide policy all moved us toward this goal. Many congratulations were pronounced at the meeting. However, the work isn't done, according to Ms. Shimizu. The Town will need to apply for re-certification in 2024.

Ms. Shimizu said that the Committee would like to work with the Council to have a more proactive tree-planting policy. Council Member Kishore referenced a policy at Martin's Additions as a possible model. There, the town purchases and plants native canopy trees on private property, and the recipients commit to their ongoing care.

Town Maintenance

After about two and half years of working with the Town, Joe Toomey is re-

tiring. Mr. Toomey provides as-needed engineering expertise by reviewing building plans and monitoring building sites, for example, when requested by the Mayor or Ms. Boa. The Council approved moving forward with Doug Lohmeyer of Montgomery Consulting as a replacement. He was recommended by Ms. Boa and Mayor Costello, who both interviewed him (as well as one other candidate). Mr. Lohmeyer does similar work for other towns and has experience with stormwater issues, and he has worked with both Ms. Boa and Wayne Fowler, the Town's as-needed construction site overseer. Mr. Lohmeyer will charge \$100/hour, compared to Mr. Toomey's \$90/hour, and he will be retiring himself in two years. With the completion of the Vassar Circle construction, Mayor Costello doesn't see any immediate engineering needs. On the horizon though is WMATA's demolition of the trestle bridge out past Radcliffe Lane and a possible renovation of the

Clara Barton House.

The Mayor and Ms. Boa met with Rolling Acres regarding our salting and snow plowing contract. It will be renewed at the same rate as last year, but Mayor Costello and Ms. Boa gave some feedback. They felt that there was some overplowing and over-salting last year. They also plan to monitor the use of brining—a pre-snow salt treatment that reduces the subsequent salting and plowing—to see if it seems effective. Bids are also coming in for the Town’s landscaping needs.

Memorial for Raya Bodnarchuk

Mayor Costello asked the Council Members what they thought about using the space by the tree in front of Town Hall to honor long-time resident Raya Bodnarchuk who passed away in September. Council Member Spealman was in favor of doing something, while

Council Member Wilson warned that the Town shouldn’t be in the business of setting up a public memorial for deceased residents, rather it should be a private donation. Ms. Kishore said she’d like to see Ms. Bodnarchuk’s art commemorated and agreed that spot is a good one since it is across the street from her residence, where people have long gotten to enjoy her wooden sculptures on her porch.

Mayor Costello agreed that this wouldn’t be a Town-sponsored memorial, rather something covered by a possible donation from her estate and private contributions. The Mayor mostly wanted to know if she could move forward organizing something that will eventually go in that spot by Town Hall. Ms. Wilson asked if it would be possible to buy or borrow one of Ms. Bodnarchuk’s paintings to be displayed in Town Hall.

Odds and Ends

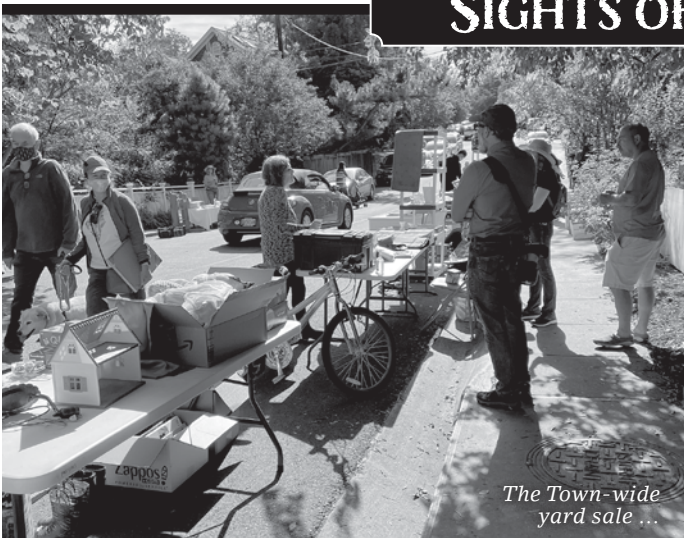
The Mayor wants Council Members to have “beats” that they cover for the Town. Council Member Stiglitz is on the police advisory committee, for example. Initially, Mr. Spealman said he’d oversee volunteer coordination for Town events, but later in the meeting he was reassigned to assist Ms. Boa in managing the American Rescue Plan funds (reporting, eligible uses, procurement)—instead of the Town hiring a consultant. Ms. Kishore and Ms. Wilson will work together on “natural landscape oversight,” also known as walking around town with an eye to overgrowth. They will also look into the feasibility of having a farmers’ market in Town, perhaps on the plots over by the Irish Inn.

The Mayor raised an issue: There have been some recent incidents of non-permitted work being done without neighbor notifi-

cation. Letting neighbors know about this type of project, which can occasionally block a road or last more than a day or create some inconvenient noise, is not a requirement, but it is a courtesy that the Mayor and Council hope residents will keep in mind when planning home improvements. It is especially important with so many people working from home these days.

The Mayor reported that she is checking in regularly with WMATA about the trestle bridge demolition. At this point, it seems a bit stalled—at least delayed past this winter. There was discussion about the annual Holiday Party in December. In the end, it was sounding like midday on Sunday, December 12, outdoors with Harvard Avenue closed off to car traffic, Mr. Omlette, a coffee and hot cocoa bar, and commemorative Glen Echo mugs. —EMILY PARSONS

SIGHTS OF THE SEASON



The Town-wide
yard sale ...



...and Halloween
decorations galore!



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NEW TO TOWN

There are a number of new faces in town, and more to come as the houses on Vassar Circle near completion. Among the bevy of newcomers are Matt Guevara and Claudia Rossel who, along with daughter Lucia, age 2, recently settled in at 6105 Bryn Mawr Avenue.



Claudia is a Montgomery County native. Her parents still live in Potomac, and her grandparents lived for many years off Goldsboro Road. They are raising Lucia to be bilingual—Claudia is a native-level Spanish speaker thanks to Chilean family connections. Matt grew up in Long Island, and they met in graduate school at University of Texas in Austin. Most recently, they lived in Columbia Heights.

Matt is a foreign policy analyst for the Department of Defense and is an Army Veteran. Claudia works as a consultant for Guidehouse, where she has transitioned

to working with domestic agencies after many years in international development and diplomacy.

While they loved their vibrant neighborhood and close neighbors, the pandemic prompted them to begin house-hunting. Lucia started daycare just a month

before lockdown, and soon the Guevara-Rossels found themselves balancing an infant, in-person work, Zoom meetings, and eager but distant grandparent childcare. Something had to give!

They were attracted to Glen Echo for its community feel and relative walkability. Claudia treasured her daily walk to work in the Before Times and is seeking out opportunities to walk more in the streets and trails around us. While it's no Columbia Heights, they have happily found that Lucia can make it most of the way to Fish Taco before melting down—a walk situation bound to improve with continued practice.

Matt and Claudia love live music and after a long hiatus, were thrilled recently to see Willie Nelson perform. Matt is also an aspiring guitarist, so you may hear some live music emanating from their porch on Bryn Mawr.
—ANGELA HIRSCH



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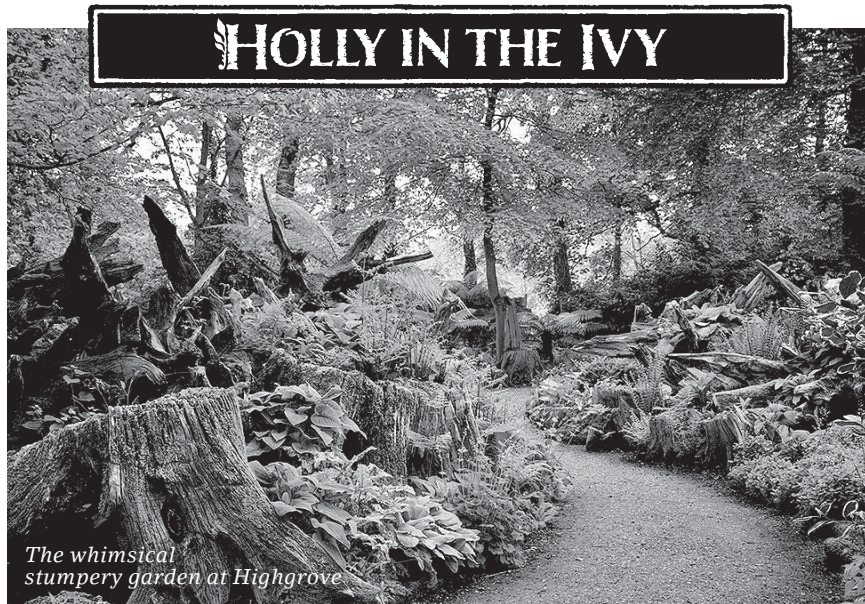
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Have you seen a snag lately? You probably have seen many as you walk along the canal or hike in the woods. Snags occur naturally when trees die, so essentially, they are the remains of a dead tree. They are also called habitat trees since they become home to hundreds of species of animals, including birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. Snags are a source of food, nesting sites, roosting places, storage, and perching sites.

Snags can last for many years as they decay and soften over time, yet they still give life to many creatures. As dead trees decompose, they provide rich nutrients. These habitat trees can be beautiful. When left alone, their form can integrate as



The whimsical stumpy garden at Highgrove

part of a garden. For example, they are attractive when used as a base for growing vines. Many artists work with snags to create a sculpture or carve a bat house or totem.

Woodpeckers tend to be the first birds to enjoy snags as they search for insect larvae beneath the surface of the tree bark. They also love snags as a place to perch, which allows them to see

other birds. After the woodpeckers leave, other birds such as bluebirds, swallows, wrens, and small owls will come nest in some of the cavities left by the woodpeckers. Nuthatches will frequent snags as they search for grubs and insects.

Snags vary greatly. But if you wish to leave one in your garden, I recommend that it be a minimum of three

inches thick and at least six feet tall. It is important to consider safety—be sure the snag won't fall on your house or something important. If the tree is too large, you can prune it back by as much as by one half or even two thirds. Downed logs are often placed on the ground around the stump. These logs are called

nurse logs because they are preferred by small mammals and amphibians.



Snags are perfect perching sites for birds to see—and be seen by birders!

OUR TOWN PARK

Glen Echo Park is pleased to be offering a more regular schedule of exhibitions, classes, and other programs this fall. The social dance groups are slowly returning to in-person sessions, taking advantage of the open-air Bumper Car Pavilion. Adventure Theatre and Puppet Co. are also offering in-person performances. If you come to the Park on the weekends you can visit the Popcorn

and Stone Tower galleries and stop into Pralines for refreshments.

The Popcorn Gallery features beautiful and unique glass items by our glass blowers. In the Stone Tower, see the meticulous landscape and figure paintings and drawings of New York artist Ephraim Rubenstein. In the Arcade building, visit the fun exhibition "Animals Around Us" on view through November 28. The annual Holiday Art Show featuring the works of Park artists will open on

November 20. You will surely find the perfect gift at this show, held in the Popcorn and Stone Tower galleries.



A painting by Ephraim Rubenstein

The GEPPAC board and staff are working with Montgomery County and the Na-

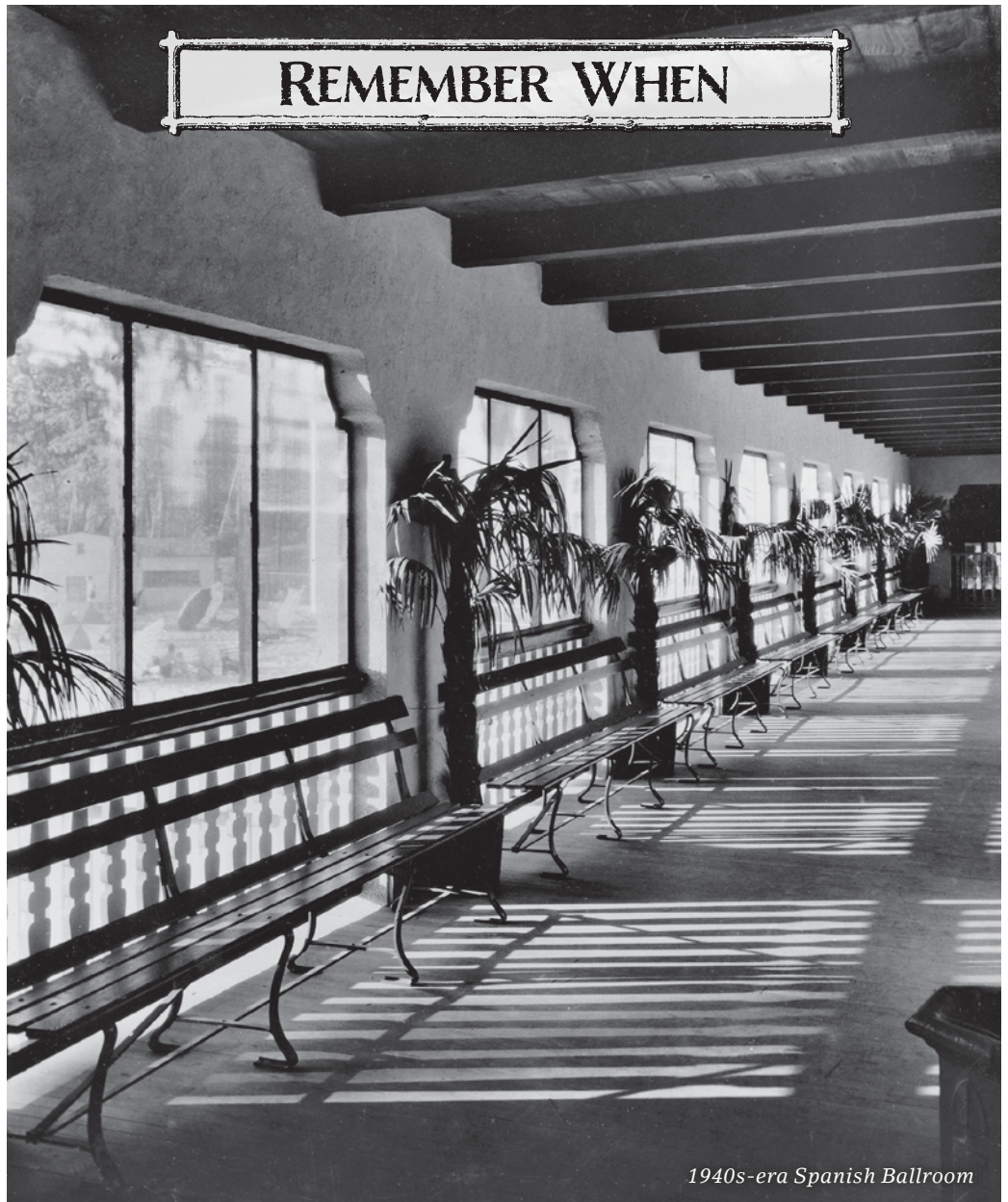
tional Park Service on planning for improvements to our historic grounds and buildings. In particular, we are examining upgrades to the Spanish Ballroom, including needed repairs of the historic dance floor and the possible addition of heating and air conditioning. Other studies will include the future of the Crystal Pool, and how we might add new spaces to the campus. No future upgrades are currently scheduled and are

You can also consider creating a stumpery, which is a whimsical garden that is made up of stumps, logs, driftwood, and bark. Stumperies were popular in 19th-Century British gardens. Prince Charles has a stumpery garden at Highgrove House, his home in Gloucestershire, England. Creative stumperies often use upturned tree stumps and plant them with ferns. Some are made into fairy gardens, gnome homes, birdhouse stands, or tree houses.

So, the next time a tree dies in your garden, think first about how it can be turned into an artistic creation that benefits wildlife, adds whimsy to your garden, and saves money—less tree work needed. Keep in mind that dead trees and logs live on as they continuously nurture new life. —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**

all dependent on additional funding. Work recently completed includes the refurbishment of the Arcade building exterior with a grant from Montgomery County. Another project underway is the replanting of the fountain area on the east side of the Park. It is funded through a grassroots fundraising program spearheaded by Barbara Martin, who lives near the Park. We are fortunate to have this community support! —**MARTHA MORRIS SHANNON**

REMEMBER WHEN



1940s-era Spanish Ballroom

Earlier this year, Glen Echo said good-bye to its oldest resident, Lee Clune, when she and her son Chris sold their house at 43 Wellesley Circle and moved to an apartment in Bethesda. Lee and her husband Bill moved to Glen Echo in 1958 and raised their four children here. They were very involved in Town affairs: Bill was on the Council, and Lee was

Election Supervisor, staff on *The Echo*, and organizer of the annual Halloween party. They left their mark on Glen Echo not just by their epic St. Patrick's Day parties—Bill Clune was instrumental in bringing mail delivery to our Town in 1963. Before he succeeded in lobbying for home delivery, residents had to pick up their mail from the P.O., but since most people worked

during the day hours, children were paid to fetch it or one resident would drop everyone's mail off at the District Grocery Store (now the Wild Bird Centers building). The houses in Town had to be re-numbered in order to receive the service! Lee shared this historic photo (above) of the Spanish Ballroom, where she and Bill had their first date in 1945. —**EMILY PARSONS**

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HAVE YOU HEARD?

Minnehaha Creek clean-up volunteers display their trash: Dan Spealman, Luke Roddy, and Declan Spealman ...



and Julia Wilson, Alex Boyar, Aaron Hirsch, and Matt Costello



A hardworking crew of volunteers organized by the Little Falls Watershed Alliance and the Town's Livable Town Committee met on the morning of October 9 to collect trash and debris from the **Minnehaha Creek** at Glen Echo Park. Items cleared from the

creek included a car's bumper, a trash can lid (ironically), part of a street sign, and a metal railing.

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There will be a **fall Art Walk** in the nearby neighborhood of **Mohican Hills** on November 6 and 7 from 11 AM to 4 PM. Local

artists will be exhibiting their work in front of their houses. They will be selling paintings, printed textiles, handmade books, jewelry, photography, fused glass, greeting cards, and other creative items. November 13 and 14 will be the rain dates only if both days are rained out.

In a year and a half, Glen Echo's **mail carrier Dorian Stewart** has become such a valued member of our community that when it was announced last month that she was being transferred, there was an outpouring of sadness on the listserv. One resi-

BIKE ACCESS TO THE C&O CANAL

Our closest access points to the C&O Canal—by the Cabin John Bridge and by the Sycamore store—are fine by foot, but unfortunately require bikers to carry their bikes for portions. There are easier ways to access the towpath for bikers that aren't much farther afield.

① Across the Cabin John Bridge, turn left at 79th Street. The street goes under the Parkway, leading to a short downhill gravel path to the Canal at Lock 8.

② Take the MacArthur bike path to Brookmont, turning right into Brookmont heading towards the river, then left on Ridge Road, parallel to the river. Towards the end of it, there is a steep path descending to the Canal at Lock 5.

③ Take the MacArthur bike trail past Brookmont up to the stoplight on MacArthur, crossing at the light, where there is a hilly bike trail leading to the Capital Crescent Trail, which leads

to the towpath near the intersection of Canal Road and Arizona Avenue. The hilly bike path also goes under the Crescent Trail to a bucolic and relative-



ly flat trail along Little Falls stream, emerging at Massachusetts Avenue across from the Little Falls Library.

④ A final bike-friendly option is to take the MacArthur path out to where it meets the end of the Parkway (8 miles roundtrip). A short ride down the entry to the Parkway leads to Carderock Park and the towpath, but you must interact with traffic entering the Parkway.

I recommend Strava—a great free app that maps you and shows the routes, distances, climbs, speed, and how long you've ridden. —DON DWORSKY



October Ladies Night celebrated our favorite mail carrier, Dorian Stewart.

dent called the postmaster to complain, and, just as abruptly, the decision was reversed. Ladies night in October at **Jane Stevenson's** went quickly from being a farewell gathering to a celebration. Dorian says she hopes that Glen Echo is her last route before she retires—and Town residents agree!

.....

There's a **new local coding club** coming soon, started by man-about-town-with-the-enormous-brown-dog Jamie Powers and marine robot designer Dr. Richard Sheryll. The Event Horizon Club will engage kids with tech challenges while building social skills critical for teamwork and collaboration. They plan to use Lego Mindstorm buildable/

programmable bots, and over a few weeks, teams of kids will build, code, and compete with their robots. The club will meet either at the Bannockburn Clubhouse or at Glen Echo Town Hall. "Beta Test Camp 1.0" is set to begin in November, so

interested families should email Jamie at datarules@me.com.

.....

During the month of November, **Simon Says Yoga** of Sumner Place shopping center will be using Town Hall for some of its classes while it is between studios. Yoga classes will never be so convenient!

Real Estate

10 Vassar Circle will come on the market soon with an asking price of \$1,599,000. The Wild Bird Centers building at 7370 MacArthur Boulevard should close this month.



20 Vassar Circle is complete!

GOINGS ON



Town Hall Events

Looking ahead:

December 12 11 AM–12:30 PM,

← Annual Holiday Party

Local Events

November 6–7 11 AM–4 PM, Mohican Hills Art Walk

Glen Echo Park Events

The Puppet Co. www.thepuppetco.org; 301-634-5380

Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins

November 18–January 2

The Nutcracker

November 26–January 2

Adventure Theater MTC

www.adventuretheater-mtc.org;

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Winterfest


November 19–January 2





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Nov. 18, **Kate Dobson**, 13
 Nov. 19, **Cristina Hooper**, 11
 Nov. 19, **Caroline Koonce**, 12



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