

The Bugle



Published by the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association

March 2015

Volume 47 #1

Association Election Results



The November 20, 2014, annual general membership meetings of the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association and the Bel Pre Recreational Association included the election of the boards of both organizations. Board members serve on each board for staggered 3-year terms. Each year, 5 members are elected to the 15-member Civic Association Board and 3 members are elected to the 9-member Recreational Association Board.

Civic Association

NANCY BECHTOL, MAX BRONSTEIN, and MAURY POTOSKY were re-elected by acclamation to the Civic Association Board.



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Recreational Association

The Recreational Association election featured 6 candidates for 4 seats (the 3 seats that normally are elected each year plus the remainder of the term of ADAM SHEPARD, who moved to Seattle this past year). After reading written statements in the October *Bugle*, and hearing presentations at the annual meeting, the general membership voted and chose BILLY RUPPERT (67 votes), GREG MILLER (66), and LARRY VAUGHT (65) for 3-year terms and LOU ANN RECTOR (61) for a 2-year term. Other candidates were RON WICK (56) and KELSEY KLASS (48). Board Members BOB BOWSER and ANTHONY WOMACK did not run for re-election.

At its December meeting, the Recreational Association Board elected the following officers for 2014-15: President ELLIOT CHABOT, Vice President KIM WATTERS, Treasurer LARRY VAUGHT, and Secretary DAN KEATING.

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THE BUGLE

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Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association (SBPCA)

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Web site: www.strathmore-belpre.org

Annual SBPCA membership: \$18.00

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*, 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 Mid-County Community Recreation Center on Queensguard 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	Secretary:	Linda Bea	301 460-0497
Vice President:	Bill Hammond	301 871-5074	Treasurer:	John Bogasky	301 460-1604
			Webmaster:	Chris Jennison	301 538-5705

Civic Association Directors

Max Bronstein	301 460-3117	Lilla Hammond	301 871-5074	Chris Swan	301 871-1113
Elliot Chabot	301 871-1113	Harry Klapper	301 460-9645	Rita Vaught	206 406-2871
Frank Corrigan	301 460-1011	Maurice Potosky	301 460-9008		

Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA)

The Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) is the homeowner's association for most of the Strathmore at Bel Pre properties. The BPRA runs our community's pool, tennis courts, volleyball, playground, picnic area, bath house, snack bar and pavilion, which are open Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. BPRA Board & committee meetings are announced at <http://strathmore-belpre.org/bpra>. The Board normally meets at 7:30 pm on the last Wednesday of each month. The annual General Membership meeting is held one week before Thanksgiving Day at 7:30 pm.

Bel Pre Recreational Association Board of Trustees

Elliot Chabot (President)	(301) 871-1113	echabot@usa.net
Kim Watters (Vice President)	(301) 460-0054	kimwatters@live.com
Larry Vaught (Treasurer)	(240) 558-3814	l.vaught@comcast.net
Dan Keating (Secretary)	(301) 603-8162	dtkeats@gmail.com
Paulette Ladas	(301) 674-7742	pauletteladas@remax.net
Greg Miller	(301) 871-9412	winstonhen@aol.com
Kye Pak	(301) 460-4388	kye_pak@msn.com
Lou Ann Rector	(301) 603-8805	louannphs@hotmail.com
Billy Ruppert	(301) 871-0076	billyruppert@gmail.com

Bel Pre Recreational Association Officials

Brenda Henry (Administrative Assistant)	(301) 871-6298
Louisa Hoar (Pavilion reservations, tennis court keys & pool passes)	(301) 871-2954
Chris Jennison (Webmaster)	(301) 538-5705

The President's Corner

by Nancy Bechtol

President, Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association

I am thankful every single day this winter that our neighborhood is not in Boston or in any of the cities in the Northeast! They are suffering with way too much snow this winter, and it brings back memories of our 2010 winter when we had three blizzards in one season! With only a month to go of winter, I think we have been most fortunate so far this winter season.



Your Civic Association Board has been busy preparing for all of our events this year, as well as covering numerous county meetings within our region, to make sure we stay abreast of events going on in the county which affect all of us. We have two very active board members, MAX BRONSTEIN and FRANK CORRIGAN, who attend numerous county meetings each month. They provide us with summaries of these meetings in our *Bugle* and on our listserv. We can't thank you both enough for spending your time to make sure our community is represented.

Community Events

The Civic Association and the BPRA hosted two community events earlier this winter: our combined community meeting on November 20, 2014, and the first ever Town Hall on December 3, 2014. Both events were well attended. What a great opportunity to find out what is happening in our neighborhood! We have 709 homes in our neighborhood. We had a quorum at the annual meeting, and about 40 people attended the Town Hall. The folks who came to the Town Hall that cold night had a great opportunity to meet some new neighbors, and have a good discussion about events in the neighborhood in a more intimate setting. Hosting this Town Hall was ELLIOT CHABOT's idea, President of the BPRA, and it was enjoyed by all who could make it.

Members Needed

Currently 261 homes are members of the Civic Association, and we are working to increase this amount as it represents a little over one third of our community. We encourage each of you to consider joining, if you have not done so. Membership only costs \$18.00 per year, and you can join our listserv, to know in real time, about events that are happening in our neighborhood. The Civic Association is the best bargain in town! Our membership is closely managed by LINDA BEA and JOHN BOGASKY. Without them being so diligent in tracking and maintaining our membership, we would be lost!



Civic Board Has Openings

Please consider joining our Board as a way to become more active in your community. We have openings. We need help to run our Entertainment Series in the summer. Our active volunteers for the Entertainment Series ARE CHRIS SWAN, ELLIOT CHABOT, and JOHN BOGASKY, but they could use more help. CHRIS JENNISON works with the Civic Association and the BPRA to maintain our joint website, but we need someone on the Civic Association to work with Chris on content for the website.

If you are interested, please let anyone on the Board know, or just attend our 4th Tuesday of the month meetings at 7:30pm at the Mid-County Recreation Center off Queensguard Rd. We have such a wonderful Board, and organize so many wonderful events, please consider joining us!

Gleanings From Meetings + More

by Frank Corrigan

November 2014

Montgomery County Taxpayers League Meeting

Questions were submitted in advance to PHIL ANDREWS, retiring member of the Montgomery County Council, and SIDNEY KATZ, newly elected member of the Council and former mayor of Gaithersburg.



County Funding in the Coming Years

PHIL ANDREWS sees changes coming to the state through the leadership of Governor HOGAN. Shortages in the State's budget will bring spending reductions. ANDREWS anticipates less money coming to Montgomery County, from both the State and the Federal governments. The *Wynn* case, which considers whether taxation of income in other states is to be offset, could result in an \$86 million reduction of income to the State's budget. County Executive LEGGETT also projects an increase in the County's budget of over \$80 million. ANDREWS foresees difficulties ahead, including matters such as \$16 to \$18 million more for the Transit Center in Silver Spring.

SIDNEY KATZ suggested that there may be an opportunity to "work" with Governor HOGAN. He noted that Mr. HOGAN did not win in Montgomery County, Prince George's County or Baltimore City. He envisions the new Governor spending funds carefully and not increasing the budget.

County School Issues

KATZ said that Montgomery County cannot afford to go above the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) in the school system budget. ANDREWS referred to MOE as a flawed law that is not likely to be changed. The County provided one-half a billion above the MOE requirement before the downturn. The County must stick to limiting MOE and work for changes. Montgomery County Public Schools will get \$30 million more just because of additional students.

ANDREWS recommended that the evaluation of teachers should draw on principals and exceptional teachers to ensure good teaching. KATZ speculated about what would happen if you took top schools and their students into the lowest achieving school? He mentioned that his wife is a pupil personnel worker in the Montgomery County Public Schools system.



ANDREWS noted that the County Office of Legislative Oversight reports have had little if any impact, despite substantially increased investments during the last 12 years. He asked "What can the County Council do to impact the school system?" Under current state law, the Council can only affect the school system in broad categories. A County study body is needed.

ANDREWS and County Council President GEORGE LEVENTHAL are questioning whether to expand the Kennedy cluster and are proposing an evaluation before placing it in another cluster. It was pointed out that the system lacked criteria to test innovations. It is a \$2.5 billion school system. Why extend experiments to other clusters without having evaluations or assessments? ANDREWS suggested raising these questions with the School Board.

Bel Pre Recreational News

by Elliot Chabot

President, Bel Pre Recreational Association

Town Hall Meeting

Thanks very much to everyone who attended the December Strathmore Bel Pre Town Hall Meeting. The meeting was jointly sponsored by the Bel Pre Recreational Association and the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association.

The format was question and answer. Everyone sat on chairs in a circle. We went around the circle and anyone with a question was welcome to ask it. The board members of the 2 organizations were there to try to answer each question. Once everyone had asked their first question, we continued going around the circle as many times as there were questions - so everyone had the opportunity to ask all of their questions. Questions ran the gamut from what is planned to replace the Giant at Plaza Del Mercado (Aldi and L.A. Fitness) to what is the authority for the Recreational Association helping to fund music and movie nights at the pool (March 27, 2014 BPRA Board decision, authorized by Article V, § 2 of the Covenants of March 13, 1968). About 40 community members participated.

I think the get-together was a success and I hope we will make this at least an annual event -- perhaps even twice yearly.

Please Participate

Want to help improve our community? The Recreational Association is looking for volunteers. If you have an interest in any of the following areas, please get in touch with me at echabot@usa.net or (301) 871-1113:

- ☐ Long Range Planning
- ☐ Grounds Maintenance (including weeding & planting)
- ☐ Tennis courts
- ☐ Entertainment & Recreation (including movie & music nights at the pool)
- ☐ Neighborhood dispute resolution
- ☐ Governing Documents Committee
- ☐ Finance Committee

Elections and Appointments

Thank you to BOB BOWSER for completing his term last November as a member of the Board of Trustees and as Treasurer of the Association. And thank you to ANTHONY WOMACK who also completed his term as a Trustee. Congratulations to BILLY RUPPERT, GREG MILLER, and LOU ANN RECTOR on their recent election to the Board of Trustees -- and to LARRY VAUGHT for his recent election as a Trustee and as Treasurer.

– Continued on page 6 –



Congratulations also to KIM WATTERS and DAN KEATING who were re-elected as the Association's Vice President and Treasurer, respectively. Also thank you to the following volunteers for accepting these appointments:

- ❑ BENDA HENRY – Administrative Assistant
- ❑ LOUISA HOAR – Pavilion Coordinator, Tennis Court Key Distributor, & Distributor of Pool Passes
- ❑ CHRIS JENNISON – Webmaster
- ❑ DAN KEATING – Liaison to pool operator Georgetown Aquatics
- ❑ PAULETTE LADAS – Liaison to contractors for lawn, landscape, tree, and fence maintenance
- ❑ GREG MILLER – Liaison to the parking lot resurfacing & restriping contractor and to the Swim Team
- ❑ KYE PAK – Neighborhood Dispute Resolution Committee Chairman and liaison to the pool's security system contractor
- ❑ HARVEY RATTNER – Tennis Courts liaison
- ❑ BILLY RUPPERT – Liaison to pool furniture vendors
- ❑ CHRIS SWAN – Chairman of the Entertainment and Recreation Committee
- ❑ LARRY VAUGHT – Finance Committee Chairman and liaison to the Association's auditor, bank, and bookkeeper
- ❑ KIM WATTERS – Liaison to contractors for pump room repairs and parking lot light repairs & maintenance



Thank you also to the election judges at last November's BPRA annual meeting: LILLA HAMMOND, CHARLOTTE POTOSKY, and MAURY POTOSKY who served as check-in judges, and RICHARD HENRY, PAULETTE LADAS, and KYE PAK who served as ballot box judges.

UPCOMING Meetings

Board of Trustees business meetings for March to December 2015 are currently scheduled for:

- Wednesday, March 11, 7:30 pm, Wheaton District Police Station [tentative]
- Wednesday, March 25, 7:30 pm, Bel Pre Elementary School (conf. room 138)
- Saturday, April 18, 10 am, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Wednesday, April 29, 7:30 pm, Wheaton District Police Station
- Saturday, May 2, 10 am, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Wednesday, May 27, 7:30 pm, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Wednesday, June 10, 7:30 pm, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool [tentative]
- Wednesday, June 24, 7:30 pm, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Wednesday, July 29, 7:30 pm, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Wednesday, August 12, 7:30 pm, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool [tentative]
- Wednesday, August 26, 7:30 pm, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Saturday, September 12, 10 am, Strathmore Bel Pre Pool
- Wednesday, September 30, 7:30 pm, location TBD
- Wednesday, October 28, 7:30 pm, location TBD
- Wednesday, December 2, 7:30 pm Bel Pre Elementary School (conf. room 138)



The **2015** General Membership Meeting will be held on **Thursday, November 19, at 7:30 pm** at Bel Pre Elementary School, in the multi-purpose room. A town hall meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, December 2, at 8 pm, at Bel Pre Elementary School. For current information on Board of Trustees meetings and meetings of the Association's committees, see the BPRA website at <http://strathmore-belpre.org/bpra/>.

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July 4th 2014 – a Great Celebration!

by Lilla & Bill Hammond and Harry Klapper, with photos by Bill Hammond
2014 Strathmore Bel Pre Celebration Co-Chairs

On a perfectly beautiful, sunny day, our community came together once again to celebrate Independence Day. The festivities began with our very popular parade from Strathmore Elementary School to our Bel Pre Pool. We want to thank all those who participated, especially the parents, their families and friends who brought their children to join in on the fun and community spirit.

Parade set up and coordination:

ELIZABETH KOMINSKY, FRANK CORRIGAN, MARILYN and REUBEN LEV and RUTH WOLPERT. Captain POTTER and his team of professional fire fighters and emergency personnel from Kensington Volunteer Fire Department Station 25 gave their support by sending their impressive hook and ladder truck, an emergency vehicle, and another fire vehicle to lead the parade. Cub Scout Master BILL TOTTON together with Scout Master ERIC WASHINGTON, the Troop 763 scouts and the flag bearers were next, followed by over 100 paraders.



Entertainment and Field Games:

HARRY KLAPPER coordinated the pavilion entertainment with professional magician MICHAEL CHAMBERLIN who produced smiles and laughter with the additional treat of balloon sculptures. DOUG ADAMS and other helpful volunteers took part in leading the field games which finished with the popular coin toss in the pool. Our thanks also go to the Pool guards who provided safety and coordination for our pool activities.



The 2015 July 4th Planning Committee needs YOU!

We need your help to make this year's the best yet. The more volunteers, the better and greater will be our celebration. What are your interests? Activities include the Parade, the Entertainment, the Field Day Activities. Any and all help is welcomed!!

Call or email to offer to help, and/or to get more information! Bill Hammond W.M.Hammond@verizon.net



Taxpayers League meeting November

Purple Line

KATZ does not want to drop the Purple Line. PHIL ANDREWS noted that Governor HOGAN has said that he prefers highways over bus rapid transit. KATZ said we need to move ahead on transportation. ANDREWS referred to the tightened requirements for utilizing designated Transportation Funds. A Taxpayers League member said he knows both LARRY HOGAN and his father and that his father advocated smaller government and control of spending. He believes the younger HOGAN will espouse similar goals and will reach out to various audiences. BLAIR LEE is on the transportation transition team and that could help Montgomery County. ANDREWS speculated that he may deal with the State's gerrymandering.



Residents of Municipalities vs. Non-Residents in the County

Discussion ensued related to the possibility of reconciling whether County taxpayers who do not live in municipalities are subsidizing those who live in municipalities – 17% income tax rebate. As an example, KATZ said the object is to subsidize parks owned by Gaithersburg. Additionally, municipalities are responsible for their own planning, zoning, code enforcement and get no police support from the County. A question was raised about whether or not Montgomery County, might be subsidizing some smaller municipalities. SIDNEY KATZ suggested looking at each municipality. Apparently, the Town of Chevy Chase has a \$4.5 million operating budget; an \$8 million fund balance on a \$2 million annual budget. KATZ indicated he does not know about this.

Alcoholic Purchases in the County

Should Montgomery County should get out of the liquor business? Essentially, the Liquor Control business is directed by the State of Maryland. The County can only offer suggestions. ANDREWS thinks the County does a fairly good job as it is, and they have less incentive to sell to minors. Additionally, the County Liquor Control yields Montgomery County \$25 million in revenue and helps avoid an excess number of liquor stores in the County. The manager, GEORGE GRIFFIN, is a good manager. KATZ doesn't think Montgomery County wants a liquor store on every corner, and suggested checking with Prince George's about what revenues they make on liquor stores and licenses. He also recommended looking across various models and options. But the bottom line is that the Montgomery County system works, and any changes would have to be made by the State of Maryland.

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Advertise in the Bugle!

Place your advertisement in the Bugle for a low cost! Annual rates include four issues of the Bugle.

Rates are:

Business Card size	\$140
Quarter Page	\$200
Half Page	\$250
Full Page	\$295



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Happy 5th Birthday, Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association listserv!

by John Bogasky, SBP Civic Association listserv moderator



The Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association started the member listserv on March 7, 2010!

Over these first five years, the listserv has grown to 261 members. The listserv has also helped boost Civic Association membership to over 300 households for the first time in many years.

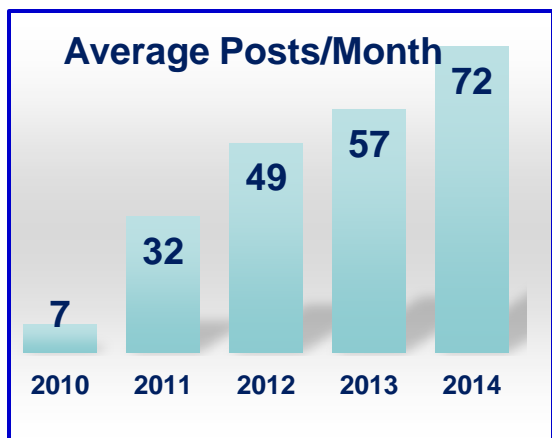
When the Civic Association decided to start a community listserv, our goals were to create a new interactive channel and foster dialogue between our members. We saw the listserv as a means to get news to the community more quickly than is possible with *The Bugle*.

The listserv has met those goals and found many other uses, including these:

- Comparing notes with owners of the same home model on how to fix shared issues.
- Our own mini-Craigs' List, enabling neighbors to advertise and promote their household goods, crafts to the community.
- Sharing information about community developments, such as the redevelopment of the Vitro site in Aspen Hill.
- Finding local service providers (painters, electricians, cleaners, etc.) with a good reputation in our neighborhood.
- Sharing information about neighborhood crime and how to better protect ourselves. A special shout-out to thank Detective Pak for his many contributions in this area.
- And many other uses, sure to come.



Join the ListServ!



Metcalfe's Law says that the power of a network grows with the square of the number of users. Put another way, the value of a network like the SBP Civic listserv grows exponentially with every additional user. *The Bugle* is distributed to more than 750 households, so there is lots of room to grow the listserv and increase its value to all of us.

Please encourage your neighbors to become Civic Association members, join the listserv, and help us all become a stronger, better-connected community.

Thanks to everyone for your support over these first five years!

Gleanings from Meetings

(continued from page 8)

December 2014

Montgomery County Taxpayers League Meeting

Montgomery County Public Schools

Questions were submitted in advance to MIKE DURSO, Montgomery County School Board member (District 5) and JILL ORTMAN-FOUSE, Montgomery County School Board Member (At Large). Mr. DURSO has served on the School Board since 2009. Ms. ORTMAN-FOUSE was elected to the School Board in November 2014.

ORTMAN-FOUSE expressed enthusiasm about the video telecasting of County School Board meetings, since a new State law now recognizes video as an official record. However, DURSO wants a written record. All School Board meetings are now televised.

ORTMAN-FOUSE noted that MCPS's budget will be online in January 2015. The Board will conduct a comprehensive review of expenditures.

It was suggested that the Superintendent of Schools meet more often with the public. ORTMAN-FOUSE said she would bring that to the Superintendent's attention. Partnering with the unions, the PTA, NAACP, etc., was another suggestion, to broaden the outreach activities.

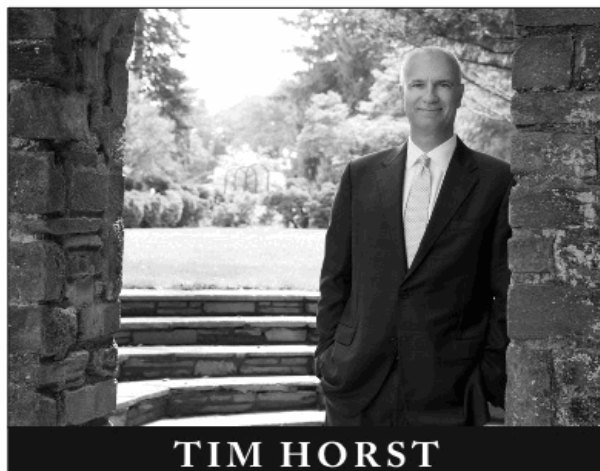
ORTMAN-FOUSE suggested alerts of when and where the Board of Education will be holding meetings/work sessions. Also suggested was including the public in union talks, "at a point when they can suggest items during development, rather than just before decision." It was felt that the taxpayers should have some role/say because they pay the bill.

ORTMAN-FOUSE said that the Board had talked about more efforts to reach more citizens. Special efforts could be made to alert citizens about opportunities to meet with Board of Education members. DURSO said "they are out there more than people realize." It was observed that both the Montgomery County Civic Federation and the Taxpayers League had been unsuccessful in getting the Superintendent to meet with them.

- continued on page 14 -

**I have served the
Strathmore at Bel Pre
neighborhood for
30 years.**

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2015 Summer Entertainment Series!

By John Bogasky



2015

Summer Entertainment Series

- 5/30 – Saturday night with a Movie
- 6/20 – Saturday night with a Concert
- 7/25 – Saturday night at the Movies
- 8/29 – Saturday night with a Concert
- 9/5 – Saturday night with a Concert
- ?? – Karaoke night to be determined

Save the dates!!



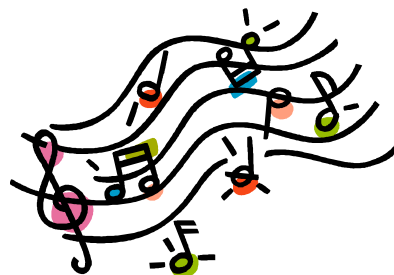
Financial Support

The 2015 Summer Entertainment Series is made possible in part with the support of our lead sponsors, LILLA HAMMOND of Long & Foster, PAULETTE LADAS of RE/MAX, TIM HORST of Long & Foster, and the Bel Pre Recreational Association.

For the Entertainment Series to continue, however, your financial support also is needed. See the next page for the details.

Plan Now!

6 Events for 2105! The Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association (SBPCA) has planned six events – 3 movies, 2 concerts, and Karaoke! - for the 2015 Summer Entertainment Series. All events will be at the Pool Pavilion and grounds, and most will be on a Saturday evening. All Strathmore Bel Pre residents, families, and friends are invited. Be sure to mark your calendars today



Suggestions Needed

It's too soon to know the specific movies and performers. IF you have any recommendations for a movie or types of music, please contact any member of the Civic Association board. Check the Bugle's inside front cover for contact information.

Find Out More Information

Watch *The Bugle*, the Civic Association listserv, the website, and the Pool Bulletin Board for details as the dates get closer.



The Summer Entertainment Series Needs Your Support

by John Bogasky

Donations Needed, please!

We Need Your Support! The 2014 Summer Entertainment Series was made possible by the generosity of our sponsors, recognized below. We will need their support and yours again this year. Our goal, with your support, is to grow the Summer Entertainment Series into a new SBP tradition

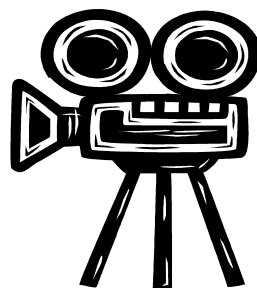
All sponsors are recognized in the Bugle and on a banner displayed at Summer Entertainment Series events. You can be an OSCAR WINNER? A BAND LEADER? How about a SUPER FAN?

The perfect gift for your 2015 Summer!

2015	
Recognition	Donation
SBP Superstar	\$ 500
Community Champion	\$ 250
Oscar Winner	\$ 100
Band Leader	\$ 50
Super Fan	\$ 5 to 25

If you can make a donation, please contact Civic Association Treasurer JOHN BOGASKY at johnbogasky@hotmail.com, or contact any other SBPCA Board Member. Any issue of *The Bugle* has the contact information on page 2.

With your support, we can create a new community tradition that takes advantage of our beautiful pool facilities, is fun for everyone, and brings our community together!



The SBPCA Thanks our 2014 Summer Entertainment Sponsors!!

Lilla
Hammond



Paulette
Ladas



Tim
Horst



SBP Superstars

Community Champion

The Bel Pre Recreational Association

Ted & Nancy
Bechtol

John & Shelly
Bogasky

Maurice &
Charlotte
Potosky

Chris Swan &
Elliot Chabot

Robert &
Yvonne Bowser

Band Leaders

Adam
Shepard

Larry &
Rita
Vaught

Susan &
Max
Bronstein

Bill &
Elizabeth
Thornby

Super Fans

And our host – The Bel Pre Recreational Association

Some additional BPRA activities since the last issue of *The Bugle* are:

Pool Operations and Maintenance

Georgetown Aquatics has been awarded the contract to operate the pool for the 2015-2017 seasons.

- Thanks to DAN KEATING who coordinated the Request for Proposals process for this contract.

Options for repairing the pool pump room are being examined.

- Thanks to KIM WATTERS for coordinating this work.

Parking Lot

GSW Electric has installed timers on the parking lot lighting.

- Thanks to KIM WATTERS for coordinating this work

Fencing

Evans Tree Service has been contracted to remove brush growing over the fence between the pavilion and the parking lot.

Potomac Fence will be replacing the barbed wire with straight wire on the top of the portion of the pool fence that backs up to homes. The Association's Board of Trustees had agreed last summer - at the request of neighboring homeowners - to use straight wire instead of barbed wire.

- Thanks to PAULETTE LADAS for coordinating both fence-related efforts.

**Website**

The graphics on the website have been upgraded; 21 covenants have been added, as have 20 meeting minutes, 15 litigation-related documents, 11 budget and audit documents, 5 pool operations documents, and 1 *Bugle* issue. Also, the meeting schedule and the list of trustees have been updated.

- Thanks to CHRIS JENNISON for all his work to improve our website.

Neighborhood Dispute Resolution

A dispute between neighborhood residents concerning a pit bull has been successfully resolved.

- Thanks to KYE PAK for facilitating this resolution.

Current Litigation

As we go to press, the Bel Pre Recreational Association is the defendant in one law suit. A second suit that the Association was the defendant in has been settled. The full text of relevant documents can be found at <http://strathmore-belpre.org/bpra-legal-proceedings/>.

Henry v. Guirand (Petition Docket 614, Maryland Court of Appeals). A suit to, among other things, compel the BRPA to take actions against the "growing fence" at 14017 Breeze Hill Lane. In November, the Maryland Court of Special Appeals ruled to dismiss the BPRA portion of the suit. In December, the plaintiffs asked the Maryland Court of Appeals to review the case.

Guirand v. Bel Pre Recreational Association, Inc. (former case 383580V, Montgomery County Circuit Court). Originally, a suit to enjoin the BPRA from taking actions against the fence at 3200 Bustleton Lane. The BPRA had then counter-claimed asking the Court to either compel the plaintiffs to remove the entire fence, or alternatively, to prohibit any fencing on the side yards. A settlement was reached in October. Under the settlement agreement, the homeowners agreed to move back their fence on the Birchtree Lane and Bustleton Lane sides of the property and to put in landscaping to screen the fence. The agreement provides for arbitration and enforcement, if needed.

Montgomery County Taxpayers League Meeting

Montgomery County Public School Construction

Regarding reductions in the costs of school construction, DURSO asked whether the participants would want their children in prefabs. He did not feel qualified to comment on construction issues. Information regarding school construction activities is being added to the MCPS website

Construction costs at Richard Montgomery, a recent school build, were between \$149 and \$163 per square foot. ORTMAN-FOUSE had information on other states school construction costs.

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts gave an "adjusted cost per square foot" for elementary schools of \$149; for secondary schools of \$163; and an overall figure of \$154. North Carolina had an overall average construction cost for new schools and additions of \$142.81 per square foot

Some Virginia school construction cost figures in 2012-2013 were:

Cardinal Ridge Elementary: \$106 per square foot	Thomas Jefferson Elementary: \$86 per square foot
South Salem Elementary: \$90 per square foot	Southern Elementary Suffolk: \$85 per square foot

The national median for school building costs , per square foot:

Elementary School \$204.79	Middle School \$193.33	High School \$214.39
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Members of the Taxpayers League encouraged the two Board members to consider new approaches to long range facility planning. The cost savings achieved with the construction at Paint Branch in 2012 left enough funds to build another school.

- continued on page 17 -

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THE BULLETIN BOARD – Updates from your neighborhood schools

Contributors: Laura Miller, Claire Pak, Brenda Quinlisk, and Megan Virga

The Parent-Teacher Associations of our three neighborhood elementary schools, Georgian Forest (GFES) and Bel Pre/Strathmore (BPSPTA), want to strengthen our ties with our Strathmore Bel Pre neighbors. Here is your one-stop summary of what's happening in YOUR neighborhood elementary schools.

Whether or not you have a past, present, or future pupil, SBP property owners share an interest in the success of the schools that serve our community.

NEWS FROM GEORGIAN FOREST

The Georgian Forest PTA is very excited for our Scholastic Book Fair during the week of March 2nd, which is also "Read Across America Week"! We're also thrilled to be sponsoring our first ever Family Story Night on Tuesday, March 3rd. Our book fair will be open for business that night from 6-8 pm, and we invite everyone to stop by and purchase some family reading materials for the last of these cold winter days. We're also looking forward to a few more spirit nights, and are eager to recruit support from GFES parents and neighbors for Staff Appreciation Week in May.



NEWS FROM BEL PRE & STRATHMORE

The PTA has been busy! We hosted a very successful Family Dance Night, and (thanks to JEN DURAN) a fun Family Zumbathon! We also want to thank Boston Market for allowing us to host a successful Spirit Night last December. Strathmore's music students presented their winter concert last month, and our Claire's Gourmet fundraiser is now underway, so consider purchasing some pizza or

delicious desserts. Elections for next year's board will take place in May, so if you have a student at Strathmore or Bel Pre, and you have been thinking about getting involved, then consider standing for a board position. More information to follow!

- continued on page 16 -



Winter Fun!



REGISTER YOUR GROCERY STORE REWARDS CARDS TO SUPPORT OUR PTAs:

Giant A+ Rewards Program (www.giantfood.com/aplus)

Bel Pre #00891

Strathmore ID# 04541

Georgian Forest ID# 00893

Safeway School Rewards Program (www.escrip.com)

Bel Pre/Strathmore ID# 6676411

Harris Teeter Together in Education Program (www.harristeeter.com)

BOX TOPS are Welcome

PLEASE HELP COLLECT BOX TOPS from General Mills products! Our schools receive 10 cents for each box top. Drop them off in the BoxTop box located in each school front office.

Both of our PTAs hope that our Strathmore Bel Pre neighbors will join us for school and community events, especially School Spirit Nights! Our combined efforts to support local organizations and businesses will help foster our community and generate benefits to homeowners.

Join the PTA!

Did you know that you can join the PTA even if you don't have children in school? Consider joining the GFES and/or Bel Pre Strathmore PTAs, and be a voice for our community's children! Application forms are available at the front office.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ongoing **Claire's Gourmet** fundraiser (Strathmore/Bel Pre)

April 29 **Spirit Night** at Lee's Kitchen, 5 pm to 10 pm.
(Strathmore/Bel Pre)
14448 Layhill Road in the Layhill Shopping Center.
Call 301-598-4810 to order take out, stop by and eat there. Mention the PTA and Lee's will donate 10% before tax to our schools.

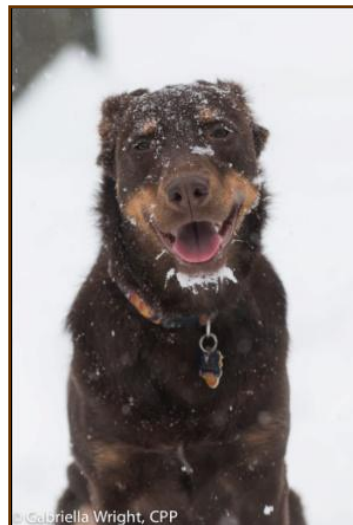
May **Elections** for the 2015/2016 Executive Board

Stay tuned for additional Spirit Nights and other PTA-sponsored community events!

Volunteers needed – SSL Opportunities

GFES SSL Coordinator: MEGAN VIRGA (megancv@gmail.com)

BPSPATA SSL Coordinator: LAURA MILLER (lilansky@aol.com)



See you at school!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Georgian Forest ES PTA

School phone: 301-460-2170

website: <https://sites.google.com/site/gfespta/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/123760599438>

Bel Pre Strathmore PTA

Bel Pre: 301 460 2145

Strathmore: 301 460 2135

website: <http://bps-pta.org/>

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

Utility Costs

MCPS projects a saving of \$500,000 in bus fuel costs this year that contributes to a projected year end fund balance of \$16 million. A deficit of \$600,000 in electricity and \$200,000 in natural gas costs in FY2015, is currently projected, based on the October 2014 finance report to the Board. There was a \$3.6 million deficit with respect to last year's utility costs. They do try to lock in prices when rates are lower. The Superintendent's FY2016 operating budget does not anticipate utility cost savings.

Equity Spending

In budgeting for equity spending, programs and criteria don't make reference to outcomes, but use the term best practices. ORTMAN-FOUSE referenced her interest in increasing achievement of African American students.

School Buildings for Public Use

Regarding the availability of school buildings for community meetings, DURSO noted that numerous factors, such as following the agreed times, simultaneous use of the school at the same time, and wide knowledge of the availability among the 203 schools, influence their availability and use.

Maintenance of Effort

The State's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement potentially has a deleterious effect on the MCPS budget, where revenues were down and previous years' budgets had significantly exceeded the basic 10% MOE requirement. MOE is a requirement warranting further study. 89 to 90% of the MCPS budget goes to salaries and benefits. MCPS spends \$500 million for employee benefits.

Getting your home insurance in order....Information for a smooth home sale:

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.

Insurance companies share claim information with each other using the C.L.U.E. report, a standardized itemization of claims and, often, inquiries that a homeowner has made. Too many calls or claims can prevent the homebuyer from obtaining a new insurance policy or s/he may be quoted an outrageously high price. 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.



And, when you're ready to make your move.... please call Lilla!

Lilla Hammond, CRS, GRI Email: lilla@lnf.com
301-518-7818 (Direct) 301-468-060 (Office)



Cubs Scouts Pack 763

by Jackie Fary-Moeller

Get ready for the Boy Scout Spring Fundraiser

Buy bags of mulch and the scouts will deliver them to your door. Help the scouts and keep your car clean!

The Cub Scouts of Pack 763 (sponsored by the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association) were busy in the community over the holiday season. Scouts and their families visited the Genesis Springbrook Senior center to spread holiday cheer; volunteered at A Wider Circle, a local non-profit organization with a mission to end poverty; and did a cleanup project at the church where we meet. Upcoming events include snow tubing and a pinewood derby.



Cub scouts helping at the "North Pole" at A Wider Circle in Silver Spring.

Many people ask the question about how Scouts system is organized. Well, if the boy is in grades 1-5 then he is a CUB Scout in the PACK. If he starts in 6th grade or older then he is a BOY Scout in the TROOP. However, with hard work, a boy in 4th or 5th grade can earn awards and advance into the Troop. This is called earning the Arrow of Light. It is the Cub Scouts' highest honor, and is the only Cub Scout badge that can be worn on the Boy Scout uniform. We are proud of our 5 Cub Scouts who earned their Arrow of Light!

Join the Scouts!



Interested in joining? Both the Pack and the Troop hold their meetings at the St. Mary Magdelene Church on Aspen Hill Road (that's the church in between Giant and the pet cemetery, facing Michael's). We meet every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7 pm during the school year. For more information, contact Cubmaster BILL TOTTEN at wandst@juno.com.

Brand new boy scouts NATHAN TEA, JOEY MOELLER, CHRISTIAN JENKINS, BEN WEINER and RAVIDU JAYASURIYA, with Assistant Troop Leader JOHN MCKENZIE, Troop Leader ERIC WASHINGTON and Packmaster BILL TOTTEN.

Yard Sale!!

by Chris Swan

Save the date: The annual Civic Association Yard Sale will be held May 30, 2015!

Have extra stuff? Your treasures can find their way to new homes, with cash in your pocket. Or you may just find that special item you have been looking for. You can sell items, shop, and visit with your neighbors. All at the Pool parking lot in May!



50 Plus Club Meetings

by Maury Potosky

The 50 Plus Club will have its next meeting on Saturday, April 18, 2015, at 2 PM, at the home of CARL and MARILYN KESSLER, 14004 Burning Bush Lane.

For our summer meetings at the Pavilion, tentative dates are: Wednesday, June 3, Wednesday, July 8, Wednesday, August 5, and Wednesday, September 2. Details will follow.

The next Toby's dinner theater will be 1776, on Wednesday, May 6, 2015 at 6 PM. If you wish to attend, please let CHARLOTTE know by mid-March, so we can assure ourselves of the group rate.

If any senior residents of Strathmore at Bel Pre wish to participate in our activities, please call us at 301-460-9008. We would love to have you join us!



The Dolphin Dash is Coming!

Save the date: Monday morning, May 25, 2015.

The Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins are holding this 1st ever/1st annual 5-K Run/walk. Details in the next Bugle, on the website, and in *The Bugle*.

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Library News

by Chris Swan & Elliot Chabot



Invest in Aspen Hill and Build a New Library !!!

The Friends of the Aspen Hill Library is collecting postcards to support funding for Strathmore-Bel Pre's community library, the Aspen Hill Library, and to request that a new, expanded, larger, better stocked Library be built here in Aspen Hill. Postcards are available at the Library.

Later in the spring, the Friends will hand-deliver them to County Council members. Our postcards do matter!! Let the County Council know what you like about our Library, and that we should invest in Aspen Hill and build a new library!

Monday Night Movies!

Join for Friends for some spring fun.

At 7:30 each Monday night, come and enjoy one of these award winning films:

- ❖ March 30 The Big Year
- ❖ April 20 The Sandlot
- ❖ May 4 How to Steal a Million

All movies are shown in the Aspen Hill Library Community Room. Admission is free!



Annual Meeting Day – April 25

Library Meeting Day, April 25, 2015, is the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Library, held in the Community Room at the Aspen Hill Library. **Everyone is welcome to attend!**

This is an excellent time to find out the state of the Aspen Hill Library, or to join the Aspen Hill Friends of the Library. Help us support your library. Events start at 10 am and continue through lunch, with a speaker. Last year, *Washington Post* columnist, John Kelly spoke. To find out this year's speaker, and/or for more information, contact the Friends at aspenhill@folmc.org or call (301) 871-1113.

Spring Book Sale – June 6th **New Month! Longer Hours! Save the Date!**



The Spring Book Sale will be Saturday, June 6th, 2015, from 10 am to 4 pm, at the Library. In addition to over 10,000 books, the sale has DVDs, CDs, and puzzles, organized in over 30 categories.

Proceeds from the book sales are used to purchase programming, supplies, and equipment for the Aspen Hill Library. If you would like to donate used books, CDs, or puzzles for the book sale, contact the Friends at aspenhill@folmc.org or call (301) 871-1113. The Aspen Hill Friends is a 501(c)(3) organization, so donations are tax deductible.

Think Pool, Think Dolphins!

by Claire Pak

If you're reading this, then you have probably spent the last six or so weeks de-icing your car and making sure that your water pipes don't freeze, and so summer might be the last thing on your mind. The Dolphins are always thinking summer, though, and we want you to join us! The 2014 season was our second winning season in a row, and we're ready for another exciting summer!



YOUR Community Swim Team

The Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins is YOUR community swim team. The team, which has been in continuous existence for over 40 years, is open to all Strathmore Bel Pre community children ages 4 to 18. Grandchildren can also join the team, and we also offer sponsored memberships for swimmers who reside outside the community. Swimmers practice daily throughout June and July and compete in meets on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings. Practices and meets are structured and competitive, but FUN. Believe it or not, your children can join the team even if they can't swim yet—we have a Developmental group, where beginning swimmers can receive one-on-one and group instruction, until they're ready to move on to the "big team."

Swim team participation offers great educational and fitness benefits, and it also offers neighborhood children and their families the opportunity to create and strengthen strong, rewarding friendships. Many of our teenage swimmers have been swimming together since age four or five, and they will remain friends long after their swimming days are over.

For current Dolphins families, ONLINE REGISTRATION is really coming this year! We have been talking about it for several years, and we're very excited to begin implementation of the Active Network online registration system. More information to come.

Join the Dolphins

We would love to see more of our neighborhood children swimming with the Dolphins—the more, the merrier! If you'd like more information, please don't hesitate to contact Coach TERRY KOMINSKI, or any member of our Board of Directors. Our contact email addresses appear below. Any of us will be happy to hear from you and to answer any questions you might have about swim team participation. If you'd like to talk in person or on the phone, just email any of us, and we'll arrange for a time to talk or meet.



GREG MILLER	President	winstonhen@aol.com
MIKE BEARMAN	Vice-President	mbearman@vecna.com
CLAIRE PAK	Secretary	cdaltonpak@yahoo.com
RITA VAUGHT	Treasurer	r.vaught@comcast.net
RENEE YOCKELSON	A Meet Manager	yocks@verizon.net
MARTA FERMAN	B Meet Manager	ferman2@verizon.net
TERRY KOMINSKI	Head Coach	mermade1967@aol.com

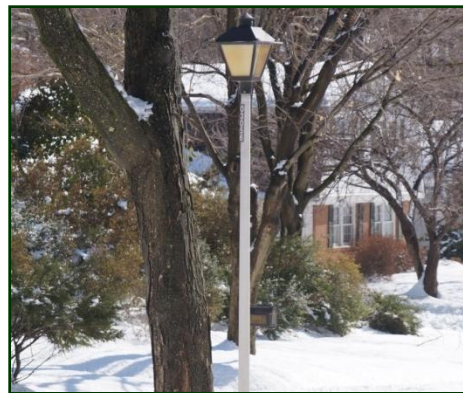
Support the Dolphins

As always, we thank you for your continued support of the Dolphins. We are very grateful for your ongoing generosity and support. We hope to see you at the pool, cheering on our neighborhood team. Please watch your mailbox later this year for our annual mailing, and keep counting the days until Memorial Day!

Poetry: A Brooklyn Snowstorm

by Marilyn L. Kessler

Why is it so with snow, now nowhere to go?
Dwellers impounded, blocked, a non-anticipated
pause, a cloudy silence, empty as in the void of a dark night,
we are waiting, waiting for freedom.



Childhood memories include boots with buckles, grandmother's
knitted scarves with pom-poms warming our necks, hats
with reindeers, slosh, down the street, to the train, to the bus, all
the snow
piled up on the side, soon to be dirty from a city that walks,
trudges and
slides, with a nonchalant observance of the sky's white stuff.

Apartments steaming from hissing radiators, heavy plastered
walls, a protection from the cold, halls with staircases,
a passageway to doors, habitats of somewhat unfamiliar
non-conversant neighbors, unleashing the smells of
their night's dinner, each aroma socializing and meeting
with faceless greetings.

Restaurant windows foggy from the cold outside, with warm
smiling faces, a commotion of people with buzzing voices.
Places that open their arms wide, all the same, enclosing
so many people, each welcome on each corner, a second home
in each neighborhood, in the snow, in the blizzard with single
digits.



Now we are in the suburbs, with time, the snow at our doorstep
ready to be shoveled, roads ready to be plowed. Cars are our feet instead
of boots with buckles. The media authenticates, attests and bears
witness, to the inches, in the counties, in the snow, while we are
waiting.

STRATHMORE-BEL PRE CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

If you haven't already done so, please join the Civic Association!

Membership Dues - Only \$18.00
Such a deal!

If you have any questions, contact Linda Bea, 301-460-0497