

The Echo

The Town of GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND Chartered, 1904



February, 1993

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS GREATLY REDUCED Will Taxes Go Down as Well?

By Carlotta Anderson

When Glen Echoans received the state's assessment notices last month, most found their properties valued considerably lower than three years ago. Average reduction for houses in the Glen Echo subdivision was over 14 percent, although some owners got a cut of as much as 30 percent.

The average reduction in Bethesda was 12 percent, according to George Andrews, assistant supervisor of assessments for Montgomery County. He said it was the higher priced properties in the Potomac-Bethesda area that "took the biggest beating" in the real estate market last year. Assessors, who found it difficult to keep up with the increased market values in the past few years, had to take care not to over-assess this time, he said.

Only one-third of the county is re-assessed each year.

What assessors considered the true market value of a house is reflected in the figures in box 4 of the notice. This amount is based on the selling price of comparable houses in the subdivision in the preceding year. It remains in effect for three years, the period between assessments.

Although people wanting to sell their houses may be distressed by the decreased valuation, those contemplating only taxes appear to be happy. Mr. Andrews does not expect the outpouring of rage that followed the increases three years ago, which averaged 70 percent.

But will Glen Echoans taxes go down? The answer is: probably, in many cases. But there are both complexities and uncertainties.

To find out where you fit in, take a look at your assessment notice. Compare the figures in box 8 (your previous assessment) with boxes 9 (phased-in assessment) and 12 (assessment cap). The assessment in box 8 is the taxable amount and is set at 40% of the market value (box 4).

FEBRUARY MEETING FOCUSES ON DISABILITY ACT

The February town council meeting will largely be given over to an open discussion of the town's compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. Mayor Debbie Beers announced at last month's meeting.

She encouraged anyone with an interest in the subject to make plans to attend.

The meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 8, at 8 p.m. at the Glen Echo Town Hall.

--continued on page 3

THE ECHO

Published unofficially by, for and in the Town of Glen Echo, Maryland. Distributed free to Glen Echo residents. Subscriptions for non-residents are \$10 per year. Copies of *The Echo* are on file at the Little Falls and Rockville libraries. Total circulation: 190. Distributed the first weekend of the month.

Editor	Carlotta Anderson 229-3748
Assistant Editor	David Sproul
Reporters	Jim Anderson, David Sproul
Distribution	Brockie and Jane Stevenson Rachel Brintnall Barbara Odell Christin Polak Penny Bodine
Circulation	Tillie McNoldy

Next Deadline February 19

Printed by Sir Speedy, Bethesda

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

Debbie Beers 229-7308

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Michael Brintnall	229-6792
Nancy Long	334-2865 or 229-1369
Donald Moran	320-2796
Bill Shultz	229-1269

CLERK-TREASURER

Kate Horwitz 320-2171

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

ANIMAL CONTROL BOARD

Daryl Kuster	229-2070
Susan Shultz	229-1269

Letters to the editor are welcomed. Articles for publication are also solicited. Any comments about *The Echo* may be addressed to the editor, the mayor or any councilmember. Volunteer reporters are always needed. Call the editor at 229-3748.

BRIEFLY NOTED

If bird feeding is your favorite hobby,
we'll be your favorite store.



10% Off Any
Purchase W/This Ad

Cash, check only; no optics



Wild Bird Center

7687 MacArthur Blvd.
Cabin John, MD 20818
(301) 229-3141

A half-mile past the one lane bridge

Reconstruction of the **parking spaces at the Garfield Studio** on Bryn Mawr Ave. is underway. The more than three year dispute between the Garfields and the town over their construction was settled in December...

A spokesman from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers told the Bannockburn Civic Association what the Corps can and can not do regarding **vendors at the lot on MacArthur Blvd. and Wilson La.** Members of the audience complained about "the onslaught of new vendors...and trashing of the grounds and bordering woods," according to the *Bannockburn Newsletter*. The conclusion, according to the paper, was that neither county nor federal officials can change the situation because of a lack of money and authority...

ECHO STAFFER RECORDS OUTAGES SCIENTIFICALLY

[Assistant Editor David Sproul, like many other Glen Echo residents, was curious about the number of power outages in town and their average duration. Not satisfied with the thoroughness of PEPCO reports, he decided to do a study on his own.]

In the beginning of 1992, I decided to build an electromechanical device to record a running total of outages and their cumulative duration. Since the town is fed electricity by three "phases" or feeder lines, this total represents only the service experience on our feeder, which serves many homes in the northwestern third of town. It is probably illustrative of all three feeders, though.

In 1992 there were 37 outages of one second's duration or more. Power was off for a total of 16 hours and 49 minutes, or an average of more than 28-and-a-half minutes per outage.

On Christmas Eve alone there were 10 outages with a total duration of two hours and 19 minutes.

One long outage in June was due to a downed tree on Goldsboro Rd. Two were apparently due to high winds and two to thunderstorms. Reasons for the others were not immediately obvious.

Anyone with question or wishing to monitor power in the other sectors of town should feel free to call me.

David Sproul
1 Wellesley Cir.
320-2665

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

THE GLEN ECHO BAPTIST CHURCH VASSAR CIRCLE, GLEN ECHO, MD.

SERVICES

Sunday	BIBLE SCHOOL	9:30 a.m.
	MORNING WORSHIP	11:00 a.m.
	OPEN BIBLE FORUM	6:00 p.m.
	EVENING SERVICE	7:00 p.m.
Wednesday	PRAYER TIME	7:00 p.m.
Friday	COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY AT ANNEX	10:00 a.m.

- Pastors: David L. Cole and Roger Arnold
- Over fifty years of crisis counseling and referral.
- Collection center of food and clothing for the homeless and needy.

Call us: 229-4430 or 229-3314

**JESUS CHRIST IS THE ANSWER TO EVERY
PROBLEM OF LIFE AND DEATH!**

ASSESSMENTS (from p. 1)

If the figure in box 8 is greater than 9 and 12, it means you were paying taxes on a value higher than the new assessed value, and your taxes should go down. This will be the case when the new assessed value is far below the value you last paid taxes on. As a result, you will not have phased-in changes over the next three years as was previously the case, since the phase-in mechanism applies only to increases.

However, the value you paid taxes on was not necessarily the fully assessed value of your house because there is a 10% annual cap on assessment increases for owner-occupied homes. (There is no cap on rental properties.) In the case of a property that had been valued at \$300,000 in 1987 and was re-assessed in 1990 at \$600,000, the cap would mean the resident owner was still paying taxes only on a \$400,000 value in 1992. If that house were now assessed at \$480,000, taxes would go up.

Further complicating the matter is the question of the tax rate. If it stayed the same, and your new assessment were 20 percent below the previous one, your taxes would go down 20 percent. In recent years, the county tax rate has stayed relatively constant (although county revenue increased because of increased assessments). Town taxes have gone down several times.

However, the new lowered assessments mean less government revenue at a time when libraries, kindergartens and other services have been cut back because of limited funding. Does this mean tax rates will be raised to compensate?

It's a possibility, according to Timothy Jones, acting director of the county Office of the Public Advocate for Assessments and Taxation. However, he said he couldn't imagine the rate being increased 20 percent. Such an increase "has never happened in the history of Montgomery County."

Question F, which was approved by the electorate in 1990, limited tax revenue increases to the rate of inflation. It put no restrictions on the tax rate, which might have to be raised to produce the same revenues.

Both the county and town will set their new tax rates in June.

FROM THE TREASURER'S REPORT

December 1992

Lynott & Craven (legal)	\$3,254.30
Holiday party	\$154.64
Office Depot (12 chairs)	\$179.88

(A full accounting of all bills paid and payments received is available as part of the town council minutes.)

IF YOU HAVE TRASH PICKUP PROBLEMS

If your trash or other discards are not picked up on the scheduled day, please call the Waste Management Operations Supervisor, Randy Johnston, at 340-0774 rather than the mayor for a speedier response. He can schedule a pick-up or explain why your trash was not picked up. Only in the event you do not get a satisfactory response from Mr. Johnston, should you call the mayor.

The trash/recycling schedule is as follows:

Regular trash is picked up from in front of town residences every Tuesday and Friday.

Garden refuse, cut into lengths and tied, placed in compostable bags, or put in a trash can clearly marked "RECYCLING" is picked up Tuesday.

Recyclables (cans, bottles, newspapers tied or in a paper bag) placed in or next to the green bins are picked up Tuesdays.

Heavy items or a large quantity of discards such as from a construction project are picked up the last Wednesday of every month.

TOWN SWEATSHIRTS AVAILABLE

The town plans to order more white sweatshirts with our "Let's give a hand for Glen Echo" logo, of the type that were distributed at the pancake breakfast. Contact Kate Horwitz, 320-2171, for size and price information. Deadline: February, 1993.

The **Blue** Bistro
sayou

1ST ANNIVERSARY AND Mardi Gras FEBRUARY CALENDAR




LANDSCAPING
in harmony with your taste & budget

WASHINGTONIAN
AWARD WINNER

Unusual Design • Wood Decks
Brick & Stone Patios • R.R. Ties
Unique & Beautiful Plantings

**Mark Willcher
and Company**
320-2040

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 SUPERBOWL SPECIAL Large Screen TV Appetizers 4-5H min.	1 C L O S E D	2 \$3.00 Off Dinner Entrees	3 1st Wednesday Social Club CHRIS ALLEN QUARTET Free Dessert per table of 2 or more	4 HALF PRICE APPETIZERS \$7 OPEN JAN 7 11	5 CORP'S CHOICE 5 7 \$9.95 CONNIE OLIVIERA 6-12 GEORGE BLANCK TRIO 8-12	6 Join Chef Gary in Kitchen Sizzler in Montgomery Hall CORP'S CHOICE 5 7 \$9.95 WIKI HORNISON TON JAFFE TRIO 8-12
7 BRLNCH 10-2 BBQ RIB SPECIAL Full Slab \$9.95	8	9 FREE ENTREE per table of 2 or more (Lesser Entree Item)	10 FREE DESSERT per table of 2 or more	11 HALF PRICE APPETIZERS \$7 OPEN JAN 7 11	12	13
14 Happy Valentines Day BRLNCH 10-1 The Blue Bazon All Stars DINNER 5 pm	15	16 \$3.00 Off Dinner Entrees	17 FREE DESSERT per table of 2 or more	18 HALF PRICE APPETIZERS \$7 OPEN JAN 7 11	19 Mardi Gras Special CORP'S CHOICE 5 7 \$9.95 RANDY PERCILL DUO 8-12 RANDY PERCILL QUARTET 8-12	20
21 BRLNCH 10-3 Crawfish Boil The Big Best Boil 6-10 pm	22	23 Fat Tuesday Specials Thelma's Meat Tribute featuring M. P. Duo 7-11	24 1st Wednesday FREE DESSERT per table of 2 or more	25 HALF PRICE APPETIZERS \$7 OPEN JAN 7 11	26	27
28 BRLNCH 10-2 BBQ RIB SPECIAL Full Slab \$9.95	1	LLNCH 11:30-2:30 Tuesday through Friday DINNER 3-9 Tuesday & Wednesday, 5-10 Thursday, Friday & Saturday 6-8 Sunday BRLNCH 10-2 Sunday				
To Cover Charge Take-out, Catering & Private parties available.						Designed by Alyson Lee



7945 MacArthur Boulevard • Cabin John, Maryland 20818 • (301) 229-9774

Community Statement

Town of Glen Echo

PARKING AND VEHICLE CONTROL. The Town government is concerned about the growing number of illegally parked cars and other vehicles on our streets. Some are potentially a safety problem, and others detract from the town's appearance or interfere with snow-plowing and maintenance.

WHAT IS A VEHICLE? Parking restrictions apply generally to "vehicles," which include trailers and portable trash dumpsters as well as cars, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, etc. Technically a vehicle is any device in, upon, or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a street, whether it is motorized or not.

BASIC PARKING RULES. Town rules for parking are built on basic common sense and courtesy to others -- observe the signs and don't park where the curb or street is painted yellow.

LONG-TERM PARKING. Key elements of the ordinances pertaining to long-term parking and storage are as follows:

- o no vehicle is to be stored on a public street
- o no vehicle is to be parked off of public streets without the consent of the property owner
- o vehicles or their parts may not be left on private, or public, property in a wrecked, junked, unlicensed, or abandoned condition

ENFORCEMENT. The Town intends always to use reminders and voluntary compliance at the outset to enforce vehicle regulations, unless pressing health and safety issues are at stake. Further options include asking county police to ticket or tow vehicles which are in violation and the use of Municipal Infraction Notices, which impose civil liabilities and fines.

Long-term parking violations, especially when public streets are apparently being used for prolonged storage of vehicles, are a priority for enforcement. Violations on private property, unless they pose a threat to safety, will typically be followed up only when complaints are received from neighbors.

TOWN COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

January 11

The town of Somerset has asked Glen Echo to file a written letter supporting its position on proposed changes to **laws governing accessory apartments**, which it believes are too easily transferred to new owners. Mayor Beers asked councilmembers to comment at the next meeting...

The mayor said that the zoning variance for **construction of a house on Vassar Circle** has been reissued with modifications. Councilwoman Long quoted the architect as saying that construction should begin in March...

The council moved \$500 from sidewalk repair to **cover additional auditors' fees**. It also authorized a contribution of \$50 to the **Glen Echo Park Foundation**.

Several present voiced concern for the **town hall's electrical system** after seeing the difficulty in keeping more than one waffle griddle going during the town's pancake breakfast. Councilman Moran said that the hall's ungrounded outlets have been outdated since the 1950s, but have been allowable because they were installed that long ago...

A town resident objected to town funds being used to settle the **Garfield parking space dispute**. The mayor said that the \$1,000 was a small price compared with the cost of litigating the case. The resident also wanted to know about the **property tax situation** and if delinquent property tax accounts were being charged fair market interest. The mayor said some accounts were still outstanding and that the town charges six percent annual interest on delinquent accounts, a figure that probably should be raised to match what the county charges...

David Sproul

COUNCILMAN PROTESTS CONSTRUCTION-CAUSED TRAFFIC JAMS

By David Sproul

Councilman Moran complained to Glen Echo Park site manager Frank Cucurullo, a visitor at the Jan. 11 town council meeting, about the "horrible" traffic jams on MacArthur Blvd and the Clara Barton Parkway since re-construction of the cantilevered section of the parkway began two months ago.

He said increased traffic causes stalls on the one-lane bridge to Cabin John, which then backs up traffic to the three-way stop intersection in Cabin John. This blocks cars trying to exit the parkway, which leads to stalled traffic on the parkway in both directions.

Resident Jim Anderson, noting incredulously that the parkway work is expected to take three years, said that the atomic bomb was designed and built in the same period of time.

Mr. Cucurullo did not give complainers much reason to hope for improvement, noting that the Manhattan bomb project cost more money.

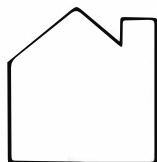
ADULT HOLIDAY PARTY A SOCIABLE EVENT

Glen Echo residents met their neighbors or got to know them better at the second town holiday party on Saturday evening, Jan. 2, intended primarily for adults.

Several new residents came and introduced themselves to the "oldtimers." Some party-goers stayed until almost midnight, enjoying the relaxed opportunity to chat at length. Party organizer Kate Horwitz decided not to hire a DJ this year, since many people said they would rather talk than dance.

She set up the decorations, assisted by Jane Stevenson, Daryl Kuster and Mary Masulla. Kathleen Loveland helped with refreshments.

—Carlotta Anderson



CABIN JOHN
BROOKMONT
CHILDREN'S
PROGRAM

Parent-run pre-school program for 3 and 4 year olds has **immediate** and Fall 1993 openings. Monday through Thursday 9:00am to 12:30pm, includes lunchtime. Located in Brookmont, off MacArthur Blvd., in Brookmont Baptist Church. Call 229-5030 for more information and to schedule a visit.

POLICE NEWS

By Jim Anderson

The plans for setting up a police sub-station at the former Clara Barton school building in Cabin John are a casualty of the budget crunch in Montgomery County. Capt. Fred Ailes, of the Bethesda District, told the Citizens Advisory Board. "realistically, I don't have anybody to staff it."

Newest scam to watch out for, as practiced on a number of people in Potomac: People get a call from a "computer company" saying that a mistake has been made and some equipment has been charged to their (usually) Master Charge account. When it arrives by UPS, would they please put it out in front or in the garage if nobody is going to be home and it will be picked up. Sorry for the mistake. Thank you.

The equipment arrives, is put outside when the occupants leave the house. The scam artists who pick it up, knowing the house is unoccupied, burglarize it. They show a fondness for computer and electronic equipment.

Montgomery Mall and the area of Westlake Blvd was a hotbed of car thefts during the Christmas season. It may continue, so be sure to lock your car and take care in the mall parking lots.

Jim Anderson represents Glen Echo on the Bethesda Police Advisory Board.

TEENAGE VANDALS CAUGHT SPRAY-PAINTING OVERPASS

By Carlotta Anderson

Several local teenagers recently were caught spray-painting the Clara Barton Parkway overpass in Cabin John an hour or two after midnight. They are thought to be part of a larger group that has been involved in other vandalism in the area, according to Lt. Harold Weber of the U.S. Park Police, Glen Echo substation.

They were caught after the park police staked out the overpass, where the park service had previously sandblasted and repainted over graffiti and profane comments, he said.

The group had "signature codes"—coded symbols known only to members, which identified the spray-painter.

"Very artistic," Lt. Weber said. "Unfortunately, the energies were misdirected. They cost the park service a tremendous amount of money."

The case has been turned over to the states attorney's office, which will decide whether to file criminal charges and work out restitution.

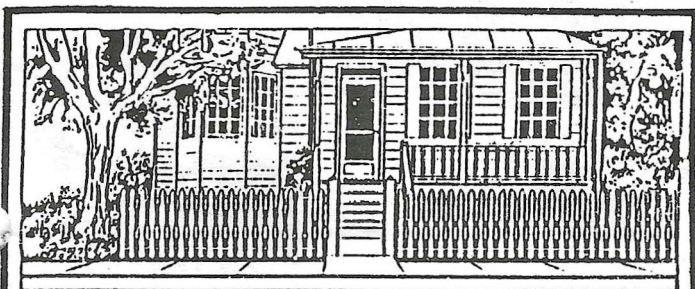
THIEVES TARGET CARS PARKED ALONG CANAL

By Carlotta Anderson

A rash of car break-ins at parking lots along the C&O Canal has kept park police busy since last spring. Plain clothes police have been staking out the areas but no one has yet been caught.

Cars targeted are generally those with valuables in plain view. All parking lots are vulnerable, according to Lt. Harold Weber, U.S. Park Police, Glen Echo substation. He said it takes the thieves just seconds to smash out a window or pry it open with a device called a "slim Jim." Often joggers change their clothes in the rest rooms, and leave them, along with wallets or purses, on or under the car seats.

In addition to leaving no valuables in sight and locking their cars, motorists should check out their surroundings before leaving the vehicle. Lt. Weber said. "If you see anyone loitering, or driving around slowly, or doing anything suspicious, write down their tag number and call park police," he said. The number is (202) 619-7300.



**REAL ESTATE? Tell a friend to call JANE STEVENSON
at Shannon & Luchs. (O) 986-9292 (H) 229-3578**

GLEN ECHO Pharmacy

7311 MacArthur Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20816

SHIP YOUR
PACKAGES HERE

(301) 229-5656
Fax: (301) 229-3036

GLEN ECHO PARK ACTIVITIES

ADVENTURE THEATRE

The Ransom of Red Chief

Through Feb. 21

Alice in Wonderland, a musical

Mar. 6-Apr. 11

Weekends at 1:30 and 3:30

Tickets: \$4..50

Tuesdays—**Wordmusic**—Feb. 9-Mar. 30

Wednesdays—**The Fisherman and his Wife**—Feb. 10-Mar. 31

Tickets: \$4.00

Thursdays—**Guess Again**, a musical—through May

Tickets: \$2.50

Reservations: 320-5331

THE PUPPET COMPANY

To Feb. 14

Hansei & Gretei

Feb. 17-April 1

Aladdin (And His Wonderful Lamp)

Every Wednesday and Thursday, 10 & 11:30 a.m.

Most Saturday and Sundays, 11 a.m., 1:00 & 2:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$4. Call 320-6668

CLASSIFIED ADS

TYPING, transcribing, word processing. FAX services. Experienced, references. Call Jennifer, 229-9121.

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.

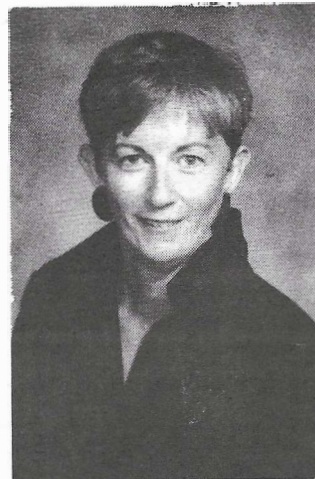
WELCOME, NEIGHBORS

The Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park was the setting for the courtship of new residents **Diana and Norman Hudson-Taylor**. They met at a Friday evening contra dance in summer, 1990, and married last July 4. In December they moved from Takoma Park to 16 Wellesley Circle.

Norman, a librarian at the Hyattsville branch of the Prince George's County public library system, has been contra dancing for 14 years. The evening Diana met him was her first try at the dance form, although she has been belly dancing for several years and loves rock dancing. She is a microbiologist at NIH.

When he discovered Glen Echo years ago, Norman often walked through town "just for relaxation," dreaming of eventually buying a house here. Once the two had merged their resources, they were able to realize that hope. "We know we'll be happy here," they said, and showed their interest in town life soon after their arrival by attending the holiday parties.

In addition to hiking, biking, canoeing and roller-skating, Norman studies American Indian survival skills. He took a course in Apache methods of tracking and fire building from the well-known New Jersey specialist Tom Brown. He would like anyone with similar interests to contact him at 229-2163.



Eleanor

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

907-7600
229-7990

LONG & FOSTER
REALTORS®