

# The Echo

## The Town of BLEN ECHO, MARYLAND Chartered, 1904



December, 1989

### **RESIDENTS REPORT EQUIPMENT DAMAGED BY POWER OUTAGE**

By Carlotta Anderson

Victor Gilinsky was using the laser printer at his Wellesley Circle home on Nov. 21 when he heard an ominous crack and the electricity went off. After power was restored some 10 hours later, he found that the printer was damaged and would require \$300 worth of repairs.

At the Stevenson residence on Yale, the outage blew out the microwave oven and tripped five circuit breakers. It also melted the insides of two surge suppressors, although they were able to protect several appliances and a computer.

Microwave ovens were also "zapped" at the Dworsky and Polak homes on Columbia Ave. and Princeton Ave.

At the Kuster's, on University Ave., the Jacuzzi was damaged and is expected to cost \$100 to \$300 to repair.

When Victor Gilinsky called Pepco, he was told that it was not financially responsible for the damage, which was an "act of God," caused by trees falling on power lines. He suggests that a representative of Pepco be invited to the next town council meeting to discuss the unreliability of the power supply and responsibility for the consequences of the frequent outages.

### **MAYOR TO SEEK COMPROMISE ON BRYN MAWR OBSTRUCTION**

By Gloria Levin

Peter Garfield, owner of the photography studio on Bryn Mawr Ave., last month presented a proposed plan to resolve the town's complaint that parking spaces built in front of his business on a town-claimed easement obstruct the sidewalk and extend into Bryn Mawr Ave.

He was willing to install a new sidewalk and change the elevation, he told the town council at its Nov. 13 meeting. However, he asked the town to "split the difference" by allowing half the sidewalk to extend onto a section of Bryn Mawr which he claims as his property.

Although conceding this plan would narrow the roadway, he said his legal advisors say the town "has no case at all" in claiming an easement because "there is no written record that the town has ever asserted the right to the easement." He said his title company agrees that the property belongs to him, and is prepared to present its evidence in court.

Mayor Borsari countered that the town attorney has advised him that the town has had an easement over the property for at least 30 to 40 years, and that the town had a strong legal standing. The issue, he told the council, is, do we want to enforce our easement?

He said he considered the higher elevation of the parking spaces to have created a roadway hazard that forces cars to



—continued on page 2

## THE ECHO

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<b>Editor</b>	Carlotta Anderson 229-3748
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## TOWN OF GLEN ECHO

MARYLAND

20812

Town Office 320-4041

6106 Harvard Avenue or Box 498, Glen Echo, MD.

20812

Office Hours: Call to arrange an appointment.

### MAYOR

George Borsari, Jr. 229-4555

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Debbie Beers	229-7308
Nancy Long	334-2865 or 229-1369
Harry Odell	229-4494
Bill Shultz	229-1269

### CLERK-TREASURER

Ilona Almasy 320-4108

### ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

### ANIMAL CONTROL BOARD

Mary Masulla	229-6521
Daryl Kuster	229-2070
Susan Shultz	229-1269

Letters to the editor are welcomed. Letters are printed exactly as received except that the editor reserves the right to shorten them. Articles for publication are also solicited. Volunteer reporters are always needed. Call the editor at 229-3748.

## BRYN MAWR STREET OBSTRUCTION (from page 1)

swerve to avoid the bump in the road, adding that there is insufficient room for two cars to pass each other.

In an effort to visualize the engineering plans displayed by Mr. Garfield, the mayor, council, and members of the audience made a "field trip" to the site.

Mr. Garfield's plan would create an S-shaped curve between his property and the MacArthur Blvd. entrance on a steep incline. The mayor said that if there were to be a compromise, he would prefer to have the road contoured to allow "a straight shot out to the boulevard." Such a compromise would involve the town giving up part of its easement, and Mr. Garfield recognizing the town's right to an easement over part of his property. Councilwoman Nancy Long objected: "If the compromise is that the town is giving away even more of its street, it doesn't seem a fair way to settle the issue."

Hoping to avert a fight over the town's legal claims, councilmembers unanimously directed the mayor to meet with Mr. Garfield to attempt to arrive at a practical solution. The mayor called the vote a "reluctant unanimous," which reflected the discomfort of the council in making a decision on the issue.



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## PROPOSED RESUBDIVISION "CONTRIVED" & "UNNATURAL," COUNCIL SUGGESTS

By Gloria Levin

The town council unanimously passed a resolution at its Nov. 13 meeting directing the mayor to communicate to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission its concern over the proposed resubdivision of the property at 5900 Oxford Rd.

The resolution, drafted by Councilman Harry Odell, would ask the commission to expand its investigation beyond technical legal aspects. "It raises, in our opinion, serious questions of public policy respecting development in Glen Echo that should be addressed by the competent zoning authorities," it states. It goes on to say that the grandfathering of building lot sizes to 5,000 sq. ft. in 1958 "was not designed to facilitate speculative development in 1989."

It suggests that the property could be improved and developed "for profitable sale without resorting to a contrived and unnatural resubdivision."

The resubdivision requested by Chris Papadopolus would create two semi-triangular lots. Two houses could be built on them—one facing Oxford Rd., the other facing University Ave.—if the existing house were demolished.

Mayor Borsari, who said he would not vote in case of a tie because he is an adjoining property owner, argued that the law gives the county authority to approve resubdivisions where the lot sizes are smaller than the norm of 6,000 sq. ft. People buy properties subject to existing law, he said, and if the law isn't honored, "you are taking something from someone when you change the ground rules."

Councilman Odell countered that he was not arguing the law, but believed the town's objections should be communicated to and considered by the commission. He cited a similar case in Brookmont where community objections caused the commission to reject a resubdivision application.

## NEWBORN ARRIVES ON WELLESLEY CIRCLE

By Judit Szilagy

The newest Glen Echo resident's name is Robert Davis Sacks, whose parents, Debbie and Ned, of 52 Wellesley Circle, plan to call him "Davis."

He was born at Columbia Hospital for Women on November 21 at 6:20 a.m., weighing seven pounds and twelve ounces. Their first child is beautiful and healthy, and, Debbie and Ned say, has made them very happy.

## COUNTY GIVES UP FRINGE PARKING IDEA

Mayor George Borsari and Glen Echo Park site manager Joanne Hanley met with county planning staff members last month and convinced them to drop from the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan the proposal to use the park parking lot for fringe parking. After their "strong opposition," the proposal was withdrawn before the public hearings started, the mayor said.

The mayor expressed the town's opposition to several other proposals at the Oct. 30 public hearing, but he said he expects them to remain in the master plan.

*The Village News* reported this month that the president of the Cabin John Citizens Association, testifying at the hearing, put on record community objection to proposed cluster developments which would permit more units than are allowed when single family homes are built. Taffy Kingscott said that "our experience is that cluster development has not resulted in environmental preservation," the paper reported.

The community also objected to the designation of MacArthur Blvd. as an arterial road, although it supported its designation as a "scenic route," according to the paper.

The Bannockburn community submitted testimony opposing townhouse development along Goldsboro Rd. and MacArthur Blvd., according to the November *Bannockburn Newsletter*.

—Carlotta Anderson

**NEXT TOWN TOWN H. MEETING**

Monday, Decen

Glen Echo Town H.

Contact the mayor if you wish to add an item to the agenda

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## THE TOWN'S VOLUNTEERS IN 1989

Thanks go to the following town residents, who volunteered their help in various ways for the town last year.

If you know of anyone whose name should have been on the list, please inform the editor and it will be published next month.

**Alban, Paul**  
**Anderson, Carlotta, Jim, Julia and Eric**  
**Balaban, Eleanor**  
**Beers, Debbie, Don, Emily and Laura**  
**Bodine, Penny**  
**Borsari, George**  
**Briggs, Betty**  
**Clune, Lee**  
**Dworsky, Lynn**  
**Espinosa, J. Manuel**  
**Frankel, Michael**  
**Gilinsky, Victor**  
**Godfrey, Kathleen**  
**Green, Dorrit**  
**Greenberg, Lisa**  
**Helmig, Nancy**  
**Henry, Debbie and John**  
**Horwitz, Kathleen and Jim**  
**Kuster, Daryl, Fred and Bill**  
**Levin, Gloria**  
**Lewis, Anne**  
**Long, Nancy**  
**Lusk, Rufus**  
**McCoy, Barbara**  
**McDonald, Nancy**  
**McNoldy, Tillie and Mac**  
**Masulla, Mary**  
**Odell, Barbara and Harry**  
**Papadopolus, Chris**  
**Robinson, Dave**  
**Rodemeyer, Michael, Christoffer and Justin**  
**Shaut, Jan and Neil**  
**Shultz, Susan and Bill**  
**Smith, Bertha**  
**Springuel, Renny**  
**Sproul, David**  
**Stevenson, Jane and Brockie**  
**Strong, Shirley**  
**Young, Kristen**

## ONE CAR STOLEN, ANOTHER VANDALIZED ON WELLESLEY CIRCLE

A white 1989 Toyota Camry was stolen from in front of 36 Wellesley Circle sometime between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m. on Oct. 28, according to Montgomery County police officer Robert Tompkins. He has no information that the car was recovered.

The right front passenger window of a 1987 Nissan Sentra parked in the driveway of the Anderson residence at 38 Wellesley Circle was smashed sometime between noon on Nov. 9 and 9 a.m. Nov. 10. No object which could have broken the window was found in the vicinity. Nothing was stolen from inside the car. The incident was reported to the police.

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## NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME WATCH

The following information is from the Montgomery County police:

- In October the Montgomery County school system began erecting signs around all schools announcing them as "Drug Free Zones." Under a new Maryland law, anyone convicted of distributing drugs within 1,000 feet of school property, or on a school bus, will receive a mandatory five year prison term upon conviction.
- To help avoid becoming a victim during the upcoming holiday season, be sure to lock your shopping items in the trunk of your car. IF you hae a station wagon or hatchback, you may want to cover these items with a blanket.
- If you are going to be away during the winter months, arrange with a neighbor or friend to make your house look lived-in. Ask them to leave tracks if it snows and shovel your walk and driveway. No marks in the snow days after a storm is a good indicator that no one is at home.

## GLEN ECHO Pharmacy

7311 MacArthur Boulevard  
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## THE TOWN ARCHIVES: GLEN ECHO'S MOST NEGLECTED RESOURCE

By J. Manuel Espinosa

[J. Manuel Espinosa, a historian by profession, lived in Glen Echo with his family from 1950 until May of this year. He was appointed town historian by Mayor Fred Kuster and the town council in February, 1986, and since then has spent many hours organizing material in the town archives. He has also written several articles on town history for *The Echo*.]

In the 1940s, forty years after Glen Echo was incorporated, some voices began to be heard from townspeople about preserving the memory of the town's history. This was first expressed through a town newspaper, named *The Echo*, published sporadically from 1948 to mid-1960. During those years, a few articles on town history by town residents appeared, which served as a stimulus for interest in the town's past.

When *The Echo* resumed publication in 1974, the special interest of the editor in items on the history of Glen Echo made it an increasingly valuable source of information. Many articles about town history have been published there.

When I began to examine the town archives in 1986, there were 82 years of accumulated town records. They far exceeded the storage space in three steel file cabinets and a few open shelves which had been designated for them after the Town Hall was built in 1960. Old, inactive records were piled in remote corners of the town council meeting room, and behind miscellaneous cardboard cartons in the small attic-like closet on the second floor.

Despite being stored for the most part in a disorganized fashion wherever there was space available, the major part of them appears to have been preserved. They include the minutes of town council meetings and tax collection ledger books dating from 1904 to the present time, all in good condition and preserved by the many clerk-treasurers. The archives also contain historical accounts of the Chautauqua, the Baltzleys, the Glen Echo Amusement Park, early Cabin John, Glen Echo Heights and Glen Echo history, photostats of old Glen Echo area deeds, maps, photographs, Chautauqua classroom books, and folders on a wide range of topics regarding the local scene.

Frank Corder, mayor of Glen Echo from 1960-1965, was instrumental in promoting the need for and appointment of the first town archivist. When plans for the appointment were reported in the *Clara Barton Times* in 1964, contributions of materials on the history of the town were requested from residents and others, and a few donations were received.

In January, 1966, Nancy Long was appointed town archivist with the proposed duties to include establishing subject matter and chronological categories, evaluating all materials from the historical standpoint, establishing a permanent archive collection and encouraging private contributions to expand the collection. These goals were never achieved, since Nancy Long was elected to the town council, continued to be re-elected, and had little time to devote to the proposed organization and cataloguing of the town archives.

To be continued in next month's issue

**TOWN HOLIDAY PARTY**  
**Sunday, December 17**

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**Details to follow in town bulletin**

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## COUNCIL DEADLOCKED IN TIE VOTE FOR ADDRESS CHANGE

By Gloria Levin

A motion to disapprove a request by Peter Garfield to change the address of his photography studio from a Bryn Mawr Ave. number to a MacArthur Blvd. one failed because of a tie vote at the November 13 town council meeting. Mayor Borsari said he disliked changing street designations, but declined to break the tie pending consultation with the town attorney.

Councilmembers Long and Odell voted in favor of the motion; councilmembers Beers and Shultz opposed it.

The mayor said the county planning commission had acted outside its authority in granting approval for the change because, according to the town charter, the town has sole jurisdiction over designations of street addresses of town properties.

The issue arose when the Garfields posted a sign outside the studio (since removed) indicating a MacArthur Blvd. address, after receiving permission to do so from the planning commission.

The Garfields explained that a MacArthur Blvd. address is easier for their clients to locate. They said that for two years the Bryn Mawr street sign was missing and the script on the restored sign is difficult to read.

Mr. Garfield reminded the council that he had presented all of his plans for the studio to the town from the beginning and that former town officials Fred Kuster and Renny Springuel had reviewed them. He showed the council correspondence between himself and former Mayor Kuster that listed the MacArthur Blvd. address, and asked that this be considered the town's "tacit approval" of it.

In opposing the Garfield request, Councilman Odell stated, "One of the nice things we have in town is the names of our streets. One of the costs of doing business in Glen Echo is to abide by our street names." Councilwoman Long said past owners of commercial properties in town had not been unduly inconvenienced by a town-designated address. However, Councilman Shultz dismissed the issue as "tilting at windmills."

While sympathizing with the Garfields having gotten bad advice from the county, the mayor warned against the town failing to exercise its regulatory authority to designate street addresses in Glen Echo. Approval of the Garfield address change would encourage similar requests in the future, he said.

He explained his dilemma about voting to break the council's tie. If he were to vote in favor of the motion, the town would have to commence legal action against the Garfields. If he voted against it, a precedent would be established with which he did not agree. He expressed a hope that the Garfields would voluntarily withdraw their request and revert to the original address.

Councilman Shultz asked the mayor to write the planning commission to inform them that Glen Echo intends to maintain sole jurisdiction over street designations. He complained, however, that the Garfields are being penalized unjustifiably for the town's lack of attention in the past. "What bothers me is that we always get careful after the fact," he said.

### BRIEFLY NOTED

- Town resident and real estate agent Eleanor Balaban informed the town council last month of the possibility that the new owners of **13 Vassar Circle**—formerly owned by the Espinosas—may request that the five-lot property be resubdivided. The new owners may raze the house and build two new houses on the 13,908 sq. ft. property, she said. In order to accomplish this, the adjacent garage would be moved or razed.

- Our sincere sympathy to **Elsie Ferguson**, whose husband, **William Ferguson**, died recently. Elsie at one time lived at 6008 Bryn Mawr Ave. and will be remembered by her former friends and neighbors as Elsie Bolton Beall. Dr. Ferguson was a retired staff physician for the Federal Aviation Administration and died of cancer at his home in Rockville.

—Gloria Levin and Tillie McNoldy

### PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

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# GLEN ECHO PARK ACTIVITIES

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Through December 17  
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Weekends at 1:30 and 3:30  
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## THE PUPPET COMPANY

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**The Nutcracker**  
In January:  
**Peter and the Wolf**  
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Most Saturday and Sundays, 11 a.m., 1:00 & 2:30 p.m.  
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## HORSE MANURE FREE FOR TAKING

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The manure is well broken up, mixed with some straw, easy to shovel into plastic bags, and free. Large piles are left in the open for all takers.

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**TYPING, word processing.** Experienced, good references. Call Jennifer, 229-9121.

**WANTED:** Resident to do occasional pen or pencil illustrations for *The Echo*. Please call the editor at 229-3748 to volunteer.

Classified ads are free to Glen Echo residents. Fee to non-residents: \$.75 per line. Display ads, \$3 per column inch. Ads may be left with or mailed to the editor at 38 Wellesley Circle, Glen Echo, MD 20812. Make checks payable to: Town of Glen Echo. Deadline: 24th of each month.



*Eleanor*

"Let's talk about what's happening up and down MacArthur Blvd."

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



DRAWING BY A. BROCKIE STEVENSON.

THE TOWN HALL