

The Echo

The Town of GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND Chartered 1904



October Town Council Meeting

By Patty Sieber

The Mayor and all Council Members all attended the October meeting. In addition, approximately six residents were in the audience. The main topic of the meeting was the amendment to the ordinance that will enable the Town to charge a fee to each household that connects to the gas lines that will be installed by Washington Gas. A number of other topics were discussed. They include:

Ordinance to Amend Articles 17 and 23

A number of residents attended the meeting to oppose the additional \$300 Permit Fee that will be charged by the Town to each property that chooses to install gas in their home. This fee will be paid directly to the Town of Glen Echo and will help replenish the so-called surplus that was diminished by the recent payment to Washington Gas in the amount of \$209,877. The check was sent to Washington Gas

November 2013

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but has not been cashed as of October 14th. Since this ordinance was introduced last summer, there has been consideration of charging even more than the \$300 fee first conceived by the Council.

The arguments for the fee were:

- Not all resident taxpayers will receive the benefit of gas.
- The Mayor stated that “residents who choose to install gas should have some “skin in the game.”

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THE ECHO

Published unofficially by, for, and in the Town of Glen Echo, Maryland. Distributed free to Glen Echo residents. Subscriptions for non-residents: \$12 per year (to subscribe call Susan Grigsby, 301-229-7735). Copies of *The Echo* are on file at Little Falls Library. Also provided online at www.glenecho.org. Total circulation: 190. Distributed the first weekend of the month.

EDITOR	Phyllis Fordham Debbie Lange
Editor Email	TheEchoEditor@gmail.com
DESIGN EDITOR	Debbie Lange
REPORTER	Patty Sieber
COPY EDITORS	Maire Hewitt Erica Tokar
ADVERTISING REP	Patty Sieber
DISTRIBUTION	Jane Stevenson Jan Shaut Sally Law Raya Bodnarchuk Debra Burton
CIRCULATION	Susan Grigsby

Next Deadline: November 20, 2013

Letters to the Editor are welcome. They must be signed. Articles for publication are also solicited. Please send comments about *The Echo* to the Editor, the Mayor, or any Council member. Volunteer reporters are always needed.

TOWN OF GLEN ECHO MARYLAND 20812

Phone: 301-320-4041
Fax: 301-320-3639
Office: 6106 Harvard Ave.
Website: www.glenecho.org

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 598, Glen Echo, MD 20812

Office Hours: Monday and Thursday
9:30 am–12:00 pm or by appointment

MAYOR	Debbie Beers	301-229-7308
COUNCIL MEMBERS	Matt Stiglitz	301-229-0926
	Nancy Long	301-332-3823
	Mark McCaffrey	202-248-8449
	Steve Matney	301-320-2059
CLERK–TREASURER	Nicole Fraser	301-320-4041

Next Town Council Meeting
November 11, 2013, at 8 pm

SUNOCO



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- The Town surplus has dropped below the auditor’s recommended amount and the fee will help recoup some of that money. The main reason for the fee, however, is to defray the cost of the gas connection fee to under \$200,000.
- The homeowners who install gas will recoup the fee in the increased value of the home at the time of resale.

Some the opposition’s arguments were:

- The permit fee paid to Washington Gas comes from the taxes already collected from all residents.
- As far as “skin in the game,” residents who choose gas are already investing heavily in the installation of gas to their home.
- The fee should not be used to replenish the surplus.
- The Town now has a surplus of more than \$250,000 that can be considered a cushion to cover a year’s expenses, which are about \$150,000 plus an additional \$50,000 that could be thought of as savings toward additional emergency or capital expenditures.
- One resident had requested a listing of the revenue on hand each June since 2004. Currently the revenue on hand is \$252,254 and the County will be sending another payment from collected property taxes in the near future.

Discussion ensued among the Council members and the Mayor. Mr. Stiglitz stated that he believed the fee should be levied and he was following his mission to be a good steward of Town resources. Nancy Long said that since Montgomery County charges a permit fee, the Town is justified in doing the same. The Mayor said that citizens had asked for the permit fee. Diana Hudson-Taylor, a member of the audience and resident who worked on collecting survey instruments from residents interested in gas said she thought the fee should be charged to those opting to hook up to gas.

There was a motion to adopt the amendment to Articles 17 and 23. After being duly seconded, the

motion was passed unanimously. The permit fee will be \$300. Article 23 is amended to allow the Town to contract without competitive bids for “contracts relating to providing natural gas service by Washington Gas to the Town of Glen Echo.”

Police Citations

Citations were on hold since the government shutdown and the Park closing.

Town Hall

The Town Hall was made available to classes that were cancelled by the Park during the government shutdown. Toddler Ballet, Blues Dance, and Yoga were all affected. Glen Echo was compensated for the use of the hall on the same basis that non-profits are charged. There was discussion of where additional parking could take place as it was affecting the residents who live near the Town Hall. There was also discussion about any interest the temporary users might have to continue to use Town Hall after the Park is opened again. Mr. McAffrey mentioned that there could be residential concern about the parking problems these groups present.

One resident asked if the data uncovered by the Town Clerk last summer had been used to make new policy about Town Hall use. The discussion came up in August but was postponed due to the late hour. The Mayor was interested in maximizing the amount of money the Town could raise by offering non-residents the hall for private events, and that might mean

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CONTINUED from Page 3

constraints on some of the times the facility would be available to residents. The Mayor said there has been no further discussion since the August meeting.

Drain at Bowden and Oberlin

During the last rain, the drain backed up again and water overflowed on to the road. This could cause major havoc on the parkway with the continued erosion and potential for downed trees. This is the Park Service’s responsibility. This situation was reviewed two years ago and county engineers designed a fix and submitted the plans to the Park Service. It was discussed that Glen Echo should address a letter to the legal department or the Superintendent of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and attach a copy of the map of the drains and remind him of the potential danger. A council member was going to locate a copy of the map.

Nancy Long’s Birthday

Nicole Fraser and her children were kind enough to make a pumpkin treat for all to enjoy in honor of Nancy Long’s birthday.

Town Finances

The following amounts were reported, which give an overview of the Town finances for the past 10 years:

Cash On Hand

30-Jun-04	\$465,141
30-Jun-05	\$502,608
30-Jun-06	\$610,272
30-Jun-07	\$642,872
30-Jun-08	\$668,527
30-Jun-09	\$686,171
30-Jun-10	\$327,372
30-Jun-11	\$337,724
30-Jun-12	\$377,292
30-Jun-13	\$429,690

Annual Revenue

30-Jun-04	\$174,004
30-Jun-05	\$193,791
30-Jun-06	\$244,674
30-Jun-07	\$255,504
30-Jun-08	\$258,418
30-Jun-09	\$266,132
30-Jun-10	\$220,673
30-Jun-11	\$234,138
30-Jun-12	\$248,905
30-Jun-13	\$252,254

Between 2009 and 2010, the total amount of the cash on hand dipped because of the Town’s investment in resurfacing the roads. Roads are resurfaced every eight years on average. Also that year the yearly revenue dipped because property assessments were lowered. To compensate, the Town raised the tax rate and the yearly revenue has been going back up.

To address concerns expressed at the Budget Hearing in May that investment in laying gas lines would lower the amount of the account balance (cash on hand), Mayor Beers noted that the Town never spends all the money that it budgets, so it is unlikely that the account balance would fall below \$200,000. “It goes up about \$60,000 every year,” she said. In the Notice of Budget Hearing, she said “past experience indicates that it is likely to be restored to its present level within a maximum of four years.”

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LADIES OF GLEN ECHO

Ladies Night

on Thursday,

November 21, at 8 pm

At the home of

Phyllis Fordham

6103 Princeton Ave

RSVP: 301-263-0552



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O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

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Holy Eucharist	8:00 a.m.
Adult Forum & Bible Study	9:15 a.m.
Nursery Care	10:15 a.m.
Choral Eucharist	10:30 a.m.
Church School for All Ages	10:30 a.m.

■ UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday, November 3, at 5:00 p.m.
Choral Evensong for the Sunday after All Saints' Day

Saturday, November 9, at 7:00 p.m.
The Yale Whiffenpoofs in Concert (*ticketed event*)

Sunday, December 8, at 5:00 p.m.
A Service of Lessons & Carols for Advent

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Natural Gas Work Continues Behind Scenes

Town Clerk Nicole Fraser sent an email update to Town residents on the progress of Washington Gas in securing the required permit from the Army Corps of Engineers to install gas pipelines across MacArthur Blvd. Ms. Fraser reported the following information on October 17, 2013:

“... Washington Gas is still awaiting approval from the Army Corps of Engineers to run a gas main under MacArthur Blvd. The first proposal submitted by Washington Gas to the Army Corps of Engineers was rejected. Mr. Higgins of Washington Gas said that this is not unusual. Washington Gas has resubmitted with revisions and was given the approval by the Corps to conduct an underground survey with test wells. Some of you may have seen at the corner of Bannockburn Drive and MacArthur Blvd this week and last, an underground utility company AI Data (big black trucks). They were conducting the survey for Washington Gas to submit the data to the Corps...”

At the October Town Council meeting, the Mayor asked that the list of possible contractors to retrofit houses and systems for natural gas as published in *The Echo* last March be repeated. *The Echo* can be found on the Town website. Despite the many articles in *The Echo* about natural gas, it seems as if some residents feel uninformed. In this issue, along with the names of contractors, we have repeated information on web sites or publications that may shed some light on the price of gas versus the price of oil for heating.

Past Echo Articles on Gas

Some residents asked that *The Echo* write more about the natural gas issue. Many articles have been written and are listed below. Past issues of *The Echo* are on the Town website, www.GlenEcho.org.

- January, p. 1, *Gas Surveys Shed Light on Possible Cost to Town*, Jerry Bodlander
- February, p. 3, *Natural Gas Surveys*, Ellen Leary
- March, p. 1, *Council Funds Gas Engineering Study*, Debi Sacks

GLEN ECHO TOWN HALL EVENTS

These Events Are Free to Town Residents.

FSGW English Country Dance
every Wednesday, 8–10:30 pm



New Babies!

Blair, Tisha, and big brother Dirk of 6106 Harvard Avenue welcome baby brother Mads Magog Anderson.

Sascha and Eden Haverfield of 7314 University Avenue welcome their baby girl Bryndis. Congratulations and welcome!



- March, pp. 9–10, *Residents Now Getting Estimates For Gas Conversion*, Phyllis Fordham
- March, p. 11, *Contractor Contact Information for Modification Estimates*
- June, p. 9, *Town to Raise Real Estate Tax to 14.13 per \$100 of Assessed Value*, Rex Rhein
- June, p. 12, *Watch for Next Meeting on Gas Lines*
- July, p. 3, *Gas Lines, MacArthur Boulevard, Other Issues Discussed*, Phyllis Fordham
- August, pp. 1, 6, 7, 9, *Gas Line Installation Major Topic of July Council Meeting; Town Residents Demand Gas; Get More Information on Energy Cost Comparison*, Phyllis Fordham
- September, p. 1, *Gas Implementation Discussed*, Phyllis Fordham

LOCAL EVENTS

Bannockburn Craft Show

Bannockburn Community Center
 6314 Bannockburn Drive
 Saturday, November 2, 11 am to 4 pm
 More Information, 301-229-4045.

Annual show featuring a range of crafts, including jewelry, glass, clothing, honey, pet gifts, household goods, ceramics, mustards and condiments, baked goods, and other items. Show benefits the historic Bannockburn Community Club.

Clara Barton Craft Show

Clara Barton Community Center
 7425 MacArthur Boulevard
 Saturday, December 7, 1 pm to 5 pm
 Contact Leslie Barden, 301-365-1311

Free annual show where 50 local artists, crafters, and authors sell items for gifting and personal enjoyment. The show includes all kinds of crafts: jewelry, glass, paintings, drawings, photographs, wood crafts, ornaments, quilts, hand knitted sweaters, pottery, books by local authors, local honey and jams . . . and more. Show benefits programs at the Clara Barton Community Center. Sponsored by the Friends of Clara Barton Community Center, a non-profit charity. See www.friendsofclarabartoncommunitycenter.org.

Recycle electronics at Whitman

Walt Whitman High School Parking Lot
 November 3, noon to 4 pm.

Sponsored by The Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services. Included items are small electronic appliances; calculators; camcorders; CDs and floppy disks; CD players; cell phones; computers and computer-related products; consumer electronics; copiers; cords and cables (including chargers); digital cameras; electronic typewriters; fax machines; monitors; personal digital assistant equipment; printers; projection equipment; scanners; telephones; small electronic toys; televisions; VCRs. Data will be erased for security purposes.

For more information, call 240-777-0311 or see www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

E-Cycling Event in Kensington

Organized by GreenWheaton,
 Tuesday, Oct. 22, 5 pm to 7 pm,
 3015 University Blvd. West, Kensington (Signal Financial Federal Credit Union parking lot)

Thanks to our friends at ECO City Junk, you can bring your unwanted TVs, computers, electronics and small appliances. Volunteers are needed to help direct traffic and coordinate the vehicles dropping off documents. For more information on volunteering, contact GreenWheaton at info@greenwheaton.org.



Real Estate Report

6001 Bryn Mawr Ave	\$1,699,000	For Sale
44 Wellesley Circle	\$1,495,000	For Sale





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Piano lessons: \$30/hour. I have been playing the piano for 30 years. I love to play and would love to teach piano to your children or to you. Please call Stephanie Rhein at 301-229-7910 if interested.

Classified ads are free to Glen Echo residents and \$1.50 per line for non-residents. Display ads are \$5 per vertical inch. Send your classified ad to TheEchoEditor@gmail.com. Send your display ad to EchoAdRep@gmail.com. Deadline for ads is the 15th of each month.

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 240-743-7194 cell
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 Call me for all of your Real Estate needs!

Contractor Contact Information for Modification Estimates for Residences*

Contacts from Aaron Hirsch

Joe Colish
Spectrum Mechanical
301-370-1434

Cornell Fields
240-508-9324

Contact from Debi Sacks

Gerald Lease
Lease Brothers Sheet Metal
4580 Mack Avenue
Frederick, MD 21703
301-695-1254

Contact from Nick Lambert

Ron Gallant
Argent Heating and Cooling
240-398-7006

Contact from Phyllis Fordham

Errol Nicholson
Griffith Energy
240-375-8390 cell
ErrolNicholson@comcast.net

*The aforementioned contacts should not, in any way, be considered recommendations by *The Echo* or of the Town of Glen Echo or of the parties who have supplied names in an effort to help residents to further their own research.

Get More Information on Energy Cost Comparisons

The following links have been suggested by Town Clerk Nicole Fraser and there are many others. They may help you to calculate the savings available from converting to gas. Washington Gas also has a calculator on their site. Most importantly, be sure of the numbers you use. For instance, for gas, include all charges including delivery costs and get up to date prices on oil costs. Griffith Energy or Petro can tell you what you pay per gallon and what the cost will be if you lock in your price for next heating season. Either company can tell you what you paid for oil for certain time periods. Other variables will include the efficiency of furnaces or boilers. Some sites to visit:

- <http://www.popularmechanics.com/home/improvement/energy-efficient/4331224>
- <http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/energy/energy-use/making-decisions/comparison-charts>

Notes from Nicole:

The Penn State calculator lets one choose their energy source. So propane users could do a propane versus gas comparison.

Some of the other calculators had fixed inputs that were out of date and others were sponsored by the gas company and might have bias. If anyone else has found sites or calculators they like, please share with the list serve.

Phyllis Fordham received a quote from Griffith Energy for \$3.989/gallon for a locked-in rate for 2013–2014.

Matt Stiglitz suggests a realistic natural gas rate may be \$1/therm that includes \$.59 gas and \$.41 delivery. If in doubt, call the gas supplier and make sure you include all charges.

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Glen Echo Park Activities

The Puppet Co.

Peter and the Wolf

Oct. 17–Nov. 22

Tiny Tots

Select Weds, Sats, and Suns at 10 am

See www.thepuppetco.org

or call 301-634-5380

Adventure Theatre MTC

Goodnight Moon

Sept. 20–Nov. 3

See www.adventuretheatre-mtc.org

or call 301-634-2270

A Successful Town Yard Sale

Once again, Town residents took advantage of coordination and group advertising supplied by Raya Bodnarchuk, Carol Barton, and Forest Yang for the townwide yard sale. Two residents reported that they made almost \$400! Some may have earned even

more but our roving reporter did not check in with everyone. There was a great turnout of residents and buyers alike. The Town is grateful to these volunteers who made the day pleasant and profitable for lots of people.

