



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

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

Because there was no August meeting, Mayor Costello, Town Manager Beth Stickler, and the four Council Members settled in for a three-hour meeting on September 11. Also in attendance were several residents and an intern from Delegate Marc Korman's office. The Mayor began the meeting with thanks: to Ms. Stickler for handling the fallout from the July 29 storm, to Council Member Stiglitz for building and installing the Little Free Library, and to resident Carol Barton for her years of providing the Town with her Mini-Farmstand.

Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant

At the last meeting, the Council got the surprising news that the Town's request for a grant to implement two water management projects—a rain-garden in front of Town Hall and a dry swale in the right of way between Harvard and Bryn Mawr Avenues—had been denied. At this meeting, resident Robin Kogelnik came to explain why this happened.

There were more applications this year, and we came

pretty close—36 grants were awarded, and we ranked 40th out of 68. The main issue was that the Town had only received one bid for the work at the time of submission and at \$155K it was much higher than the \$76K expected by the engineers who had designed the plan. Had we received more (and more reasonable) bids, the outcome very likely would have been different. The one other area deemed weak was "Audience Need." This refers to the size of the community that would ben-

efit and whether that community has been historically under-resourced. There isn't a lot that Glen Echo can do to strengthen this category, but Ms. Kogelnik said that it was highlighted in our application that we don't get County funds for stormwater management.

Mr. Stiglitz asked if we would have a good shot at getting the grant if we re-applied next year. Ms. Kogelnik said that these two projects are just the first of a whole list of things that our consultants identified as solutions to Town water issues. She and other members of the Environmental Committee recommend that the Town use American Rescue Plan Act funds to implement these first two projects sooner rather than later and then next year apply for a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant for the remaining items on the list.

Ms. Kogelnik reported that the bids that eventually

did come in for the rain-garden and dry swale varied greatly, so she is doing an in-depth comparison to figure out which vendor would be best for the projects. She will be back at the October meeting with more concrete numbers and the Council can decide what it wants to do. Mayor Costello said that refreshing the upstairs of Town Hall was a lower priority than dealing with stormwater. The remaining ARPA money—\$193K—needs to be committed by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2025.

Fence Permit Ordinance

Resident Pete Epanchin attended the meeting to urge the Council to take a "less is more" approach when considering additional permitting requirements. This is also an argument made by Council Member Spealman, who wondered if adding a permit requirement for

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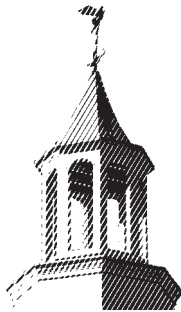
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Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be signed.

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: October 9, 2023, 7:30 PM

any new fence would really solve the problems it is intended to address. However, this is an issue that Mayor Costello and Ms. Stickler, as the people who deal with the problems that arise from a surprise new fence, feel very strongly about.

They also feel that simply telling residents that the Town isn't dealing with any fence concerns and to contact the County

directly wouldn't be a satisfactory response. Council Members Wilson and Tanner both thought it was

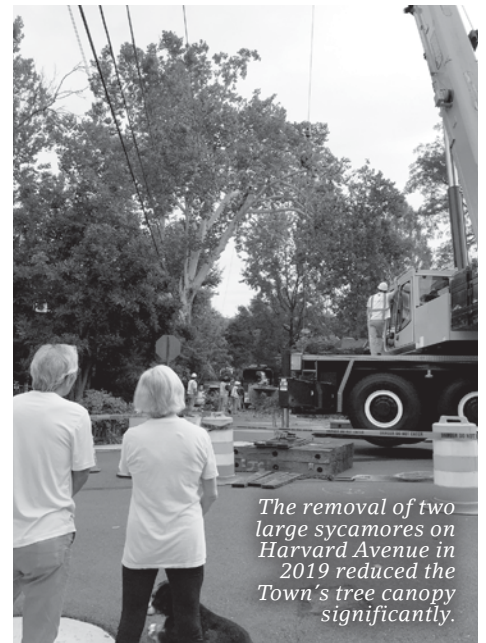
reasonable for the Town to try to solve the problem with a no-fee permit for any fence being built—new or replacement.

Mr. Stiglitz went even further and cited not just absent County en-

forcement and residents' expectation that the Town would help resolve fence disputes, but also a lack of engagement and neighborly consideration in recent years as factors that make action on this ordinance reasonable. With a few small changes, the Council introduced the updated ordinance, which means it can come to a vote at the October 9 meeting. Residents will be notified of the changes and can bring any comments to that meeting.

Tree Removal Criteria Ordinance

Currently, the Town has no power to stop a resident from cutting down any tree on their property. The owner simply needs to notify the Town Manager (it's supposed to be with 60-day notice). However, many surrounding municipalities are more proactive about protecting the can-



The removal of two large sycamores on Harvard Avenue in 2019 reduced the Town's tree canopy significantly.

opy and mitigating the environmental damage done when too many large trees are cut down in a community. The new ordinance being considered will have a list of aggravating and mitigating factors that will be considered, and the Mayor and Council tried to avoid any that seemed too subjective. If passed, the Mayor would be able to deny permission to remove a tree from private property. That said, this isn't expected to come up often and residents would

not be forced to keep trees that were a danger. In some cases, the Town would retain its own arborist to assess. The Council introduced the amended ordinance with some edits, but it will be shared with residents and discussed before coming to a vote. Mr. Spealman and Ms. Tanner agreed that large healthy trees should be protected and the common good considered, while Mr. Stiglitz had reservations.

Trestle Bridge Future

Mayor Costello and Ms. Stickler met with the real estate team at Washington Metro Area Transit Authority, the current owners of the trestle bridge in the forest just beyond Radcliffe Lane. In an effort to save Town residents the headache of trucks on our streets, a staging area in our midst, and extensive tree removal during the planned demolition of the structure, the Mayor is considering the impact of the Town taking ownership of the trestle bridge. WMATA is enthusiastic about this option. Our Town lawyer Ron Bolt is much less enthusiastic, saying that even if we caged it solidly, there would still be issues of liability if someone was injured on the structure. Ms. Stickler met with a fencing company that initially said it could secure the structure with new fencing for \$16K, but then said it re-

ally didn't want the job. The Mayor asked if she could follow one more lead to see if she could hire someone to remove just the metal parts of the trestle bridge and walk them out of the woods, and Mr. Spealman and Ms. Wilson were open to that. Mr. Stiglitz made it clear he would never vote for the Town to take on this literal "bridge to nowhere."

Traffic and Trailers and Boats, Oh My!

Residents have recently been alarmed by speeding on Town streets. The Mayor and Ms. Stickler spoke with Joseph Cutro, our street sign consultant, who said that a traffic study wasn't what we needed. He says the first step is making sure speed limit signs are visible by cutting vegetation and perhaps adding some signs or making them more reflective if night-speeding is an issue. The next step would be to talk speed bumps, a topic that can be contentious. The Council agreed that making sure the current signs are visible was wise. They didn't think night-speeding was much of an issue. They laid a portion of the blame on high school students. Residents: If you have driving teens, remind them not to speed in Town.

Mayor Costello next raised the issue of some out-of-date and even conflicting language in the ordinance governing trail-

ers, boats, and RVs. First, the Council agreed to strike language about a Vehicle Control Officer, which we haven't had in decades. (Ms. Wilson shared that her father had once held the title and that at that time the streets were littered with abandoned—and sometimes tire-less—vehicles.) The ordinance has language about an "extended parking area" for trailers and RVs, but the Town doesn't really have that. There was extensive debate about whether it's fair for the ordinance to differentiate between boats on trailers that sit idle versus ones that are actively being used and are moved regularly. Mayor Costello thinks those two cases should be treated differently and will work with Mr. Bolt to craft language to bring to Council.

Odds and Ends

Ms. Stickler reported that the Town's auditor will be at the next meeting and that the audit has begun. She also told Council that insurance paid more than \$8K for the tree work done after the July 29 storm.

There was a short discussion about the Town Manager job, which will hopefully be filled before Ms. Stickler departs next year. Mayor Costello is considering splitting the financial part off into a parttime bookkeeper position, which has long been recommended by the

auditor. This could potentially shrink the Town Manager position back to more of the parttime Town Clerk job it once was. However, the Mayor doesn't want the position to be less appealing to competent applicants, so she just wanted to make sure it was OK with Council that she keep her options open. They agreed.

Regarding repairs to a water main on Oxford Road last month, WSSC said it wasn't a water main, so Ms. Stickler hired a company to do the repair. However, it turns out it was in fact a water main, so now Ms. Stickler is working to get \$23K from WSSC to cover the cost.

Some upcoming dates to save: October 14 is the Town-wide yard sale; December 9 will be the Holiday Brunch; and leaf pick-up will be November 6, 20, and 27 and December 4 and 18. On October 21, a Bell Ringer bike ride for cancer research will travel down Princeton Avenue and then along University Avenue, ending at the Glen Echo Park parking lot where there will be music blasting. Look out for the hubbub of 500 riders and a party that day.

Town Expenses

In September, the Town paid \$6,086 to Level Green Landscape, \$3,500 to LSWG (auditor), and \$1,678 to Shannon Baum (street signs). —EMILY PARSONS



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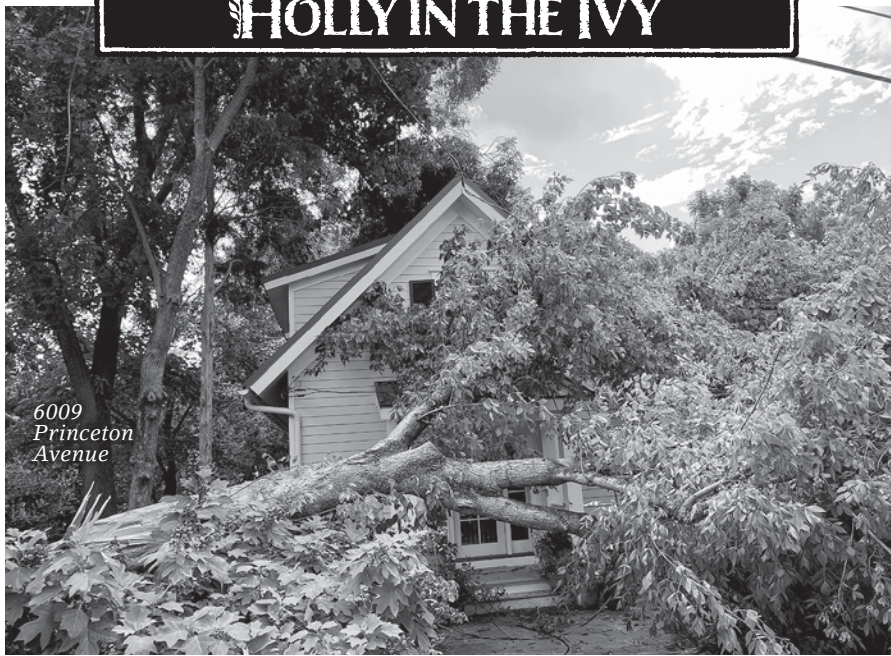
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HOLLY IN THE IVY

The excess water and high winds of our recent storms have caused havoc in many of our gardens. Here are a few tips for dealing with some of the damage:

🌿 Assess the situation, take note of the areas where the water drains or runs or where excess water pools. For areas where water naturally gushes, consider putting in a swale or dry creek bed with large gravel on top to slow the water down and spread it out. In an area unable to drain well, consider improving drainage by putting in a French drain. This involves placing a perforated pipe in a small trench and covering it with gravel to carry the water downhill to an outlet point. Often, a rain-garden is created at the end of the drainage pipe as a way to capture the water.



6009
Princeton
Avenue

🌿 Remove broken or damaged branches on small trees or shrubs, making a clean cut to help facilitate healing. Pruning sealants or paints are not recommended to assist with healing. As a general rule, do not remove more than one-third of the plant. For larger trees, hiring a consulting arborist is a good idea. If many of the tree roots are exposed, tree

removal is recommended.

🌿 If a plant has been blown over and is leaning, try to stake it gently for one year to see if it recovers—this will depend on the extent of the root damage.

🌿 Cut back severely damaged foliage.

🌿 If garden soil has washed away, cultivate in a layer of compost or good garden soil, working it into the existing soil. Adding compost to heavy clay soils also enhances the soil drainage.

🌿 After a severe storm that has caused tree damage, additional sunlight can now reach the understory. This provides an opportunity for planting new plants. If left alone, weedy invasive species will usually grow and should be removed. Applying mulch to the area can help keep some of the weeds down. To restore the shade, plant young trees.

🌿 In his excellent book, *The Nature of Oaks*, Dr. Doug Tallamy recommends planting trees in small groves. When placed in closer groupings, tree roots intertwine to form a stronger structure which makes it more likely they will not get knocked over in strong winds.

🌿 When planting new trees,

smaller is better! Young trees will grow faster, quickly becoming established in their environment. They are much easier to handle, have fewer root problems than larger trees, and cause less damage to the surrounding plantings. Dr. Tallamy recommends growing oak trees from acorns—“You don’t have to have a green thumb to grow an oak and you will get a larger, healthier tree than if you buy an expensive one in the nursery.”

—HOLLY SHIMIZU



If you are interested in rain-gardens, check out the Montgomery County’s RainScapes Program. The program includes rain gardens, conservation landscapes, green roofs, water harvesting, permeable pavement, and pavement removal. Rebates for homeowners are possible through the RainScapes Rewards Rebate Program. Check out this great site: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/rain-scapes/rebates.html>



End of an era: Carol Barton on the last day of her mini-farmstand

The **Roddy** family travelled to Italy, where they spent time in Milan, Lake Como, and shown here, Cinque Terre (1).

The **Kishores** spent the early summer in Egypt, where they enjoyed visiting the pyramids (2), exploring tombs, swimming in the Mediterranean Sea, soaking in sunsets, and eating lots and lots of mango!

The **Vincent** clan spent two weeks RVing in Alaska and visiting Denali, Wrangell-St. Elias, and Kenai Fjords National Parks. They are shown here after hiking up Mt. Margaret in Denali National Park (3).

Pete, Colby, Lara-T and **Becky Epanchin** travelled to Costa Rica (4), shown here enjoying its Pacific coast.

The **Maasjo-Spealmans** did a grand tour of western national parks: Arches, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef, Bryce (5), and Zion. The capstone of the trip was a rim-to-rim hike across the Grand Canyon (24 miles) with a stay at Phantom Ranch at the bottom.

Angela and Aaron Hirsch did a little hiking in Vermont (6).

The **Anderson** family vacationed in Wyoming (that's **Mads, Durke, and Tisha** walking down Rendezvous Mountain in Jackson Hole (7)). And for the fourth year in a row, they drove home by camping across the US, including stops in Montana, North Dakota, and the north

ROAMIN' HOLIDAYS



woods of Minnesota.

Highlights from **Julie Rosenthal** and her sons **Jon** and **Simon's** summer adventures included hik-

ing on Mt. Rainier (8), a 5.25 hour trek up to its 7000 foot elevation. Then it was on to Vail, Colorado, for a week.

Those perennial beach

lovers **Bray Hill, Griffin Finan** and their son **Jordy** went to the Outer Banks in July and then Bethany Beach in August (9).



The **Etulain** family visited Troy's hometown of Sitka, Alaska, this summer, where they saw brown bears at a local sanctuary and climbed

a local mountain **(10)**. **Troy** and **Isarra** also climbed Mt. Edgecumbe **(11)**, a volcano across from Sitka on Kruzof Island.

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The Avalon: *Dumb Money* is now playing and is the latest release by director Craig Gillespie (*I, Tonya*). The film is getting a lot of buzz for its smart, energetic exploration of how a bunch of nobodies went up against Wall Street to make GameStop one of the hottest stocks in the land. But the real treat in October is the 50's entry to Avalon's 100 Years of Cinema Magic series, *Roman Holiday*, playing October 15. The romantic comedy starring Gregory Peck as a reporter and Audrey Hepburn as an incognito princess ducking her royal duties garnered ten Oscar nominations, including a win for its leading lady. Director William Wyler's

THE CINEMANIAC



daughter Catherine will be on hand to discuss the film upon its conclusion.

AFI Silver: Based on the bestselling book that depicted the tragic murders of members of the Osage Nation in the 1920s, *Killers of the Flower Moon* will surely draw Oscar atten-

tion for director Martin Scorsese and two of his favorite leading men, Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert DeNiro. It opens October 20.

Alamo Draft-house: There are a number of Halloween and horror-themed movies playing here this month. One of the highlights is Tim Burton's *Beetlejuice* (10/22), with Michael Keaton at his most manic. Another notable entry at the Alamo is *Donnie Darko* (10/7), in which Jake Gyllenhaal commits violent acts

at the behest of a monstrous man-sized rabbit named Frank—and/or he might be preventing the apocalypse? It's a disturbing, puzzle-box of a movie that sits with you for a long time in a way that more traditional horror flicks just can't achieve. And speaking of non-traditional horror movies, *The Cabin in the Woods* (10/9) playfully deconstructs the genre. Kenneth Branagh also feints at horror in his latest Hercule Poirot mystery, *A Haunting in Venice*, which is already out. If it follows the trend of the first two films in the series, it will have gorgeously designed sets and will be well-acted, even if the mystery itself is a little stale. —DAN SPEALMAN

OUT AND ABOUT

Let me introduce myself: I'm Emily Ellis, three-year resident of Glen Echo (in the red house, aka "Matt's old house") and mom of Grant and Sally. You have likely seen (or heard) us walking down University with the *Frozen* soundtrack blaring, which is why my first *Out and About* column could be subtitled "How do I entertain my children now that the pool is closed?"

Luckily, there are countless locations and seasonal activities close by that are enjoyable for all members of the family. Here are a few of our family's favorites or ideas we are hoping

to check out this fall:

Pumpkinpalooza is a free family event at Alethia Tanner Park on October 26. In the past, they've had music and performers, kid-friendly games, and a costume contest.

There are so many wineries, breweries, and, more recently, cideries in the area that offer decent drinks, beautiful scenery, and ample space for kids to run around. Our recent favorite is **Rocklands Farm Winery**. This year we hope to make a day of it with a trip to Homestead Farm for apples and farm animals beforehand (the two



locations are only five minutes apart!).

Old Lucketts Store near Leesburg has their annual **Fall Market** October 13 to 15. There are awesome outdoor

displays my kids love running through and lots of cool home goods inside. I plan to make this a daytrip by tacking on a visit to **Bleu Frog Vineyards** for lunch.

We'll definitely take a ride on the **Halloween Eye Spy Train** at Cabin John Regional Park. Tickets are available online now.

I highly recommend getting them in advance.

While not a seasonal destination per se, the recently renovated **MLK Library** will be our next rainy day outing. The improvements include rotating art exhibits, a cafe, a rooftop garden, and even a kids' slide.

I have some big shoes to fill with this column, and I can assure you future months will not be centered around children. Feel free to email me at emilybaldwinellis@gmail.com about any cool events in the area that you'd like to share. Until then, know that our bounce house is always open! —EMILY ELLIS

ed, and students can earn SSL hours. Volunteers will meet at the pedestrian footbridge that connects to the parking lot. Email julia.wilson@me.com with any questions.

Real Estate

Norman Bernhardt will be putting his house at 6008 Bryn Mawr Avenue on the market with a list price of \$699,000 as is.

TOWN YARD SALE

The Glen Echo Town-wide yard sale will take place on Saturday, October 14, from 9 AM until 1 PM, rain or shine. This is a very popular event and lots of fun regardless of whether you are selling or shopping. There are tables available at the Town Hall to use the day of the sale. Contact Jan Shaut (Jshaut@gmail.com) to make arrangements to get your table on Friday night.

Sales are often concen-

trated along University Avenue. Check with your neighbors if you want to use space along University in front of someone's house, or you can set up at the Town parks. We often create a map that will allow shoppers to see which houses in Town are participating in the sale. If you would like your house noted on the map, please e-mail Jan prior to October 10. There will be no charity pickup this year.



They Say it's Your **BIRTHDAY!**
 Oct. 17, **Cléo Moreau**, 13
 Oct. 17, **Manoé Moreau**, 13

The Art Deco Society of Washington to host a new event called Deco Chic on October 21 from 2-5 PM. In honor of the Spanish Ball-



Newly paved!

room's rich history and as an ode to its art deco architecture, the Park will present a fashion show with a

champagne reception in the grand space. Tickets are \$50, but \$25 for Park members. Festive vintage and cocktail attire is welcome.

You may notice that a big change has been made to improve the upper permit parking lot. After a long time waiting for approvals and contributing funds from County and state, the Park repaved the lot last month. The potholes won't be missed! —MONA KISHORE

GOINGS ON

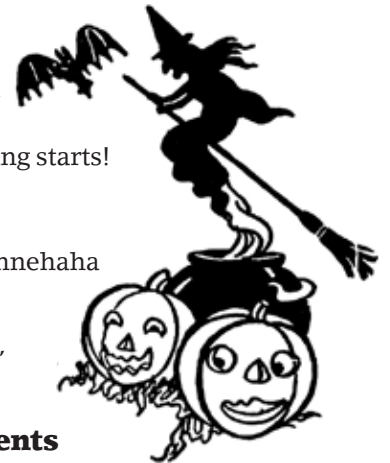
Town Hall Events

October 4, 11, 18, 25 8-10:30 PM, FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, free to Town residents

October 31 5-6 PM,

HALLOWEEN PIZZA PARTY

before the trick-or-treating starts!



Local Events

October 7 9-11 AM, Minnehaha Creek Clean Up

October 14 9 AM-1 PM, Town-wide yard sale

Glen Echo Park Events

October 1 Echo Arts Festival, 12-5 PM, Arts presentations and activities throughout the Park

October 7 11 AM-4 PM, outdoor marketplace

October 5, 12, 19, 26 11 AM Aquarium kids story time

October 21 2-5 PM, Art Deco Fashion Show in the Spanish Ballroom

October 28 1-4 PM, Fall Frolic, celebrate Halloween at the Park

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

Witch Wartsmith's Halloween Spooktacular through October 29

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

Adventure Theater MTC

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You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown through October 29



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