

The Echo

The Town of GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND Chartered, 1904



July 1998

TOWN WON'T PAY FOR VEGETATION CUTBACK

By M. Grigsby

Last July, \$1,500 of Glen Echo's budget went towards trimming vegetation which, in the absence of proper attention by owners, had overgrown town sidewalks and streets and violated town ordinances. The costly undertaking was part of a "one-time experiment," according to Mayor Debbie Beers, which will not be repeated this summer.

The town has chosen instead to reinstate a course of action employed in previous years, whereby residents are held more directly responsible for vegetation originating on their property. Namely, after landscapers have been specifically instructed as to which plants to cut, property owners will be billed for the amount of time spent at each house.

The same town ordinance which states that there be no obstruction of public places or sidewalks also requires that parties who fail to comply with this regulation be notified individually by the town. Consequently, although a flyer serves as sufficient general declaration of the town's expectation and intent, residents who continue to maintain "offending vegetation" will receive notices that explicitly identify which plants are in need of pruning.

June 30th is the date on which individual violation notices will be distributed. Vegetation not attended to within 10 days (e.g., by July 10th) will be indicated to the landscapers and

—continued on page 3

GOOD ECONOMY ENRICHES TOWN BUDGET

By Bonnie Whyte

The booming economy found its way to Glen Echo, as Maryland income tax revenue from town residents in fiscal year '97-98 increased by nearly 33 percent. In approving the upcoming fiscal year '98-99 budget, Mayor Debbie Beers noted it was the first time real estate taxes were not the largest revenue item.

It is expected that \$42,000 of the \$158,308 in revenue will come from Glen Echo's share of state income taxes paid by residents, while \$36,846 will be collected in real estate taxes. The real estate tax rate will remain the same for the upcoming year, \$.36 per \$100 real property value.

Other high income items include town hall rental, state highway fund and vendor offsets, as well as interest on the Capital Investment Fund. Of particular interest, \$9,500 is budgeted from personal property taxes from business interests in town, the largest payer being Pepco for the utility poles!

It is anticipated that the trolley right-of-way purchase will finally close in the upcoming fiscal year, with \$35,000 budgeted. The prior year's capital expenses included the town hall ADA renovations. This coming year, the furnace and air conditioning will be reviewed for probable renovations. Significant sidewalk repairs are budgeted, now that the streets

—continued on page 4

THE ECHO

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EDITOR Carlotta Anderson 301-229-3748
ASSISTANT Diana Hudson-Taylor
REPORTERS M. Grigsby, Bonnie Whyte
DISTRIBUTION Brockie and Jane Stevenson
 Joe and Susan Gruenspecht
 Vicki Hewitt
 Jillian Horwitz
 Sally Law
 Jan and Chelsea Shaut
CIRCULATION Susan Grigsby

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TOWN OF GLEN ECHO MARYLAND

20812

Town Office 301-320-4041

**6106 Harvard Avenue or Box 498, Glen Echo, MD
20812**

Office Hours: Monday (if holiday, moved to Tuesday),
and Thursday: 9:30 am- 12 noon, or by appointment

MAYOR

Debbie Beers 301-229-7308

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Norman Bernhardt 301-320-2469

Michael Brintnall 301-229-6792

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Sunday Evening: 6:00 WHY WE BELIEVE THE JEWISH BIBLE, 7:00 PRAISE, TESTIMONIES, WORSHIP, SINGING.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 PRAYER, TESTIMONIES, BIBLE QUESTIONS

Friday Morning: 10:00 COMMUNITY PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY

Collecting food and clothing for the homeless and needy.

PET LICENSE REMINDER

Residents are reminded that pet licenses are due June 30. All town pet must be licensed by the Town of Glen Echo.

The fee for spayed female and all male dogs and cats is \$4; the fee for unspayed female dogs and cats is \$8.

License applications will be included with the June *Echo*.

NEED NEW RECYCLING BIN?

If your green recycling bin has been damaged, or if you are a new resident and didn't find a bin when you moved in, you are eligible for a new one.

Just call Clerk/Treasurer Betsy Platt at the town office, 301-320-4041 and let her know if you are trading in an old one or ordering a new one.

VEGETATION CUTBACK (FROM PAGE 1)

subsequently trimmed by them.

Last year, because Glen Echo intended to pay for the trimming expense, the town did not feel it was necessary to send out individual notices in addition to the flyers. Some residents expressed surprise at learning, only too late, that their foliage had, in fact, been in violation and was cropped. To prevent a reoccurrence of any such confusion, the town has authorized Clerk/Treasurer Betsy Platt to evaluate individual cases, at residents' request.

Residents who may find the July 10th deadline problematic for some reason, including fiscal or scheduling difficulties, should be advised that Mayor Beers has said that dispensations are highly unlikely, except in cases of extreme hardship. In the past, volunteers have organized to help some residents perform necessary yard work in order to meet the town's ordinance requirements.

The town council plans to eliminate the 10-day grace period when rewriting the ordinances. In doing so, the council hopes to underscore the point that vegetation needs to be kept clear of sidewalks throughout the year, and not just tended to annually. Historically, overgrown vegetation has created problems ranging from obscuring signs to interfering with snow removal.

TOWN RELUCTANTLY SUPPORTS DRAIN PLAN

By Carlotta Anderson and M. Grigsby

Threat to a century-old sycamore tree in the path of the proposed town storm drain construction plus easements that are "unnecessarily destructive of existing landscaping and vegetation" have troubled the town council as well as the affected property owners. Despite these reservations, the town acknowledged in a letter to the county that the most recent design was the best alternative the county had proposed.

The letter stated that the town could not afford to support any alternative that required it to maintain either the existing system or a replacement system.

The council voted at its May meeting to accept the county's plan to repair the deteriorating storm drain system by locating it along the following route: MacArthur Blvd. down Bryn Mawr Ave. to University, then along University to join an existing system between houses on the southwest side of lower Harvard Ave. and the northeast side of Bryn Mawr. This route would necessitate digging up the back yards of several residents.

The town's letter suggested that the drain be routed around the sycamore, which seemed to be threatened "for no apparent reason" and urged the county to work with the affected property owners to resolve the issues. It stated, however, that if necessary, the town would support condemnation proceedings to obtain the necessary easements.

The current plan includes the installation of a different type of catch basin to relieve water pressure on a wall on University Ave. just above Tom Kenney's Harvard Ave. house. Now, when the storm drain backs up, the water rises up against the wall. This pressure is part of the reason the wall is separating. Mr. Kenney sent the town a letter expressing his concerns about the whole plan for storm drain construction.



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LADIES OF GLEN ECHO

You are invited to a Ladies Night

*at Julia Wilson's new house in
Fairway Hills*

6703 Barr Rd.

*(cross MacArthur at church, up
Dunrobbin, left on Barr, second house
on right)*

Wednesday, July 22, 8:00 p.m.

301-320-2331

TOWN BUDGET (FROM PAGE 1)

have been sealed. With major WSSC work likely on the drainage line through town, only pothole repairs are planned.

Other significant line items are \$15,000 for the clerk/treasurer's salary, plus \$7,500 in administrative expenses. New updated computer software will be purchased, and a second phone line for the town office will be installed.

Town insurance, accounting and legal fees add up to an additional \$26,000. Utilities for the town will run nearly \$13,000, of which \$9,500 is for street lighting and electricity. The largest town expenditure continues to be refuse and recycling, at an estimated \$32,000, or well over \$300 per household.

The anticipated changes in the animal control functions during the year may change the expenses if the town cedes responsibility to the county.

On a positive note, a schedule for major capital improvements, such as new roof for the town hall and other expensive but necessary maintenance, is being developed. Council members agreed that the more stable budget allowed actual planning of major work, rather than dealing with crisis repairs now that the ADA improvements and right-of-way are nearly complete.

The budget hearing June 1 was attended by only two citizens, plus this reporter, as the council collegially reviewed each line of the budget in a business-like manner.

TOWN STATEMENT ON PARK'S FUTURE AGAIN DEFERRED

By M. Grigsby

The town council last month again postponed approval of a letter drafted by the town's Glen Echo Park Committee which would express Glen Echo's official position on what form the management of the park should take.

Councilwoman Nancy Long requested the delay in order to allow some "tuning" she felt was necessary. The letter must be forwarded to the National Park Service and other bodies by Sept. 1 in order to become part of the public review process for determining the future of the park.

Councilwoman Long suggested that the town consider establishing some kind of formal (contractual) relationship with the NPS which would provide a commitment from them and the town of Glen Echo regarding the future direction of the park.

Councilman Michael Brintnall suggested a compromise that would depict the NPS as the "lead manager" overseeing other groups' involvement with the park on the grounds that the park at this time is very much **community** based. Some council members and residents were reluctant to take such a step, while others felt that the compromise or one very similar to it was inevitable.

One issue that hinders the park in definitively claiming a broad public-interest base is that it does not have its own enabling legislation, e.g., a statement of purpose, the way that national parks like Yellowstone do. There is, however, a mission statement for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and the legislation which established that parkway also established Glen Echo Park.

NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, July 13—8:00 p.m.

Glen Echo Town Hall

Contact the mayor to add an item to the agenda

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COUNCIL DISCUSSES PARK MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

By M. Grigsby

The Glen Echo Town Council last month discussed a "Straw Man (trial balloon) Scenario" developed by the Glen Echo Park Working Group formed by County Executive Douglas Duncan. It outlines a plan for the park's future operation as well as the necessary improvements or replacement of physical structures at the park.

The proposal calls for the park to remain a National Park Service property, but to operate under the management of a nonprofit organization, referred to as the Governing Board.

Under the proposal, the NPS would enter into a long term lease agreement with the Governing Board, but be responsible for external security of buildings and grounds. It would continue to maintain the parking lot and bridge, make available the parking spaces by the Clara Barton site, and be responsible for traffic control for special events.

The scenario proposed that capital improvements be accomplished under a joint venture of the Federal government, State of Maryland, Montgomery County, and the Governing Board, with the county taking the lead. However, the NPS would continue to take responsibility for all projects currently funded by the Federal government.

The town council was pleased with some elements of the scenario, including the separation of Capital Improvements from Operating Concepts, the county's commitment to put forth one-third of the stated capital cost of improvements, and the county's interest in performing "in-kind" services, like trash collection, on an on-going basis.


One point of concern, however, was how these plans for the park will be financed. The NPS estimates the cost of

rehabilitating the park as approximately \$20 million; the county's estimate is closer to \$19 million. There appears to be a general agreement that there must be a package of federal, state, county, and private monies available for structural rehabilitation.

The town council was in general agreement that the NPS has done a great job in light of its budgetary constraints. Councilwoman Long pointed out that when the government acquired the park in 1970, the buildings and rides had deteriorated to where "it was a wonder they ever passed any kind of safety inspection."

Councilwoman Long and Mayor Debbie Beers reported that when they met with Rep. Connie Morella she encouraged them to draft possible legislation which would extend the leases of the cooperators, allow the park to retain more of the money that is generated there, and possibly broaden the kinds of additional sales that might be possible at the park. Clerk/Treasurer Betsy Platt, who represents the National Campaign to Save Glen Echo Park on the Duncan committee, said some legislative changes will be drafted for the committee by the law firm of Arnold & Porter.

The mayor and Councilwoman Long reported that at their meeting with County Executive Duncan they found him closed to ideas which did not entail removing the park from the NPS's jurisdiction. Mayor Beers said he seemed to think that every group, except the town of Glen Echo, wanted the NPS out on the grounds that they are doing a terrible job running the park. The mayor and Councilwoman Long said they believed that most residents of Glen Echo are generally happy with NPS management and feel that it provides quality programming at reasonable prices, is a good neighbor, and has a good relationship with the town.



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Around Town

Concrete has been poured for the supports for the **new bridge to the towpath** below Glen Echo. Completion of the bridge was delayed because a construction more environmentally friendly than the one now underway didn't work out. It should be finished soon despite the delays, according to Douglas Faris, Superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park...

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and Park Service Director Robert Stanton came to Lock 8 last month to announce a program called **Public Land Corps**. In the C&O Canal area, the Public Land Corps will be assisting with trail work, removal of vegetation around the locks and lock houses, and other general cleanup...

Dancing at Glen Echo Park's Spanish Ballroom has become the "in" thing to do since the surge of newspaper articles warning that the park's future funding may be threatened. On a recent Saturday night the parking lot, including grassy areas, was filled with cars by 8:15 p.m. and three park rangers were directing traffic. The line of patrons waiting to buy tickets extended past the rest rooms. A ranger said that another night 500 would-be dancers were turned away...

The Cabin John *Village News* reports that the Potomac Conservancy is seeking support from communities along the C&O Canal in an effort to eliminate the **unpleasant odor** so noticeable in summer. The smell comes from the so-called Dulles Interceptor sewer system that follows the Canal from Dulles down to the Blue Plains sewer plant south of D.C. In a letter to the editor, Larry Heflin, one of the engineers on this 1950s project, wrote that the tops of the pipes were ventilated so acids wouldn't collect there, with activated charcoal filters used to kill the smell. The effectiveness of these filters has waned, but they have not been replaced, he wrote...

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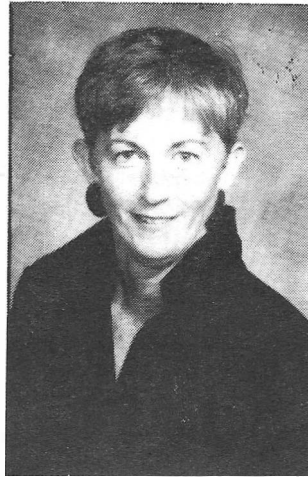
NEW GIRL IN TOWN

Sonja Elena Lorenzen, not quite one month old, became Glen Echo's youngest resident on the day of her birth, Tuesday, June 9, at the Maternity Center in Bethesda. Weighing six pounds, seven ounces, she was born at 1:10 a.m., and her mother, **Laura**, was ready to bring her home with father, **Tom**, 10 hours later. Sonja has lots of black hair and is "adorable," Tom said. The parents have resided at 6010 Princeton Ave. since 1990.

Tom also recently celebrated an acting award for his performance in a one-act play performed by Cedar Lane Stage in Bethesda. The play, "Patient A," won the state of Maryland competition for best production in the Maryland Community Theater Festival. It was up against 14 other one-act plays from the state.

INCIDENTS ON C&O CANAL

May 8, 3:15 p.m. : Indecent Exposure. Area of Cabin John Creek. A woman was jogging and observed a naked man with a dog on the Clara Barton Parkway side of the canal. He was wearing only white socks. Description: white male, 6'3", average build, white hair, accompanied by a beagle. Contact U.S. Park Police CIB (202) 690-5050.



Eleanor

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

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WELCOME, NEWCOMERS!

We welcome this month a Golden Retriever puppy, who recently joined a relatively new Glen Echo couple. Zeus has been walking around town with his owners, **Mike** and **Heather Manatos**, since the beginning of May. Heather moved to Glen Echo last summer, when she and Mike got married.

Mike is a seven-year resident, having come to town with his brother, Nick, in 1991, when they bought the house at 6006 Bryn Mawr Ave. They lived there with roommates until last August, when Nick moved out and the roommates were invited to leave. Mike carpeted and re-painted the entire house and Heather moved in.

Mike works for the public policy/lobbying firm of Manatos & Manatos in Washington D.C. Heather is a CPA for an information technology company in Rockville. She grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and moved to this area with her sister and mother five years ago. Mike is a Bethesda native, growing up in Brookmont and Tulip Hill, where his parents and two younger brothers still live. He attended Walt Whitman High School (graduating class of 1986), where he played football and where his brothers Tom (captain and linebacker) and George (quarterback and defensive back) currently lead the team.

Mike and Heather are members of the St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Bethesda, where Mike is a member of the Parish Council's executive committee.

Welcome also to another new resident, one of the manartists, artisans and musicians who make Glen Echo such a center of creative activity. **Rob Howe**, a drummer in two area bands, moved to 6000 Bryn Mawr Ave. in January. A local boy, he grew up a few blocks off Wilson Lane, and attended Pyle Junior High and Walt Whitman High School (class of '77).

After graduation from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. with a major in French, Rob returned to the D.C. area. His daytime job is with a contracts management firm, Selbre Associates, in Bethesda. His second career takes him to gigs with a country music band, Honky Tonk Confidential and an R&B band with the girl-group sound, The Towering Bouffants. Honky Tonk Confidential will have its first album out shortly. Leader of both groups is Diana Quinn, formerly a resident of 44 Wellesley Circle. Information on the bands is available at: <http://www.muddypaws.com>.

Rob, who is also an avid photographer, says he moved to Glen Echo because it is "a beautiful little town in the middle of suburban sprawl."

ALL GLEN ECHO TOWN RESIDENTS
ARE INVITED TO
CARLOTTA ANDERSON'S
BOOK PARTY

**"All-American Anarchist: Joseph A. Labadie
and the Labor Movement"**

Just published by Wayne State University Press

Sunday, July 19, 4-6 p.m.
Glen Echo Town Hall

Refreshments will be served

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Hewlett Packard External CD-Writer Plus 7200e. Write and rewrite data and audio CD-ROMs. Brand new, unopened box, won as door prize. Retail \$500, sell \$400. Call Andy 301-263-0146.

GIVEAWAY: Poly/cotton car cover in zippered bag, size medium (fit a Nissan Sentra). Call Anderson, 301-229-3748.

DOG WALKER NEEDED. Glen Echo resident "Zeus" (a 16 week old Golden Retriever puppy) needs to be walked in the early afternoons. Any responsible student looking for some extra money and a daily dose of unconditional love, please call Mike or Heather at 301-229-8861.

ACUPUNCTURIST seeking new office space. Lost lease on current space due to expansion of lessor's business. Have been in private practice for the past 14 years (last 7 in Glen Echo). Looking for my own full-time room (or suite) if possible. Please call Cherie Finkelstein, 301-229-8151.

Classified ads are free to Glen Echo residents. Fee to non-residents: \$.75 per line of 55 characters or fewer. Display ads: \$4 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.

NATURE MUSEUM COMES TO GLEN ECHO PARK

The Discovery Creek Children's Museum of Washington held a groundbreaking ceremony at its new site in Glen Echo Park on June 18. It will begin offering exhibitions and programs at the Glen Echo location the weekend of Oct. 3.

Live animal demonstrations featuring boa constrictors, raptors, salamanders, falcons and turtles were highlights of the inaugural ceremony, as well as remarks from Montgomery County Executive Douglas Duncan, Isaiah Leggett, Chairman of the Montgomery County Council, and other dignitaries.

Plans for the Glen Echo site include the renovation of the Park's brick stable, formerly used for Park Police horses, which will be used for programs, and the development of 17 acres of nature trails leading to Minnehaha Creek.

Since its opening in 1994, Discovery Creek has provided outdoor nature experiences and environmental education programs to more than 60,000 children at its original location in a former one-room schoolhouse on MacArthur Blvd. in D.C.

Glen Echo resident Francois Springuel, 15, of Vassar Circle, was also honored at the ceremony for his work in trail development for the museum. He was presented a Certificate of Appreciation for building a path to the creek as an Eagle Scout project. Francois has been in Boy Scout Troop No. 240 for five years.

In order to become an Eagle, he had to plan a project offering service to the community, get it approved, organize volunteers and complete the job. He recruited 15-20 volunteers one Saturday in spring for 6-8 hours work, and another group of five young people for 4-5 hours the following day. They nearly finished the path in a two day period.

Francois needs four more merit badges to become an Eagle Scout. His brothers Bernie and Mark are also in Troop No. 240, which meets at the Bethesda Methodist Church.

ANOTHER GREAT TOWN PICNIC

The day was clear and pleasant, and some 50 town residents joined forces to provide a colorful, varied and delicious fare for the annual town picnic on June 28.

Townsppeople assembled on the lawn of the town hall from 4:00-7:00 p.m. to eat and converse. Beverages and utensils were provided by the town.

The event was organized by Clerk/Treasurer Betsy Platt. Among those volunteering to help were John, Michelle, India and Charlie Wells, Debbie and Michelle Lange, Peter Somerville, and new residents Michelle Brafmar and Tom Helf.

Whoever left a glass bowl at the picnic should contact Betsy Platt at the town office.

TREE FALLS ON TWO CARS; TOWN LOSES POWER

A towering tree fell on two cars on MacArthur Blvd. Saturday, June 13 around 3:00 p.m. during a heavy rainstorm. Three occupants were trapped for an hour before rescue personnel could determine that power to electrical wires draped over the cars had been turned off.

Residents of the town lost power to their homes for two hours during the storm.

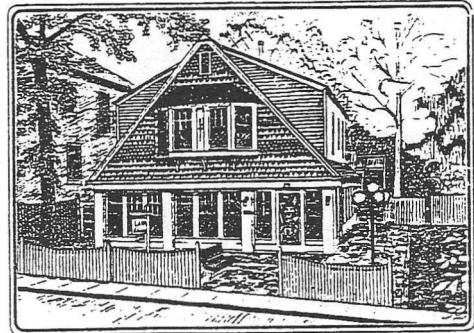
A woman driving a Volvo along MacArthur just south of Wilson Lane apparently saw the tree hit a power line, which short-circuited the electrical system, causing a transformer to explode. She instinctively cringed sideways. When the tree hit her car it pushed her further sideways in the passenger seat, where she was trapped, but uninjured.

Branches from the same tree hit a Mercedes occupied by a man and his son returning from a soccer game. They were trapped by the power lines that fell across the car until it was clear that the lines were dead.

PROPERTIES ON THE MARKET

6108 Princeton Ave.	\$395,000
6104 Bryn Mawr Ave.	Under contract
41 Wellesley Circle	\$340,000

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