



PUBLISHED SINCE 1948 FOR THE TOWN OF GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND ~ CHARTERED IN 1904 ~ MARCH 2023

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The meeting was held via Zoom with Mayor Costello and all Council Members except Council Member Stiglitz in attendance. Also present were the Town Manager Beth Stickler, a handful of residents, and Ha-Yeon Jeon, an observer and intern for Delegate Marc Korman's office.

Police Report

The February 13 Town Council meeting was informally kicked off with Mayor Dia Costello welcoming MCPD's Officer Demond Johnson. Office Johnson spoke with candor of the police force's current staffing shortage. He led a conversation on staying safe in and around our neighborhood, a subject of heightened interest because of a recent string of car break-ins in our area. The man in blue shared that the vast majority of car break-ins are crimes committed against unlocked cars. If your car is locked then it will likely be passed over, unmolested by criminals.

Some tips he shared were to use exterior house lights, not to leave valuables in vehicles, to lock your cars, and to report suspicious activity to the police.

Odds and Ends

After this conversation, the Town Meeting was formally kicked off. First on the agenda were comments from residents. Gloria Levin announced that last month she resigned from her long-held seat on the board of the Glen Echo Fire Department. Gloria noted that her seat could be filled by a volunteer from Town (This could be you! If interested, send a note to townhall@glenecho.org).

John Lynch of Vassar

Circle shared the sad news that another majestic oak on his property is dying and will be removed in early March. Mr. Lynch requested that the Town consider waiving the \$3,000 bond he has been asked to post. The bond would be used to help cover costs in the unlikely event that the tree removal damages Town property. Otherwise, in the case of no damages, the bond would be returned to him. Given that the tree is scheduled to be removed prior to the next Council meeting, the Council dove into a robust discussion that included questioning the need for a bond if heavy equipment is not used (as claimed by the arborist), the type of insurance the arborist holds, what the Town's ordinances require, and the

feasibility of changing any ordinances. The Council chose to follow up on this issue once they reviewed the ordinances more carefully. [Update: To clarify, the Town requires a bond for heavy equipment, which



Our new (and still very charming) street signs were finally installed.

THE ECHO

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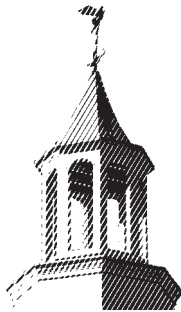
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Next Deadline: March 20, 2023

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: March 13, 2023, 7:30 PM

the Lynches will not need for their tree removal.]

The rest of the evening's agenda moved swiftly with an approval of the January meeting minutes, an update on the March 4 Winterlude social gathering and fundraiser for a local family shelter, and a discussion of options for a refresh to the interior of the Town Hall. Among the options are new floor tiling, covering up existing peg board walls, a new kitchen sink, and a new sound system. While there was quick agreement that the current acoustics situation in the Town Hall is unpleasant at best, it is unlikely to be resolved by this refresh, because the work will only tap into a small amount of the total available Covid relief funds.

In gardening news, the Town received seven bids for its landscaping contract. Town Manager Stickler recommended signing a contract with Level Green—not only were they the most economical, they also had good references and are used by Glen Echo Park. Congratulations, Level Green, the Council members voted to make Glen Echo your newest client.

Other notes of merit include a Mayoral proposal for a March 12 volunteer appreciation event to recognize existing volunteers in our Town and to encourage new ones. The Council Members grinned

with pleasure in response to the many compliments (and no complaints!) received concerning the attractive new street signs. The street sign contractor is attending to some final fixes to the new signs. The Clara Barton House construction is delayed in order to address unexpected structural issues. This setback pushes the construction start date to January 2024. The Mayor shared an incipient idea for Glen Echo and its MacArthur Boulevard neighbors to use email to rapidly communicate news, specifically any safety concerns. The Mayor is also in conversation with the Bannockburn neighborhood on improving safety at the Bannockburn Drive and MacArthur pedestrian crosswalk.

Stay posted for upcoming Town Council agendas, including the Town's budget and the possibility of welcoming signs that demarcate the Town of Glen Echo.

Town Expenses

In February, the Town paid \$11,780 to Coastal Resources, \$3,500 to Key Sanitation, \$1,342 to PNC Bank, and \$1,005 to Pepco (streetlights).
—PETE EPANCHIN

CORRECTION: The Feb. Echo cited "merely satisfactory" landscaping work from Rolling Acres, when, in fact, it is Maple Hill's work that led the Town to get new bids.

A NOTE FROM THE MAYOR

I am writing in response to the two early morning break-in attempts that occurred on January 24 and February 18. The car break-ins consisted of thieves pulling car door handles to see if they were unlocked, and the two attempted home break-ins consisted of intruders trying home door handles as well. We know these details due to residents' home security footage. It was very fortunate the home doors were all securely locked.

Certainly, these events are disturbing, and we want to be proactive in taking appropriate preventative measures. I have spoken to Commander Daum at District 2, our local police precinct as well as the reporting officers. We held a safety meeting to discuss these events and possible safety options on February 23 with Council and residents.

There is not one method to prevent crime but we are considering options that may be effective. Alternatives range from thinking about changes in street lighting, Town Council members on foot patrol to ensure car doors are locked, hiring professional security patrols, installing security cameras through Town, and encouraging residents to consider home alarm systems and outdoor lighting. We are also speaking with other towns regarding measures they are taking as similar events have generally increased in our area.

I have created a listserv with the lead contacts in our connected neighborhoods so our communication is extended and improved. Montgomery County traffic is also doing an evaluation of the street lighting on MacArthur Boulevard at my request.

The most important thing you can continue to do is intentionally prevent potential "crimes of opportunity." This means ensuring your car and home doors are always locked, bikes and scooters are secured away in a safe, out of the way place, ensuring your home and yard have adequate lighting, and leaving your porch lights on throughout the night.

Please do call 911 during an active emergency, or use the non-emergency number, 301-279-8000, if you notice something occurred overnight. (Let us know at Town Hall as well.) The police appreciate receiving any footage you may have to help them catch the culprits.

I will keep the Town apprised via Constant Contact and our resident listserv when the Council has decided what action they choose to take. As always, do not hesitate to contact me with your thoughts, questions, and concerns.

—DIA COSTELLO

NEW TO TOWN

The Steele family has deep roots in Glen Echo. Meris and Mark moved to their home on Bryn Mawr Avenue in the early nineties. Meris' parents joined them soon after: Phyllis Daen and her late husband Jerome first lived in what is now Julie Rosenthal's house on Harvard, which connects to the Steeles' Bryn Mawr home via the back gate. Phyllis moved to her current home down the hill to make room for her grand piano!

Meris and Mark's children were lucky to spend their childhood with their grandparents, and now the multi-generational tradition is continuing. Kellan Steele has moved back to Town with her daughter Isla, age 15 months. "It's a once in a lifetime chance," says delighted grandfather Mark, to live with his first grandchild and daughter.

Kellan had been living in the United Kingdom, finishing her Ph.D. in math at University of Glasgow. When Isla was born, she arranged to come back to Glen Echo for a few months—she

hadn't seen her parents since the start of the pandemic. Her husband, Flynn Gewirtz-O'Reilly, remained in London to finish his doctoral degree in statistics.

Plans shifted, however, when Kellan was offered a job locally. The four-month visit became a long-term plan to stay in the United States, with Flynn joining when he gets his green card and finishes his degree.

They'll look for a place of their own eventually and hope to stay in Glen Echo. Kellan, a lifelong resident, says, "It's a special place to grow up."

Isla—nicknamed Tater by her grandfather—likes to go to Glen Echo Park, hang out with fellow 15-month-old Jordy Finan, and go to school. Isla is also taking swimming lessons, preparing to represent the next generation of Steeles on the Bannockburn swim team: her mom, Uncle Spenser, and Aunt Bryna were all members and coaches, and her grandparents were superstar parent leaders for many years.

—ANGELA HIRSCH

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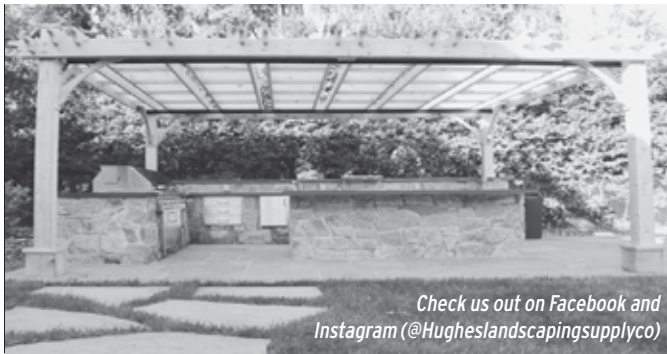
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HOLLY IN THE IVY

I am always excited to look through my new stack of plant catalogues. Two important factors I consider are how well a plant will grow in my soil and light conditions and where I have the right space in my garden. I check out the most interesting vegetables, herbs, and perennials. Heirloom plants are wonderful. They often have better flavor and fragrance, and bring qualities that may have been lost in the breeding process. Some of the newly developed plants provide disease resistance and have been improved in some way.

The new **Sun Dipper tomato** sounds promising. It is ideal for container growing as it produces a cherry-sized fruit that is a deep orange, shaped like a bowling pin, and grows



about one inch long. Most importantly, it is disease resistant, has excellent flavor, is prolific, and does not crack.

One vegetable that I always include in my garden is **Bright Lights Swiss chard**. Its

iridescent stems are gold, pink, orange, and purple on upright attractive plants that make it a stunning addition to any garden.

Harvesting throughout the growing season can be done without damage to the mother plants. Swiss chard is a delicious as well as nutritious vegetable.

There is also a gorgeous Ruby Red Chard that is a strong growing heirloom cultivar with brilliant red stems and leaf veins.

Impatiens is a favorite shade annual as it provides



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a variety of summer colors. The double forms have not always been easy to find. Now the catalogues are including a new Glimmer series which produce double flowers that remind me of unfurling roses. Appleblossom is a stunning pale pink variety with an explosion of flowers and, happily, the plants are resistant to the downy mildew that is often a problem for impatiens.

'Appleblossom' impatiens



Because my garden has a fair amount of shade, I am always looking for shade plants that can provide contrast. 'Dark Side of The Moon' is a new perennial Astilbe with deep burgundy-chocolate leaves and upright fluffy, rose-pink flowers that are loved by

bees. Astilbes need moisture and around six hours of filtered light to thrive. The deep burgundy leaves should stand out in a garden of green.

An additional new burgundy foliage shrub that is actually a cultivar of our native ninebark is named Panther ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*). It shows off textured dark purple-black foliage, which provides a strong contrast in the garden. The beautiful pink flowers add to its beauty as does the peeling bark seen in winter. Ninebark plants attract both butterflies and hummingbirds. The Panther cultivar is a small shrub, approximately 4 feet, which thrives in partial shade to full sun. —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**



I assume these plants or seeds will be available locally. If you wish to purchase online, check out these sources:

- www.johnnyseeds.com
- www.totallytomato.com
- www.burpee.com
- www.waysidegardens.com

CALLING ALL WEED WARRIORS!

Have you noticed how the English ivy, kudzu, and other invasive vines are killing the trees along MacArthur Boulevard, from Brookmont to Cabin John, in Glen Echo Park, and in Glen Echo? Well, thanks to Jon Nowick and Carl Gunther, who have begun an organized, volunteer-run effort to tackle this problem, many trees in our area could be saved. This is a serious problem that is getting worse quickly. By cutting down the vines, we can lessen their stranglehold on the trees in time for them to survive and regain their health.



Jon and Carl are working with the National Park Service in coordination with Mr. Charles Cuvelier, Superintendent for the NPS George Washington Memorial Parkway. Their volunteer coordinator, Ranger Tracy Roth, will be coordinating and overseeing the project.

There are volunteer opportunities available on weekends and weekdays. Each session will be for two hours. Bring your own gloves and tools. If you don't have the tools, the NPS will have some available. This is a great community builder and a critical environmental issue. If you are interested in joining the effort, please contact Jon Nowick at avanti7700@verizon.net.

Sessions are scheduled from 10 AM to 12 PM on Friday, March 3, Friday, March 24, and Saturday, April 1. So far, about 40 volunteers have signed up, including our Mayor Dia Costello, myself, and 6 others from Glen Echo! —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**

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OUT AND ABOUT

After a long hiatus, the boisterous **National Gallery Nights** return on March 9. This long-awaited after-hours monthly party will recommence in the East Building and celebrate female heroes, "(S)heroes," with a sneak peak of works to come at the future opening of Smithsonian American Women's History Museum. Not a coincidence, this event aligns with Women's History Month. The evening will include music, dance, food, and drinks, and a hands-on opportunity to make your own art all packed from 6–9 PM. Registration is required

and opens March 2 at noon. Act fast because this event will surely sell out in seconds.

Another typically sold-out event: On March 9, Kennedy Center holds its beloved fourth annual **RIOT!** event with a star-packed lineup of female comedians. Tickets are now on sale and available online.

RiverRun Festival commences on March 22 at the Kennedy Center with a magnificent lineup of



performances—from dance to film to music—celebrating the environmental impact and importance of rivers across the world. Passes with discounts are available for those interested in more than one performance. The festival will run until April 22.

The **Cherry Blossom Festival** is firmly set to kick

off this year on March 20 and run through April 16. While it's still too early to tell when peak bloom will be around the monuments, a line-up of events are now posted. A fundraiser for keeping the festival free for all, the fashionable **Pink Tie Party** will be the place to see and be seen on March 16 in downtown DC at the Ronald Reagan Building.

Not to be forgotten, **St. Patrick's Day** will be well placed on a Friday this year on March 17. Several local bars will be celebrating the holiday including, to be expected, our local Irish Inn. —MONA KISHORE

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If you are considering running for an open Council seat on May 1, 2023, here is information that will assist your efforts:

- Open seats are for a 4-year term. Candidates must be registered Glen Echo voters who have resided in Town for at least one year prior to the election and be at least 25 years of age. They are not required to be U.S. citizens.

- We encourage you to attend the next Town Council Meeting on Monday, March 13, via Zoom. Our Town Manager will send out the link with the agenda the Friday prior to the meeting. I encourage anyone interested to log in to experience the dynamics of the Council and learn more about the role a Council Member plays.

- Anyone interested in running must declare their nomination no later than COB April 11, 2023 in writing to Jan Shaut, Election Supervisor. Deliver your nomination to 6004 Harvard Avenue or via

2023 ELECTION NOTICE

email to JShaut@gmail.com.

- We will hold a "Meet the Candidates" event at the Town Hall on Friday, April 14, from 5 to 7 PM. This will give people an opportunity to meet with those interested in running prior to the election on May 1.

- Candidates must produce a bio, in the form of a flyer, along with a photo that will be available at the meet and greet. The bio and photo will also be published in the next edition of *The Echo*.

- If elected, you will need to attend the Council meeting on May 8 to be sworn into office and participate in the meeting.

For all Town residents: Absentee ballots will be available from Jan Shaut on April 14 at the Meet the Candidates event and at 6004 Harvard Avenue (call 301-661-6811 to arrange a

time to pick up the ballot).

Following that date, Mayor Costello will be at the Town Hall office the evening of April 17 through the 20th from 7 to 8 PM, if you would like to pick up a absentee ballot or drop one off. An Absentee ballot can also be mailed to our P.O. Box # 598, Glen Echo, MD 20812. If in Town, please use the mailbox inside the post office. Do not drop ballots in the mail slot at the Town Hall. All ballots must be received by Jan Shaut, Supervisor for the Election, by April 29 to be counted on May 1. —**JAN SHAUT**

Council-curious? Hear what some current Council Members have to say:

"Most of us live in Glen Echo partly because it is unusual in how close-knit and involved the community is. There is no better way to experience



that sense of community than to be on the Council. Meeting once a month, with a few extra budget meetings, Council members are an integral part of the ordinances and finances of the Town. In addition, it is a wonderful way to meet your neighbors and learn what issues are important to them."
—**JULIA WILSON**

"The council is a great way to lend your experience for the good of the Town. Everyone comes with a unique perspective that is welcome and heard."
—**MONA KISHORE**

"The Council is a great way to be involved in solving the issues we face together as a community; it's nice to feel like you're helping in some small way to make the Town a better place. Also, I like the folks I get to serve with—the Council Members, Mayor, Town Manager and Committee Members are all great people, and it makes it easy to work with them."
—**DAN SPEALMAN**



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On the second time around, can I claim this to be an annual column summing up the Academy Award Best Picture Nominees and where to stream them?

But before we get to that, don't forget that great theaters like the Avalon and AFI Silver usually give you a second bite at the apple in March with some Oscar-nominated films you missed in 2022. Keep an eye out for some hard-to-find movies you might not otherwise be able to catch before the big show on March 12.

Playing through early March at the Avalon are the nominated short programs that round up the Doc Shorts in one showing, the Live Action Shorts in another, and the Animated Shorts in a third. Highlights for me included *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* (also streaming on AppleTV+), which is a tender animated fable; *The Elephant Whisperers* (Netflix), which is an inspiring environmental documentary; and *Stranger at the Gate* (Youtube), a surprisingly redemptive true-life story.

And now, for Best Picture, the nominees are ...

All Quiet on the Western Front is a German film that continues a trend that I appreciate of allowing more foreign language pictures into the race for top film of the year,

THE CINEMANIAC



Everything Everywhere All at Once

but it's far more likely to win in the International Feature category than here. It is paradoxically both beautifully and brutally filmed and certainly hits its marks in terms of confirming that war is hell and often futile. It's a well-made film all around except that I found the score to be intrusive and distracting. (Streaming on Netflix)



Avatar: The Way of Water

Avatar: The Way of Water is somewhat less ridiculous than its 2009 predecessor (thankfully, "unobtanium" is only said once, that I recall) but it's still full of plot holes and one-note characters. I will say that this sci-fi spectacular of aliens trying to stave off human invaders is technically and visually unique and kept me engaged enough that I

wasn't checking my watch every 20 minutes for the full 3 hours. (In theaters, until it comes to Disney+ sometime later this year.)

The Banshees of Inisherin is a small, intimate story of two friends who have, shall we say, a serious falling out. It's loved by critics, well-acted, and filmed in a beautiful Irish setting, but I often found it frustrating and even a little horrifying. The motivations of the characters make no sense at all unless you think of it as a parable about the stupidity and self-destructive nature of humankind (as reflected in the civil war taking place at the time). (HBOMax)



Elvis

Elvis is a biopic you might enjoy if you are a fan of Baz Luhrmann's directorial style, but I find it a bit

too showy and frenetic. Still, lead actor Austin Butler deserved his best actor nod, even if Tom Hanks's performance as the evil manager was cartoonish and abrasive. (HBOMax)

Everything Everywhere All at Once is both my favorite of the bunch and my pick to win the trophy (it's always nice when that's the same movie). Inventive, touching, and hilarious, this alternate-universe-hopping story of an immigrant family who is both closer and stronger than they realize earned the most nominations of any movie this year. It's led by a triumvirate of great, nominated performances on the part of Michelle Yeoh, Ke Huy Quan, and Stephanie Hsu, and I'll be disappointed if at least one of them doesn't also score a win in an acting category. (Showtime)



The Fablemens

The Fablemens is by far Steven Spielberg's most personal movie to date. It's not so much a celebration of film, as it is a surprisingly honest confession by a director about how he learned as a youth to use movies to manipulate his audience and how his obsession with film led to

riffs in his family. (Expected to stream on Peacock soon)

Tár, like its protagonist, a troubled symphony director played by Cate Blanchet in a likely Oscar-winning performance, is brilliant, prickly, and hard to fully comprehend. Be sure to read Dan Kois' explanation of its ending at Slate.com to fully grasp what director Todd Field is trying to portray. (Peacock)



Top Gun: Maverick

is actually better than the original. Tom Cruise is back, piloting his fighter against the bad guys, but a little less cockiness this go around makes his character a lot more tolerable. Val Kilmer, performing through throat cancer, makes a particularly moving cameo. (Paramount+)

Triangle of Sadness is, well, a lot. It's a satirical take

on class dynamics that feels almost like three separate vignettes (in the fashion world, on a boat, and on an island) tied together. The behavior of many of the characters is revolting, as is their comeuppance. I laughed a lot throughout, but I cringed plenty, too. (Rentable from Amazon, Apple, etc.)

Women Talking is a powerful but quiet film about sexual assault survivors in a religious colony and their debate about how they should handle the situation. The title accurately captures the plot of most of the film, but



in Sarah Polley's confident directorial hands, those conversations are full of tension, thoughtfulness, and drama. (Not streaming as of this writing.)

—DAN SPEALMAN

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HAVE YOU HEARD?



The Gillberg family with new baby Jasper

The Glen Echo baby boom continues! Welcome to **Jasper Gillberg** born February 3! Mom **Natalie** reports that big sibs **Niklas, Stella,** and **Sandra** are very much enjoying spending time with their new baby brother.

.....

On Wednesday, January 25, Wellesley Circle resident **Paul Levine** was crossing Woodmont Avenue in Bethesda on his way to swim laps when a



Paul Levine

truck coming from the opposite direction unexpectedly turned left and struck him, running over his leg. The driver didn't stop but was found soon after. Miraculously, Paul had no head

injuries and is his usual optimistic and engaged self. However, his leg was badly damaged and couldn't be saved. Paul with wife **Debbie Lange** and his children have spent the past month in various hospital settings, and he is now receiving physical therapy at National Rehabilitation in DC. You can follow Paul's progress or reach out via his site at CaringBridge. If you would like to see what you can do to support Debbie in this challenging time, contact neighbor **Maire Hewitt** (301-502-2689) who is coordinating keeping her fridge stocked, etc.

.....

Inspired by her eight years in office in Glen Echo, Mayor **Dia Costello** is running for District 16 Delegate to fill the vacancy that Ariana Kelly left after she was recommended to fill Susan Lee's state senate seat. Governor Wes Moore will appoint the person recom-

mended by the County's Democratic Party, so letters of support from registered Democrats is a deciding factor. Letters must be emailed to d16vacany@mcgcc.org by 5 PM on March 17. And, don't worry, Dia will still be our Mayor!

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Everyone should have received their **Town Directory!** If you did not get

one or if your information is not correct, please email TheEchoEditor@gmail.com

.....

Last month, **Tree Montgomery** installed three trees in our right of way, by the Town Hall. This was part of a free tree planting program that all residents are eligible for. Two of the trees planted are Redbuds and the middle tree is a Gleditsia Shademaster. Thanks to **Mona Kishore** for shepherding the process.

SIGNING OFF

At the beginning of February new street signs were installed. The old script signs were distributed to interested residents based on who had lived in Town the longest. All signs were claimed. If you would like to share how you are using or displaying your sign, send a picture to TheEchoEditor@gmail.com



Three new trees in the right-of-way across from Town Hall

OUR TOWN PARK

Our vision for the Park is to foster creativity and community well-being through the power of the arts and nature. As spring approaches this vision is coming alive! It's a lovely place for classes, dancing, or enjoying an art exhibition or Puppet Co show. Take a class in storybook writing or fiber arts! Think about relaxing there enjoying a picnic or simply soaking up the environment. New art exhibitions include a display of DC's Otis Street artists in the Popcorn Gallery. Also coming up will be a new installation depicting an artist's view of how nature has been "Uprooted" via a variety of influences such as invasive species. Look for this installation at the "wall" where the Carousel 100 mural was displayed.

Other news: We will be working on filling those pesky potholes in the upper lot this spring! The Park

Service is continuing to plan for the renovations of Clara Barton House. They will be studying the public feedback recently received. This may delay the project, but it will be completed. Other planning is moving along on the options for improvements to the Spanish Ballroom. Those results will be coming up in 2024.

Speaking of the Ballroom, stay tuned for information about the annual Gala in the Park. Mark your calendar for May 20. It's always a super event!

The GEPPAC board is growing! As of February 1, we added five new members. These individuals will add new ideas, enthusiasm, talents, and support to the Park. The Town is well represented with board members including Willem Polak, Dia Costello, Mona Kishore, and Katrin Peck. The current board members are featured on the Park website. —**MARTHA MORRIS SHANNON**

GOINGS ON

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

8–10:30 PM, FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, free to Town residents

March 4 6 PM, Winterlude, an outdoor party of lights (and warm treats) on upper Harvard



Local Events

March 8 6–8 PM, Family Bingo Night at Whitman High School; proceeds go to Shepherd's Table, a local charity

March 31 7–9 PM, Family Night Bingo at the Clara Barton Community Center, \$5 cards, food, friends, and local celebrity callers—House of Delegates members Marc Korman and Sara Love!

Glen Echo Park Events

March 12 3–5 PM, Family Dance in the Ballroom Back Room, \$5

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

Sleeping Beauty March 2–April 9

Tiny Tots select Weds, Sats, and Sundays at 10 AM

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, AT 8 PM
LADIES NIGHT
 7106 RADCLIFFE • MADELEINE CARTER HOSTING



They Say it's Your
BIRTHDAY!

March 11, **Greta Hirsch**, 12

I live, *work*, and
have grown my
family here.



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