

# e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 63

January 2016

No. 1



## Calendar

Wed., Dec. 23	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place	Mon., Jan. 11	Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 7:30 pm
Thurs., Dec. 24	Town Office closes 12:30 pm	Tues., Jan. 12	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
Fri., Dec. 25	Christmas Day; Town Office closed	Thurs., Jan. 14	GPJams, Town Hall, 8 pm
Sat., Dec. 26	No farmer's market	Fri., Jan. 15	Film Society, <i>Casting By</i> , Town Hall: dinner 7 pm, film 8 pm (see p 3)
Thurs., Dec. 31	Town Office closes 12:30 pm	Sun., Jan. 17	Art at Penn Place, Joe Cloher, digital photography (till Feb. 13) (see p 5)
Fri., Jan. 1	New Year's Day; Town Office closed	Wed., Jan. 20	Town Council hearing on sidewalk project, Town Hall, 8 pm
Sat., Jan. 2	No farmer's market	Thurs., Jan. 21	GPJams, Town Hall, 8 pm
Mon., Jan. 4	Yard waste and Christmas tree pickup; Citizens Sidewalk Advisory Committee meeting, Town Office, 7 pm	Fri., Jan. 22	Pick up <i>Bugle</i> from table in PO lobby
Thurs., Jan. 7	GPJams, Town Hall, 8 pm	Sun., Jan. 24	Art at Penn Place: Youth Art "story box" workshop, Town Hall, 2 to 4 pm (see p 5)
Sat., Jan. 9	Large item pickup; GIVES collection, Penn Place, 9 am to noon	Tues., Jan. 26	Town Council hearing on sidewalk Project, Town Hall, 8 pm
Sun., Jan. 10	Art at Penn Place: Youth Art "story box" workshop, Town Hall, 2 to 4 pm; "Meet-the-Artist" reception, glass artist Margaret O'Brimski-Bonacorda, Penn Place, 3 to 5 pm (show open till Jan. 16; see p 5)	Sat., Jan. 30	Town Dinner, Town Hall, 6 pm (see p 4)

## Known Knowns, Known Unknowns, and Unknown Unknowns

The December Town Council meeting began with desserts (cookies, brownies, apple crisp) and comments about current legislative activity from state representatives Ana Sol Gutierrez and Al Carr. Both took questions from the room about Maryland's "green" initiatives and the possibilities for connecting with other towns whose tree canopies are, like ours, aging.

Citizens' comments began with Barbara Jackson expressing concern about the town having moved ahead with some recent road work despite not knowing exactly what the end point of the work might be. Councilmember Joanna Welch remarked that this was pretty routine procedure with contract work; you sometimes proceed with-

out total assurance about where things are going to go. Kacky Chantry pointed out that after this latest round of road work, "We did indeed decide to look at the process to see if there are places when we can improve things."

Margaret Goldsborough now rose to thank "both the members of Arboretum Committee who moved the tulip poplar removal issue forward, and the members of the Town Council who expedited the process. We're very happy, and we thank you." Kristin Altar asked that we show this same sort of consideration and input regarding sidewalks, which, she argued, "has not happened

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up to this point. Alternatives, for instance, are not being considered.”

After citizen comments, the Mayor announced that we now have a new version of the proposed sidewalks work. This document is very detailed, and is easily accessible to all citizens. The entire project is done on the town right of way, and the town is meeting one-on-one with the people who would be affected by the work. “We’re proposing two public hearings dedicated to the question of whether or not the sidewalk project should move forward. After those meetings, we propose having a Council vote.” The proposed dates for public hearings were Wednesday, January 20, and Tuesday, January 26.

There will be, at these meetings, an opportunity for the town to discuss, and to weigh in on, the concept of sidewalks, potential problems with sidewalks, and any other issues people have with the idea.

An extended discussion now ensued as to where we are now on proposed sidewalks, and what the plans look like at the moment.

Phil Schulp worried that things may play out in such a way that we’ll get hit in the budget in ways we don’t now know. Representative Gutierrez said that our delegation could ask the contractor to provide additional information in that regard.

“If the town in principle says let’s move ahead,” the Mayor remarked, “we will be able to determine if there any budgetary issues and therefore if we are able to complete this project.”

However, some on the Council still felt that they don’t know enough with things as they are to take a go/no go in principle vote on the project.

Peter argued that we should decide pretty quickly whether we approve the project in principle. There are always going to be worries about any project, and the Mayor feels he has put enough time into something that remains a proposal. “If the Council can’t say yes or no in principle at this point, I’m not going to put any more time into it. Two years is enough.”

Kacky Chantry remained unhappy about our level of knowledge in regard to contingencies. The Mayor responded that “if you can’t trust me enough that I would come back to you if there are problems, then I don’t want to proceed.”

Tara Flynn asked that we revisit the initial resolution on new town sidewalks, so the resolution was now read aloud. “It’s clear,” said Tara, “that the Council can continue to have input into this project after we vote yes conceptually.” Hans Wegner agreed that “we’ll have lots of input as we go forward.”

Kacky Chantry remained “troubled that we don’t really know the cost of this. I don’t know where we are with any of the money; I don’t

know what the picture of this budget’s looking like.”

“We’re not going to know the cost,” the Mayor responded, “until we have a bid.”

Dick Pratt now said that the Sidewalks Advisory Committee “will be concerned about its role at this point. If the committee looks at these plans and sees things it thinks should be tweaked one way or another, is the committee going to be listened to, or are the plans fixed in that regard?”

The Mayor responded that these particular plans will not be changed until after the next set of reviews.

There were more comments, from the Council and from the audience, expressing discomfort with our relative lack of control over this project, and arguing that the town has not adequately explored alternatives to sidewalks. Tara Flynn took exception to the latter claim. “The Council has considered the alternatives that have been suggested, and will continue to do so.”

The Mayor noted that “we have to act in accordance with this grant. We can make minor modifications, but we cannot make big changes.”

The Council voted to approve the two public hearings in January on a vote of one abstention, one opposed, and three in favor.

The rest of the meeting was taken up with proposed 2016 budget amendments. Gene Swearingen proposes putting money into the capital program for a survey of the locations of all town rights of way. “In many cases, we don’t know for sure where these are,” the Mayor noted. There’s also a proposal that money be put aside for storm water management issues, since these, said Gene, are “definitely looming.”

Margaret Soltan



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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# Town Manager Notes

**Leaf collection.** Leaf collection will be finished for the year at the end of December. If you have leaves left over after that date, you can either pile them in a corner of your yard for composting (the Town Office has compost bins available for free), or bag the leaves for the yard waste pickup the first Monday in January (Jan. 4). Please use paper yard waste bags.

**Snow.** Just a few reminders regarding snow: it is especially important to try to park off the streets when snow is expected so that the town crew can clear them curb-to-curb whenever possible. This will allow for more space to park after the streets are plowed; if you have a special need for your driveway to be open (medical supplies, caregiver services, etc.), please call the office and let us know so we can see that your driveway is among the first to have the plowed snow pushed aside.

Also remember that Argyle Avenue is closed for sledding when the snow falls. Be especially careful driving where Argyle meets Rokeby at Wells Park.

**Holiday Fund.** Thank you to the many residents who have generously given tips to the Montgomery County Sanitation employees who take away our trash, recyclables, and yard waste. And please note that it is not too late to make a donation. We typically receive numerous contributions after Christmas and make a second distribution to these deserving individuals.

**Trash, recycling, and large items.** Trash and recycling pickups will take place on the usual days through the holidays. Please be sure to break down gift boxes to help the recycling crew. The next large item pickup is on Saturday, January 9.

**Christmas trees.** If you miss the scheduled pickup on Monday, January 4, the town's maintenance crew will collect Christmas trees as they are put out after that date. The trees will be chipped, so please remove as much tinsel as possible to keep our woodchip pile clean.

**Town Dinner.** The date for the annual Town Dinner is Saturday, January 30. Please save the date!

**Taxes.** As much as I hate to bring this subject up during the holidays, please note that when filling out your state income tax forms, you should remember to write "Garrett Park" in the box labeled "City, Town or Taxing Area." This ensures that our community receives its fair share of the income tax revenues that 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.

Best wishes for Christmas and New Year's from all of us who work for you as town employees. We are always looking for ways to improve our service; suggestions are always welcome!

**Town Office closure.** The Town Office will be closed for a half day on Christmas Eve and all day on Christmas Day, Friday, December 25. The office will also be closed for a half day on New Year's Eve and all day on New Year's Day.

Gene Swearingen, 301-933-7488

## New Film Society Season

On Friday, January 15, the Film Society will open its new season with *Casting By* (documentary, USA, 2012), a film about the movies for people who love them. Casting directors get little or no recognition, yet are responsible for finding just the right actor for a role. When they get it right, it is hard to imagine anyone else in the part. This behind-the-scenes look at the casting process provides "delicious insider tales of the making of some of your favorite films."

The film will be shown at 8. Admission is free for GPFS members. Nonmembers pay \$5 per person or \$10 per family. (Membership forms will be available at the door, but also are in the Post Office lobby.)

Drinks and dinner are served beginning at 7 pm. The menu will feature American classics at a cost of \$10 per person (dessert extra). Drinks include soda, beer, and wine at prices ranging from \$1 to \$5.

See you at the Town Hall!



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Support Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Companionship</li><li>Meal Preparation</li><li>Medication Reminder</li><li>Physical Therapy</li><li>Light Housekeeping</li><li>Transportation to Appointments</li></ul>	

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# Citizen Association Notes

The Town Dinner is coming up on Saturday, January 30. The theme for this year is "This Old House." Please bring your stories of renovations gone wrong, unusual discoveries, and the history of Garrett Park houses. Doors of the Town Hall (Kenilworth Avenue) will open at 6 pm, and we will sit down at 6:30 pm. In addition, the 2016 Officers of the Citizens Association will be elected at the dinner.

As always, this is a potluck dinner. Along with your own serving and eating utensils, you are asked to bring one of the following: appetizer, salad and bread, main dish, or dessert (enough for 8 to 10 people). Please RSVP to Sean Conlan (see your directory) to let us know you are coming and what you'll be bringing. Alcoholic beverages will not be provided, but please feel free to BYOB. A fee of \$5 per person will be collected at the door to cover the cost of decorations, non-alcoholic drinks, and paper goods. This is also a convenient time to pay your annual CA dues (\$15 for individuals and \$25 per family). Please invite your neighbors and friends, especially those who haven't been to a Town Dinner before. The Citizens Association is nothing without you!

*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, and experiences. Tap into these resources and stay informed with the Garrett Park neighborhood listserv. This electronic forum lets neighbors communicate information about town concerns, safety issues, upcoming events, and recommended services (such as contractors, lawn care, doctors, and baby sitters). It will not be used for unsolicited marketing, and you can unsub-

scribe at any time. To join, e-mail Todd Harris or sign in at [groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettPark-neighbors/join](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettPark-neighbors/join).

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

## Arboretum News

The Keswick tulip poplars are now a fond if slightly fearful memory. To replace them, the Arboretum Committee selected swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), a regionally native and hardy tree. This oak is rather swift growing and has larger leaves. We have one in the town's collection, across the street from 10926 Montrose. We believe that planting these oaks on the even side of Keswick will recall the colonnade the tulip poplars once provided. The committee is considering specimens for the odd side of Keswick that will accommodate the power wires and complement the existing plants, as well as the oak trees to be planted on the opposite side.

Are you interested in a shade tree for your own yard? Tree Montgomery is the county's new program to plant shade trees—for free! The county will install shade trees on personal property and provide some free after care. When installed, the trees will be 10 to 12 feet tall and eventually will grow at least 50 feet tall, to provide decades of shade. You can Google "Tree Montgomery" or go to this [link](#) on the county Web site.

Bill Elwood,  
Garrett Park Arboretum Committee

<i>Large Item Pickup Schedule</i>	
2016 Saturdays	
	January 9
	April 2
	June 25
	October 1



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- ♪ Chris Keller would like to extend a hearty “thank you” to the anonymous resident who brightened the path through Porcupine Woods by planting colorful ornamental kale at several locations. It makes for a pleasant, unexpected grace note to a walk through the woods, especially on a dreary fall or winter day.
- ♪ Intrepid *Bugle* reporter Mary Moyer has managed to free herself from rehab and is back home. She is happy to receive phone calls, and is even up for visitors if they let her know ahead of time. Although she is currently still confined to quarters, she is glad to be home.
- ♪ We were sorry to see news of the recent loss of two long-time Garrett Parkers. First, former resident Judy Brubaker died on November 22; a memorial is planned for January in Charlottesville; contact brubakerva@gmail.com for details. Then, Ned Dolan, who played Uncle Sam in our Fourth of July parades for so many years, died on November 25. Our condolences to their loved ones. We hope to run obituaries next month.
- ♪ Perhaps it’s the editor’s imagination, or the unusually mild weather, but the holiday lights seem particularly enjoyable this year. As regular evening walkers, we have been taking note as more and more displays appear. At this dark time of year, it certainly makes evening strolls around town cheerful and interesting to look out for the lights.

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### Art at Penn Place

From December 21 through January 16, glass artist Margaret O’Brimski-Bonacorda will display her amazing glass pieces at the gallery. Margaret’s passion is experiencing the incredible journey of creating glass, watching with captive breath and deep respect as the sand reacts to the heat of her kiln and becomes a beautiful vessel and an outlet of emotion. Her colorful pieces are breathtaking and reveal exceptional expertise in her craft. You won’t want to miss this fabulous exhibit! Please join us for Margaret’s “Meet-the-Artist” reception on January 10 from 3 to 5 pm.

On January 17, Joe Cloher will present his digital photographs, which will be on display until February 13. Many of you will recognize Joe from Black Market Bistro, where he worked for years. We are so happy to welcome Joe back to town for his photography show at the Penn Place gallery! His camera work reflects the wonder he sees in everyday images, especially in nature and cityscapes. Joe also enjoys illustrating with pen on

stock paper, often using his photographs as inspiration. Please watch the Garrett Park Web site or the Penn Place gallery Facebook page for the date of Joe’s upcoming “Meet-the-Artist” reception.

If you have a child in first to 12th grade who is interested in art, there are still openings for the Youth Art Event in January/February. Three local artists (Suzi Gifford, Vickie Baily, and Lynn Lewis) will work with the participants to create a unique “story box” in which to display their talent. Children with an interest in all media are invited to join us for this fun and creative adventure! There will be two workshops held at the Town Hall on January 10 and 24, from 2 to 4 pm, as well as individual help as needed. The finished pieces will be displayed in the Penn Place gallery from February 14 to 17. There is a participation fee of \$40 per child and space is limited, so if your child is interested, or you’d like more information, please contact Suzi Gifford right away (consult your directory).

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### Greening Report

In the last *Bugle*, we were unable to thank our green banner sponsors because Mary Moyer, who normally tracks this information, was experiencing health issues (see *Sweet and Sour*, above) that prevented her from updating us. In this issue, we are happy to be able to thank our December sponsor, Elizabeth Van Fleet, who sent us a contribution in honor of the birthday of her then-fiancé (now husband), Tim Sweeney. Tim and Elizabeth bought a house in Garrett Park earlier this year (on Argyle Avenue) and were married in the Town Hall on May 30. According to Elizabeth, she wanted to celebrate all those things by “painting the town ‘green’ and sharing our good news and celebration with all our lovely friends and neighbors!”

We thank Elizabeth both for sponsoring a banner and for being so patient, as Tim’s birthday was actually in June!

For this *Bugle*, we are grateful to sponsors Donald and Barbara Reed, who have become regulator banner contributors. Barbara says, “We moved into Garret Park in 2011 and have been constantly amazed by the thoughtfulness and kindness of everyone in town. We wish we could have moved here years ago!” Thank you for your support!

If anyone wants to sponsor the green for the rest of 2016, we’d be most grateful. The greening fund is almost dry. If you’re interested, please make out a check to the Citizens Association for \$45 and mail it to Mary Moyer at Box 98. If you are sponsoring a banner in honor of something or someone in particular, please enclose a note to that effect. It would be helpful if you also notify editor Barbara Collier (e-mail, phone, USPS, note on the door... check your directory for the details!). That way we will have more than one record. Many thanks.



## Letter from the Mayor

I was recently showing a cable channel crew around town and doing interviews, and I was thinking how much better it would have been if they had arrived when the spring flowers are bursting and the trees are full of new leaves, or in the fall when the trees are a riot of color. But I heard them exclaiming about what a beautiful town we have, and I realized that we are all very lucky to live in such a wonderful town any time of the year. Each season brings special beauty, but what is here all year around is our community and our people, which is what makes this town a special place.

I hope that each of you will have happy holidays and a joyous new year, and I hope that you will keep all of your new year's resolutions. I do have one resolution to suggest for your list, and I sincerely hope that you will keep it: Come to the Garrett Park Town Council hearings on the sidewalk proposal and express your support for or opposition to the proposed project. I specially want to appeal to those of you who have assumed that the project is a done deal and that it is just a question of waiting until the sidewalks appear. The Council has heard frequently from those who oppose the project, but those who support it have assumed that they did not need to address the Council.

When the Council voted to accept the 100-percent federally funded grant for this project, they did so in a resolution that said "subject to a full public review of the project at the completion of preliminary design." This was to allow enough design to be accomplished to assure the citizens that their major concerns about preserving the tree cover, not eliminating off-street parking, constructing entirely in the town-owned right of way, and preserving the historic character of the town would be accommodated.

That work has been completed, and the preliminary designs are posted in the Post Office and are available at the Town Office upon request.

Electronic versions of the designs may be downloaded from Dropbox at the following links:

[Clermont drawing](#),  
[Oxford drawing](#), and  
[Kenilworth drawing](#).

(Note that you do not need to join or sign in to Dropbox to view the designs.) You can increase the size of the drawings on a computer screen to see substantially more detail, and can move the image on the screen to scroll through the plan from one end to the other or to focus on just one area. The Dropbox links have been sent to all persons on the Garrett Park Mailing List, and we will also try to fit the links on the temporary Garrett Park Web page.

At its December meeting the Council voted to hold two hearings (the public review called for in the resolution discussed above), one on Wednesday, January 20, and one on Tuesday, January 26. The Council is tentatively scheduled to vote on whether or not to proceed with the proposed sidewalk project at its meeting on Monday, February 8. There will be more discussion of the merits of the project at that meeting, and you may want to come to express your opinion at that time, as well. There is a substantial possibility that the Council will not vote to proceed if those of you who favor the project do not express your support at the hearings.

Here is a summary of what is proposed for the sidewalk construction:

- The sidewalk will be four feet wide except where it will be narrowed to no less than three feet to avoid trees and other objects, and will broaden to five feet at driveways and crosswalks to accommodate Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- The entire project will be built totally within existing town right of way. No private property will be used.

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- Sidewalks will have gentle curves where possible to be consistent with the curving nature of our roadways.
- All existing driveways will get new concrete driveway aprons.
- Curbs and gutters will be constructed to allow better storm water management and to eliminate current discontinuities.
- Sidewalks and curbs will be tinted (colored) exposed aggregate (stones visible) concrete to allow them to fit into the visual landscape and avoid the jarring effect of bright white smooth concrete. Curbs will be rolled concrete (curved shape rather than angular) to give them a more gentle appearance.
- No existing off-street parking will be eliminated; no resident will have to park on the street because of this project.
- Six trees will be removed and replaced, as recommended by the Arboretum Committee:
  - On Clermont, one spruce in declining health, and one very old and large tulip poplar, which is also in declining health and would have to be removed soon anyway.
  - On Oxford, one katsuma tree, of a group of three decimated by Pepco and Washington Gas. The other two have already been removed by the two utilities.
  - One small pin oak in declining health, one red maple in declining health, and one very small maple which will either be transplanted or replaced.
- Two trees were not specifically identified by the Arboretum Committee, but are shown for removal on the plans:
  - On Kenilworth, one holly at the end of a line of hollies would be transplanted or replaced in order to allow the sidewalk to curve around a much larger tree.
  - On Oxford, one tree, near Weymouth, is still under discussion, and can be retained.
- In summary, the sidewalk will not have a significant effect upon the town's tree cover. All of the trees of any size which are close to the sidewalk will get tree root bridges to protect their roots. Some, but not all, of these are noted in the plans.
- The county storm water management requirements, which will be met, are that the equivalent of any amounts of additional runoff due to the use of impervious surfaces be treated in a manner which will preclude further impact on Rock Creek. An example would be a rain garden.

You do not need to wait for the hearings to express your opinions on the preliminary design to the Council or to ask questions. Feel free to discuss this matter with any Councilmember, the Town Manager, or with me. You can also e-mail comments to [mayorandtowncouncil@garrettparkmd.gov](mailto:mayorandtowncouncil@garrettparkmd.gov). We look forward to a continued open and participatory process in making this important decision for the town.

Peter Benjamin