

The Bugle

Published by the Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association

Spring 2011

Issue: 11.02

STRATHMORE BEL-PRE 30th Annual Yard Sale

Spring is here and that means it's time again for the annual Strathmore Bel-Pre community yard sale. It's a fun and easy way to turn that unwanted clutter into cash. We take care of all the advertising and bring a large pool of potential buyers to you.

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WHEN: Saturday, June 4th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (rain date, Sunday, June 5th)

WHERE: BPRA pool parking lot (on Bethpage Lane)

GATES OPEN FOR SET UP AT 8:30 am

If you have paid your membership dues to the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association, you will receive a \$2.00 member discount off the registration fee of \$12.00 per space.

TO REGISTER: Fill out and return the registration form below, along with a check for the registration fee. Tables (including 2 chairs) are available for rent for an additional \$5.00 on a first-come, first-serve basis. Numbers are limited, so reserve early.

At the door registration will be accepted as space permits. The fee will be \$15.00. Call Linda Bea for additional information: (301) 460-0497.

~~~~~ YARD SALE REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE/EMAIL: _____

Number of Spaces:

Civic Assn members - \$10.00 per space: \$ _____

Non-members - \$12.00 per space: \$ _____

Number of tables - \$ 5.00 each: \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to 'SBPCA' and mail to:
P.O. Box 6836, Silver Spring, MD 20916

THE BUGLE

Published by the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association Since 1969

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Layout: Charlie Bea	301-460-0497	Advertising: Harry Klapper	301-460-9645
North Circulation : Louisa Hoar	301-871-2954	South Circulation: Dan Mann	301-460-3330
Send information for The Bugle to: blev@his.com or to 2701 Bellmawr Court by the 15th of the month prior to publication.			

Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association (SBPCA)

P.O. Box 6836, Silver Spring, MD 20906

e-mail: Strathmo@strathmore-belpre.org

Web site: www.strathmore-belpre.org

Annual SBPCA membership: \$15.00

The SBPCA is a voluntary association, funded by membership dues, that represents our community to County Government and various other groups such as the Montgomery County Civic Federation. The SBPCA also publishes **The Bugle** and organizes the annual Yard Sale and 4th of July festivities. The SBPCA Board of Directors meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Genesis Center Nursing Home on Bel Pre Road. The Civic Association's annual meeting is in November just before the BPRA annual meeting.

Civic Association Officers

President:	Nancy Bechtol	301-871-3679	Vice President:	Bill Hammond	301-871-5074
Treasurer:	John Bogasky	301-460-1604	Secretary:	Linda Bea	301-460-0497
Past President:	Reuben Lev	301-460-1048	Webmaster:	Bill Hammond	301-871-5074

Civic Association Board of Directors

Charlie Bea	301 460-0497	Harry Klapper	301 460-9645	Max Bronstein	301 460-3117
Marilyn Lev	301 460-1048	Elliot Chabot	301 871-1113	Dan Thomas	301 871-2624
Frank Corrigan	301 460-1011	Maurice Potosky	301 460-9008	Chris Swan	301 871-1113
Ron Daub	301 460-0929	Arlene Thorne	301 871-5013	Lilla Hammond	301 871-5074

Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA)

The Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) is the homeowner's association for the Strathmore Bel Pre properties. Your annual assessment is paid to the BPRA to pay for your pool, tennis courts, volleyball, playground, picnic area, bath house, snack bar and pavilion open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. BPRA Board Meetings are held the 4th Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at Bel Pre Elementary School and during summer months at the Pool Pavilion. The BPRA's annual meeting is in November.

Bel Pre Recreation Association Officers

President:	Dan Keating	301-603-8162	dtkeats@gmail.com
Vice President:	Sue Hoyer	301-603-9559	sue@hoyes.org
Treasurer:	Keith Yockelson	301-460-8555	number1pools@verizon.net
Secretary:	Ed Frantz	301-603-8055	ed_frantz@comcast.net
Lou Ann Rector		301-603-8805	

Bel Pre Recreation Association Board of Trustees

John Adamo	301 460-3275	fijimaster@juno.com	Dan Entwisle	
Lou Ann Rector	301 603-805		Arthur Meister	301 438-7869 ustation@aol.com
Paulette Ladas	301 674-7742	apladas@aol.com		

Bel Pre Recreation Association Volunteers

Admin Asst:	Brenda Henry	301-871-6298	Pavilion Usage:	Louisa Hoar	301-871-2954
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The President's Corner

- by Nancy Bechtol, President SBPCA

I am hoping everyone will be able to come to our Yard Sale on Saturday June 4th, with a rain date on Sunday June 5th. The yard sale starts at 9:00am and lasts 'til Noon. It is a great way to meet new neighbors, and if adventurous rent a table and clean out your closets and garage! If your garage looks anything like mine, you need to rent two tables! I hope to see you there!

At our March meeting we invited Lt. Karen Petrarca, Commander of Patrol, K9 and SERT for the Maryland-National Capital Park Police to come speak with us about safety on the new bike trail that divides our neighborhood. She has served over 19 years with the Park Police and is very experienced. She told the Board that the biggest problem along the trail is with adolescents that have been drinking. Most arrests are for this type of activity. She told us that there are approximately 85 park police officers now working in our county parks, and this is down from 120 officers 10 years ago. They are very short staffed.

There was an assault along the trail on December 31, 2010 which involved a gentleman being pushed and knocked over, but Lt. Petrarca did not know of any other incidents. She encouraged us to call the Park Police if we are ever on the trail and notice any unusual activity. She can be reached at 301-929-5989. She believes the trail system is very safe, but encourages our careful observation whenever using the trail.

We received word on Monday April 25th that our community sign, on the corner of Hathaway and Layhill was indeed hit by a vehicle for the second time in less than a year! Here we go again, needing to replace our poor community sign. I am sure I will have much more to say about this in my next update. I wish everyone well, and hope each of you enjoy this beautiful springtime season!

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Gleanings from Meetings & More

- by Max Bronstein

The Montgomery County Civic Federation's February meeting featured a report from the Organizational Reform Commission. The commission was formed to make suggestions for consolidating the functions of county government so as to achieve greater efficiency and effect cost savings. All in attendance were impressed with how well the aims were met. The report can be viewed on the council's website at <http://tinyurl.com/mcorcrep>.

In March there was a double program at the Civic Fed's meeting. The first part was led by Joe Beach from the Office of Management & Budget, and Glenn Orlin, Assistant Director of the County Council Staff. They spoke of \$325 million in bonds to be issued between 2011-15 to fund the CIP (Capital Improvements Program), which is a 6-year schedule of major projects involving building roads, schools, buildings, bridges, etc. About 40% of CIP spending is for school purposes. It was observed that the debt service (interest costs) on all outstanding bonds was at \$32 million and was felt to be too high. Consequently, the planned CIP amount was reduced to bring debt service and debt to a level more in keeping with expected revenue and with lower ratios of debt to revenue in line with past practice. Mary Bradford, Director of Parks, presented the next section of the program. Ms. Bradford oversees 410 parks and 300 ball fields within a 36,000 acre park system that comprises about 10% of the county's land area. Due to the current financial situation, the parks system is not planning any major CIP projects but will concentrate on improving and refining current facilities. The March meeting was attended and reported upon by Frank Corrigan, super-citizen, and transcribed by Carole Corrigan, Frank's super-wife. (Cont. next page)

Gleanings (Continued from previous page)

At this writing, the April meeting of the Civic Fed has not occurred but will cover the next fiscal year's \$4.3 billion operating budget. Presenters will be Alex Espinosa of OMB and Steve Farber, Director of the County Council's Staff. There are a number of thorny problems and interrelated factors and interests that affect the makeup of this budget, so the upcoming discussion will be very interesting and important. Look for our report in the next Bugle.

The meeting of the Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board on March 15th dealt primarily with new additions to the county code to be administered by the Departments of Permitting Services and Housing & Community Affairs. Most of the additional regulations go into effect April 24, 2011. They deal with home-based businesses; parking for heavy commercial & recreational vehicles; off-street parking; and paving of front yards. The thrust of these new laws is to maintain the residential character of our neighborhoods. There are many details in the new code so for a full picture go to: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/goodneighbors. Another topic covered was a proposed new setup for the regional service centers and other activities to be combined into an Office of Community Engagement. Possible approval will come by council action.
(Continued page 8)



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Be prepared... What About Homeowners Insurance?

Flood Coverage - Most policies cover water damage that occurs from above the ground, such as roof leakage, storm water pushed through window voids, and burst plumbing. Water that rises or seeps into a basement from the ground is considered a flood and is not insured. If you are concerned about ground water seepage & damage, you need a separate flood insurance policy.

Who Has a C.L.U.E.? In recent years, insurance companies have shared claim information with each other. The C.L.U.E. report is a standardized itemization of claims and, often, inquiries that a homeowner has made. If there have been too many calls or claims, the buyer of that home may be denied a new insurance policy or may be quoted an outrageously high price. This has become a serious problem for some sellers, who called their insurance companies every time there was a covered problem and find themselves unable to find a buyer who can start a new insurance policy (required by all lenders). A savvy homeowner, in order to keep his policy intact and to have an acceptable C.L.U.E. report, will only make an inquiry or claim for major losses.

Deductibles - Since only large losses might be claimed, it may be economical to raise the deductible on your current policy to lower the annual premium.

Insurance When Selling - You should call your insurance company to let them know that you are putting your home on the market to be sure you are properly covered. After the sale, keep your policy in effect for a week or so until the buyer's deed has been recorded with the County.

Consult Your Insurance Agent - For insurance information, your agent has definitive answers. Long & Foster Insurance Agency can provide information and competitive quotes. Contact them at www.longandfoster.insurance.com



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THE TRADING POST

Free (non-commercial) ads are available to all Strathmore Bel-Pre residents in the **Trading Post**. Ads are published at no cost. Send your advertisement to crbea232@yahoo.com

1 pair Rollerblades (Spiritblade) in line skates. \$20.00.

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The 50 Plus Club Update

-by Charlotte Potosky

The 50 Plus Club Started its Spring and Summer schedule with its attendance at the Hexagon Players' "A 21-Pun Salute" on Thursday, April 7th. This was a wonderful show, one of the best in the Players' history. Following that we are scheduled to see "Happy Days", the musical based on the old sitcom, at Toby's Dinner Theatre on Saturday evening, May 7, 2011, with some members going on Wednesday evening, May 11. We expect to have a fun time recalling the Fonz and his crew with their shenanigans. On Wednesday, July 20 we will be returning to Toby's for their production of "Anything Goes", the Cole Porter musical of the swing era.

The Club will be starting its summer schedule of meetings at the pavilion at the swimming pool on Wednesday, June 1. These meetings are an evening of fun. After that, meetings will be held monthly throughout the summer, starting on Wednesday, July 13. Future dates will be announced in the next Bugle.

For more information please contact Charlotte Potosky at 301-460-9008.



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The March meeting of the Montgomery County Taxpayer's League hosted County Executive Isiah Leggett. Several interesting facts emerged: The county spent \$70 million last year on snowstorm expenses; the county reserve fund, now at 6.3%, has a target of 10%; a 4.2 cent increase in the property tax rate will be requested to make up for lower property assessments; and county employees are being asked to pay a larger percentage of their salary for their benefits to put them in line with levels maintained by other major employers.

On April 6th, this writer testified at the hearings on the pending county budget. My testimony, in part, pointed out that warnings voiced prior to the current recession about the unsustainability of council financial decisions were ignored. Consequently, the fiscal bind the county now faces is worse than it would have been had they heeded the warnings. Also, it was suggested the county engage an outside financial advisory firm to notify the council if they foresee budget problems ahead for the county. Another suggestion was for legislation placing the school board under the oversight of the County Council as to the board's expenditures, since 57% of the county's budget, or about \$2.2 billion, goes to operate the schools. An interesting statistic: MCPS' budgeted cost per student for FY 2012 is \$14,136.

(Continued page 9)

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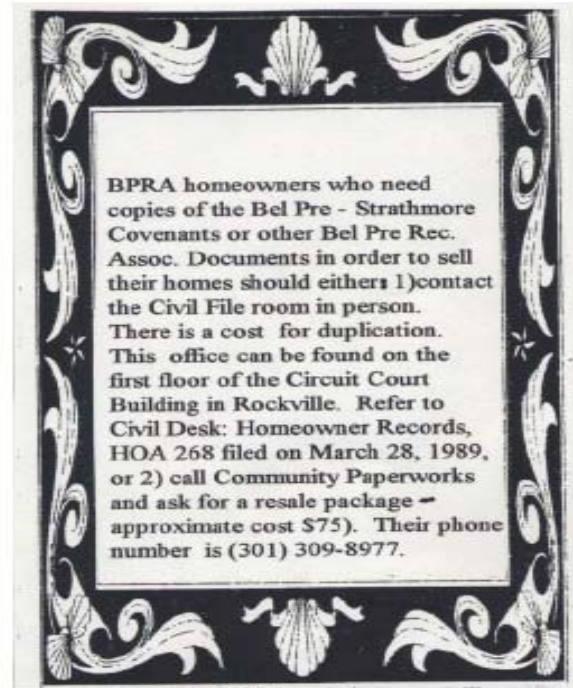
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Gleanings continued from page 8)

In the follow-up department: Construction has begun on an additional Metro garage in Glenmont. The Mid-County Recreation Center is slated to open July 1, 2011 under the direction of Ingrid St.Villier of the Department of Recreation.

Finally, pay attention to the actions and decisions of your elected officials. When elections come around you'll be better prepared as to how to vote. Remember, the most important office in our democracy is that of private citizen.

Stay tuned for more notes from the Bugle!

Andrea J. Lev

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