

The Echo

The Town of
GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND
Chartered, 1904



September 2012

Council Asked to Approve Chicken Raising in Town

By Rex Rhein

A young resident has asked the Town Council to consider allowing live chickens to be raised in Glen Echo.

At the August 13th meeting, Maddox Feldbaum, 6, the son of Harley Feldbaum and Nicole Fraser of Oxford Road, said “chickens are important to help kids learn about where their food comes from.” Changing the current Town ordinance to allow keeping them would “teach kids about how to take care of animals too,” he argued.

“Montgomery County has good rules about how far a chicken coop can be from houses and about noise,” Feldbaum said. “I think we can follow those

rules and allow chickens back in Glen Echo.”

Acting Council chairman Steve Matney told Feldbaum that the current prohibition on chickens is “one of the ordinances we’re looking at” in the Council’s continuing review of all of the Glen Echo Town Ordinances. The Town’s current ordinance against chickens, dating to 1996, bans the keeping of all animals except dogs and cats, unless – like fish – they are kept exclusively indoors. In an interview with The Echo, Matney said that Montgomery County allows chicken coops so long as they are kept a certain distance from neighbors’ property.

Since June 4th, the Council has met three times to go over the current Town ordinances to bring them up to date, eliminate errors and inconsistencies, and specify where Glen Echo’s rules purposely deviate from the county’s ordinances, Matney said. [See The Echo, July 2012, p. 8.] A fourth meeting for this purpose was scheduled for August 20th, and

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THE ECHO

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Next Town Council Meeting:
September 10, 2012 at 8pm

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Sun Trust Bankcard, N.A. *	\$3,022.86
Chapel Valley	\$1,910.83
Local Government Insurance Trust	\$804.00

*Includes Town Picnic expenses and half of floor refinishing for Town Hall

CONTINUED from page 1

unofficial monthly meetings will continue until the process is completed. When the review process is finished, Matney said, the Council will propose an updated set of ordinances that would replace existing and previous ordinances. “The Mayor wants to finish by late spring,” he said.

Tribute to Barbara Pierce

Even though Mayor Beers was out of town and Councilmember Nancy Long was ill, the Council had a quorum of three, which was necessary to approve a \$200 donation to an Ecuadorean orphanage in memory of Barbara Lee Pierce, a former long-time resident of Glen Echo, who died on August 4th in Southport, North Carolina. Pierce and her husband, Ed Pierce, lived at 6104 Harvard Avenue in Glen Echo and operated a portrait photography studio in Potomac, Maryland, for most of their 36 years of marriage. She also headed the administration for their company, PhotoVision, for 15 years. The couple moved to Wilmington, North Carolina, in 2004.

Phone Bank for Obama

Town resident Ellen Leary, who has been running a volunteer phone bank for the Obama campaign in the Town Hall once a week during August, asked for an extension of the Council’s permission to the end of October. Several Town residents have donated a couple of their free Town Hall uses to the phone bank, which is run on Tuesday evenings by volunteers who bring their own cell phones to make calls

on behalf of the Obama campaign. They also use the Town Hall’s wi-fi setup for their computers.

Councilmember Matney said he had two concerns about the request. “Generally, we discourage weekly events” at the Town Hall because it locks it up for other purposes, he said. And, even though the Town would certainly accommodate a similar request on behalf of former Governor Mitt Romney, if requested, “are we giving the impression of the Town making a statement” about the campaign, he asked.

As to the first concern, Leary said that she would willingly give up her use of the Town Hall anytime another resident wanted it for another purpose. Councilmember Mark McCaffrey said there was “no precedent” to help the Council decide on the second concern; he suggested there was nothing specified in the rental agreement that residents cannot use the Hall for certain events.

Glen Echo Park Report

Site manager, Polly Angelakis reported that, in addition to the Glen Echo Park Labor Day Art show, the National Park Service (NPS) will host an “Art of Clara Barton” and an open house and blood drive on

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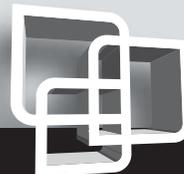


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the Sunday of that weekend. She added that the NPS is moving forward with an environmental assessment for a new roof and an upgraded fire detection and suppression system for the Clara Barton house.

Another environmental assessment should be finished by December on the proposed bike path through NPS-administered land, with a public comment period and public meeting after that. She said a County representative will contact the Town directly regarding the path.

Kim Robinson, who recently accepted a 120-day detail as curator of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, has returned from London, where she learned day-to-day operations and exhibit planning. Her assistant, Neva Sypniewski, will assume Robinson's duties at Glen Echo Park and the Clara Barton National Historic Site, Angelakis said.

A partnership between the NPS and the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), called "2nd Nature Exhibition," will feature the art work of youth from the LAYC in the Partnership Office from July 21st through September 1st.

NPS is planning several exhibits for the Candy Corner, including one about the Crystal Pool, and is also working on an interpretive exhibit for the Shooting Gallery, according to Angelakis, who stated, "Our first meeting with the contractor is August 14th." NPS is also in the midst of planning the "Then and Wow" exhibit, she said.

Angelakis thanked the Council for hosting Kevin Patti's recent program about his trip to Armenia. "We hope we can set something up on a regular schedule," she said.



Police Officers May Comment on Stop Sign Violations

After months of monitoring stop sign violations on Oxford Road, Officer Holland of the Montgomery County Police Department provided the Town Clerk with a monthly report that includes the observations of the two Officers who monitor and ticket violators at the sign. It appears that weekday morning violations have decreased, but on weekends, drivers are violating the sign at the same percentage as last reporting period.

Officer Holland has compiled several ideas on possible solutions to reduce the number of violations and would like to schedule a time to meet with the Town, in person, to present his ideas.

During the period between mid-July and August 13, there were 83 warnings and 16 citations issued. The off-duty officers provided service over a total of 16 hours during this latest reporting period. They are contracted directly by the Town and provide a monthly report to the Town Clerk.



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Story of How a Stop-Sign Camera for Glen Echo Went Viral

By Rex Rhein

On August 7, an article in the Washington Examiner told the world that Glen Echo is trying to set up Maryland’s first stop-sign camera, a fact known to the readers of The Echo since at least March, when this newspaper reported that Mayor Beers planned to ask state, county and park officials that a camera be installed at the intersection of Oxford Road and University Avenue to capture stop-sign runners.

The Examiner article, written by staff writer Rachel Baye, pointed out that Maryland law does not allow stop-sign cameras, although it does permit speed and red-light cameras. Baye also reported that Mayor Beers has written to Sen. Brian Frosh, D-Montgomery County, and Montgomery County Council President Roger Berliner, D-Bethesda, for support. The letters, which were mailed on August 3rd, attached the results from Town resident Willem Polak’s video showing that 81% of the 2,687 vehicles that came down Oxford from MacArthur Blvd. over five days in December 2011, failed to stop at University Avenue, despite two stop signs, words on the street, and a speed bump. [See The Echo, March 2012, p. 3.]

This being the second decade of the 21st Century, the Examiner article was immediately picked up by, among others, the Washington Post, the Huffington Post, WTOP, local affiliates of ABC, CBS, Fox News, and at least a dozen blogs, including muck-rack.com, stopsignsandmored.com, masscops.com, and underyourhood.com’s “news of the weird” . Comments on these posts ran from support to outrage:

“...and while we’re at it,” suggested one anonymous commenter to an article posted at WJLA.Com, “let’s install toilet seat cameras too. Some SOB keeps leaving the toilet seat up.”

“[Glen Echo] could take a positive approach that recognizes there must be something inherently wrong with the intersection and work to alter the intersection,” suggested a Washington Post reader.

“Indeed, one of the problems with stop signs is that they are ALWAYS in effect, regardless of traffic at the intersection. They also do not differentiate between the major and minor roads at the intersection or which road is currently carrying more traffic, making it easy for one side to back up.”

“What nobody wants to acknowledge or admit is that as Americans, a lot of us figure it’s our birth-right to drive like we wanna drive, and we’ll take our chances on getting busted...except with speed cameras..and red light cameras...and now, stop sign cameras,” editorialized WUSA’s Derek McGinty. “Getting busted becomes almost a guarantee. It’s like having grandma back seat driving, except this grandma is handing out \$50 citations.”

Despite the world’s reaction to the news from “the lovely little place with a grand total of 255 residents” (as the Washington Post’s Mike Rosenwald described our Town), it appears unlikely in the near future that anything will actually happen to change the legal situation. If anything, political pressure is being applied to dismantle the whole idea of “gotcha” cameras.

In March, sixteen members of Maryland's House of Delegates filed a bill highlighting abuses in the way private contractors operate speed cameras in the state. Although the bill would not overturn the law, it sought to close loopholes that its sponsors alleged have been exploited by many jurisdictions. Most recently, the Post reported on August 13th that Riverdale Park is facing a class-action lawsuit claiming that tens of thousands of speed camera tickets should be invalidated because they were not properly approved by a police officer. The lawsuit “could cost the small town in Prince Georges County millions of dollars,” the article said.

Real Estate Report

44 Wellesley Circle	\$995,000	For Sale
12 Wellesley Circle	\$599,000	Sold
26 Wellesley Circle	\$579,000	Contract

CLASSIFIED ADS

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Classified ads are free to Glen Echo residents. Fee to non-residents: \$.75 per line of 50 characters or fewer. Display ads: \$4 per vertical inch. Ads may be left with or mailed to the editor at 6103 Princeton Ave, Glen Echo, MD 20812. Make checks payable to: Town of Glen Echo. Deadline: 24th of each month.



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AROUND TOWN

Polly Angelakis, site supervisor of GEP, is moving to Haleakala NP on Maui. Aaron La Rocca will be taking over as interim site supervisor.

Chris Sheldon, resident on Yale Avenue, was associate creative director on a TV ad for Norfolk Southern railroad. The ad, which mimics *Toy Story* characters, is running on networks and selected cable channels. Creatively, the ad has received favorable reviews in Adweek where it was named “ad of the day.” You can see it when it runs during the political conventions or see the review at www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/ad-day-norfolk-south-ern-142695

Sally and Jim McGunnigle celebrated 50 years of marriage on September 1. In 1962, after a wedding in New York, they went immediately into the Peace Corps. After 2 months of training in Hilo, Hawaii, they were off to the Philippines for 2 years. Then, Jim joined the United States Foreign Service, and they spent most of the next 35 years living in 9 different countries. In 1995, the McGunnigles retired and lived in the Azores for 6 months each year. To our advantage, the couple moved to Glen Echo once the Azores property was sold, and they have made a great impact here with their multiple volunteer jobs and as former editors of *The Echo*.



GLEN ECHO TOWN HALL EVENTS

The Following Events Are Free to All Town Residents

English Country Dance
every Wednesday, 8 pm-10:30 pm

Town Council Meeting
September 10, 8 pm



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Potomac Conservancy Events

For information, contact Anne Sundermann at sundermann@potomac.org or 301-608-1188 x 208.

Voices of the River: Potomac Palette

Sunday, September 9, 12 pm – 2 pm
River Center at Lock 8, 7906 Riverside Drive, Cabin John, MD 20818

Art exhibit at the River Center, featuring the work of local artists. Judy Welles, author of *CABIN JOHN, Legends and Life of an Uncommon Place*, will tell the stories of the intriguing name and history of the community by the Potomac River and the C&O canal.

Canal Stewards at Fletcher's Cove

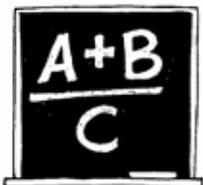
Saturday, September 29, 10 am – 12 pm
Boathouse at Fletcher's Cove, 4940 Canal Road NW, Washington, DC 20007

Celebrate National Public Lands Day with Potomac Conservancy! Meet at 10 am at Fletcher's Cove to clean up the picnic area and surrounding trails. This cleanup is open to all ages, and we'll provide all the necessary supplies - just bring a water bottle, sunscreen, and casual clothing! No registration is necessary and all ages are welcome.

5th Annual Potomac River Jam

Sunday, October 14, 10 am – 4 pm
River Center at Lock 8, 7906 Riverside Drive, Cabin John, MD 20818

Join Potomac Conservancy for the 5th annual Potomac River Jam – a full-day celebration of the natural beauty, culture, and history of the Potomac River and C&O Canal. The morning will begin with a sampling of the summer's most popular nature walks at Lock 8, followed in the afternoon by live music from local musicians. River-inspired artwork from local painters will be displayed; children's activities, and canoe rides ongoing. This is a free event open to all ages.



Local Stone “Castle” Renovated

By Carlotta Anderson

This is not an area that boasts many castles, but there is a recently restored one visible right above MacArthur Blvd. near Mohican Road that may impress you. It is a massive four-story stone version with medieval turrets set high above the river that has been recently restored to its 1890 glory.

It is the once-famed Baltzley Castle, built high above the Potomac River to emulate those along the castle-studded Rhine River in Germany. Its builders were brothers who had made a fortune from the invention of a reversible eggbeater. It was the dream of Edward and Edwin Baltzley to develop land along what was then known as Conduit Rd. into a grand pleasure resort and residential area. And that led, as many Glen Echo residents know, to the National Chautauqua of Glen Echo.

The Baltzley Castle is one of the few buildings from that era that remain. The stone tower in Glen Echo Park is another, as well as the 1891 Victorian Clara Barton House, which was built to be the American Red Cross headquarters. The house was stocked with supplies for Clara Barton's nursing work during wartime crusades.

If you wonder why you live on an irregular, often pie-shaped lot, blame the Baltzley developers who parceled the land of Glen Echo into a warren of small unusually shaped building lots intended for summer cottages. Anticipating hordes of visitors, they built a hotel and a trolley waiting station.

The castle has changed owners several times since the 1900's and at one time was reportedly used as a speakeasy with a dance hall during the Prohibition era. It was purchased along with a smaller mansion next to it by Carol and Paul Schaffer in 1960 and they lived there together until Paul died in 1991. Carol continued to make it her home even as it crumbled around her.

In 2010 builder/developer Ross McNair bought it, its only bidder. He described it thus, according to an article in *The Village News* by Larry Massett, "... it was falling apart. Every structural beam was shot,

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LADIES OF GLEN ECHO
Ladies Night
on Wednesday,
September 26, at 8 pm.
At the home of
Bonnie Whyte
39 Wellesley
RSVP: 301-229-2331

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the roof was shot, stones were falling out...there were raccoons living upstairs. Rationally speaking, there was nothing to be done with the castle except to tear it down.” But McNair was something of a romantic and he and his wife Alison wanted to live there.

Reconstruction has taken a year and a half, and McNair has made some changes, including an elevator to replace the servants’ staircase. He plans to move into the second and third floors this summer, meanwhile using the partly restored “Charles Castle” next door. The castles, which previously were only visible by driving from MacArthur Blvd. up Mohican Rd. and staying right, now can be seen from McArthur Blvd. However, to get a good view it is necessary to park your car in the MacArthur parking space across from the Sycamore store and walk a few steps on the bike path. The castles are no longer covered with vines and some trees have been removed so you will have an unobstructed view of the structures.



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Nursery Care	10:15 a.m.
Holy Eucharist with Hymns	10:30 a.m.
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Labor Day Art Show

Sept. 1- Sept. 3, noon-6pm
Spanish Ballroom
See www.glenechopark.org

Glen Echo Partnership Open House

September 1, noon-4pm
Partnership Office
See www.glenechopark.org

Irish Music and Dancing

Sept. 1 and Sept. 6, 1pm-6pm
Bumper Car Pavilion
See www.glenechopark.org



Want Trees? The Arbor Day Foundation Will Supply

Maryland residents who join the Arbor Day Foundation in September will receive 10 free trees as part of the Foundation's Trees for America program. Trees will include an eastern redbud, white pine, sugar maple, white flowering dogwood, pin oak, red maple, river birch, silver maple, northern red oak and Colorado blue spruce. The trees will be shipped postpaid at the right time for planting between October 15 and December 10. New members of the Arbor Day Foundation will also receive The Tree Book, which includes information about tree planting and care. To receive the 10 free trees, send a \$10 membership contribution to Ten Trees, Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Ave., Nebraska City, NE 68410, by September 29, 2012, or join online at arborday.org/september.

Pepco, the PSC, and Us

The Public Service Commission is having new hearings regarding the fairness of Pepco's practice of bill stabilization rates during the first 24 hours of an outage. You can read about this and enter your comments at www.PackUpPepco.com. According to The Village News, the site has been created to help communities take action. The site also has a comparison chart of legislators who have accepted campaign contributions from Pepco and how they've voted on Pepco/PSC issues.

