

# The Echo

## The Town of GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND Chartered 1904



**April 2014**

### **March Town Council Meeting**

**By Jim McGunnigle**

The March Town Council meeting was relatively quiet as opposed to earlier meetings this year which were focused on construction of new houses and details of gas pipe installation under the streets of Glen Echo.

#### ***Glen Echo Park***

Aaron LaRocca of the National Park Service spoke about issues in the Park. The Park Service has proposed a reorganization of Park management due to a restricted budget. It is likely that Mr. LaRocca's supervisory position will be moved to Turkey Run Park, and Glen Echo Park supervision will be exercised from that location.

Due to rising popular demand, the carousel will increase its operating hours in the spring.

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#### ***Council Announcements***

The next Town Council meeting will take place on April 7. This is a different date than the usual second Monday of the month, which will be the beginning of spring break for Montgomery County schools. The change of date is intended to accommodate the public who may be away due to the spring holiday.

Snow emergency parking rules prohibit parking in the Post Office parking lot. Mayor Beers pointed out that the snow parking ordinances need to be revised.

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# THE ECHO

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**Next Deadline:** April 20, 2014

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

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**Next Town Council Meeting**  
**April 7, 2014, at 8 pm**

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Further discussion was tabled for a future meeting.

The Town landscaping contract is up for renewal and a discussion indicated that residents are generally satisfied with the service. The Council agreed to renew that contract and there will be a minor increase in the cost for landscaping services that include the two pocket parks at University and Princeton Avenues and Town Hall grounds. The landscaping maintenance contracts do not include tree pruning. There is a separate contract with Mark Peyton for snow removal and maintenance of the right-of-way along MacArthur Boulevard and a few other spots in Town.

Council member Matt Stiglitz provided a report from the Montgomery County Police since he is the Town's liaison with the police district that serves Glen Echo. There are no new or alarming trends indicated. Home burglaries are up slightly, while thefts from autos are down

**Gas Permits**

The Council reviewed and approved a permit form that will be used by residents wanting gas hookups. A fee will be required of those residents. Thus far thirty-two residents have formally applied for gas service to Washington Gas or through Nicole Fraser for Washington Gas. The Town-imposed permit fee will be \$300 per hookup.

**Construction Concerns**

A Town resident expressed concern that home renovators were using public streets for placing building materials, which reduces available parking spaces. This is especially problematic after snow storms.

**Town Council Meeting**

The April Town Council Meeting will be held on April 7 at 8 pm rather than the usual second Monday of the month.

**Washington Gas Representatives Meet Residents**

**By Phyllis Fordham**

A February 27 meeting at Town Hall was held by Washington Gas to bring current information to residents about installation of gas lines in Glen Echo. The audience of about 75 people included the Mayor and Council members. Washington Gas representatives were Jack Higgins, Project Manager, Haytgam Abu-Hantash, Manager of Construction, and Kelly G. Caplan, Community Outreach Manager.

Mr. Higgins stated that gas lines should cross MacArthur Boulevard into Town between April 1 and April 15 near Wellesley Circle. Construction is expected to last until August 2014 but could be completed sooner, depending on weather or other construction factors.

**Status of Commitment Letters**

Residents had many questions which were answered by the gas company representatives. Some commitment letters have been submitted to Washington Gas either by residents, contractors, or through Town Clerk-Treasurer Nicole Fraser. Letters were distributed by the Town to residents' doors and at the February 27 meeting. Some residents signed and turned them in at that time. Washington Gas will have a representative contact each home to see if an appliance is going to be installed. This is important to residents' costs since Washington Gas will bring

CONTINUED on Page 4

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CONTINUED from Page 3

pipng to a meter at the house at no additional cost but only if the resident will be installing a hot water heater or converting to a gas furnace.

It should be noted that this commitment process is different from the survey taken by Town residents about a year ago. Even if a resident stated they were interested in gas, that survey was merely used to begin the Town’s negotiation process with Washington Gas to get gas lines installed in Town. Residents may find that they are not yet listed as a committed customer. Nicole Fraser is keeping track of those whom the Gas Company views as committed and said that 32 residents had signed up by the time of the March Council meeting.

**Timetable for Retrofits and New Systems**

Residents will have up to a year after the meter is placed at a residence to complete the installation of the gas system (furnace or water heater). If no systems are installed by then, Maryland State law dictates that the branch lines be dug up and capped. The need to repeat the digging process would create additional disruption to Town residents so an accurate initial determination is imperative. Washington Gas has promised close communication with residents and will hold weekly meetings between April and August when construction and restoration of streets and trenches is scheduled for completion.

**Getting Ready for Construction**

The construction method used to extend gas lines to homes will be the creation of a trench up to 24 inches deep within a narrow width. Mr. Higgins and Mr. Abu-Hantash described the process as one in which they will “mole rather than drill.” Before construction, Washington Gas will have identified the location of all utility lines on public and private properties through Miss Utility. Owners need not contact Miss Utility for these lines, but must mark their properties where private lines exist for such amenities as sprinkler systems, outdoor lighting, generators, or any other buried lines that could be damaged during construction.

Now is a good time to discuss meter placement with your contractor. Contractors’ representatives

will know where your systems are inside your home, and have an idea of code restrictions and what the gas company may view as the most cost-effective manner to lay lines. For instance, for Glen Echo homes with close proximity to a neighboring home, one lateral trench may be sufficient to get close to two homes. Fewer trenches mean less disruption of landscape materials and streets. Tree roots will be avoided whenever possible but landscape, if disturbed, will not be replaced by Washington Gas. Streets and sidewalks will be repaired. While observing code restrictions and construction constraints, Washington Gas representatives stated that they will bring the lines as close as possible to a location chosen by the homeowner for a meter.

**Rebates**

Washington Gas representatives knew of no rebates given to Maryland customers. Some of the contractor’s representatives suggest that there may be a rebate for energy efficient furnaces and there may also be a small tax credit. This would depend on systems, not the adoption of gas as a fuel and should be a topic of research for each home owner. Contact your tax advisor for complete information on taxes since credits could change at any time.

**Town Permit**

When asked, Mayor Beers said the Town will charge a permit fee to each household that installs gas systems or appliances. This one-time fee, she said, has been adopted to slightly defray the Town payment of over \$200,000 charged by Washington Gas to bring gas lines into Town.

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## Vassar Circle Development

By Jim McGunnigle

Resident and developer Aaron Hirsch met on March 24 with about 20 Glen Echo residents concerned with the development of 2 Vassar Circle. Mr. Hirsch was joined by Curt Schreffler of CAS Engineering and Erin Girard of Attorneys Linowes and Blocher. Both firms are engaged by Mr. Hirsch to assist with his development plans. Mr. Hirsch also made it clear that the meeting was a Montgomery County statutory requirement and that CAS Engineering would provide the Montgomery County Office of Parks and Planning with the minutes of the meeting, reflecting the concerns of those residents attending. Parks and Planning will then submit its recommendations to the board that deals with property subdivisions. Mr. Schreffler presented a site plan that showed how 2 Vassar Circle could be divided into four lots and the possible locations of four houses on those lots.

CAS Engineering will also submit to the County its plans for drainage. They will propose to build dry wells and permeable pavement driveways in an effort to control water runoff. Many residents expressed concerns about the downhill effects of rainwater once the property is further developed.

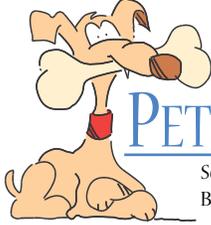
The proposed arrangement of houses on the site would provide a one-car garage and sufficient space for only one car in the driveway of each property. Vassar Circle residents voiced serious concerns about Vassar Circle parking limitations. Most of the existing houses on Vassar Circle have no off street parking. Consequently, little street parking is available even now, and the result of four new houses would certainly exacerbate the problem. In addition, residents noted that Vassar Circle, especially the lower part of the circle, is extremely narrow. There are genuine concerns about the ability of large trucks, especially emergency vehicles like ambulances and fire trucks, to negotiate around the circle. Ms. Girard noted that the proposed street layout will be submitted to County officials concerned with safety and access.

Other residents are concerned about how Mr. Hirsch will treat the grade of the houses on the site,

as the property does not follow the downward slope of Glen Echo.

Mr. Hirsch said that he would email residents drawings of his plans as they are further along and that he would also agree to a further meeting with residents to continue discussions about their concerns.









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<b>Palm Sunday – April 13</b>	
Blessing of Palms, Procession & Holy Eucharist	8:00 a.m.
Blessing of Palms, Procession & Choral Eucharist	10:30 a.m.
<b>Maundy Thursday – April 17</b>	
Simple Supper	6:00 p.m.
Choral Eucharist with Washing of Feet	7:30 p.m.
<b>Good Friday – April 18</b>	
Stations of the Cross	12:00 p.m.
Musical Meditation: <i>Stabat Mater</i> by G.B. Pergolesi	12:45 p.m.
The Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday	7:30 p.m.
<b>Easter Eve – April 19</b>	
The Great Vigil of Easter	8:30 p.m.
<b>Easter Sunday – April 20</b>	
Holy Eucharist	8:00 a.m.
Festal Eucharist of the Resurrection	10:30 a.m.
Hot Cross Buns & Easter Egg Hunt	12:00 p.m.

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## Past Echo Articles on Natural Gas

By Phyllis Fordham

Some residents are still saying they know little about the process for natural gas installation in Town. Many articles have been written on different aspects of natural gas and numerous meetings have been held where the Council or Washington Gas discussed the topic. Past issues of *The Echo* can be found on the Town website, [www.GlenEcho.org](http://www.GlenEcho.org). Here is a list of the articles regarding natural gas.

### 2013

- January, p. 1 *Gas Surveys Shed Light on Possible Cost to Town*, Gerry Bodlanger
- February, p. 3 *Natural Gas Surveys*, Ellen Leary
- March, p. 1 *Council Funds Gas Engineering Study*, Debi Sacks
- March, p. 9, 10 *Residents Now Getting Estimates For Gas Conversion*, Phyllis Fordham
- March, p. 11 *Contractor Contact Information for Modification Estimates*
- June, p.3 *Update on Gas Lines* Ellen Leary, p.12 *Watch for Next Meeting on Gas Lines*
- June, p. 9 *Town to Raise Real Estate Tax to 14.13 per \$100 of Assessed Value*, Rex Rhein
- 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
- October, p. 6 *Natural Gas Update*, p. 9; *Should the Town Charge Residents \$300 for Gas Hookup?* Debbie Lange
- November, pp. 1, 6, 9 *Ordinance to Amend Articles 17 and 23*, Patty Sieber, *Natural Gas Work Continues Behind Scenes, Past Echo Articles on Gas, Get More Information on Energy Cost Comparisons*
- December, p. 11, *Important, Converting from Oil to Gas*

### 2014

- January, p. 9 *Update on Gas Installation*
- February, p. 4 *Gas Conversion Update*, Ellen Leary, p. 5 *Gas, Important Upcoming Meeting for Residents*
- March, p. 3 *Gas Installation Permit*, Debi Sacks, p. 5 *Update on Gas*

*LADIES OF GLEN ECHO*

*Ladies Night*

*on Thursday,*

*April 17, at 8 pm*

*at the home of*

*Jan Shaut*

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## St. Patrick's Day Party

About 60 people attended the St. Patrick's Day Party. Thanks to set-up volunteers Jim and Kate Horowitz and Harley, Nora, and Maddox Feldbaum and clean-up crew Bernie Edelman, Ellen Leary, Steve and Andrea Matney, Debi Sacks, Bill and Kiera Vincent, Susan Grigsby, and helpers from Bannockburn.



Kate toasts the memory of Brockie Stevenson, Jim Shaut, Peter Somerville, and Jim Anderson



Anthony Hyatt and Kate Horowitz lead the Irish songs



Alexander Vincent



Christina Hooper



Susan Grigsby, David Kirschner, Phyllis Daen, Ellen Leary, Debi Sacks, Holly and Osamu Shimizu with Bernie Edelman and Jim Horowitz in back

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*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](mailto:TheEchoEditor@gmail.com). Send your display ad to [EchoAdRep@gmail.com](mailto:EchoAdRep@gmail.com). Deadline for ads is the 15th of each month.*

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**LOCAL EVENTS**

**C&O Canal Activities**

**Potomac Watershed Cleanup**

Saturday, April 5, 9 am–12 pm  
Conducted at various sites. Contact Jim Heins at 301-949-3518.

**Nature Walk**

Saturday, April 12, 10 am  
Focus on wildflowers. Meet at parking lot opposite Old Angler’s Inn. Contact Marion Robertson at [morobertson@verizon.net](mailto:morobertson@verizon.net) or 301-657-8992.

**Douglas Memorial Weekend activities**

Reservation deadline is Wednesday, April 16. Contact Jim Heins at 301-949-3518 or [vip@candocanal.org](mailto:vip@candocanal.org).

**Fence Painting and Vegetation Removal**

Saturday, April 19, 9 am–12 pm  
Riley’s Lock, Contact Jim Heins at 301-949-3518 or [vip@candocanal.org](mailto:vip@candocanal.org).

**Douglas Hike 60th Anniversary Weekend**

Friday–Sunday April 25–27  
Activities include hiking, camping, annual dinner. Contact Marjorie Richman at [vip@candocanal.org](mailto:vip@candocanal.org).

**Nature Walk**

Sunday April 27, 8 am–11 am  
Focus on birds, guided walk. Riley’s Lock. Contact Marion Robertson at [morobertson@verizon.net](mailto:morobertson@verizon.net).

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HALL EVENTS**

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Scottish Fiddle Club Program  
Saturday, April 19, 1–5 pm

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## Glen Echo Park Activities

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or call 301-634-5380

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or call 301-634-2270

## Residents Should Weigh In on Budget

The Town Budget will be adopted in May on a date that will be advertised. The 2014–15 tax rate must be sent to the State of Maryland by May 14. Prior to a budget hearing, Nicole Fraser, Clerk–Treasurer will distribute copies of a proposed budget to residents. The budget hearing is traditionally held the same time as budget adoption by the Mayor and Council, so it is best to send any comments or suggestions to the Mayor or the Town Clerk prior to the hearing. The email address for such comments is [Townhall@glenecho.org](mailto:Townhall@glenecho.org). You may also write or call Town Hall or the Mayor or any Councilmember or speak at the public hearing.

## Election Day Volunteers Wanted

Montgomery County is seeking Maryland registered voters who read, write, and speak English to work on Election day. If you will be at least 17 years old by November 4, 2014, please consider volunteering. Election Judges may work all day or just a portion of the day. Training is provided prior to election days. Primary elections will be held on June 4 and the general election will be held on November 4, 2014. A stipend is paid for the service. For more information, check the website [www.777vote.org](http://www.777vote.org) and click on Election Judge, or call 240-777-8533.

## Police Report

Between February 11 and March 10, police officers monitored Oxford Road on 2 days for 7 hours. There were 4 citations and 17 warnings issued. The Town paid \$280 for these services.



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