

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 63

April 2016

No. 4



Calendar

Sun., Mar. 20	Art at Penn Place, Penn Place Gallery Juried Invitational Show, 25 artists (till Apr. 23; see p 5)	Mon., Apr. 11	Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 pm
Wed., Mar. 23	Citizens Assoc. Mtg., Town Hall, 7 pm; nominations for Town Council; rainscapes presentation (see p 4)	Thurs., Apr. 14	<i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
Fri., Mar. 25	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> in Penn Place lobby	Fri., Apr. 15	Film Society, <i>Pygmalion</i> , Town Hall; dinner 7 pm, film 8 pm (see p 2)
Sat., Mar. 26	Register to vote in the town election, Town Office, 9 am–1 pm (see p 3 for all election-related dates and deadlines)	Sat., Apr. 16	GIVES collection, Farmer's Market, 9–12 pm
Sat., Apr. 2	Large item pickup; GIVES collection, PO lobby, 9–12 pm; Voter registration, Penn Place lobby, 9 am–1 pm (last day to register)	Thurs., Apr. 21	GP Jams, Town Hall, 8 pm
Tues., Apr. 5	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm	Fri., Apr. 22	<i>Bugle</i> out in Penn Place lobby
Thurs., Apr. 7	GP Jams, Town Hall, 8 pm	Sun., Apr. 24	Art at Penn Place, Jane Salomon, paintings (till May 21); "Meet the Artist" reception, 3–5 pm (see p 5)
		Wed., Apr. 27	Citizens Assoc. Mtg., Town Hall, 7:30 pm; Candidates Forum
		Mon., May 2	Town election, Penn Place lobby, 7 am–7:30 pm; Reception with results, Town Hall, 9:30 pm

Rolling in It

There was a bit of a chill in the air outside, but inside the Town Hall the Council gathered in warmth and fellowship to do the business of Garrett Park. This was a brief, efficient sort of meeting, largely devoted to discussing the implications of our having gathered a good deal more property and local income tax than we had projected.

I believe the term for this quandary is "first world problem."

The meeting began, however, with a more recognizable dilemma: One of our neighbors, Warren Kornberg, has long had trouble convincing our refuse collectors not only to pick up his trash at the side of his house, but to return the empty barrel to the same location. Reading a statement his fellow Garrett Parker had written, Charlie Snyder recounted the "contest of wills" between Mr. Kornberg, who is "reaching my

ninetieth year, [when] carting barrels up and back becomes onerous," and collectors who "take the trash and then dump the barrel in front of the house for me to retrieve." He asks the town to intervene, and the Mayor responded that the message has been received, and the town has been working on it.

Capital and operating budgets for fiscal 2017, which are policy documents for the coming year in which we set out, said the Mayor, "where we think our priorities are," passed unanimously.

Taxes remain unchanged, as does the refuse collection fee.

The Council now unanimously approved a new election judge: Natalie Grande.

Next the Town Manager filled us in on the gory details of our revenue problem. "We are well

(continued next page)

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ahead of our estimates. Real personal property taxes have come in higher than we had budgeted, and local income tax is also well ahead of last year, and will probably remain that way for the rest of the year."

Councilmember Joanna Welch asked whether, this being the case, we should revisit our projections for next year.

"It's a really scary thing to project income tax," said the Mayor. "Real property tax is easier to predict."

The Mayor added that these are very important projections, since the services we provide in town are predicated on them.

Gene Swearingen touched on a few more elements of the budget, one having to do with January's big snowfall. "The storm has been approved as a disaster, and we will be filling out forms for possible reimbursement from FEMA. We spent around twelve thousand additional dollars, related to snow removal plus staff overtime. I don't think we'll get reimbursed for that full amount, but we will get some of it back."

Gene then noted that we've budgeted \$50,000 for the eventual removal of the Laetitia Yandle house (Laetitia has generously made a gift of the property to the town), but it turns out that this will cost more like \$25,000. "So not only can we cover this, but we have money left over."

This avalanche of good financial news left one money anxiety intact: Town Hall rents are down from last year.

But Gene instantly put the kibosh on that as well. "We tend to bring in more money toward the end of the fiscal year. We'll be ok."

A final personal note: I'll be teaching in China for a semester, starting this September, so the *Bugle* will need someone to replace me in covering Town Council meetings. It's an easy, informative, collegial, and very pleasant way to contribute to the town. Please consider contacting Barbara Collier (see boxed masthead, this page, or the directory) if you're interested.

Margaret Soltan

Musicale Coming Up!

Remember to mark your calendars for the 20th Garrett Park Musicale on May 22 at 4 pm at the Town Hall. This program for all music lovers benefits the Ilah Gieser Music Scholarship (now part of the Garrett Park Community Fund), which supports a year of private music lessons for a budding musician at Garrett Park Elementary School.

Do you play an instrument and would like to have a kind and enthusiastic audience? Contact Sue Petito or Meme Lincoln (see your directory).

Film Society: *Pygmalion*

On Friday, April 15, the Garrett Park Film Society presents the 1938 film of George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*. Wendy Hiller and Leslie Howard as Eliza Doolittle and Henry Higgins use wit, charm, and timing to make this fairy tale a classic of sophisticated comedy. "Miss *Pygmalion*? Not B***** likely!"

The film will be shown at 8 pm. Admission is free for GPFS members and \$5 per person or \$10 per family for nonmembers.

Dinner, served at 7 pm, will feature British classics as well. For details, check the poster in the PO or the garrettparkneighbors listserv a week before the film. Cost is usually \$10 plus a bit more for dessert. Drinks are served from 6:45 pm to show time. Soda, water, beer, and wine are available at costs ranging from \$1 to \$5.

See you at the Town Hall!



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The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$25 per family or \$15 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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Town Manager Notes

Election. Mark your calendar for Election Day: Monday, May 2!

Please remember to vote! The Mayor and two seats on the Town Council will be on the ballot. See the detailed election schedule on this page.

State tax form reminder. Remember to write “Garrett Park” in the box labeled “City, Town or Taxing Area” when filling out your state income tax forms. If someone prepares your tax returns for you, be sure to remind them to put “Garrett Park” in that box. This ensures that our community receives its fair share of the income tax revenues the state distributes to the 23 counties and 157 incorporated cities and towns throughout Maryland. This revenue supports many of the services the town provides to residents.

Fiscal Year 2017 budget. The FY 2017 Operating and Capital Budgets were introduced at the March 14 Town Council meeting and are scheduled for approval at the April 11 Town Council meeting. Copies of the budgets are available at the Town Office. The FY 2017 budget leaves the real property tax rate unchanged at 21¢ per \$100 of value and the personal and corporate property tax unchanged at \$1 per \$100 of assessed valuation. The refuse collection fee also remains the same, at \$333 per household.

Large item pickup. The next large item pickup is scheduled for Saturday, April 2. Remember to place your items curbside no later than Friday.

Reminder regarding permits. If you are planning to do any construction this spring, please remember that a Garrett Park building permit is required whenever a new structure is to be built, including houses, additions, sheds, garages, decks, porches, and driveways. This is in addition to the required Montgomery County permit. To save time, it’s a good idea to complete your Garrett Park permit and submission of plats and drawings before requesting a county permit.

Street cleaning. Please watch for information on the date for the upcoming street cleaning in late April. We will ask that you move your cars off the streets so that the cleaning can extend from curb to curb.

Reminders on yard waste collection. Yard waste is now collected every Monday through the end of October. Use paper bags for yard waste; no plastic, please! Don’t forget to bundle brush.

If you have branches too large to bundle for yard waste collection, bring them to the curb, butt-end facing the street; the maintenance staff will come by and chip them.

Also remember that bamboo cannot be chipped—it jams the chipper and sends out dangerous shards. Please cut it up into 4-foot lengths and either bundle or bag it for regular yard waste collection on Mondays.

Contact us. If you have any questions about town services, please call the Town Office at 301-933-7488.

Gene Swearingen, Town Manager

Town Election Schedule

- Wed., Mar. 23 Candidate nominations, Citizens Association Meeting, Town Hall, 7 pm
- Sat., Mar. 26 Voter registration, Penn Place lobby, 9 am–1 pm
- Sat., Apr. 2 Last day to register to vote in election
Voter registration, Penn Place lobby, 9 am–1 pm
- Mon., Apr. 4 Candidate financial interest disclosure forms due at Town Office by noon
- Mon., Apr. 11 Candidate petitions due at Town Office by 4 pm
- Wed., Apr. 13 Absentee ballots available
- Wed., Apr. 27 Candidates Forum, Town Hall, 7:30 pm
Last day for regular absentee ballots from Town Office, available till 4 pm
- Thurs., Apr. 28 Late absentee ballots available in person only from Town Office, 8:30 am–4:30 pm
- Mon., May 2 Election Day. Polls open in Penn Place lobby, 7 am–7:30 pm
Absentee ballots and late absentee ballots must be received by Judges of Election by 7:30 pm.
Election reception at Town Hall, 9:30 pm; results announced around 10 pm; swearing in of elected candidates

Services for Seniors

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Citizens Association Notes

March meeting. Nominations for Town Council take place Wednesday, March 23, at 7 pm in the Town Hall. The terms of office for Mayor Peter Benjamin and Town Councilmembers Hans Wegner and Tara Flynn are up this year. Nominations will be followed by a presentation about rainscapes and other stormwater management practices, featuring an expert from Montgomery County.

February meeting report. The Citizens Association meeting on February 24 was devoted to stormwater management. Mayor Peter Benjamin gave a great introduction about the stormwater issue that the town has been facing for quite a long time. As the town continues to develop and new construction increases, our natural landscapes are being replaced with more impermeable surfaces. As a result, during rain and snowstorms, water does not soak into the ground and therefore becomes surface runoff. In addition to causing increased flooding, this runoff collects potential contaminants and flows into streams, which in turn leads to contamination of watersheds such as Rock Creek.

The purpose of the stormwater management meeting was to initiate discussions about the potential mechanisms that we as a town could employ in order to manage stormwater and minimize the impact on our environment.

Christy Ciarametaro and Mark Etheridge from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) joined us to discuss some of the programs that the DEP uses to assess and address the impact of stormwater and water pollution in Montgomery County. One such program is the Watershed Restoration Program. Montgomery County's Watershed Restoration Program began in the early 90s and focuses on watershed studies, stream restoration, wetland creation, and stormwater management projects. A local example is the bioretention area (rain garden) at the Kensington Public Library.

The Rock Creek Watershed Study is one of DEP's newest endeavors under the Watershed Restoration Program. This program is expected to kick off in spring 2016. As part of this study, the DEP will assess 97 stream miles to identify areas (large impervious areas, unforested areas, neighborhoods with large property ownership, etc.) that may need stormwater management. Geographically, Garrett Park is part of the Rock Creek Watershed Study, which includes certain parts of Garrett Park and some of the open areas around the edges of the town. The Rock Creek Watershed Study is expected to finish by the spring of 2017, after which a public meeting will be organized to discuss the results of the assessment.

So what does this mean for the town of Garrett Park? This is a great opportunity for the town

to start discussion and collaborate with the DEP to identify mechanisms to alleviate the stormwater issue in our town.

Upcoming Citizens Association events. Please save these dates.

- Candidates Forum: Wednesday, April 27, 7:30 pm
- Independence Day festivities: Monday, July 4 (of course!)
- Newcomers Welcome: Sunday, September 18
- Spooky Woods: Saturday, October 29

Future meetings. Do you have a suggestion or idea for a meeting topic that you feel would be of interest to the town? If so, please forward your thoughts to Sean Conlan or send a note to Box 456.

Annual dues. The Citizens Association 2016 annual dues are being collected. The annual dues are \$15 for individuals and \$25 per family. Thank you to all of those who have already paid. For those who have not, please submit dues by mailing them to the Citizens Association at Box 456.

Garrett Park listserv. Our neighborhood is made up of people with a wide variety of backgrounds, skills, perspectives, and experiences. Tap into these resources and stay informed with the Garrett Park neighborhood listserv. The listserv is an electronic forum for neighbors to communicate information about town concerns, safety issues, upcoming events, and recommended services (for example, contractors, lawn care, doctors, and baby sitters). The listserv will not be used for unsolicited marketing, and you can unsubscribe at any time. To join, e-mail Todd Harris or sign in at groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors/join.

Questions or comments for the Citizens Association? If so, please send a note to P.O. Box 456 or e-mail Sean Conlan.

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Art at Penn Place

The very popular annual Penn Place Gallery Juried Invitational Show is here! This annual juried group exhibit is held for artists who do not live in Garrett Park, but who do live in Montgomery County. This year we had so many wonderful entries that our juror, Michael Shibley, asked if he could include five additional finalists above our traditional 20! The Invitational Show is on display from March 20 to April 23, and the 25 artists were celebrated with a reception and award ceremony on March 20.

Next up, Garrett Park artist Jane Salomon will display her work in the gallery from April 24 to May 21. Her show will include her wonderful “squiggle paintings,” a unique new direction that Jane has taken with her art. As Jane describes, “A good friend sent me a Ted Talks video, ‘Embrace the Shake,’ when he knew I was figuring out how to cope with a diagnosed ‘essential tremor.’ Thus were born my squiggle paintings, and instead of being frustrated trying to paint as I had in the past, the squiggles felt fun and free, and allowed me to move forward rather than lament the past.” Jane’s “squiggle paintings” are fabulous, and we are excited to display them in the gallery. We hope you will join us at Jane’s “Meet the Artist” reception on April 24 from 3 to 5 pm.

Townwide Yard Sale

As mentioned in last month’s *Bugle*, this town-wide yard sale, sponsored by the GP Women’s Club, takes place on Saturday, May 21, from 9 am to 2 pm. See the post office notice board for more information and details.

If you’re interested in participating, please contact Caroline Turner with your address, e-mail, and phone number. We are charging all participants a \$5 fee (cash or check) to cover publicity; please send your fee to Box 173 or drop it off at 11116 Rokeby. Thank you.

Greening Report

Thanks go again to repeat donor Frank O’Brinski, who is sponsoring this month’s green. Thanks so much for your continuing generous support!

If anyone wants to sponsor the green for future months, now is the time—the greening fund has run dry! If you’re interested, please make out a check to the Citizens Association for \$45, with “greening” in the memo line, and mail it to the Citizens Association at Box 456. We’d be most grateful.

If you would like to sponsor a banner in honor of something or someone in particular, please enclose a note to that effect, and please also send the information to editor Barbara Collier by e-mail (but phone, USPS, or a note on the door would also work... check your directory for details!). Many thanks.



Women’s Club Events

Did you mark your 2016 calendars with these dates for Women’s Club and other town events? Please note a couple of changes from last month. Also, times will be confirmed as we get closer to the dates.

Spring TBD	Plant swap
Sat., May 21	Progressive Dinner (note date change)
Sat., May 21	Town yard sale (in front of residents’ homes)
Sun., May 22	Musical for Gieser Scholarship Fund
Sat., Sept. 17	Porches & Patios (note date change)
Sat., Oct. 15	Attic in the Street
Fall TBD	Pooch Parade
Fri., Dec. 9	Holiday Sing-Along, Town Hall
Sat., Dec. 10	Santa at the Town Hall
Wed, Dec 21	Holiday Decorating Contest

Questions? Please contact Women’s Club President Lillian DelPriore.

Spring into Yoga

at Garrett Park Town Hall

Tuesdays:

5:30–6:15 pm—Breathing and meditation

6:30–7:45 pm—Yoga (for all)

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- ♪ April is National Poetry Month, and to mark it, *Bugle* reporter Margaret Soltan will be giving a series of lectures at the Georgetown Public Library, 3260 R Street, NW. They will take place from 2 to 4 pm on the following three Saturdays: April 2, 9, and 16.
- ♪ The *Bugle* received the following note: “The Martin Family wishes to thank our friends and neighbors for their prayers and for the many kindnesses received since the death of our son and brother, Paul Martin. Your thoughtfulness is immensely appreciated.” The family is still in our thoughts.
- ♪ In case you didn’t read all the way to the end of the Council Notes (pp 1–2) this month, we’re looking for another *Bugle* reporter to fill in for Margaret Soltan at Council meetings while she is away in China (!) for a few

months beginning in September. If you are interested in attending Council meetings and sharing the highlights with your fellow citizens, please get in touch with anyone on the *Bugle* staff or Citizens Association board (see the masthead box on p 2 for contact information).

- ♪ Remember that although the town’s old web site is no more, and the new site is not yet, the town does maintain a web presence at www.garrettpark-md.gov. A single page provides calendar information and various links.
- ♪ The memorial for Lillian Henley on March 18 was very well attended; reminiscences by family and friends painted a picture of a very remarkable lady who led a long and interesting life.

Letter to the Editor

Change and Progress

I’d like to make a few gentle comments to Mayor Benjamin’s quote, in the March 2016 edition of the *Bugle*, taken from George Bernard Shaw stating, “Progress is impossible without change and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

First of all, change and progress are inevitable whether we like it or not. I get that, and so do most other people. The few times when change is “somewhat” under the control of people, change can be extremely beneficial when a real problem has been identified and finding the best solution to a problem has been explored. And, finally the best change solution identified benefits the majority of beings and folks impacted by the change.

I want to acknowledge all the positive changes made regarding the renovation of Penn Place and how much safer our very busy Strathmore

Avenue is because of the sidewalks, lighting, etc. Thanks to the Mayor and the Council and all the people involved spending countless hours ironing out all the details, discussion, voting, etc. Change and progress “par excellence.”

Change forced on other people who are very negatively impacted by the change because there is “free money” involved as a direct result from instituting this specific change borders on ... well, you fill in the blank.

From my point of view, change and progress are natural—it’s in our DNA. Change agents are resilient. First they identify real problems, consider all the possible solutions and make a decision based on how the change benefits the majority of people, considering carefully the environment and the cost.

Courtenay J. Culp

Early Days at GP School

An oral history in the town archives provides a description of the late 1930’s by Joy Duey, who was the sole teacher in the one-room school (Mrs. Duey went on to become the principal of the school in later years). She describes a time before Garrett Park Estates was built, and Holy Cross School was a pasture where the children loved to go to pet the cows and visit the horses. “The yard was just a field of daisies, coreopsis, and wild strawberries. The children were allotted a great deal of freedom, brought the dogs in on cold days behind the stove.”

In her reflections on the Depression, she described a hot lunch program instituted by the Mothers Club, a tight-knit group who met after school. Some of the children attending the school

at that time were from a large house across the Pike. The families were squatters who could not provide lunches for their children. The Mothers Club ran into some difficulty: “They weren’t used to the type of food that we ate so we had a hard time keeping in mind what we served them. Sometimes we didn’t have a hot dish and they’d send sandwiches.”

When asked about the character of the community, Mrs. Duey said, “Artistic, the way it is now, you know. I think it is a little more far out than it was then ... but they were always intellectually minded; they really had ideas of their own, and they were always like that about their school.”

Marian Green

Letter from the Mayor

As I write this the lawns are turning green. The leaves are budding on the trees. The cherry trees are blossoming. Flowers are blooming. Spring is dressing our town in its finest, bringing color to our arboretum. We value the natural feel of living in Garrett Park. The character of the town as we know it is inextricably bound to its varied vegetation.

It is important that we manage the trees in our town right of way to ensure the beauty of the town and contribute to enhancing the environment. We do not like removing any trees, but trees are living things with natural lives. They take a while to grow to maturity, and as they age they often lose limbs and sometimes fall over. When they die, they may crash to the ground. We try to trim them to lengthen their lives and to minimize their potential danger to people and property.

They grow into the electrical lines that give us power, entertainment, and communications. To preserve those services, Pepco trims and occasionally removes the trees. We have been lucky to have a town arborist, Phil Normandy, who loves our trees and works with the Pepco arborist, Adam Owens, to ensure that the trimming is done tastefully and in as constrained a manner as possible. Upon occasion, they find that the necessary pruning will so hamper the health of the tree that it is better to replace it. The result has been that our town has been spared the indignities to its trees that other communities have endured and that we see along the highways.

We do not just remove trees in the town right of way; we replace them. As trees age we try to find the best time to replace them so that the overall tree cover is maintained while a new tree matures. We try to anticipate when trees will be a danger to life, limb, and property. Accordingly, we are attempting to manage their natural cycle to reflect the fact that they are in a populated area, not in the deep woods.

Unfortunately, when a homeowner planted tulip poplars along Keswick 100 years ago, that person could not have fathomed what the town would be like today and that we would be faced

with a group of trees that had aged to the point that they presented a potential danger to residents along that street. So at the urging of those residents we removed those trees and, with the advice of the Arboretum Committee, are in the process of replacing them. As we do, we will be cognizant of two criteria. The replacements should be sufficiently varied that they do not all mature and approach their end simultaneously and present the residents of the street 50 or 100 years from now with the same problem. We will not plant them along the edge of the roadway so that paving of roads and driveways and cars parking on them will damage their roots.

Many of the trees planted by the town in the right of way are growing into the utility wires and will continue to be trimmed and eventually replaced. We have learned that we need to replace those trees with ones that either do not grow as high or are located so as to minimize their incursion into the wires. Yes, the wires could be put underground, but that would cost millions of dollars in our town alone, a price we cannot afford and Pepco believes the ratepayers would not tolerate if done throughout its service area.

We need a plan to manage our street trees so that we do not repeat the situation we faced on Keswick, so that we retain our tree cover, and so that we do not create for the citizens of this town 25, 50, or 100 years from now the same conundrum we face: balancing our desire to maintain our tree cover with the safety of our residents. It is for that reason that I have asked the Arboretum Committee, with professional assistance, to develop a plan so that we may undertake an orchestrated, controlled, and judicious tree replacement process that ensures that we do not take down too many trees in one place at the same time, and that we replace trees so that the new ones are appropriately located to minimize their impact on utilities and the impact of our facilities upon them. That is our responsibility to ourselves and to our environment now and for those who will live here in the future. We will keep you informed of the progress of this initiative.

Peter Benjamin

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