



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

TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

October's Town Council meeting was a hybrid event with Mayor Costello, Town Manager Susan Theis, and all four Council Members attending in-person. Kayla Alshouri, the Town auditor from SEK, attended remotely.

Town Audit

The meeting was dominated primarily by a review of the recently drafted audit of the Town's financials for fiscal year 2025. In short, the independent, external auditor issued the Town of Glen Echo a clean audit opinion for the year. The Town's financial position is healthy and reflects a positive net increase from the previous year. Large ticket expenses were improvements to the roadways and to the Town Hall elevator, both of which were financed under the American Rescue Plan Act. Ms. Alshouri participated in the meeting, answered questions, and took feedback that will be incorporated into the final audit report.

Old Business

While sticking to the meeting agenda, the Town Council covered a range of discussion items. First on the list was the Town's recent emails sent to upwards of 25 residents, requesting their cooperation in keeping the sidewalks clear by cutting back vegetation overgrowth. Those who received an email and fail to act may see the Town's landscaper doing the work for them, in which case residents may still be on the hook, financially.

A proposed tree ordinance amendment was also up for discussion. The conversation centered on the permit process for the removal of large canopy trees and the specific require-

ments that could be included in a permit; hazardous trees would be exempted. A proposed tree ordinance will continue to be discussed in the coming months.


A motion was made and supported to introduce a noise ordinance amendment that would push the allowable weekday construction start time from 7 AM to 7:30 AM. A Town comment period will follow. This amendment could be voted on as early as the November meeting, so keep your eyes peeled for more details and how to have your voice heard.

The Council then discussed the prospect of making upper Harvard one way, a change requested by some residents. This is still very much in the phase of exploring options and consequences, ranging from choosing which direction the traffic should flow, to the impacts on traffic and safety elsewhere in Town, to taking

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Nov. 11 & Dec. 15

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raked to the curb.*



no action. In response to the Town's request for proposals, four traffic engineering groups submitted bids for a traffic study. One of the two lower bids will be chosen to conduct the study. The traffic study results will help the Council and residents better understand options and safety issues.

Odds and Ends

The end of the meeting was a quick touch on four items. First, a recent public information request that the Town Manager fulfilled—

THE ECHO

Distributed free to Glen Echo residents. Subscriptions for non-residents: \$12 per year (to subscribe call the Town Manager). Copies of *The Echo* are on file at Little Falls Library. Also provided online at www.glenecho.gov. Total circulation: 190.

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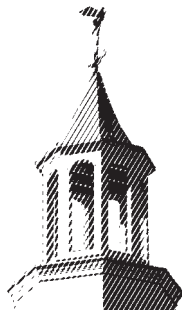
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Next Deadline: November 20, 2025

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.



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Next Council Meeting: November 10, 2025, 7:30 PM

the request concerned information on salaries and position descriptions for the Town Manager and Town Attorney. Second, an effort is underway to host a flu clinic in the Town Hall fall 2026. Third, a Town-wide program offering residents the opportunity to compost their kitchen scraps and food waste is actively being explored. And finally, there

was agreement that picking the best dates for the Town-sponsored leaf pick-up remains a perennial challenge, which is further confounded by a changing climate.

Town Expenses

In October, the Town paid \$3,653 to Key Sanitation, \$1,650 to Marcelli Cleaning, and \$1,325 to LSWG.

—PETE EPANCHIN

TREE ORDINANCE, CONT.

On September 30, Mayor Costello, Town Manager Susan Theis, and the Council held an open meeting at Town Hall to discuss strengthening the Town's regulations concerning the cutting down of large canopy trees. Currently, property owners simply need to give the Town 60 days of notice before taking down any trees. Many municipalities regulate the size or type of tree that can be removed for non-safety issues or levy a large tree removal fee or require replanting elsewhere.



Everyone agreed there should be a balance between owners' rights and community good and that any new ordinances shouldn't be unduly cumbersome. Further, as much as possible it shouldn't feel like one person is arbitrarily deciding what their neighbors can and cannot do.

The main purpose of this meeting, besides getting feedback from residents (a couple in person, a couple virtually), was to decide if the Mayor and Ms. Theis should move forward with proposing language for a new tree ordinance. Some Council Members

seemed solidly in favor of this type of regulation and the message of protecting canopy trees for the common good that it sends, while others leaned more towards owner rights. However, the suggestion that the ordinance might include a list of only a few specific types of canopy trees that would require this particular type of permit for removal swayed the other Council Members, so the re-drafting will continue. There will be more opportunity in the future for resident comment. —EMILY PARSONS



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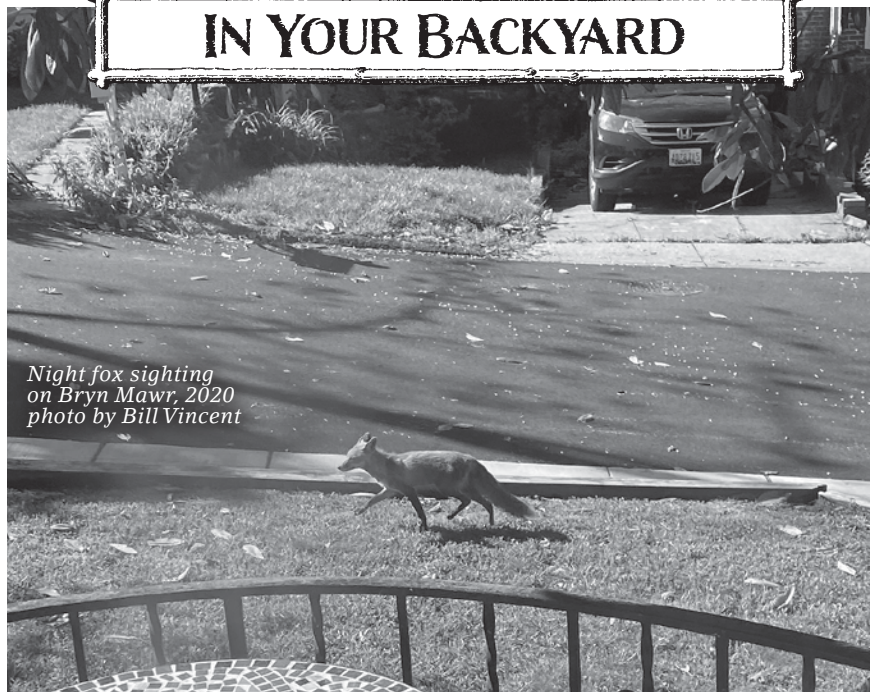
With the weather turning cooler, we've turned off the air conditioning at our house and have been sleeping with the windows open. The normal sounds of the neighborhood drift in: barking dogs, chatter from the sidewalk, early-morning sparrows. Last week, though, there was a new sound in the night—a piercing shriek, somewhere between a yowl and yip. The

noise didn't *not* sound like a human cry, and just in case there was a Kitty Genovese situation happening somewhere on Vassar Circle, I figured I had better not be a bystander, and I got out of bed to check it out.

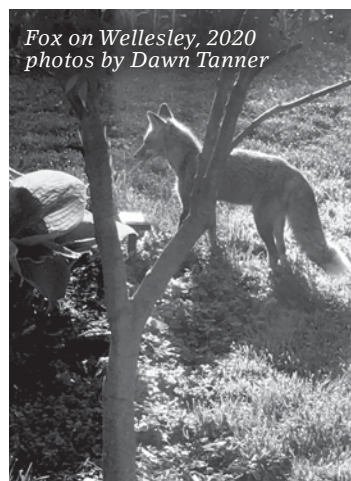
I walked over to the front window and stared down at the street at the same moment the creature before me let out another high-pitched scream. I gasped in surprise, and the fox heard me. It stared up at me through the open window, engaging in a good twenty seconds of prolonged eye contact before it went ambling down the circle and into the dark.

A yowling fox would not have been too surprising if this had been February and not October. In the late winter and early spring, foxes are on the prowl for mates and they spend a good period of time stalking around at

IN YOUR BACKYARD



*Night fox sighting on Bryn Mawr, 2020
photo by Bill Vincent*



*Fox on Wellesley, 2020
photos by Dawn Tanner*



night screaming with want. This fox—and the one I heard later on in the week—seemed a little early to the dating game. What gives?

The alarming scream of a fox in October and November is primarily a functional cry related to territorial dynamics and the dispersal of young, rather than a mating call. This time of year is when kits, born in the spring, reach full size and are forced out of their parents' territory to establish their own. The

screams you hear are often the sound of this turbulent process. Adult foxes, who are highly territorial, use the scream as an aggressive, loud warning to tell these dispersing young, or any other intruding fox, to stay away and find a new home. It's an effective way to assert dominance and defend boundaries before the winter sets in.

This period is often characterized by skirmishes and intense vocalizations as older foxes enforce their

space, and younger foxes fight or cry out in fear as they try to find their own territory. The Vassar Circle fox I saw was likely claiming West Glen Echo for himself, potentially telling the foxes of Oxford and Princeton to back off.

Beyond territorial disputes, late autumn screaming can also be a potent alarm and contact call. A fox will use a piercing scream or a chattering sound

called "gekkering" when it feels immediately threatened by a predator (like an owl or a coyote) or when a human or dog gets too close to its resting spot. The sound is designed to signal danger to other nearby foxes. It is also possible that as foxes become more solitary in the colder months, the scream may simply be a long-distance contact call used by two separated foxes (such as a parent checking on a late-leaving kit) to locate each other across an open area.

In all these cases, the scream is a crucial tool for survival, not romance. So, if you hear a blood-curdling scream in the night sometime over the next few months, well, you should probably still check it out. But know it might just be a belligerent, adolescent fox. —CHARLOTTE TAYLOR FRYAR

Although I love The Avalon, I try to be ecumenical when I talk about which great movies are arriving in theaters near us. But there are so many good films coming to my favorite cinema this month, that I'm going to concentrate this column on DC's only non-profit, independent, art-house theater.

By the time you're reading this, two movies that I'm really excited about will already be playing at the Avalon and should continue well into mid-November. I'm told that *Springsteen: Deliver Me from Nowhere* is not your typical biopic film; instead, it focuses on family trauma and artistic redemption. It follows The Boss as he pauses mid-career, before the massive *Born in the U.S.A.* album, to produce the haunting, stripped-down album *Nebraska* as a way to explore and heal the dark corners of his soul.

Next as November comes around, *Blue Moon* will still be playing at the Avalon. It's helmed by one of my fa-



vorite directors, Richard Linklater, and stars one of his favorite actors, Ethan Hawke. Hawke is almost unrecognizable as a short, balding Lorenz Hart, the less known half of Rodgers and Hart, on the night when he gets jettisoned from the partnership for the

replacement lyricist, Oscar Hammerstein. Speaking of Oscars, Hawke is the early favorite for an Academy Award for his stellar and nuanced performance.

Next up, *Sentimental Value* premieres November 21, followed quickly by *Hamnet* November 26. The first stars Stellan Skarsgård as a difficult director trying to reconcile with his difficult actress daughter played by Renate Reinsve. He writes a movie just for her, but when she turns it down, Elle Fanning steps in, further complicating things. I'm told that all three of the core performances are Oscar-worthy and the film will likely be a strong contender from Norway for best foreign language film.

Hamnet will start just a few days later, led by Os-

car-winning director Chloé Zhao. The film, which won the audience choice award at the latest Toronto International Film Festival, explores the death of Shakespeare's son and the writing of *Hamlet* through the eyes of the Bard's wife, played by Jessie Buckley. She will almost certainly be nominated for her powerful and thoughtful performance.

In addition to the first-run independent films shown on a regular basis, The Avalon also has a number of regular programs you may not be aware of. Senior Cinema Thursday happens every third Thursday of the month at 10:30 AM, when folks over 62 get a special \$6 entry to see one of the latest films with open captions. There are also often weekend family matinees on Saturday and Sunday mornings that are usually scheduled in the dead of winter, when the little ones might need a fun, warm place to spend a couple hours.

Often on Sunday and Tuesday mornings at 10:30

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Blue Moon



Hamnet

AM, you'll find films at the Avalon that highlight other forms of art. The "NT Live" series brings you performances from London's famous National Theatre, and this month it's the family feminist drama *Mrs. Warren's Profession* on November 9 and 11. Meanwhile, the "Exhibition on Screen" series highlights famous artists via the documentaries often crafted to accompany their exhibitions. This month the artist in residence on November 16 and 18 is Caravaggio.

One of the coolest things the Avalon does is to sprinkle in some one-offs and special showings as part of the rotating "Signature Se-

ries" that happens every Wednesday at 8 PM:

■ **CinePolksa** is held in cooperation with the Embassy of Poland to highlight the best films from that country. This month, on November 5, it's a geriatric road trip comedy called *Off We Go*.

■ **Lions of Czech Film** is hosted along with the Czech Embassy, and is presenting *Waves* on November 12, about courageous radio journalists defying the Soviets in late 60s Prague.

■ **French Cinémathèque** is held with the French Embassy for the francophile cinephiles. This month, on November 19, it's *The Musicians*, which is about trying to

get four argumentative virtuosos to perform together.

■ **"Reel Israel DC"** is a similar embassy partnership, but no films are scheduled yet for November.

■ **Programmer's Choice** is a series for which the Avalon's expert booker brings in a movie that will likely wow you, but that might not fit at the Avalon for a full, regular run.

■ **Avalon Docs** highlights important and moving true films that don't always get the audience attention they deserve.

■ **Film in Focus** allows filmmakers to come in and talk about their films in a post-screening discussion with the audience.

While our closest theater, Landmark Bethesda, seems to be slowly running down, the next closest movie destination, just a mile or so further away, is lovingly restored and maintained thanks to the support of folks who want to preserve its historic structure and unique place in DC's film history. With its grand, 400-seat main theatre, enormous screen, and lovely classical ceiling mural, you won't find a better place in the area to watch a film than the Avalon. And with its continued impressive selection of coming attractions, you're guaranteed a great night at the movies. —DAN SPEALMAN

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OUT AND ABOUT

We're in the sweet spot on the calendar when kids are back in school, routines have (some-what) formed, the humidity is gone, and the leaves are turning but holiday frenzy has not yet begun. Prime time for a change of scenery to celebrate the new season. This year, for our family, that meant a trip to **Sperryville, VA**—under 90 minutes, but a world away.

I had last visited Sperryville in 2020. Since the height of the pandemic, this area has launched even more great restaurants, shops, and places to stay, making it the ideal destination for an overnight (although very doable for a day trip, too). Here are some favorites, and new (to us) spots from our visit:

TO STAY—We've previously gone the Airbnb route, but this time we checked into the **White Moose Inn** in Washington, VA. It's a two-minute walk from the far fancier (and pric-

ier) Inn at Little Washington but offers much of the same charm and perks. Also, the location can't be beat. The staff was incredibly warm, the room spacious and cozy, and our stay came with a lovely happy hour and breakfast before we checked out. I've heard great things about Blue Rock, which is about 10 minutes further in towards the mountains.

TO EAT—Sperryville and Washington have become foodie destinations with formal and casual options to choose from. If you plan far enough in advance, snag a table at **Three Blacksmiths**. The food is (apparently) incredible, but with one seating and just 20 seats, this is a very hard-to-get reservation! Luckily there are plenty of other options. We love **Rappahannock Pizza Kitchen** for a more casual

option. On our trip we had an excellent lunch at **Patty O's**, the (far less fancy but equally delicious) sister restaurant to the Inn at Little Washington. Chef Patrick O'Connell is most famous for helming the Inn's renowned kitchen, but several years ago he turned an old gas station across the street into a bakery and café turning out reimagined classics throughout the day. You

get the same quality of food and service for a fraction of the price. If you are more interested in on-the-go options, swing by

the **Sperryville Corner Store** which has gourmet snacks, breads, and cheese—everything you need for a mid-hike picnic. For dinner, we did the prix fixe menu at **Blue Rock**. Their Executive Chef, Aaron Bachoon, came over from the Inn at Little Washington this year and put together an amazing

meal with lots of treats and surprises along the way.

TO DO—There is plenty to do in Sperryville and the surrounding area, most of the options centering on nature or imbibing. Justin is a huge fan of the **Schoolhouse Nine golf course**, located in the center of town with the mountains as a backdrop. After hitting the links, you can poke around the shops along the river. I really enjoy wandering around the **Copper Fox Antiques** warehouse. There are several great hikes, ranging in distance and difficulty, close by. I love Old Rag, especially when the leaves are changing. Finally, I recommend taking a tour and having a drink at **Copper Fox Distillery**. The space is amazing, and after you finish you can sit out back and order drinks and snacks.

Sperryville is great any time of year, but fall is truly when it shines. Check it out and let me know what you think! —EMILY ELLIS



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Thirty years ago, 13-year-old Michael Levenson of Princeton Avenue offered to watch a friend's pets while they were out of town. What he found there was more than a dozen aquariums with all sorts of animals. In one, there were three baby turtles all trapped on their backs—not a viable position for a turtle. Two were already dead, but the third was holding on, foaming at the mouth. Michael adopted that baby turtle as his own and named him Jimi (yes, after Hendrix).

Time passed, Jimi grew,

IN OUR MIDST



Jack, Jo Anne, and Jimi

Michael became an adult and moved away from Glen Echo, and Jimi grew. At 55 pounds, he became too heavy for Michael's parents Jo Anne and Marc to lift. Jo Anne was hoping to either find Jimi a new owner or get

him out to the west coast to be a charming attraction in her son's veterinarian office.

A couple of months ago, my family was visiting cousins who live on a farm outside of Winchester, VA. They have quite the menagerie already, but during our stay it came up that they'd love to have a giant tortoise. Wait for it: for their 14-year-old

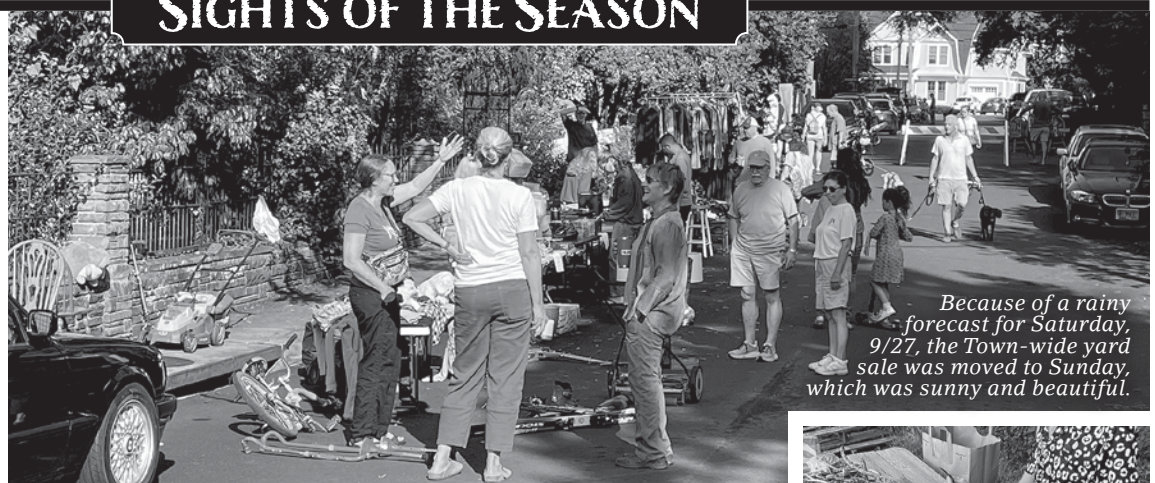
son Jack who wants to be a vet. Contacts were shared and a visit to Glen Echo and then to the farm followed.

On October 11, Jack and his parents came to Glen Echo to collect their newest member, Jimi. He's since joined their mishmash of horses, cats, dogs, chickens, partridges, and his bunkmate, a pig. And this likely won't even be his last home. The sulcata tortoise can live up to 100 years! —EMILY PARSONS



Pig meets tortoise at the Virginia farm.

SIGHTS OF THE SEASON



Because of a rainy forecast for Saturday, 9/27, the Town-wide yard sale was moved to Sunday, which was sunny and beautiful.



Nancy Long's art collection was sold, proceeds benefiting the Dentzel Carousel.



Karim Khalifa's Halloween spider is back, but in a new inflated style.



Bounty from this year's Community Garden was celebrated on October 6.

It's been many years since the last time the **Eistophos Science Club** held a meeting in Glen Echo. But that time has come again! Former resident **Diana Hudson-Taylor** invites all neighbors to come to Town Hall on Saturday, November



The Vera Rubin Observatory in Chile

HAVE YOU HEARD?

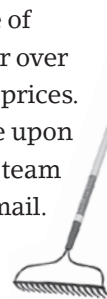
8, at 2 PM for a discussion of recent science news and a speaker on the Vera Rubin Observatory. Over a hundred years old, Eistophos encourages all women in

science. To learn more see Eistophos.org

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Need help cleaning up your leaves or with basic yardwork this fall? **Leaf Relief**

is a group of three neighborhood teenage boys who can expertly rake the leaves in your yard and handle any basic yardwork. The team has been taking care of yards in Bethesda for over a year at reasonable prices. References available upon request. Contact the team at leafreliefteam@gmail.com or text 240-750-0322 to learn more.



Bummed that you missed the **Bannockburn Spring Show** last May? Or saw it and just wish you caught more of the jokes? Come to the Bannockburn Clubhouse on November 2, 6-8 PM, for the world premiere of the movie [with closed captioning] put together by Mike Zangwill. Suggested donation \$10 to the Bannockburn Spring Show AV recording improvement fund.



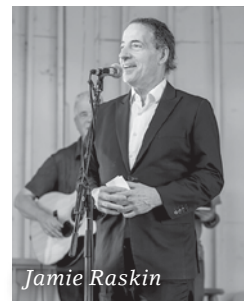
By all metrics, the **Washington Folk Festival** at Glen Echo Park on October 19 was a success! The weather was glorious: a warm fall day. It was so well attended—around 6,500 people—that the food trucks all sold out. The crowds of people were smiling and dancing, all happy to have the festival back after it was cancelled last year. The Town got involved a lot more which was great. Many thanks residents

Chloe Sax, Emma Sax, Vanessa Sax, Karim Khalifa, Pete Epanchin, Matt Costello, Aaron Hirsch, Mona Kishore, and Ayan Kishore for on-the-ground volunteering as well as those who supported the event with a donation. Many Delegates, Councilmembers, and State Senators attended. Councilmember Evan Glass introduced Rep. Jamie Raskin, who shared how the festival embodies what America is about. The Governor's office

provided a Governor's citation to the Folklore Society of Greater Washington for service to the community through the festival. Special thanks to resident Ayan Kishore, who took action when the festival was cancelled, joined the board of FSGW, and brought this beautiful event back!



Ayan Kishore



Jamie Raskin



PHOTOS BY MATT COSTELLO

Glen Echo Pizza and Subs has a new face behind the counter, and it's one many locals already know. Girma Hailu, former proprietor of the 7-Eleven next door for over 15 years, recently took ownership of the beloved neighborhood pizzeria. Glen Echo Pizza has been serving the community for over 50 years, and Girma is proud to continue that legacy. "People love this place for its simplicity, good food, friendly service, and consistency," he says. "I just want to keep that spirit going." Under his ownership, the restaurant continues to serve its signature pizzas, subs, and salads, but regulars may notice smoother service and spruced-up details including faster takeout turnaround and online ordering via delivery app services.

Girma is an active supporter of community life. Just last month, he helped sponsor the return of the Washington Folk Festival. He also made the pizzas for the Town's annual Halloween party; feeling "immense gratitude" for the Glen Echo community, which has shown him support since he took over.

As another way to give



Girma Hailu

back, Glen Echo Pizza welcomes local teenagers to apply for summer jobs, offering a chance to gain work experience close to home. And for the month of November, residents who spend over \$30 will receive a 10% discount. Just mention it to any staff member at checkout.

Soon to come are extended hours as Girma ramps up service to meet growing demand. He also welcomes feedback and can be reached anytime at glenechosub@gmail.com.

With a friendly smile and a quiet determination, Girma is betting on what he calls "the heart of Glen Echo," a community that knows its neighbors and supports local businesses. Stop by soon and you'll likely find Girma there, greeting customers by name.

—MONA KISHORE



They Say it's Your BIRTHDAY!

Nov. 9, **Wes Woodall**, 1
 Nov. 13, **Jordy Finan**, 4
 Nov. 23, **Gabriel Fiedler**, 3

GOINGS ON

Town Hall Events

November 5, 12, 19, 26
 8–10:30 PM, FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, free to Town residents.

November 8 2 PM, Eistophos Science Club meeting (see description opposite page)



Local Events

November 1 11 AM–4 PM, The Mohican Hills Art Walk, along Rivercrest Court, between 6602 and 6605

November 9 1–4 PM, 5th annual holiday market hosted by Gitika Kaul at 6913 Nevis Road offering goods from women-owned local businesses.

Glen Echo Park Events

November 6, 13, 20, 27 11 AM, kids story time at the Aquarium

November 1 10 AM, 45-minute, ranger-led Civil Rights Tour starting at the carousel, free

November 8 9:30 AM, Four-mile ranger guided history hike starting at the Carousel

November 15 6–8 PM, Opening of the Holiday Art Show and Sale, runs through January 4

The Puppet Co. www.thepuppetco.org; 301-634-5380

The 37th Annual Nutcracker November 28–December 31

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



Adventure Theater MTC

www.adventuretheater-mtc.org;
 301-634-2270

Frosty the Snowman

November 26–January 11

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, AT 7:00 PM

LADIES NIGHT

6001 BRYN MAWR • MARY & EMILY PARSONS HOSTING

