

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 61

October 2014

No. 8



Calendar

Fri., Sept. 19	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place; Deadline for Porches and Patios (see p 3); Film Society: <i>Today's Special</i> , Town Hall, dinner at 7 pm, film at 8 pm	Sat., Oct. 11	Deadline to register for Attic in the Street space (see p 3)
Sat., Sept. 20	GIVES collection, Farmer's Market	Mon., Oct. 13	Town Council Meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 pm
Sun., Sept. 21	Citizens Assoc. Newcomers Welcome, Town Hall, 1-3 pm (see p 4; all residents are invited); Art at Penn Place reception, 3-5 pm (p 5)	Tues., Oct. 14	<i>Bugle</i> deadline, 3 pm; Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm (p 4)
Sat., Sept. 27	Porches and Patios, around town, 6 pm (see p 3)	Sat., Oct. 18	Attic-in-the-Street sale, Kenilworth Ave. south side, 10 am-2 pm (see p 3)
Sat., Oct. 4	Large item pickup; GIVES collection, Penn Place lobby	Sun., Oct. 19	Fall Tree Walk; meet at Penn Place at 1 pm (see p 6)
Mon., Oct. 6	Art at Penn Place: John Guernsey (see p 5)	Fri., Oct. 24	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place; Film Society: <i>Incendies</i> , Town Hall, dinner at 7 pm, film at 8 pm (see p 6)
		Sat., Oct. 25	Spooky Woods; pumpkin carving (see p 4)
		Fri., Oct. 31	Trick or Treat night

A Town's Work Is Never Done

There was nothing autumnal about September's Town Council meeting: It was all about looking forward, as the Mayor and each Councilmember summarized their tasks for the year ahead.

But first, after the approval of the agenda, a number of residents rose to voice their opposition to the town sidewalks project. John Smith, who lives on Montrose, said, "I've never seen so many calm and reasonable neighbors so angry. Clearly people feel the town is ignoring them; something needs to change."

In response, the Mayor noted that the Council has acted with great care to move the project toward the 30 percent stage, and that once that has been accomplished, residents will review and discuss the design, after which the Council will vote again on whether to proceed with the project.

Next, Charles Snyder introduced our new Town Archivist, Stephanie Sheridan.

Joanne Welch is heading up the renovation of the Town Hall, and has developed an RFP

focused on the first phase of the project: assessment. This will be sent out to engineering, home inspection, and architectural firms.

The rest of the meeting was taken up with the statement of goals for the year. Here is some of what the Mayor and Councilmembers will be focusing on.

The Mayor stressed four engineering-related tasks: completing the preliminary engineering on the sidewalks project, engineering to determine the rehabilitation needs of the Town Hall, initiating the next stage of road repair, and finding a solution to the water overflow problems at the Penn Place restaurant.

In more bureaucratic matters, the Mayor anticipates approval of the new personnel policies we want to put in place, getting up and running a spiffy new town Web site, and replacing Harry Gordon as Setback Advisory Committee Chair (and renaming the committee). George Martin, Jr., has agreed to take Harry's place.

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Among Town Councilmembers, here are some of the goals they've set for themselves:

Joanne Welch will work on moving forward on the Town Hall renovation, as well as on getting a walkway built between the GPES and the nursery school. She will be partnering with the Mayor to improve our parking ordinances, and she will bravely take on the task of revising the Town Charter.

Hans Wegner's mandate is mainly about our roads: He will oversee the next phases of the Safe Roads to School project, work with Joanne Welch on the parking ordinances, determine the next phase of the town repaving program, and try to make the town flood less (replace curbs, do something about Porcupine Woods' sticky flooding problem).

Tara Flynn's tasks include thinking about how the town wants to handle Airbnb rentals, and in general how the town wants to approach rental properties. She has been handling the rewrit-

ing of our personnel policies, and will call for an October meeting to discuss updates. She will also work on a policy regarding signage in town.

Kacky Chantry, who has been the point person on the new town Web site, will continue to oversee its implementation. She will work with the Arboretum Committee to develop a survey of all of the town's trees so we can know which need replacement or repair. And as the representative to the Historic Preservation Committee, she will be assisting with the renovation of the Town Hall.

Phil Schulp will focus on town equipment and the safety of the people using it. He will assess the condition of our equipment and determine what might need replacement. And he will work on a document that will outline areas of safety training for town employees. He will also work on reconstituting the Parks and Open Space committee.

And that's only a partial list. Busy year up ahead.

Margaret Soltan

Notes from the Town Archives

Garrett Park has a new archivist, and we invite everybody in town to come in to meet her. Stephanie Sheridan has replaced Abigail Kabaker, whom many of you knew as the go-to person for any question about the history of the town, its citizens, or its houses. Abigail has begun a master's degree program in Museum Studies at George Washington University. We all wish her luck.

Stephanie came highly recommended and began work in July. She has certainly lived up to that recommendation, and more. She is in the Archives all day Tuesdays and Wednesdays and, in a first, on Saturday mornings.

The archives cannot do its job without a regular cadre of volunteers, and some of the most productive have come from Community Support Services, Inc. (CSS), which approached us a year ago offering us help. CSS deals with people with autism and similar conditions. Over the past year, three times a week, groups of three CSS volunteers—two clients and one professional supervisor—have come in to work in the Archives. In

their first year, they scanned and digitized virtually the Archives' entire photo collection—more than 3,500 pictures—and several hundred slides. They have just begun cataloging those images in our museum and archival software program, PastPerfect, and are doing a wonderful job. Thank you, guys.

We still could use other volunteers. For high school seniors and rising seniors, this is a great way to gain Student Service Learning (SSL) credits. For others, it is an opportunity to serve your historic community. We especially need people willing to work on our large collection of oral histories. We can use help in transcribing tapes and indexing transcribed interviews. We also need to interview more long-time town citizens. And we always need people to catalog our thousands of documents, and to photograph and catalog other items of historic memorabilia. If you are interested, please get in touch with us (archives.garrettpark@comcast.net) or contact Elizabeth in the Town Office. Thanks.

Services for Seniors

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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 (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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 First-class subscriptions cost \$15 (bulk mail subscriptions are no longer available). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to Bugle staff or by e-mail through the town Web site: www.garrettpark-md.gov/submit-BugleArticle.php. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

Town Manager Notes

Newcomers Welcome. For all new residents to the town, the Citizens Association will hold a Newcomers Welcome event at the Town Hall on Sunday, September 21, at 1 pm. Long-time residents are also welcome to attend and meet the new folks.

Large item pickup. The fall large item collection will take place on Saturday, October 4. Please mark your calendars accordingly and be sure to place your items curbside no later than Friday.

Driveway & parking pad permits. Please remember, if you are planning to alter your driveway or install a parking pad in front of your house, you are going to impact town property and you must file for a permit with the Town Office.

Penn Place basketball court. Montgomery Parks and Recreation resurfaced the basketball court and installed new goals. If you have not had a chance to see it or shoot a few hoops, please stop by—it is an attractive addition to the grounds.

Trees. The town, under the leadership of the Arboretum Committee, is making a detailed assessment of the large trees on town right of way, focusing on the tulip poplars. The goal

is to maintain our canopy by pruning, crown reduction, or replacement of the trees. This will be a long-term process over several years that will preserve the beauty of our canopy. When you see David Gregg's Tree Service working on our trees, it is part of that program.

Leaf removal. It's hard to believe that autumn is fast approaching with its falling leaves. As in past years, Bethke Landscaping will be removing leaves for the town, starting the week of October 13 and continuing until the end of the year. Each street will be cleared once every week, as early in the week as possible (rain will delay collections). Leaves should be placed in the street in rows along the curb. Please remove sticks, rocks, trash, and other debris that could damage the machinery. Shredded leaves or grass clippings should be bagged and put out for the regular yard waste collection, or (even better) composted.

Leaf raking & yard work assistance. Any young people in town who would like to offer their services to help residents with fall yard work may contact Elizabeth Henley at the Town Office (301-933-7488) to add their names to the list we keep.

Gene Swearingen, Town Manager

Attic in the Street October 18

The Garrett Park Women's Club is pleased to announce the annual Attic in the Street townwide street sale on Saturday, October 18, from 10 am to 2 pm (note one hour later start time from last year). The rain date will be Sunday, October 19. Attic in the Street is like a giant yard sale in one location: participants will have allotted spaces along Kenilworth Avenue, between Strathmore Avenue and Oxford Street. The street will be closed to traffic. It's a great place to find a good buy, socialize with neighbors, and enjoy refreshments on sale by the Garrett Park Nursery School and our local Scout troop.

The cost is \$20 for one space or \$35 for two spaces. Setup time is from 8 to 9:30 am, and all unsold materials must be cleared by 3 pm.

The deadline to register for a space is October 11 (postmark date), and there are a limited number of spaces, so register early! (Last year we filled up before the deadline date!) To register, please send your name, address, telephone, e-mail address, number of spaces requested, and check (made payable to the Garrett Park Women's Club) to Garrett Park Women's Club, P.O. Box 494, Garrett Park, MD 20896. Once you register, you will receive an e-mail confirmation and other details about the event.

For more information, or if you are interested in volunteering to help with this event, please contact Kathy Hedge or Celia Peacock.

Porches and Patios

Garrett Park's 4th Annual Porches and Patios event is coming up on Saturday, September 27, from 6 to 9 pm-ish.

This is a progressive, low-key, casual, light supper of "heavy" hors d'oeuvres and desserts only. Think of how often you have looked at a restaurant menu and thought that you could happily make a meal of just the appetizers and still have room for dessert! A variant of our annual Progressive Dinner in the spring, this is much more informal and easy.

After you sign up, you will be assigned to two different homes for the appetizers, one from 6 to 7 pm and the second from 7 to 8 pm. Then you will go on to a third home for desserts. This delightful evening will end around 9 pm.

So, sign up now to offer to provide food, or to host on your own porch or patio. Forms are available online at the Garrett Park Web site and at the Post Office.

Final deadline is *Friday, September 19.*

And please note, this event is for adults only.

Caroline Turner, GP Women's Club
Communications Secretary

Visit Garrett Park's Web site:
www.garrettpark-md.gov

Citizens Association News

July 4th recap. Another terrific July 4th was had by all! Congrats to the Pie Baking Contest winners: Fruit Pie First Place went to the Morrison family with their apple pie, and Second Place went to Steve Lillie for his strawberry-rhubarb. Nonfruit Pie First Place went to Jenny Krivanek with her Glory-Be! chocolate pecan, and Second Place to Natalie Manning with her sugar cookie pie.

We want to send a special thank you to the people who help make July 4th possible.

- The Strong Family for managing the Fun Run
- The Grill Crew: Mario Grande, Keith Mayhew, Chris Strong
- The Wrapping Crew: Meme Lincoln, Leslie Bethke-Pope, Beth Irons, Rana Koll-Mandel, Suzanne Grefsheim

Newcomers Welcome. On Sunday, September 21, at 1 pm in the Town Hall, we will hold this annual gathering for new and longtime residents to meet and greet over light refreshments, to hear about events, activities, committees, and volunteer opportunities in Garrett Park.

Spooky Woods. Save the date! Spooky Woods will be Saturday, October 25. Would you like to help? Got a terrific idea for a station? Let us know. We will also have pumpkin carving that weekend.

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 Michael Lutkenhouse or send a note to Box 456.

Annual dues. The Citizens Association 2014 annual dues are being collected. The annual dues are \$10 for individuals and \$20 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 Michael Lutkenhouse.

Lunch Bunch Is Back!

Lunch Bunch is a fun way to get together for some potluck on the second Tuesday of every month at 12:30 in Town Hall. All Garrett Park residents are invited!

Bring a friend or neighbor along if you like, a dish to share, and a \$1.50 contribution towards the beverages served: water, wine, juice, and sparkling juices.

Lunch Bunch dates (put on your fridge):	
September 9, 2014	January 13, 2015
October 14	February 10
November 11	March 10
December 9	April 14
	May 12
	June 9
(Summer break in July and August)	

Plus ça change...

“In spite of its size, Garrett Park has developed a lively political fight. The town election will be held Monday, May 5, and the discussion as to the candidates for office has been going on for the last two or three months.

“Not much was thought about the election until the town council passed an ordinance prohibiting chickens from running at large. This stirred up a number of chicken owners, as well as the chickens, and after presenting a petition to the council, signed by a practical majority, for its repeal, the talk of running an opposition ticket was heard. The town council heard the discussion on the question of repeal of the ordinance and has been debating the question ever since. If they repealed the act it would have been a feather in the cap of the opposition; if they refused to repeal it the opposition would have gained a strong campaign argument. As it is, the town fathers have been sitting on the fence wishing they had never heard of chickens.”

—*Montgomery Press*, May 2, 1902

Art at Penn Place

Group Exhibit. The gallery is pleased to present our Series 10 Group Exhibit, on display from September 21 until October 4; the exhibit opens with a champagne gala catered by Black Market Bistro, from 3 to 5 pm on September 21. Since the inauguration of the Art at Penn Place gallery, the town of Garrett Park has sponsored a group exhibition at the beginning of each series, consisting of one piece from each of the artists who will exhibit their work during the coming months. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet the Series 10 artists and get a sneak peek at their upcoming solo shows.

The 2014/2015 artists of Series 10 are as follows:

John Guernsey	October 6 to November 1 (see below)
Dave Almy	November 3 to December 6
Lucila San Jose	December 8 to January 3
Charlotte Ghiorse	January 5 to 31
Felisa Federman	February 2 to 28
Bruce Cyr	March 2 to April 4
Farhad Heidarian	May 4 to June 6
Michael Shibley	June 8 to July 4
Alan Rich	July 6 to August 1
Lynn Lewis	August 17 to September 19

We are very excited to present the work of these talented artists, and look forward to seeing you at their Group Exhibit and Gala on September 21!

Guernsey show. The solo show of John Guernsey begins on October 6 at Penn Place Gallery, with a fascinating display of his surreal and dream-like imagery.

Many residents are familiar with John Guernsey, who grew up in Garrett Park and became not only a talented artist, but also a gifted and well-known jazz/blues musician, and author of the novel *A February Song*. He was drawn to art and music as a teenager, and has followed both passionately ever since. In addition to studying etching at the Corcoran School of Art, John received an ongoing scholarship from the Bethesda Women's Club to study printmaking with Joyce Jewell at Montgomery College. He considers himself primarily a printmaker, but also paints and creates large, colorful, mixed media drawings. Among other exhibits, you may have seen his work in the local "Made in Takoma Park" show, as well as many Artomatics events, a Washington DC extravaganza run for and by artists.

John's art is influenced by Kathe Kollwitz, Maurice Sendak, Renoir, Jackson Pollack, Escher, and Jasper Johns. You can view his work at sites.google.com/site/johnguernseyartmusic/home. John's exhibit at Penn Place Gallery runs through November 1, and you won't want to miss it!

Welcome Back GIVES!

All volunteers, contributors, and residents are invited to celebrate the reinstatement of GIVES and the 2014 Soup and Bread Supper! The supper will be held at the Garrett Park Town Hall on Sunday, November 9, from 5 to 7 pm.

GIVES (Garrett Park Intercommunity Voluntary Experiment in Sharing) has collected donations of money, clothing, and toiletries to help relieve hunger and poverty locally and internationally for more than 40 years. We salute the foresight and wisdom of the founders of this Garrett Park-based organization dedicated to helping those in need of food, clothing, shelter, and job training, and we celebrate the efforts of all who continue its legacy. Unfortunately, the need increases dramatically each and every year.

Please join us for the wonderful food and to discuss plans for 2015. Thrive DC Executive Director Alicia Horton will be on hand again this year to say a few words about the many ways that donations actually help those in need. All GIVES donations collected—100 percent—go to two nonprofits, Thrive DC and the American Friends Service Committee.

If you can attend the Soup and Bread Supper, please contact Nancy Walz and let her know if you can bring soup or bread to share (for 10 to 12 people) or contribute other supplies, help set up, clean up, etc. Remember: The event is BYOD (bring your own drink)—as well as bring your own bowl and spoon.

All contributions collected at the door are tax-deductible and benefit both Thrive DC and the American Friends Service Committee. Make 2014 your year to call some old and new neighbors and friends, ask them to attend, and get to know the GIVES community.

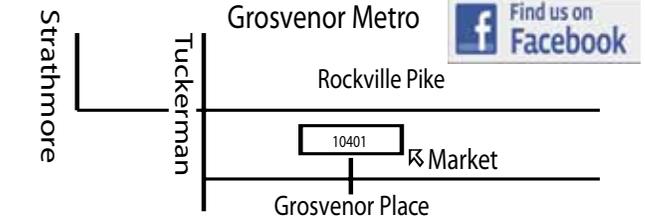
Hope to see you all on Sunday, November 9, at 5 pm.

Please RSVP to Nancy Walz, Rana Koll-Mandel, or Karen Anderson.



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Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ The e-Bugle is available online on the town Web site the Monday after the Town Council meeting.
- ♪ Save the date: GIVES Soup and Bread Supper returns on Sunday, November 9, from 5 to 7 pm.
- ♪ In June, Nan Gootenberg participated in the US Special Olympics Games in Princeton, New Jersey. She was on the Maryland Bocce team, and did very well. She came home with a bronze medal in her single matches and an honorable mention in her double matches. The whole Gootenberg family enjoyed the experience and is very proud of their "Bocce Queen."
- ♪ Jeremy Lichtenstein had a nice blurb in the September/October "Bethesda Magazine" about his Kids in Need Distributors (KIND) nonprofit organization. It has grown to 35 vol-

unteers who help deliver food to nearly 1,000 students at 17 public schools throughout the county. It has also raised \$250,000 in donations and grants to fund the runs to the grocery stores. Way to go, Jeremy!

- ♪ If anyone is interested in raking leaves for money, give Elizabeth at the Town Office a call (301-933-7488) and she will put you on her list.
- ♪ Kensington Volunteer Firehouse is holding a Firehouse Flea Market on Saturday, September 27, from 8 am to noon. You can rent a table for \$20 (chair \$5) by mailing a check to KVFD, PO Box 222, Kensington, MD 20895 (in memo area write Flea Market). Deadline: checks must be received by September 22. You can also donate items for the sale by taking them to the firehouse (from September 24 to 26, 5 to 9 pm); you can make special arrangements for a pickup by contacting the firehouse in advance: kvfd00762@kvfd.org, 301-929-8000.

Arboretum News

The Arboretum Committee will host the Annual Tree Walk on Sunday, October 19, at 1 pm, beginning at Penn Place. This pleasant stroll through the town will again be led by Town Arborist Phil Normandy. Phil's knowledge of our arboretum will be shared as he leads us through a lesson in urban forestry management. Bring your best questions, as our renowned woodsman is not often stumped.

Everyone benefits as we turn off of the heat island of Rockville Pike into our town's shaded canopy. Our collective stress is instantly relieved, as the arboretum has a naturally calming effect. Our annual Tree Walk offers the same respite, as Phil will humbly brag about our prize and rare specimens. He will talk about our changing climate and his continued effort of reforestation that looks 50 to 60 years to the future.

The Arboretum Committee, led by Chairman Keith Mayhew, also has a heightened awareness of keeping tabs on aging trees. For decades the town has engaged in ongoing monitoring of its trees: Butch and the maintenance crew, Phil Normandy in his role as certified consulting arborist, David Gregg as the town's highly skilled contract tree pruning and removal specialist, members of the Arboretum Committee, and concerned individual citizens all contribute to the continuous scrutiny of town trees. Keith is using the latest resistograph (beneath the soil) technology to supplement this vigilance, augmenting the "boots on the ground" approach to tree monitoring. Our annual tree walk should be a fun and informative way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

Speaking of boots on the ground, the Arboretum Committee would like to welcome new members: Joan Kennedy, Jill Stevens, and Ron Landsman.

GPFS Presents *Incendies*

Incendies, a drama of intense emotion and suspense, begins with the reading of a will. As part of her legacy, a mother sends her twin son and daughter on a quest to the Middle East to find their father, whom they thought had died in Lebanon years ago before they were born, and a brother they didn't know existed. What they discover on their journey is a culture of "deep-rooted hatred and unending war," as well as the mother they never really knew. It is a film you will not soon forget.

The film will be shown at 8 pm on Friday, October 24, in the Town Hall. Admission is free to GPFS members; nonmembers pay \$5 per person or \$10 per family. *Incendies* (the title is French for "fires") is rated R for violence and language. It is a French/Canadian film with subtitles in French and Arabic.

Dinner will be served at 7 pm and will feature Middle Eastern food. For details about the menu look for information on the GP neighbors listserv or the poster in the P.O. the week before the showing. Cost for dinner is usually \$10 to \$12 per person; dessert is extra. Soda, water, beer, and wine are available at prices ranging from \$1 to \$5.



Storm Water Management

In the last *Bugle*, Mayor Benjamin addressed the issue of storm water management and suggested the need for “careful consideration and respectful debate” as to whether the town should develop and implement a comprehensive plan. In that spirit, and at the risk of being called upon to join a committee, I would like to suggest an alternative to the concrete curbs, gutters, and culverts that the mayor estimates would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars for planning and millions more for implementation. The modern way to deal with storm water is to keep as much of it as possible on site through the use of permeable driveways and sidewalks, holding ponds, rain barrels and rain gardens (such as the one in the mayor’s front yard). In this way, much of the water can be purified as it filters slowly through the ground toward Rock Creek and ultimately to the Chesapeake Bay. Much of the rainscaping would have to occur on private property at homeowners’ expense, but keep in mind that Montgomery County offers substantial rebates for approved rainscape projects, up to \$2500 for residential, and \$10,000 for “institutional” proper-

ties,” which might include town parcels. In my opinion, town resources would better be spent on programs that encourage residents to take advantage of this subsidy. A side benefit for participants is that rainscape projects are designed to move water away from the house, thus diminishing the chance of basement flooding. There is also much beautification to be realized with this approach, especially if neighbors collaborate on the design of joint projects. Finally, benefits would also accrue to some of the creatures, such as amphibians, who would like to share our habitat. I dream of the day when a great blue heron visits a new holding pond, perhaps in Wells Park at the base of the high RR embankment, where Rokeby/Argyle runoff now gushes unimpeded.

Ken Ingham, President, Garrett Park Conservation Trust

Green Again

My apologies to the Walter-Freer family for a flying finger error in our last *Bugle*. The thanks should have included our own JC, who is a grandson of Bert Walter. I’m afraid the fingers got ahead of the thought process. We’ll try to do better this time.

Speaking of which, this month’s banner was covered by a contribution from Warren and Felice Kornberg. We thank them for their continued support of the green in Garrett Park. However, we only have three donations for this year, which leaves us with seven more slots to fill for the bucket of donations for the “greening” of the banner. You can make out a check to the Citizens Association for \$45 and mail it to me at Box 98. Many thanks.

Mary Moyer

GPES

As of the start of the school year, there are 750 students registered at GPES. Some days there are fewer and some days more, as students keep drifting in. The office is busy collecting forms, such as the student data sheets and the form for the reunification of students with adults in case of an emergency. Both forms need to be turned in as soon as possible so that we have the information needed to release a student during the school day.

As staff duties continue to grow, there is a great need for parent volunteers to stand with the patrols at Kenilworth Avenue and Oxford Street from 8:55 to 9:15 am and from 3:25 to 3:45 pm. If interested, contact the office and training can be arranged. Also, part-time work is available for substitute lunch/recess aides. Applicants must be 18 years old and will be paid an hourly rate. If interested, call Ms. Cervas, administrative secretary (301-929-2170), for more information.

Keep on saving your Box Tops for Education labels and send them in to the office. The school is also accepting small toner cartridges that can be sent in for a rebate.

Mary Moyer

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“Serving Garrett Park since 2010”

Letter from the Mayor

We are on the verge of signing a contract for the development of a replacement for our town Web site. Our current one does not have many of the capabilities which characterize more recent sites, including enhanced and intuitive navigation, integrated data bases, and simplified posting.

An excellent and hard-working citizen committee with experience and expertise in the areas of Web site development, graphic design, IT systems, and business plans, proposals, and contract awards relevant to IT procurements conducted extensive research for over a year on what site content and capabilities were available, which firms were competent and reliable, and which types of sites met the town's needs and maintenance capacity. The members of the committee were Jenny Krivanek (Chair), Martin Trocki (Co-Chair and former designer/developer of the original GP Web site), Steph Hooten, and Donna Callejon. The work was begun with Jack Mandel as Town Council liaison and continued with Kacky Chantry as liaison. The committee also developed a proposed set of features, functions, performance requirements, and criteria for the Web site, which became the basis for a request for proposals. We received 16 bids, which were winnowed to four finalists, all of whom conducted demonstrations of the proposed type of Web site for us. We chose a tentative winner and checked with other towns that had used the firm to determine their experience when the firm developed their Web sites. The reports were excellent, so we intend to proceed with Vision Internet as our developer and site host.

Communication between the town government and the citizens is one of the key functions of the town, and we want to make it easier for you to get information about the town and its activities and functions, for the government to reach out to you, and for all of us to interact with one another. Some of the capabilities we hope to introduce are a comprehensive town calendar in easy-to-read form. The site will also have the ability for

users to see what activities are being held at Town Hall and when, and to allow people to rent Town Hall and to pay the costs over the Web. It will also provide individuals with the ability to sign up for town activities and pay any associated fees. We plan to have special pages for town committees on which they can post what they are doing, who their members are, and when their meetings will be held, and also make available committee documents. Through an integrated data base we hope to make many more town documents and much more town information available and make it all easier to find. We plan to use the Web site as the mechanism for you to sign up to get specific categories of town information of interest to you sent to you as it becomes available, and for you to send messages to the town.

Among the functions we plan to provide is a password-protected secure residents-only section in which each of us can provide to our neighbors as much of our contact information as we desire, as well as any additional information, such as children's names and ages, and schools. We might want to list activities in which we are engaged to see if others wish to join us. This portion of the Web site will have a discussion forum capability, which will allow residents to discuss matters of interest to the town with the town government and with one another. The Web site will replace our town phone book and listserv, but will provide much more control to the individual and much more flexibility in interaction.

Finally, the Web site will be the town's face to the world, since Internet searches seem to be the way that many of us obtain information these days. It will provide an attractive, informative, easy-to-use way to learn about our town, with links to town activities, committees, and resources, such as the Archives. We look forward to having this new and better way to communicate with each other and to find information about the town and its activities which we want and need.

Peter Benjamin