



PUBLISHED SINCE 1948 FOR THE TOWN OF GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND ~ CHARTERED IN 1904 ~ JULY 2025

## TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

Mayor Dia Costello and Town Manager Susan Theis were joined by all four Council Members and a couple of residents in person and virtually for the Council meeting on June 9.

### Legal Questions

Town lawyer Ron Bolt called in to the meeting and fielded a few legal queries. First, resident Kate Stiglitz of University Avenue asked if the Town could set its own—later than the County’s 7 AM—start time for noisy construction. She thought 8 AM was reasonable. Mr. Bolt said that the Town was legally able to set its own regulations pertaining to construction work hours and that some other municipalities have done it.

Because Ms. Stiglitz was raising this issue in response to recent demo and work site noise from 6103 Princeton Avenue and any changes to Town ordinances would occur after the

fact, Mayor Costello said she would discuss the matter with the construction company working at that property and see if they are amenable to a later start time. Council noted that this could actually extend the duration of construction or lead to trucks idling on Town streets. Council Member Wilson recalled asking her contractors to start later when they worked on her property, and they complied.

The Mayor said this proposed ordinance change could still be considered and would be discussed at the July Council meeting. The current work hours allowed by the County are 7 AM–9 PM weekdays and 9 AM–9 PM weekends. Start time is

one part of the County regulation. The other two are decibel level and the rather vague “noise disturbance.”

The reason Mr. Bolt attended the meeting was to brief Council on recent state legislation that affects Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) construction. To encourage more housing, state law says that local governments cannot have regulations for ADUs that are different from their regulations for other stand-alone structures. For example, the setbacks must be the same for ADUs as for sheds and stand-alone garages. Glen Echo has until October 2026 to be in compliance and some changes to current ordinances will be required. However, the County’s current laws also need to be rewritten to be compliant, so Council and Mr. Bolt agreed to wait until after the County amends to edit Town ordinances affecting ADUs. Council Member Stiglitz

said he wants language in our ordinance that prohibits short-term (fewer than 30 days) rentals for ADUs.

### Odds and Ends

Ms. Wilson said she wants to look into best practices for recycling in the County to make sure we are doing it correctly. She’ll research composting options as well. She also announced

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
★ DON'T MISS  
★ GLEN ECHO'S  
★ JULY 4TH PARADE

See details on page 8



# THE ECHO

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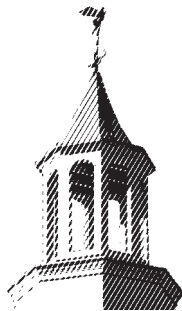
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Next Deadline: August 20, 2025

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

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### MAYOR

Dia Costello

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dan Spealman

Matt Stiglitz

Dawn Tanner

Julia Wilson

### TOWN MANAGER

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

Next Council Meeting: July 14, 2025, 7:30 PM



*The new paving leaves something to be desired..*

that teen resident Corrina Spealman will be leading the Fourth of July parade planning along with Angela Hirsch and the Event Squad.

Council Member Tanner pointed out that the two phases of last month's re-paving along University and

Wellesley Circle appear to vary. The dividing line near Bryn Mawr Avenue is easy to see. Mayor Costello will have Chamberlain Contractors take a look at that as well as gaps around man-hole covers flagged by Mr. Stiglitz. Council asked about



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fresh yellow striping, and a discussion ensued about Council Members doing it versus hiring Town youth to do the job. The Mayor will decide next steps. Several Council Members noted that there are cars around Town parking in the No Parking, yellow-striped spots. Owners of said vehicles will get a friendly reminder about the rules.

Mayor Costello took a moment to note the passing of longtime Harvard Avenue resident Phyllis Daen (see In Memoriam on page 9). She also raised the ongoing issue of suspicious night activity in the Glen Echo Park parking lot. It appears to be home to a robust drug marketplace.



The Clara Barton Parkway cantilever

If you see a single car or two side-by-side in a remote part of the lower lot, please call 202-610-7500 to report it.

There will be another public hearing to discuss the Clara Barton Parkway cantilever repair project, but the date hadn't been set at press time. Council Member Speelman pointed out that the Town hasn't disbursed its budgeted Community Contributions for the fiscal year ending June 30. The Council agreed to give

\$1500 each to Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture and Glen Echo Fire Department.

Ms. Theis shared that next steps are being taken to procure the \$150K Legislative Bond Initiative grant for stormwater management around Town Hall. Apparently, they were waiting for us to "activate" our application, which has now been done. Ms. Theis is also currently rewriting a possible tree ordinance for Glen Echo.

### Town Expenses

In May, the Town paid \$90,222 to Chamberlain Contractors, \$3,653 to Key Sanitation, \$1,668 to Oyster, Imus, Petzold & Assoc. (Town engineer), and \$1,509 to various for Town Hall maintenance. —EMILY PARSONS

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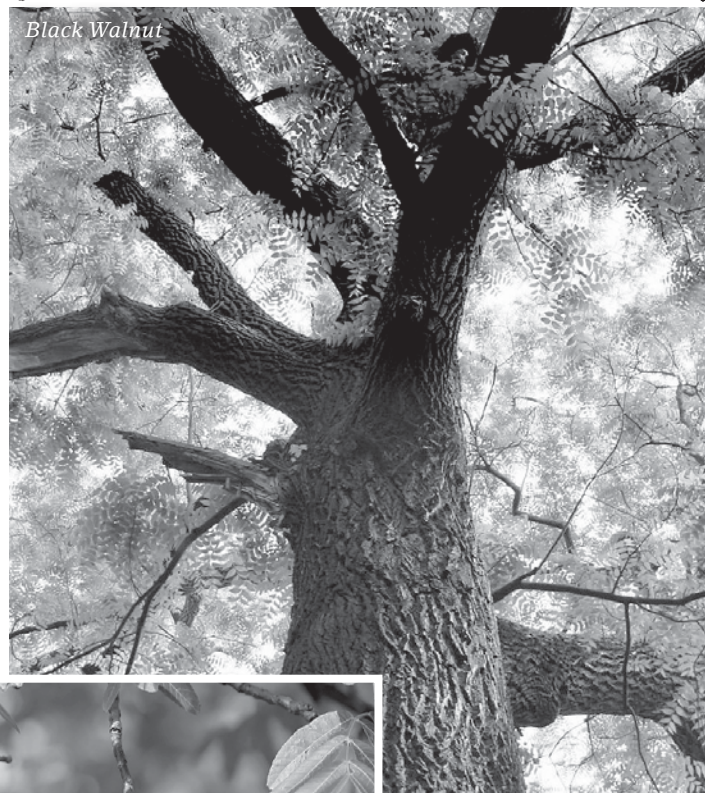
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## IN YOUR BACKYARD

As the days stretch longer and we pass the summer solstice, your eyes—and nose—might be drawn to the abundant black walnut trees overhanging the bike path along MacArthur Boulevard. If you've walked there in late summer, around the time school starts back up, you've likely spotted the unmistakable dark stains on the pavement. Perhaps you've even experienced their staining power firsthand if you dared to pick up one of those strange, spherical fruits, which emit a strong, sharp aroma—something between citrus and pine—when crushed.

While these nuts can be a bit messy by season's end, picking them beforehand can mark the start of a fascinating, ancient tradition and a delightful wintertime treat: Nocino!

This rich, dark, and wonderfully complex Italian liqueur is steeped in history, mystique, and even a touch of magic. While many families guard their secret recipes, a common thread is its preparation around Saint Giovanni's Day, June 24. This date typically coincides with the summer solstice, a time of profound significance in ancient cultures, and when the



walnuts are still unripe—perfect for slicing for the liqueur. Old legends in both Italy and France whisper of barefoot witches dancing around walnut trees on the night of San Giovanni, gathering green nuts to craft a potent potion for health and wealth, earning Nocino the nickname “witches’ liqueur.”

Beyond Nocino, the black walnut tree offers remark-

able versatility. Its kernels provide a delicious and nutritious food, with an earthier, richer flavor than their paler English cousins found in grocery stores. You can even tap its sap for a sweet syrup, much like maple, though perhaps don't try that with the trees along MacArthur Boulevard. And those notorious brownish-green husks are not just for staining sidewalks; extracts from unripe husks can also be used as a

digestive aid and are known for their anti-parasitic, antifungal, and antiviral properties.

If you're interested in making your own witchy brew of Nocino, the process is pretty simple: First, identify a black walnut tree by its distinctive deeply furrowed, diamond-patterned bark and large, compound leaves with many leaflets. Then, pick a couple of handfuls of small, soft walnuts before they turn woody and become impossible to slice.

Cut them in halves or quarters and combine with other herbs if you wish. The best Nocino I ever made included angelica stems and coriander seeds, though

other recipes feature cinnamon, juniper berries, lemon zest, cloves, or vanilla pods. Place them in a jar and cover with a strong, grain alcohol (vodka is preferred). Let it infuse

in a dark place for about 30 days. Strain the liquid and sweeten with simple syrup to taste. Bottle it, and let it age for at least six months—ideally until the winter solstice—for those complex flavors to truly develop.

So, as the longest days of summer are upon us, consider what you'll be sipping come the holidays and the shortest days of the year—and go pick some black walnuts. —CHARLOTTE TAYLOR FRYAR

This is a Q&A with local author and Oxford Road resident Michelle Brafman. The idea for this exchange came from a conversation that our late neighbor Jan Shaut had with Michelle several months ago.

**Q: We hear that you are working on a new novel! There are details in your last three books that locals found familiar—the 2012 derecho, Praline Bakery, the #42 bus, and more. Is your current project set in the DC area, and where did you draw inspiration for it?**

My new novel titled *Draw Near to Me* (Turner Publishing, July 2026) is a companion to *Swimming with Ghosts*, so readers might notice more DC area namechecking. And while I do revisit the characters and the emotional ruptures featured in the first book, this book explores new territory and is designed to



stand on its own. In our time of great chaos and rupture, *Draw Near to Me* poses the question: What does it take to approach a person with curiosity and compassion at the exact moment we want to push them away?

**Q: I'm sure every project is different, but can you describe the typical journey your books take from conception to publication?**

Because *Draw Near to Me* is a sequel of sorts, I was already intimately acquainted with the world of the story when I began writing. That said, I start all my projects by writing a short story, and if afterwards, the characters are still sparking for me, I'll write random scenes that give me a sense of their respective journeys. I'll then power through a rough first draft. Many

## IN OUR MIDST



versions later, my smart beta readers and agent will give me feedback, and I'll revise accordingly. Once a publisher makes an offer on the book, my agent will negotiate a contract. The final stage of this process entails the publisher creating a book cover, a marketing and PR plan, and editing and proofing the manuscript for its release. It's a long and winding road.

**Q: Can you share your writing process?**

I like to write in the morning, when my brain is most verdant, and I also do a ton of conjuring away from my computer, especially during my walks through the streets of Glen Echo. When I'm deep into drafting a book, I'm pretty much always filtering my experiences through the lens of my characters. For example, if I'm walking by a freshly mowed lawn, I'll wonder if my character loves or hates this scent and why. One answer begets another question which often illuminates some aspect of their internal or external world. It's a delightful part of the process, and it sure beats the proofreading phase!

.....  
Michelle is currently offering a series of summer workshops to help high school juniors write college essays in their own voices and improve their writing skills. Space is available in the July and August sessions, 1–4 PM at the Glen Echo Town Hall. Email [michelle-brafman@gmail.com](mailto:michelle-brafman@gmail.com) for more information.

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**The Avalon:** Early in July, The Avalon plans to show *Marlee Matlin: Not Alone Anymore*, a moving documentary about the first (but thankfully not only) deaf Oscar winner. I hear there may also be some summer fun coming to the Avalon, though the programming decisions are still being ironed out. Keep your eyes peeled if some potential summer blockbusters show up. These could include *F1*, Brad Pitt's racy Formula 1 movie. (Should we assume, if it does well, that the sequel will be *F2*?) As well as the new Superman movie from writer/director James Gunn, who's bringing his quirky sensibilities from the Marvel Universe (where he made *Guardians of the Galaxy* an unexpected hit) to the DC Universe. There will also be a repertory program hitting on a major summer theme (camps, road trips, vacations, and romance), and there are a lot of quality films being considered for that series like *Way Way*

## THE CINEMANIAC



*Back, Adventureland, The Florida Project, and Little Miss Sunshine.* Don't miss it when the series details are announced.

**Mitchell Park:** If they're unable to get *Little Miss Sunshine* at the Avalon, it's still worth a watch. Though the movie deals with some tough themes, the whole cast is outstanding, and Alan Arkin works impressively blue. For all of its rough edges, its soft, gooey center is filled with love and lessons learned. It plays on August 21 as part of the outdoor movie series in the

little park north of Dupont. Also playing there this summer is classic kids adventure *Goonies* on July 24.

**Library of Congress:** If you can't catch it in Dupont, *Goonies* is also showing outdoors July 17 as part of the Library of Congress' summer presentation of movies on its National Film Registry. It's joined in the series by one of my personal favorites, *The Princess Bride* on July 10, *Spy Kids* on July 24, *The Muppet Movie* July 31, and *Jurassic Park* August 7. It's the original, thankfully, since the powers that

be are bringing us yet another sequel to theaters this summer with *Jurassic World: Rebirth*. After 7 films, you'd think they'd have learned to stop messing around with science and dinosaurs but somehow they never do.

**The Alamo:** I think I'm going to skip it myself, but if dinosaur rebirth intrigues you, the latest *Jurassic World* will bow July 2. And if *F1* and *Superman* don't hit the Avalon, you can catch them here the first and second week of July. The other summer blockbuster that I might be checking out is *The Fantastic Four: First Steps*, starting July 24 and starring Pedro Pascal as the patriarch of a super-powered family in an intriguingly designed retro-futuristic world.

**The Miracle:** And if actual retro movies are your bag instead, you can watch all-time classics *Citizen Kane* ("Rosebud!") and *The Maltese Falcon* ("the stuff that dreams are made of") on the big screen July 16 and August 20, respectively. —DAN SPEALMAN

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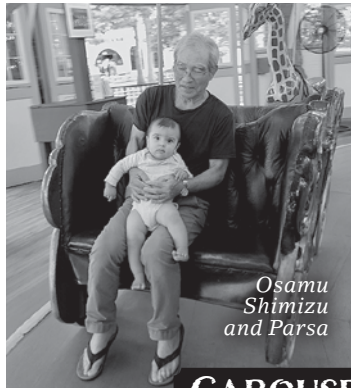
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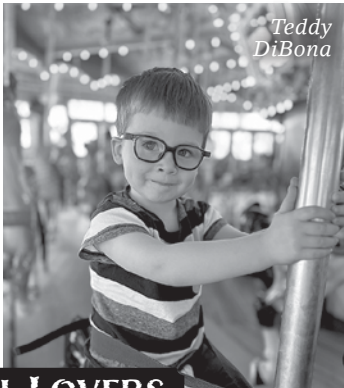
Join neighbors for the annual **Glen Echo Fourth of July parade!** We will meet at University and Princeton Avenues at 10 AM for some Declaring of Independence and perhaps Singing of the Anthem before walking along University, around Vassar Circle and back again. Hang out along the parade route or gather at the pocket parks to march. Decorated strollers, bikes, scooters, and people encouraged. The parade will be followed by popsicles and an us versus Brits water balloon fight. Many thanks to organizers **Corrina Spealman** and **Angela Hirsch!**

.....  
**W**e all know that the **Carousel** draws Glen Echo little ones year after year, but did you know that it also attracts another Town demographic? Stop by this summer and you just might find one of these adult men from Glen Echo working a shift: **Karim Khalifa**,

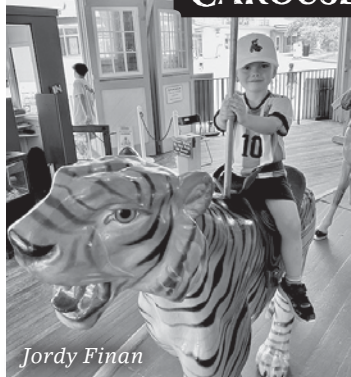
## HAVE YOU HEARD?



Osamu Shimizu and Parsa



Teddy DiBona



Jordy Finan



Bray Hill and Savannah Finan

### CAROUSEL LOVERS

who has been the manager for several years, **DJ Johnson**, **Andy Malmgren**, and **Matt Stiglitz**. The work is varied, including operating the carousel, operating the Wurlitzer organ, including song selection, ticket taking, and safety monitoring. It is worth noting that tickets sales are no longer

under their purview. To purchase tickets for the carousel, you must visit the box office at the Puppet Co. The price remains \$2 for a ride and \$5 for an unlimited-ride bracelet.

.....  
**T**he invasive **spotted lanternfly** has arrived in Glen Echo. You should

definitely kill them on sight. You should also consider removing any ailanthus, aka Tree of Heaven, from your property for that is where they lay their eggs.



.....  
**I**n May, fourth-graders **Lara-T Epanchin** and **Stella Gillberg** found a days' old bird after it fell out of its nest. They nurtured it and named it **Cracker**. Now that it has started to fly, Cracker comes and goes as it pleases. It's not uncommon for it to land on hands or shoulders, squawking for a bite of food. Its area of exploration has been growing, so if you are lucky enough to be greeted by an unusually friendly juvenile bird, now you know why.



### Real Estate

There may not be any properties for sale or rent at the moment, but there's plenty of real estate news!

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43 Wellesley is nearly complete. 6103 Princeton Avenue

was demolished and a new house is being built there.

## IN MEMORIAM

**P**hyllis Daen of 6000 Harvard Avenue died at home on May 31 after a period of declining health. She was predeceased by her husband of 53 years, Jerome Daen. Phyllis moved to Glen Echo about 30 years ago after her daughter Meris moved here with her family.



Phyllis was born on February 22, 1931, in New York City to Herbert M. and Esther Deutsch. She graduated from Queens College in 1950 and received her PhD. in Clinical Psychology from Adel-

phi University in 1960. She was a practicing clinical psychologist in both clinical and community mental health and private practice for 67 years until her retirement in 2021.

She was also an accomplished classically trained pianist and avid gardener. She was devoted to her family and is survived by her children, Jonathan, Matthew, and Meris, who still lives in Glen Echo with her husband Mark. Their daughter Kellan also lives here with her husband Flynn and daughter Isla.



## They Say it's Your BIRTHDAY!

- July 1 **Lucas Masullo**, 14
- July 21 **Shaan Patel**, 5
- July 23 **Emilia Garcia Arean**, 13
- July 25 **Julian Guevara-Rossel**, 3
- July 27 **Eli DiBona**, 7
- July 29 **Lucia Guevara-Rossel**, 6
- Aug. 26 **Stella Gillberg**, 11
- Aug. 29 **Jett Belinkie**, 8
- Aug. 18 **Henry Moskowitz**, 1

# GOINGS ON

## Town Hall Events

**July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30** 8–10:30 PM, FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, free to Town residents

**August 24** 5 PM Annual Summer Picnic, Mexican food, shaved ice, water play

## Glen Echo Park Events

**July 3, 10, 17, 24** 11 AM, kids story time at the Aquarium

**July 12** 9:30 AM, Four-mile ranger guided history hike starting at the Carousel

**August 1** 6–8 PM, Art Walk in the Park, First Fridays

**August 2** 10 AM, 45-minute, ranger-led Civil Rights Tour starting at the carousel, free

**Summer Concert Series** free performances in the Bumper Car Pavilion, Thursdays at 7:30 PM

**July 10** Black Masala

**July 17** The High and Wides

**July 24** U.S. Marine Band

Latin Jazz Ensemble

**July 31** Halley's Hot

Gumbo Swingtet

**August 7** Justin Trawick and the Common Good

**August 14** Kiti Gartner & the Drifting Valentines

**August 21** James Bazen Big Band



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

**The Frog Prince** July 5–July 20

**New Squid on the Block** July 26– August 10

**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

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