



PUBLISHED SINCE 1948 FOR THE TOWN OF GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND ~ CHARTERED IN 1904 ~ MAY 2024

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## TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The April 11 meeting saw a return to the downstairs office in Town Hall. Mayor Costello and all four Council Members met there along with two visitors—both interested in the open Town Manager position.

### Old Business

At the start of the meeting, Council Member Tanner asked if there was more to discuss about EV cords going across Town sidewalks. The Mayor said that the current ordinance addressing blocking sidewalks applied and that she would be discussing with individual residents about their options (that wouldn't block sidewalks). The Mayor reported that a date for a community meeting with WMATA to discuss the demolition of the old trestle bridges has not yet been set. The idea that the Town might buy the trestle bridge just beyond Radcliffe Lane has been abandoned. Council

Member Stiglitz said that the bike path along MacArthur is due for a cleanup and asked who to call at the County about that.

### FY 25 Budget Discussion

Mayor Costello told the Council that the community garden had received a mini-grant of almost \$5,000 from Chesapeake Bay Trust. This meant that the line item for funds for the community garden would only have the CBT funds. No Town funds will be spent on this at this time. Mr. Stiglitz missed the March 18 budget work session, so he gave his notes to Mayor Costello, and they were incorporated at this meeting with the approval of

the other Council Members. The changes included lowering the estimate for interest earnings; making clear in the budget whether the funds were coming from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money or an outside grant; removing the Traffic Consultant line item; lowering the Street Signs line item to \$500 since they were all replaced recently; creating a line item for Storm Cleanup (\$2,000) to prepare for an increase in storm activity.

There was a longer conversation about how to budget the ARPA funds since they will need to be allocated—with a contract by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2025. Mr. Stiglitz said that because Street Repair is a regular and necessary expense, they could put the bulk of the ARPA money there to make sure it gets spent. Everyone agreed to budget \$125K for street repairs and yellow

striping. Council Member Wilson wanted to make sure there were still funds allocated for a new elevator. The Mayor put \$80K in Town Hall Improvements in hopes that a large portion of the ARPA funds will be able to go to the elevator replacement. The budget hearing and vote will be at the next Council meeting on May 13. Residents are encouraged to look at the budget and share comments with the Council ahead of that meeting.

### Green Team Update and Community Garden

Ms. Tanner reported that members of the Green Team and interested residents met on March 27 at Robin Kogelnik's house. There was a presentation by Mike Hunninghake from Sustainable Maryland and seeds and plants to give away. In response to the question of whether being designated Sustainable

# THE ECHO

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**EDITOR** Emily Parsons  
([TheEchoEditor@gmail.com](mailto:TheEchoEditor@gmail.com))

**ART EDITOR** Mary Parsons

**CONTRIBUTORS** Thom Amdur, Carol Barton, Dia Costello, Matt Costello, Emily Ellis, Pete Epanchin, Angela Hirsch, Mona Kishore, Gloria Levin, Joe Shannon, Martha Morris Shannon, Holly Shimizu, Patty Sieber, Dan Spealman, Bill Vincent, Bonnie Whyte, Julia Wilson

**COPY EDITORS** Maire Hewitt, Debbie Lange

**ADVERTISING** Patty Sieber  
([EchoAdRep@gmail.com](mailto:EchoAdRep@gmail.com))

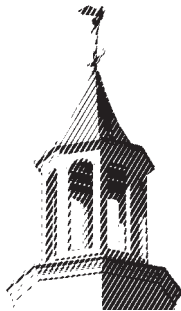
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Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be signed.

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.



## TOWN OF GLEN ECHO

MARYLAND 20812

Phone: 301-320-4041 Fax: 301-320-3639

Website: [www.glenecho.org](http://www.glenecho.org)

Office: 6106 Harvard Avenue

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 598, Glen Echo, MD 20812

[townhall@glenecho.org](mailto:townhall@glenecho.org)

### MAYOR

Dia Costello (301-538-7784)

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dan Spealman (202-560-2237)

Matt Stiglitz (202-236-9161)

Dawn Tanner (420-383-0427)

Julia Wilson (240-899-1763)

Next Council Meeting: May 13, 2024, 7:30 PM



Green Team meeting

Maryland worth the effort, Mayor Costello said that the real work was applying the first time, which was done by former Town Manager Beth Stickler. A reapplication is quite simple and is being handled by Ms. Kogelnik, Holly Shimizu, and Ms. Tanner. Many things that Town residents do can count towards the certification: the creek clean-ups; the Adopt a Road clean-up.

Mayor Costello reported that she had met with the community garden committee and that they understood that because they received funding from Chesapeake Bay Trust, the Town would not be giving them any money. They agreed to a few small changes to the by-laws, like prohibiting marijuana plants

and having participants clear their plots and reapply each year. The Mayor said that Town lawyer Ron Bolt said the Council would need to approve a charter to officially create the Community Garden Committee. This will cover the garden by the Town's insurance and stand in for a lease. The Council adopted the charter for the committee.

### Upcoming Events

Come mingle with neighbors at the Free Plant Exchange on May 5 from 9:30 AM to 4 PM—this year in front of Town Hall—or at the Summer Picnic on June 23 at 5 PM all around Town Hall. This year's Fourth of July Parade will happen with the Livable Town Committee organizing. —EMILY PARSONS

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## NEW TO TOWN

**N**ancy Sausser moved into 5 Vassar Circle last May after casually looking at houses for a few years. She and her husband Greg Boyd had spent 25 years in nearby Wood Acres, where they raised two now-adult daughters. They wanted a home more conducive to their creative work of sculpting and boat-building and to hosting guests. The Glen Echo house—with its quirky double walk-out basement, private guest space, and possibility for one-level living—met their needs surprisingly well.

But life took an unexpected and tragic turn when Greg died, very suddenly, while visiting family in Seattle in August.

Navigating the new normal has been eased by the support of her daughters, work, and friends—Dawn Tanner and Emily Siegel are longtime friends. Nancy has been pleasantly surprised that the house does not feel too big for just one person. She's also been enjoying the spring plantings now appearing around the yard (a legacy of former resident Anna White).

Nancy is the curator

and artistic director for the McLean Project for the Arts, a nonprofit contemporary art space just across the river. It exhibits the work of artists from the Mid-Atlantic Region and conducts art classes, camps, and community programs. Nancy is excited about the organization's upcoming



move to a new, stand-alone space in downtown McLean, after sharing space with the McLean Community Center for many years.

Along with more exhibit space, the new center will offer membership access to a pottery space, which will help provide sustaining income.

Nancy is looking forward to getting back into her sculpture work in that bright basement space that drew her to Glen Echo in the first place. She works mostly in ceramics, sometimes incorporating other materials like wood in her abstract pieces.

Nancy is grateful for Ivy, her 14-year-old golden lab, who has loyally stuck around to support her through the transition to this new chapter. —ANGELA HIRSCH

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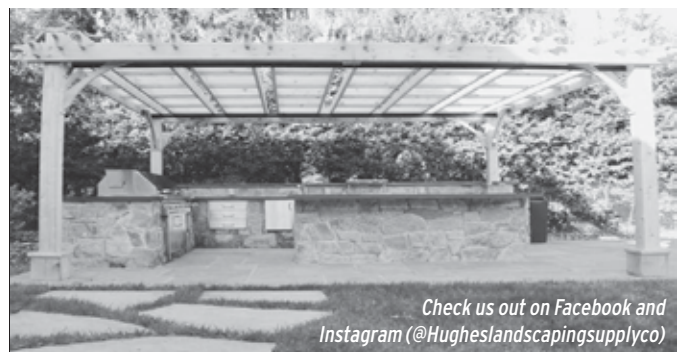
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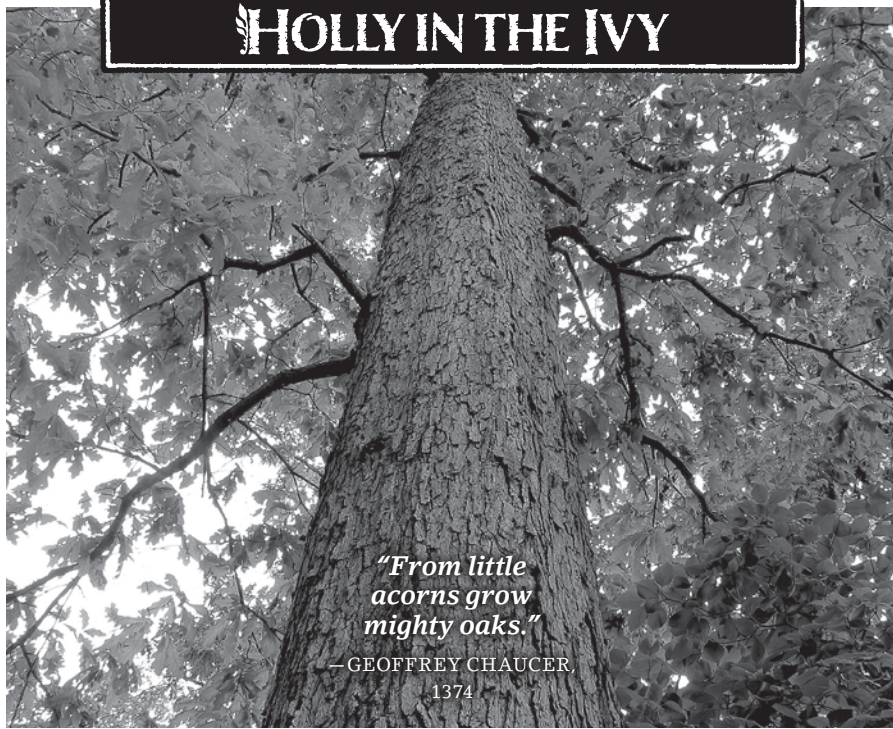


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The mighty oak has been revered for centuries and is considered sacred by many civilizations. Oak trees symbolize strength, longevity, and endurance. The National Arbor Day Foundation designated the oak as the national tree of the United States.

The average tree life span is approximately 100 years, but not so for the oak—these trees usually live roughly 400 years, but can live as long as 1,000 years. World-wide there are over 435 existing species and roughly 90 of those are considered native in the U.S. Our knowledge about the critical role that oaks play in ecosystems has gained much traction thanks to Dr. Douglas Tallamy, Professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. His



# HOLLY IN THE IVY

*“From little acorns grow mighty oaks.”*

—GEOFFREY CHAUCER  
1374

recent book, *The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of our Most Essential Native Tree*, is a wonderful read and explores the profound impact oaks have on the natural world. Every oak tree supports a whole community of living things that change throughout the year.

These magnificent trees are called a keystone species because they play a vital role in the food web of the ecosystem. Caterpillars

that overwinter on oak trees are an essential source of food for overwintering birds. Oaks support the greatest number of *Lepidoptera* (butterflies and moths), which are a critical food source for birds and other wildlife.

All parts of the oak tree support biodiversity. The flowers are eaten by a host of insects, squirrels, bees, and butterflies. The oak mining bee feeds on the oak flower

pollen, and the list goes on and on. It’s impossible to note all the wildlife that depend on the oak tree since there are 2,300 species of wildlife and 1,178 invertebrates in this group. Oaks are also host to a huge number of lichen and fungi.

Another attribute of the oak tree is their function of soil stabilization. Their roots spread out three times beyond the spread of their

crown. This important function helps to prevent erosion while conserving soil, improving soil fertility, and protecting groundwater quality. Fallen leaves (I do not like to refer to it as “leaf litter”) can last up to three years, providing essential cover for creatures that live in the soil. As a protective blanket, the leaves hold in moisture and return nutrition into the soil.

Growing an oak tree from

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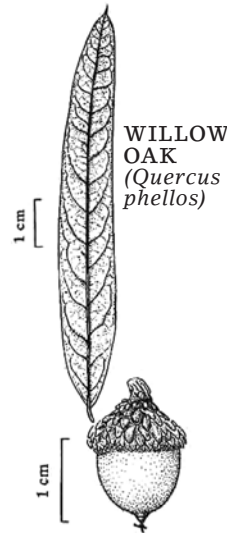
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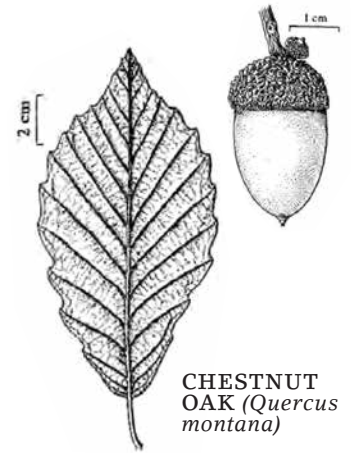
WHITE OAK  
(*Quercus Alba*)



NORTHERN RED OAK  
(*Quercus rubra*)



WILLOW OAK  
(*Quercus phellos*)



CHESTNUT OAK  
(*Quercus montana*)

OAK SPECIES: USDA; PHOTO: AMPHIS / CREATIVE COMMONS

an acorn is easy to do and allows the oak tree roots to grow a full-size root system. Planting a large oak tree in the garden is riskier because the tree roots have been pruned and the tree goes into shock when planted. If grown in a pot too long, roots often become pot bound and then grow around in a circular fashion. If the plant can't straighten the twisted roots, it can lead to roots choking themselves. The roots need to grow out from the center. You can also buy small oak trees, which will turn into a healthier tree in the long run.

The white oak (*Quercus alba*) is one of the most

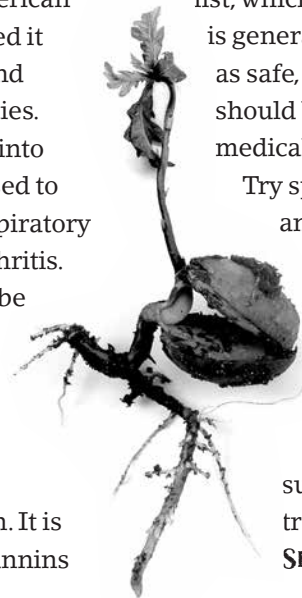
widespread species in the eastern U.S. They are bountiful producers of acorns, serving as a considerable food source for wildlife such as blue jay, chipmunks, black bears, and wild turkey. Throughout history, the acorns have been an important, nutritious food for humans as well. They contain bitter, astringent tannins that need to be leached before eating. Acorns can be made into flour or eaten as a delicious roasted nut—they taste a lot like roasted chestnuts. They should be gathered as soon as they begin falling from the tree. I enjoyed a native dinner produced by


a friend who had created a food forest. The dinner included oak bread made with ground acorns.

White oak bark has a long history of use in medicine. Several North American Indian tribes valued it for its antiseptic and astringent properties. It was often made into a tea which was used to treat diarrhea, respiratory infections, and arthritis. The bark can also be dried and ground into a powder used topically to suppress inflammation and soothe irritated skin. It is thought that the tannins

are responsible for the oak bark's healing properties. White oak bark is available over the counter as capsules, liquid extract, tea, or powder. It is on the GRAS list, which means that it is generally recognized as safe, but its use should be guided by a medical professional.

Try sprouting an acorn: It is especially fun for children to experience the process of growing such a significant tree. —**HOLLY SHIMIZU**





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# OUT AND ABOUT

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 4, for two wonderful events: the Kinetic Sculpture Race in downtown Baltimore and the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival in West Friendship. Our Town has two contestants in the Kinetic Sculpture Race, Andréa and Steve Matney. Here's a post about the event from Andréa:



*Last year's race entry*

"Steve and I invite you to join the fun on May 4th during the **Kinetic Sculpture Race (KSR)**. Look for our award-winning team "Goes to 11" along the 15-mile course through the streets of Baltimore!

We've come up with a wonderfully creative and new way to decorate our craft "Dancin' Fools." We have homemade artwork with brightly colored dancing figures and matching support crew. Test your knowledge and see if you can recognize the art style and the figures honoring Baltimore KSR sculptures and mascots of this popular outdoor event.

Hope to see you at the start or end of the race,

located at the Visionary Arts Museum, or at one of the obstacle courses, including a water entry, sand pit, and mud pit!! Check out the event's website and spectator's guide at [www.kineticbaltimore.com](http://www.kineticbaltimore.com)."

The 51st **Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival** is one of the largest festivals of its kind, featuring fiber arts demonstrations, sheep shearing, a

parade of sheep breeds, border collie trials, and a wool fashion show. Available for purchase are delicious lamb-based meals, an amazing

array of yarns for knitters, sweaters, sweaters, and more sweaters, and a nice selection of native and flowering plants offered by the Putnam Hill Nursery. The festival takes place at the Howard County Fairgrounds on both Saturday, May 4, from 8:30 AM–6 PM and Sunday, May 5, from 8:30 AM–5 PM. Admission is \$12.50 online or \$15 at the gate. Find more information at the website [www.sheepandwool.org](http://www.sheepandwool.org).



You can attend both events by starting Saturday morning in Baltimore and heading out in the afternoon along highway 70 toward the Fairgrounds. —CAROL BARTON

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The **Bannockburn Spring Show** returns May 3–5 and 10–12 for its 68th year as a central event for the community. This is the second time—and we hope, the last one—for the show to take place at Adventure Theatre instead of the Bannockburn Clubhouse, which is awaiting required building code renovations.

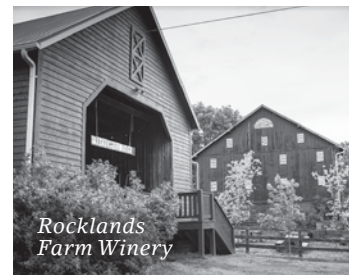


The Spring Show is a neighborhood institution, built around popular songs rewritten to poke fun at national and local current events. The cast includes adults, children, and teens, including Glen Echoans Angela and Greta Hirsch, Vanessa and Emma Sax, and Colby Epanchin. Behind the scenes, Aaron and Conrad Hirsch are working on sound and lighting for the show, and Troy Etulain

contributed his songwriting wit. Purchase tickets at [bannockburncommunity.org](http://bannockburncommunity.org) and don't wait—shows are already selling out. Prices include a pre-show happy hour, which really enhances the charm of the amateur production! —ANGELA HIRSCH

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May is prime time for weekends spent outdoors—pre-heat and pre-mosquitoes! A new(ish) tradition for us is an afternoon spent at **Homestead Farm** and **Rocklands Farm Winery** in Poolesville. Homestead Farm has great produce available for purchase, lots of trucks and other equipment that appeal to young kids, and plenty of farm animals. After picking up some fruit to bring home, we'll stop at Rocklands.



There is a rotating schedule of food trucks, or you can purchase snacks from the farm store. There are plenty of picnic tables and covered spaces to sit and enjoy some surprisingly good Maryland wine, and best of all, there is a ton of open space for kids to safely run around and explore. —EMILY ELLIS

This year's **plant exchange** will take place on Sunday, May 5 from 9:30 AM to 4 PM. Note the change of site: It will be set up at Glen Echo Town Hall. Participating neighbors were enthusiastic about last year's exchange, filling yards with hostas, toad lilies, columbine, and Mexican sunflowers. Seeds can also be exchanged. You can bring as many plants and seeds as you like and take whatever you wish: This is an un-curated, 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. 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

## HAVE YOU HEARD?



The Green Team's Earth Day event

to add interest to our Glen Echo yards and gardens!  
—CAROL BARTON

On April 21, the **Glen Echo Green Team** hosted the Town's first **Earth Day event**. There were plenty of enthusiastic helpers to spread seeds and plant native plants and little seedling trees on the right of way by Town Hall near the Bird and Butterfly Garden. Now we can watch everything grow!

As the weather warms, **Cristina Bermudez's Magic Window** at 47 Wellesley Circle opens for another season of delicious, often vegan, treats—smoothie bowls, bobas, juices, ice creams. Stop by Sundays between 10 AM and 2 PM or text (202-756-6743) for a weekday pick-me-up. Profits go to an amazing cause, which she recently shared with the *Echo*. Since 2018, Cristina has been providing meals (and

clothes and supplies and a phone and solar panels to charge it) to a group of 12 homeless veterans in DC. This act of charity was made easier when a Bannockburn client of Cristina's catering company offered to pay for their meals. However, since he passed away in 2022, the cost has been Cristina's to bear. This year she helped the veterans move into a house, where she continues to provide them with meals. Any purchase at the Window or at [www.OldTwist.com](http://www.OldTwist.com) will support her efforts.



## OUR TOWN PARK

Last month, public hearings were held at the state capital for the 2025 fiscal year budget. The County Executive put forth a request for \$3.25M for Glen Echo Park to be part of the operating budget. If approved, these funds are expected to be matched by the National Park Service and will provide most of the funding needed to help preserve the Spanish Ballroom and ensure its

community-use year-round with much needed upgrades such as an HVAC system. Whether that funding will be in the budget is expected to be announced in May. For those attending the May 18 "Boogie in the Ballroom" gala, expect a night filled with festivities. The event's honorees include Jeff Kirk, founder and resident Art Director of Glen Echo Pottery. In addition, civil rights activist and historian Tina Clarke and social practice

artist Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg will also be honored. Tickets for the main reception are starting to sell out, but you still have time to grab a ticket to join the Disco Dance Afterparty that will be held in the Bumper Car Pavilion. This month marks the culmination of ten years in the making of *Ain't No Back to a Merry-Go-Round*. The film, by Emmy Award-winning documentarian Ilana Trachtman, chronicles the civil rights protests

that erupted at Glen Echo Park's historic carousel in the summer of June 1960, bringing together local residents and Howard University students to push for the Park's desegregation. On May 5, at 5:15 PM, the world premiere will be featured in the historic Parkway Theatre in Baltimore. This premiere coincides with the 25th Maryland Film Festival and is open to the public to attend. However, tickets are required. —MONA KISHORE

## MONEY MATTERS

At the next Town Council Meeting—May 13 at 7:30 PM—the Council plans to pass next year’s budget. Now is the time for residents to take a look at the proposed budget. Any feedback should be submitted to Mayor Costello and the Council by May 8. The budget can be found on the Town’s website.

Property taxes are not increasing, so they will remain at 0.15 per \$100. The Town’s expected income will be \$876,552.10, including the \$204,106.00 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds carried over from FY24. The proposed expenses for FY25 will be \$680,908.00. All items in the budget proposal with footnotes are projects to be funded through ARPA



funds, Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) mini-grant, or Maryland Legislative Bond Initiative (LBI). The projects identified are elevator replacement, road repair, stormwater restoration, and the community garden. The community garden funding source is entirely from the CBT mini-grant awarded for that purpose. No Town funds will be budgeted for the garden.

The MD Legislative Bond Initiative is something that Mayor Costello applied for in February and was awarded in March. The funds in the amount of \$150K are for Stormwater Management, with projects like a Town Hall rain garden and plantings along the right of way being considered. All in a day’s work for our Mayor!

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 May 12, **Aran Bragan**, 12  
 May 23, **Alice Parsons Amdur**, 9

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## GOINGS ON

### Town Hall Events

**May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29** 8–10:30 PM, FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, free to Town residents

**May 5** 9:30 AM–4 PM, Glen Echo Plant Swap

### Local Events

**May 3–May 5** 10 AM–5 PM, Azalea Festival at Landon School



### Glen Echo Park Events

**May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30** 11 AM, Aquarium kids story time

**May 18** 6 PM, Boogie in the Ballroom Gala

**The Puppet Co.** [www.thepuppetco.org](http://www.thepuppetco.org); 301-634-5380

**Alice in Wonderland** through May 19

**Allan Stevens' Pinocchio** May 25–June 23

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

### Adventure Theater MTC

[www.adventuretheater-mtc.org](http://www.adventuretheater-mtc.org); 301-634-2270

**Sing Down the Moon: Appalachian Wonder Tales** through May 26

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