

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 64

February 2017

No. 2



Calendar

| | | | |
|----------------|--|-----------------|--|
| Fri., Jan. 20 | Pick up <i>Bugle</i> from table in PO lobby | Fri., Feb. 10 | Film Society, <i>Learning to Drive</i> , Town Hall; dinner 7 pm, film 8 pm (see p 2) |
| Sun., Jan. 22 | Art at Penn Place: Meet the Artist Reception: Glenn Roberts, 3–5 pm (see p 4) | Sun., Feb. 12 | Gallery at Penn Place, Youth Art Show Reception, 3–5 pm (show runs through Feb. 25; see p 4) |
| Fri., Jan. 27 | Film Society, <i>Tangerines</i> , Town Hall; dinner 7 pm, film 8 pm (rescheduled; see p 2) | Mon., Feb. 13 | Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 pm |
| Sat., Jan. 28 | Town Dinner, Town Hall, 6 pm (see p 4) | Tues., Feb. 14 | Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm |
| Sat., Feb. 4 | GIVES collection, Post Office lobby, 9 am–12 pm | Thurs., Feb. 16 | <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm |
| Mon., Feb. 6 | Monthly yard waste collection | Thurs., Feb. 23 | GPJams, Town Hall, 7:30–10 pm |
| Thurs., Feb. 9 | GPJams, Town Hall, 7:30–10 pm | Fri., Feb. 24 | Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at the PO lobby |
| | | Mon., Feb. 27 | Gallery at Penn Place, new exhibit: Leila Holtsman (see p 4) |

Stop Signs Dominate (or Do They?)

It was 19 degrees on Monday, January 9, when all Town Councilmembers, the Town Manager, and Mayor met for the January meeting. Hans Wegner moved to modify the agenda to include a discussion of how the town addresses snow removal and snow melt. The Mayor and Gene stated that they have received and are currently evaluating bids in response to the town's RFP for a contractor to write an RFP to continue the SRTS Sidewalk program. In response to a resident's question, the Mayor and Administrator said they have contracted to have the town surveyed to determine the exact location of the town right-of-way. Locations of trees and fire hydrants are to be included in this survey.

Chris Keller spoke regarding the stop signs on Oxford. Chris was concerned that the town ignored the professional input they solicited regarding locations of stop signs and wondered what the rationale was for the stop signs so closely spaced at the intersections of Oxford and Kenilworth, and Oxford and Montrose. Jane McClintock indicated she felt the stop signs were

effective at Oxford and Kenilworth (although she noted that Principal Tucci's presence at that location may have had some effect). Chris said that his experience was diametrically opposite from Jane's and that he had observed 30 to 40 cars over a period of 5 minutes that failed to stop at the new stop sign at Montrose. There was general agreement that stop bars need to be painted on the road, but the town has to wait for warmer and drier weather to do that. There was some discussion about the inability of the town to enforce its own traffic regulations, although Chris noted that if they were adopted as an ordinance it is possible to enforce them. Hiring an off-duty policeman to simply park a car nearby at least initially was also discussed but not followed up. Kacky Chantry suggested the school prepare a paper pointing out new traffic regulations to be handed to each parent who was driving and dropping off a child, in addition to sending a schoolwide e-mail notifying parents of the changes. The Mayor indicated that he feels the town has done what is needed to ensure safety and coordination with the school.

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Moving on, the minutes of December 12 were approved as presented. The discussion then moved to the mid-year budget assessment. The major items to be changed included a doubling of the carryover from the FY2016 budget for a total of \$204,282, due to revenue higher than projected and some expenses less than expected. There was also a calculation mistake in salaries; in addition, the town set aside \$33,879 for tax receipts that now have to be repaid to the taxpayers following the Supreme Court's Wynne decision (which affects the calculation of state income taxes for taxpayers who pay taxes to several states). The Midyear Capital and Operating Budgets Amendment was unanimously approved by the Council.

A discussion of how the town handles snow removal and treatment was led by Hans and Gene. Several years ago Hans found a study indicating that the least damaging snow melt was magnesium chloride; however, it is 2 or 3 times more expensive than rock salt and less effective, and it doesn't work as quickly as rock salt. The current policy has been to use plowing first, then magnesium chloride and rock salt only where there are areas that are particularly difficult. It turns out sand is not a good option, because it is much more difficult to clean up after application. The Council decided to not vote on making exclusive use of magnesium chloride a policy but instead reiterated the town's priority to use the least harmful snow removal and treatment and to leave the solution to the judgment of the town administrator and maintenance employees.

Kacky Chantry brought up her concerns that stop signs might be required on Kenilworth at Argyle because visibility is limited by vegetation and parked cars. It was decided that more research needed to be done before the Council takes up that issue. It was noted that in addition to new stop signs, there are now speed limit signs installed on streets that did not have any before.

Finally, the meeting was adjourned.

Barbara Jackson

(Editor's note: Barbara filled in for normally stalwart reporter Margaret Soltan, felled by bronchitis. Thank you, Barbara!)

Save the date for

Our Neighborhood Spring Fling!

Sunday, June 11, 2 to 4 pm
Town Hall

(But what is that? See p 5 for the answer!)

All Garrett Park residents invited

☞ Sponsored by Neighbors Helping Neighbors ☜

GPFS January, February Films

First, *Tangerines* (Estonian/Georgian, 2013) will be shown on January 27, not January 20, as first announced. The film is a plea for peace and understanding between differing cultures/religions in a war-torn country.

On February 10, the film is *Learning to Drive* (UK/USA, 2015), starring Patricia Clarkson as a writer living in Manhattan and Ben Kingsley as a Sikh driving instructor. Her marriage is failing, while he faces an arranged marriage. Together they teach each other how to find the courage and joy to start a new life.

Both films start at 8 pm and are shown at the Town Hall. Dinner is served at 7 pm. *Tangerines* will feature hearty Eastern European/Russian dishes. The menu for *Learning to Drive* will be announced later. Cost for dinner is \$10 per person. Drinks, soda, beer, and wine are on offer at 6:45 pm at prices ranging from \$1 to \$5.

Greening Report

This month's green banner has no sponsor. Alas! Our fund is almost dry; we have one sponsor for a later month, but otherwise we are out. The Citizens Association will have to sweep the pennies out of the corners of its underground treasure vault, unless, of course, someone else would like to support the green in future months. If so, 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 your sponsorship to honor something or someone, please enclose a note to that effect with your check. If possible, please also send the information to editor Barbara Collier by e-mail (gp.bugle.editor@gmail.com); phone, USPS, or a note on the door would also work... check the boxed masthead (below) or your directory for details.

Visit Garrett Park's Web site:

www.garrettparkmd.gov

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.

Citizens Association Officers:

President: Sean Conlan
Vice-Presidents: Michael Lutkenhouse; Darshini Trivedi
Treasurer: Bridget Silverman
Secretary: Mike Grieb

Bugle staff:

Editor: Barbara Collier (Box 191, gp.bugle.editor@gmail.com)

Reporter: Margaret Soltan (Box 518)

Ads and Distribution: Peggy Pratt (Box 158)

Subscriptions: Joanne Schmader (Box 415)

First-class subscriptions cost \$15 (bulk mail subscriptions are no longer available). Letters to the editor can be submitted by e-mail, mail, or hand to *Bugle* staff. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

Town Manager Notes

Icy streets. At the January 9 Town Council meeting, the Council expressed its continued concern regarding the use of salt products to remove snow and ice from town streets. Those products harm vegetation, are harmful to pets and other animals, and lead to runoff that increases the salinity of streams, damaging aquatic plants and animals. The Council has asked that we plow effectively to minimize snow pack, use any salt products judiciously, focus their use on the hills and narrow streets where traction is needed, and communicate with residents when we do use those products. The town will continue to look for less damaging materials for treating the street. Our goal is to maximize public safety while minimizing environmental damage. And if you must drive in the snow and ice, be careful!

Trees! We have had another situation similar to the Keswick Street tree removals where many trees on one street have to be removed. Due to age and disease, many of the trees on Argyle Street are being removed and will need to be replaced. As Mayor Benjamin has noted in earlier *Bugle* articles, we do not have an arboretum plan that will direct us in the management of this extremely important part of our town life. The need for such a plan and the need to begin managing the arboretum according to that plan are serious.

Volunteer Consultant Needed

The Garrett Park Archives could benefit from a fresh set of eyes to examine the physical space in the archives. Are there better ways to arrange the needed equipment and materials so that our archivist and volunteers can make the most out of this treasure?

To help, contact Marian Green (please consult your directory). Thanks.

Volunteers. This leads to the next item: volunteers. The town needs volunteers to work on the various committees that advise both management and the Town Council. If you are interested in serving, the Arboretum Committee, the Historic Preservation Committee, and the Archives Committee all could use your help!

Christmas tree collection. If you missed the scheduled Christmas tree pickup, put your tree by the curb. The town maintenance crew will take it away.

Holiday fund. Thank you to the many residents who generously gave tips to the Montgomery County Sanitation employees who take away our trash, recyclables, and yard waste. A year-end gift will be made to each of the six men, and letters of acknowledgement are being sent to all who gave.

Gene Swearingen, managergene@garrettparkmd.gov, 301-933-7488

Women's Club Calendar

The following are the tentative dates for 2017 events sponsored by the Garrett Park Women's Club:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Progressive Dinner | April 22 or May 20 |
| Musicale | April 30 |
| Porches & Patios | September 16 |
| Pooch Parade | Fall, TBD |
| Attic in the Street | October 14 |
| Holiday Sing-along | December 8 |
| Santa's Visit to Town Hall | December 9 |
| Holiday Decorating | December 18, week of |

The next yard sale (held every two years) will be in spring 2018.



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Services for Seniors

| | |
|--|--|
| Activities of Daily Living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bathing Lifting Personal Care & Hygiene Dressing Transferring | What Makes ElderCaring Different? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 hour minimum for services – most companies require 4 hours as a minimum All caregivers are professionally trained nursing assistants The owner of ElderCaring personally meets with you to discuss your needs All caregivers are fluent in English Personal choice in selection of every caregiver Licensed, Bonded, Insured 24 Hours Service – 7 Days a Week |
| Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Companionship Meal Preparation Medication Reminder Physical Therapy Light Housekeeping Transportation to Appointments | |

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Citizens Association

The annual town dinner is right around the corner on Saturday, January 28. The theme for this year is "Our National Parks: Tales of the Outdoors!" Ever had raccoons ransack your cooler? Selfie with a bison gone wrong? We want to hear about it to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the U.S. National Park Service. Doors of the Town Hall (Kenilworth Avenue) will open at 6 pm, and we will sit down at 6:30 pm. Please RSVP to Sean Conlan to let us know you are coming and what you'll be bringing.

Save the Dates: 2017 CA Calendar (subject to change)

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Town Dinner | Saturday, January 28 |
| Candidate Nominations | Wednesday, March 22 |
| Candidate Forum | Wednesday, April 26 |
| Independence Day barbecue | Tuesday, July 4 |
| Newcomers Welcome | Sunday, September 17 |
| Spooky Woods | Saturday, October 28 |

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.

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.

Art at Penn Place

On exhibit now through February 11 are the paintings of Glenn Roberts, a unique artist whose figures are bold, whose colors are vivid, and whose energy and determination are inspiring. Please join us at Glenn's Meet the Artist Reception on Sunday, January 22, from 3 to 5 pm. Whether or not you can get to the reception, be sure to stop by to see his work before our next show starts on February 12.

For the next show, 23 young artists, ages 6 to 13, have been working very hard to create another fun February exhibit for the gallery. Last year they created wonderful story boxes that described something special about themselves, and received rave reviews. This year, Suzi Gifford is leading a workshop with the help of Lynn Lewis, Vickie Baily, Mary McDonnell, and Ann Gordon to teach the artists about basic mosaics, and their colorful carousel animals are fabulous! Their exhibit will be on display for two weeks, from February 12 to 25, so please stop by and enjoy their creativity and enthusiasm. And don't miss the reception for their exhibit on Sunday, February 12, from 3 to 5 pm—everyone is invited and the kids would love to see you there!

Our next show (from February 27 to March 25) will showcase the work of mixed material sculpture artist Leila Holtsman—more details on this in the next *Bugle*.

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Letter from the Editor

Bugle Editor Retiring

Dear readers: I have decided that after 29 years of working on the *Bugle*, it is time to hang up my editor's hat. I intend to continue through the July issue, which is the one preceding the *Bugle's* annual two-month summer hiatus. With luck, this time frame is enough for a new team to be assembled to take over this publication.

Currently, several people deserve our thanks for their contributions to making the *Bugle* happen each month: intrepid reporter Margaret Soltan supplies us with Town Council notes, Peggy Pratt keeps track of advertisers, Joanne Schmader takes care of subscriptions, and our town staff collect the printed copies, put them in the Post Office, and post the electronic versions to the town Web site. And of course, the Citizens Association pays the bills!

However, over time I have come to have sole responsibility for editing and assembling each issue. In addition, the software I use is becoming obsolete. Accordingly, I hope we can find a small group to share responsibilities and rethink them. A change like this is a chance to reinvent the *Bugle* to make it a truly collective project.

Our community has people with lots of skills: technical, literary, managerial, and collaborative. This is a great opportunity to get involved in the town and get to know your neighbors!

If you are interested or have ideas to contribute, please contact me at gp.bugle.editor@gmail.com, or contact the Citizens Association at PO box 456.

Barbara Collier
Bugle editor

Spring Fling!

This year the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Committee is making a few changes to our event formerly known as the "80 and Over Gala." We are now calling the event "Our Neighborhood Spring Fling" to encourage more of the community to come join in this celebration, which will honor our neighbors who are 70 years of age and over. Did you know that there are 130 residents of Garrett Park who are in that age group? Save the date: Sunday, June 11, 2 to 4 pm at the Town Hall. Everyone is invited!

Thanks to all who responded to our recent survey. We will be following up with information about services people are interested in.

Ken Keppel, Neighbors Helping Neighbors Committee

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Check out Jeremy in the community at: KindinMd.org

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Letter from the Mayor

I am often asked about the status of one initiative or another of the town. Below is a list of our major activities and their current status. I have written about many of these activities in more detail in the *Bugle*.

Town right of way survey. The layout of the town right of way and the location of roads, trees, property lines, driveways, and other major elements within it are inconsistent throughout the town and have never been fully determined and documented. In order to carry out our responsibilities for proper maintenance of that right of way, we need to know where it is and what is in it. The survey is under contract and is expected to be completed this month.

New town web site. We are completing the final adjustments to the new web site, a major improvement upon the old one, and it is available for viewing during our "soft launch" period at www.garrettparkmd.gov. We hope to do the hard launch this month.

Traffic management, stop signs, and speed limits. In an effort to improve traffic and pedestrian safety in town, we have added several stop and speed limit signs on some roads to test their effectiveness.

Revamp traffic and parking ordinances. Our ordinances are a clumsy way to handle traffic management and to define signage. They are also in many cases impossible to enforce. We are preparing a set of new legislative proposals to streamline and improve the flexibility of traffic management and to enhance enforcement capability.

Sidewalks engineering. We have advertised for and are on the verge of awarding a contract to a town-managed engineering firm to complete the design of the Oxford, Clermont, Montrose, and Kenilworth sidewalks.

Town Hall rehabilitation. Many aspects of our Town Hall are in grievous disrepair, and a major rehabilitation is necessary. We have completed the engineering evaluation and are moving toward meetings to discuss possible actions.

Streets rehabilitation. We are continuing with a major townwide multiyear rehabilitation of our streets defined in our Capital Improvement Program.

Sidewalks repair. Some portions of our existing sidewalks have heaved, have cracks, or otherwise need repair to assure safety and quality. We are completing the engineering proposal and will advertise for a contractor to perform the work soon, with a target of completing the repairs this spring.

Capital Improvement Program update. As we complete portions of our CIP and as time and use change the status of our equipment and infrastructure, we need to update our plan. That is currently in process.

Stormwater management plan. We need to do a comprehensive plan to handle the stormwater in our town as weather events become more powerful and to minimize the effect of our runoff on surrounding communities and environmental resources, such as Rock Creek. We are determining how best to develop such a plan and what it should encompass.

Arboretum management plan. We are developing a statement of work to advertise for an arborist or firm to develop a plan for the ongoing maintenance of our arboretum in order to preserve our tree cover and enhance safety.

Elections ordinances update. Our elections ordinances do not reflect current practices, are contradictory in some places, and need modifications to encourage voter participation. We are developing proposed modifications for discussion.

FY 2016 financial audit. This closeout of our books for last year is complete, and the printed version of the audit will be available later this month.

FY 2017 midyear budget adjustments. This ordinance has just been approved by the Council.

FY 2018 budget approval. The FY 2018 budget proposal is in final development and will be provided to the Council in time for hearings, consideration, and introduction in April.

Town committee membership. There are numerous vacancies on official town committees, as well as currently active members whose terms are expiring or have expired. We plan new nominations at the next Town Council meeting.

Energy saving street lights. We are investigating ways to replace the existing lighting mechanisms with alternative lower-energy usage options that provide the same lighting levels and light characteristics at little or no cost to the town.

All of this is in addition to our extensive ongoing activities managing everything from snow removal, landscaping, and trash collection to Town Hall rental, building permits, variances, and infrastructure maintenance. With our tiny staff, we could not do this without the help of many volunteers from the town, including our all-volunteer elected officials. If you are interested in participating in any of the above major projects, e-mail Gene at managergene@garrettparkmd.gov or call 301-933-7488.

Peter Benjamin