

The Bugle

Published by the Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association

May 2013

www.strathmore-belpre.org

vol. 45 #2

STRATHMORE BEL-PRE 32nd Annual Yard Sale

It's Yard Sale time! Such a fun and easy way to turn your clutter into cash, to meet your neighbors, and to support your community!

We advertise our sale in many places, from Craig's List, to the Gazette, and our listserv! This reaches many interested buyers.

WHEN: Saturday, June 1st from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
(Rain Date, Saturday, June 8th)

WHERE: BPRA pool parking lot, on Bethpage Lane
GATES OPEN FOR SET UP AT 8:30 am

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Your membership in the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association gives you \$2.00 off the Yard Sale 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 with 2 chairs are available for rent for an additional \$5.00 on a first-come, first-served basis. Spaces are limited, so please 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

Chris Swan, Editor 301-871-113

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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 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	Webmasters:	Bill Hammond	301 871-5074
Treasurer:	John Bogasky	301 460-1604		Adam Shepard	727 871-0393

Civic Association Directors

Charlie Bea	301 460-0497	Ron Daub	301 460-0929	Chris Swan	301 871-1113
Max Bronstein	301 460-3117	Lilla Hammond	301 871-5074	Dan Thomas	301 871-2624
Elliot Chabot	301 871-1113	Harry Klapper	301 460-9645		
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 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 Georgian Forest 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:	Karen Potocki	609 947-1256	karenpotocki@yahoo.com
Treasurer:	Ed Frantz	301 603-8055	ed_frantz@comcast.net
Secretary:	Paulette Ladas	301 674-7742	pauletteladas@remax.net

Bel Pre Recreation Association Trustees/Directors

Robert Bowser	301 460-3444	r.bowser@verizon.net	Kim Watters	301 460-0054	kimwatters@live.com
Dan Entwisle	301-871-9363	twisles@msn.com			
Lou Ann Rector	301-603-8805	louann.rector@fsis.usda.gov	Anthony Wormack	202 468-3565	awwormack@gmail.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

The Bugle

Have you noticed the changes in *The Bugle* lately? This last edition was outstanding in every way.

We were so fortunate when Chris Swan and Elliot Chabot came forward and volunteered to manage *The Bugle's* production. They collect all of the articles, design the layout and produce newsletter each quarter. They submit the final copy to Linda Bea, who manages the printing and distribution of our newsletter. The distribution is managed by our expert volunteers Louisa Hoar and Dan Mann. They have a group of excellent, steady neighbors who help them distribute our newsletter every quarter. We also put the newsletter on our Website (www.strathmore-belpre.org) and on our neighborhood listserve. Please contact John Bogasky to join the listserve at johnbogasky@hotmail.com.



The excellence of our newsletter depends on the quality of our article submissions. We have outstanding neighbors who contribute these articles to keep us all informed. Over the past few quarters we have enjoyed quality articles from Dan Keating on the BPRA, Maury Potosky on the history of the covenants, Frank Corrigan with an overview of local community meetings, just to name a few highlights. Our last edition was 19 pages! I can't thank enough all who contribute their time and expertise to our newsletter, ***The Bugle!*** It has been around for decades, and I am happy to say, still going very strong!

Want more community events? Your help is invited and needed ...

I have the pleasure to work with your Civic Association Board and I can attest to how wonderful and engaged this group is throughout the year. We are currently planning our June 1st Yard Sale in the pool parking lot and are starting to plan for our 4th of July festivities. We could use more help from the community in planning and working at these events. Please consider assisting in any capacity, as we just need more hands to assist us with these events. We would like to actually host new events, and are considering a movie or music event at the pool for this summer. If you have some time where you could help out, or have some creative new ideas for events, please let me know. I promise not to work you too hard! Even several hours of your time would be most helpful.

Board Meetings – New Location

We are always looking for new members for the Board. You are welcome to attend any of our meetings. We meet the 4th Tuesday of every month (except November and August). Our new meeting location is in the new County Recreation Center off Queensguard Rd. and Layhill Rd. at 7:30pm. Please consider joining us anytime. And we mean it!

Gleanings From Meetings + More

By Frank Corrigan

Montgomery County Civic Federation – March Meeting

On March 11th, the Civic Federation (MCCF) received a presentation regarding the Fiscal Year 2014 State and County budgets by Jennifer Hughes, Director of Montgomery County's Office of Management and Budget, Joe Beach, Finance Director, and Steve Farber, Staff Director for the Montgomery County Council. Topics included commercial and residential property tax assessments, raises for county employees, agency requests that exceeded budget guidelines, state required maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements, bond authority and ratings.

2013Fiscal year – Tax Supported Expenditures by Function

	Appropriation	% of Total	Cumulative %	Personnel*
Public Schools	\$2,028,871,395	50.5%	50.5%	19,750.7
Public Safety	545,868,186	13.6%	64.0%	3,701.8
Debt Service	298,792,040	7.4%	71.5%	none
General Government	241,212,873	6.0%	77.5%	965.7
College	218,786,599	5.4%	82.9%	1,711.1
Health and Human Services and Safety Net Services	202,488,962	5.0%	88.0%	1,117.1
Transportation	154,983,035	3.9%	91.8%	1,022.9
Retiree Health Insurance	134,482,024	3.3%	95.2%	none
Park & Planning	107,043,155	2.7%	97.8%	799.0
Libraries, Culture, Recreation	60,866,457	1.5%	99.3%	686.7
Community Development and Housing	25,571,296	0.6%	100.0%	67.0
Environment	1,510,982	0.0%	100.0%	11.5
Total	\$4,020,477,004			29,833.3 * full time equivalents

Property taxes amounted to \$1,462 billion.
Income tax returns were \$1,263 billion.

It was noted that income taxes were 28.5% of the revenue this year and were 33.8% in FY2008. The property yield for 2013 was 33% and 31.7% in FY 2008, reflecting some of the financial realities of recent years.

— Continued on page 6 —



THE DOLPHINS

by Claire Pak

The Dolphins want YOU!

Memorial Day is right around the corner! The Dolphins are getting ready for another great SBP summer.

The Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins, **your community swim team,**



is open to all Strathmore Bel Pre community children ages 4 to 18. Swimmers practice daily throughout June and July. They compete in meets on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings.

Practices and meets are structured and competitive, but **FUN**. Not only does swim team participation offer great educational and fitness benefits, it also offers neighborhood kids 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 will remain friends long after their swimming days are over. Kids have such a great time growing up here, that they return as adults, so as to be able to raise their children here!

If you're interested in finding out how your children can enjoy a Dolphins summer, please contact Coach Terry Kominski, or any member of the Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins Swim Team Association Board of Directors. Our contact email addresses appear below. We hope to see you at the pool!

Greg Miller	President	winstonhen@aol.com
Mike Bearman	Vice-President	mbearman@vecna.com
Claire Pak	Secretary	cdaltonpak@yahoo.com
Alvaro Duran	Treasurer	justalvaro@gmail.com
Renee Yockelson	A Meet Manager	yocks@verizon.net
Marta Ferman	B Meet Manager	ferman2@verizon.net
Terry Kominski	Head Coach	mermade1967@aol.com

Funds Needed

Please watch your mail this spring for our annual fundraising mailer. Our 2012 fundraiser was a great success, thanks to your generosity. We sincerely hope that you'll consider supporting us again this year. Your contributions allow us to offer our community's children an opportunity to learn and compete in a great sport, to make lifelong friendships, and to have fun! The team's existence also helps to build and strengthen the relationships among families that make our community such a wonderful place to live.

Gleanings (continued from page 4)

Several measures taken in recent years to address budgeting pressures including:

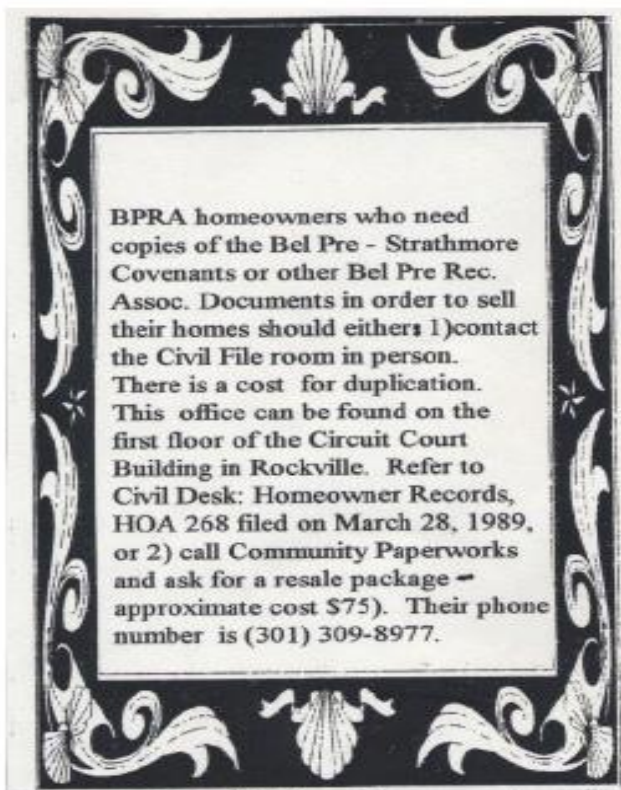
- a hiring freeze effective January 3, 2008
- a procurement freeze beginning in FY 2010
- a wage freeze in FY 2011 and FY 2012 and furloughs in FY 2011
- service reductions in Library and Recreation Center hours
- Reduction in maintenance standards for roads and facilities

Between FY 2013 and FY 2009, Departments hard hit by revenue constraints are:

Park and Planning	- 5.4%
Health & Human Services	- 6.9%
General Services	-12.7%
Transportation	-15.6%
Recreation	-20.0%
Libraries	-22.1%

As for FY 2014 fiscal prospects, presenters were guarded about the economic recovery and its implications for local tax revenues and county services. Another concern is reflected in the continued decline in commercial property tax assessments, due to high vacancy rates. Are commercial property rates too low? Additionally, uncertainties surrounding the Federal budget, the impact of the sequestration and any contractions in Federal employment could further constrain revenues.

— Continued on page 8 —



BPRA homeowners who need copies of the Bel Pre - Strathmore Covenants or other Bel Pre Rec. Assoc. Documents in order to sell their homes should either 1) contact the Civil File room in person. There is a cost for duplication. This office can be found on the first floor of the Circuit Court Building in Rockville. Refer to Civil Desk: Homeowner Records, HOA 268 filed on March 28, 1989, or 2) call Community Paperworks and ask for a resale package - approximate cost \$75). Their phone number is (301) 309-8977.



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Bel Pre Elementary School

The Bel Pre Elementary School is being rebuilt between January 2013 and June 2014. Students return to the new school August 2014. During the construction, students are attending the North Lake Center.

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Gleanings (continued from page 6)

Maintenance of Effort

The State's Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement, applicable to all school systems in the State, impacts Montgomery County. In the past, when revenues were strong, Montgomery County exceeded the requirement. The MOE requirement for schools often arises in discussions about budget constraints, fairness to other governmental components and the like.

On Friday, March 8th the *Washington Post* published an editorial, "Maintenance of Everything." The editorial noted legislation supported by Montgomery County senators, Madaleno, Manno and King that "... would forbid county governments from cutting anything from large categories of their budget, on pain of losing state aid – even if a severe economic downturn guts local revenues, as was the case just a few years ago?" Several members of MCCF commented that the legislation could result in Maryland counties being left with little discretion over their own budgets.

Former Gleanings column writer, and current Civic Association Board member, Max Bronstein sent an e-mail query to the three Montgomery County senators who sponsored the bill, requesting an explanation for their position. His inquiry has been distributed on the SBPCA list serve.




Montgomery County Taxpayers League – March

Jennifer Hughes, Director of Montgomery County's Office of Management and Budget was the presenter at the March 28, 2013 meeting. Ms. Hughes informed the group about the specifics of the newly released County Executive's budget proposals. One proposal is for the school system to retain a level Maintenance of Effort for the coming school year, 2013-2014.

— continued on page 9 —

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Gleanings (continued from page 8)

Highlights – Montgomery County Executive's Budget Fiscal Year 2014

While the Executive's over \$4 billion budget must be reviewed and adopted by the County Council before it is final, here are some provisions of particular interest:

- 35 additional police officers next year
- After the initial restoration of some funding this year, positions and functions will be examined for possible shifts from police officers to civilians (e.g. police and fire officers as dispatchers; code compliance inspectors, etc.)
- Trying to tamp down the sums devoted to debt service over the next five years. Approximately \$180M of the \$309M in debt service each year is for the school system.
- The County anticipates eliminating the unfunded liability related to the retiree health insurance program of \$174,106,392.
- The income tax increase enabled the County to propose employee raises of \$36M. Additional funds from the State of \$21,500,000 will be applied to the ride-- on program and the police.
- The Bond Rating agencies have recommended that Montgomery County increase its reserve from its present level of 6% to 10%. The County plans to meet that goal within several years.

— continued on page 10 —

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Gleanings (continued from page 9)

Jennifer Hughes provided additional background material in the form of an "Economic Indicator Dashboard" and an enumeration of "Fiscal Issues" that provide insights into various factors influencing the County's financial situation and the basis for its budgetary assumptions and projections.

FISCAL ISSUES

- Sequestration: income tax and other economically sensitive tax revenues
- Wynne Case & Income tax revenues
- Potential State Incursions: MOE for spending levels on jails, libraries, roads, police, sheriffs & fire departments; Indemnity Deeds of Trust
- Transportation Funding
- Bond Rating: AAA but negative outlook from Moodys due to "indirect Linkage" with Federal government

Montgomery County Civic Federation April Meeting

New Countywide Transit Plan

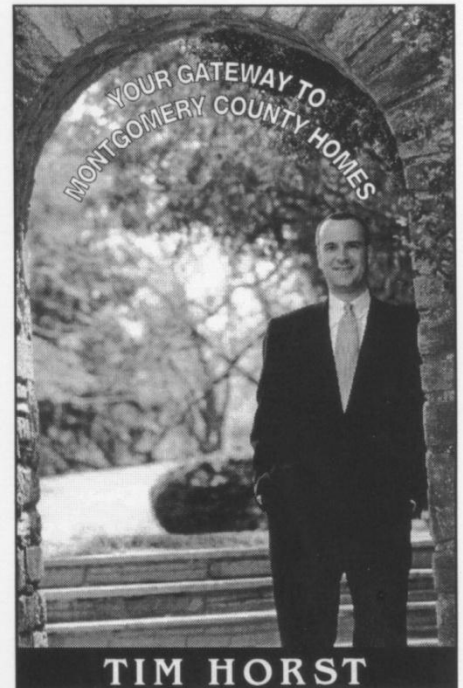
The proposed Countywide Transit Plan, a long range proposal to address traffic congestion on major corridors and provide a comprehensive and effective transit system, was the topic of the meeting. The mounting congestion and various solutions have been examined for over a decade.

Currently, Montgomery County's Department of Park and Planning is reviewing proposed routes and systems for inclusion in the Master Plan for Highways. A proposal for submittal to the County Council is anticipated by this summer.

— continued on page 11 —

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Gleanings (continued from page 12)

New Bus Services Proposed

While heavy and light rail have significant merits they are too expensive for most lines – an exception is the Purple Line. The cost for Metrorail is estimated at \$250M per mile; light rail at \$75M per mile and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) would cost in the realm of \$17M per mile. Following extensive hearings and reviews the County Council will make the final decision.

In addition to Bus Rapid Transit, Rapid Transit Vehicles (RTV) are also proposed. Both new bus services are to have dedicated lanes/guideways; visible and permanent stations and frequent service. Some of the corridors would have a lane in each direction. Others would reverse direction and utilize only one lane, e.g. Connecticut Avenue could have a lane going south in the a.m. rush and north in the p.m. rush.

In the meantime, numerous studies will look into how to integrate the current local Ride-On and Metrobus with Bus Rapid Transit or Rapid Transit Vehicles, the Purple Line and the Corridor City Transitway (CCT). The network would contain ten corridors and 79 miles to 152 miles. One corridor would be MD355 which is envisioned as having very high ridership going in both directions. US29 is also expected to have high ridership; whereas, North Bethesda would have moderate ridership and Georgia Avenue North would have low ridership.

This is a long range project that will undoubtedly not be fully realized until 2030 to 2040. Because it will have ramifications for many neighborhoods, I would encourage anyone who is interested to consider attending the public hearings for this issue -- to be held in the months ahead. Depending on developments or issues that may arise, it may be worth sharing your concerns and recommendations with members of the County Council and County Executive too.



Artificial Turf

The other topic of the meeting related to the use of artificial turf on playing fields. It seems that schools like to use artificial turf for its appearance and its easy maintenance. It never is muddy and it wears well. Through the efforts of local members of MCCF, it now is known that there are long-term health risks associated with this kind of turf, such as toxic gases, particulates and nano-particles. These toxic particulates also run off into streams and the Potomac, creating an environmental hazard. Crumb rubber, from pulverized tires, is used as the infill between strands of plastic carpet to create the artificial turf.

MCCF has been working with Delegate Aruna Miller, Delegate Jeff Waldstreicher and Senator Roger Manno regarding bills to address the risks that artificial turf represents to students, the public and the environment. These legislators were honored for their research and advocacy.

Aspen Hill Library News

by Chris Swan & Elliot Chabot



Spring Book Sale— May 18, 2013 10 am to 3 pm

The Spring Book Sale will be Saturday, May 18, from 10 am to 3 pm, at the Library, in the downstairs Community Room.. In addition to over 10,000 books, this sale will also feature DVDs, CDs, and puzzles. The books are organized into over 30 subjects, including large selections of History & Politics, Science Fiction, and Cookbooks. Most books cost 50¢ and \$1. Proceeds from the book sales are used to purchase books, programming, supplies, and equipment for the Aspen Hill Library.

Book Donations Needed

If you would like to donate used books, CDs, records, or puzzles for the book sale, e-mail the Friends at aspenhill@folmc.org or call us at (301) 871-1113. The Aspen Hill Friends is a 501(c)(3) organization, so donations are tax deductible.



Caribbean-American Heritage Celebration – June 15, 2013

The fifth annual Caribbean-American Heritage Celebration will be held at the Aspen Hill Library on Saturday, June 15th, from 1:30 pm to 4 pm. Good music, yummy food, and dancing! Mark your calendar now.

Summer Reading 2013 – Dig Into Reading

The theme for Summer Reading 2013 is “Dig Into Reading.” Special Summer Reading programs will be held at the Library in the Community Room. The schedule so far:

June 18	11 am	Maryland Zoo – Living Places, Living Planet
June 22	4 pm	Music in Me
June 25	11 am	Maryland Science Center – Hey, Try This!
July 11	2 pm	Baltimore Aquarium – Marshland Mystery
July 23	2 pm	Uno, dos, Tres, con Andres
July 30	2 pm`	Rainbow Company — Treasure Island

More programs are being planned, and will be listed in the next edition of *The Bugle*. You also can visit the Library or go to

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Apps/Libraries/branchinfo/ah.asp>.

50 Plus Club News

The 50 Plus Club meets monthly at various members' homes. The meetings normally include lots of socializing, discussion of community affairs, and planning of activities for the upcoming months. The summer meetings traditionally take place in the pool pavilion.

The next meeting of the Club is scheduled for Wednesday, May 29, 6:15 at the pool pavilion.

On Wednesday, June 19, the Club will be hosting a get together at Toby's Dinner Theater to see the production of "The Heights". The show is preceded by a lavish buffet, with doors opening at 6:00 PM. "The Heights" is an award winning musical about the Dominican communities in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City.

In late August or early October, the Club is planning to see "Les Miserables".

For further information on the Club's activities, please contact Charlotte Potosky at 301-460-9008.

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)**



Strathmore Bel Pre Photo Contest

By Adam Shepard

For the first time, the Strathmore Bel Pre Civil Association will be holding a photo contest for our neighborhood. All entries will be featured on the Strathmore Bel Pre website (www.strathmore-belpre.org), and may be published in *The Bugle*. There will be prizes for top entries.

The Civic Association board is still ironing out the final details, but keep an eye on the Civic Association listserv, *The Bugle*, and, of course, our very own website for forthcoming details including how to enter, how to vote, and how to win! The contest is limited to Strathmore Bel Pre residents.

Start snapping those pictures!

A curious, if not controversial, resident of Matthew Henson Park.

A photo contest winner?

What say You??



Bel Pre Strathmore Recreation Association News

By Dan Keating

We look forward to wonderful summer on our recreational properties: the tennis courts, basketball court, volleyball court, playground ship, swing-set, pavilion, snack bar, picnic tables, the bath house, table tennis, baby pool and main pool.

Any member of the Bel Pre Recreational Association in good standing (the annual assessment is paid) can get a key to the tennis courts by contacting Louisa Hoar at 301-871-2954.

The rest of the properties will open on Saturday May 25, the start of Memorial Day Weekend.

In the years I have served on the Recreational Association board, I have heard several people say they never use the recreational properties, and yet they live in the community. We urge everyone to use the facilities that you are paying for. If nothing else, use it for a chance to entertain friends and guests, even for a stroll in the grass.

We'll be looking for you!

**Strathmore Bel Pre Community's
2013 July 4th Celebration Committee
Planning Meeting
May 21st, 2013 7:30 pm to 8:30pm**

We need your help to plan great activities to enjoy the 4th with friends and family:
The Parade ! Entertainment! Field Games!

Please help us make July 4th a special day, and a great celebration for our community!!

RSVP TO:

- Joe Story at Joestory@mac.com or 301-460-0230;
- Harry Klapper at hjksbk@msn.com or 301-460-0159; or
- Lilla Hammond at lilla@inf.com or 301-518-7818

to get the location of the meeting.

Bring your friends! For updates, please visit: strathmore-belpre.org.

Thanks! We look forward to hearing from you!!!



Bugle Advertisements

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