

The Bugle



Published by the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association

March 2014

Volume 46 #1

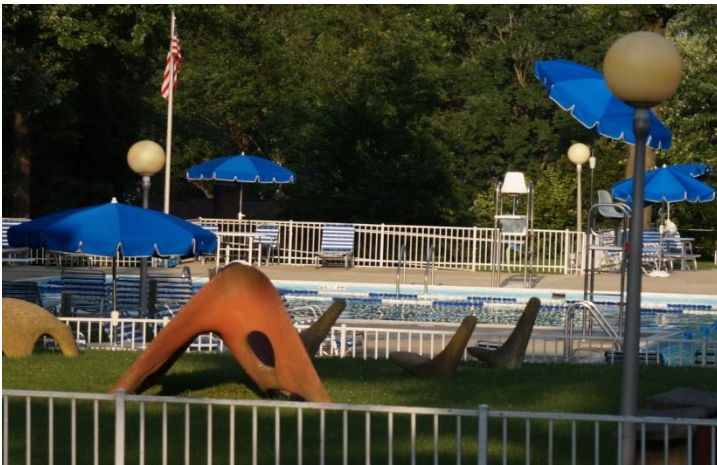
Association Election Results



The November 21, 2013, 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

SHARON ADAMO, FRANK CORRIGAN, WILLIAM HAMMOND, RITA VAUGHT, and HARRY KLAPPER were re-elected by acclimation to the Civic Association Board.



Recreation Association

The Recreational Association election featured 6 candidates for 3 seats. After reading written statements in the Fall *Bugle*, and hearing presentations at the annual meeting, the general membership voted and chose KYE PAK, ADAM SHEPARD, and ELLIOT CHABOT. Other candidates were incumbent Board member LOU ANN RECTOR, and longtime community members KELSEY KCLASS and JIM RAUCH. Board Member ED FRANTZ did not run for re-election, having served 10 years on the Board, including 4 years as President.

At its December meeting, the Recreational Association Board elected the following officers for 2013-14: President ELLIOT CHABOT, Vice President KIM WATTERS, Treasurer KAREN POTOCKI, and Secretary DAN KEATING.

Contents:

Association Election Results	1
SBPCA & BPRA Boards	2
President's Corner	3
Gleanings from Meetings	4
Bel Pre Recreational News	7
Covenants & the County Code	8
Summer Entertainment Series	11
Summer Entertainment Series Needs Your Support	12
News from Georgian Forest's Neck of the Woods	15
50's Plus	16
Library News	17
Yard Sale	18
Think Pool, Think Dolphins!	19
Volunteers Needed for July 4 th Planning	20

THE BUGLE

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

Civic Association Directors

Sharon Adamo	301 443-3972	Frank Corrigan	301 460-1011	Maurice Potosky	301 460-9008
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	Rita Vaught	206 406-2871

Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA)

The Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) is the homeowner's association for the Strathmore Bel Pre properties. Your BPRA annual assessment pays for your 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/bpra>. The Board normally meets at 7:30 pm on the 4th Thursday of each month. Tentative schedule: March 27, April 24, Sept 23, Oct 23 & Dec 4 at the Aspen Hill RE/MAX Office (13415 Conn. Ave.); May 27, June 26, July 24 & Aug 28 at the Pool Pavilion. The Nov 20 annual meeting will be held at Bel Pre Elementary School.

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
vacant (Treasurer)	---	---
Dan Keating (Secretary)	(301) 603-8162	dtkeats@gmail.com
Adam Shepard (Webmaster)	(301) 603-8162	awshepard@gmail.com
Robert T. Bowser	(301) 460-3444	r.tbowser@verizon.net
Paulette Ladas	(301) 674-7742	pauletteladas@remax.net
Kye Pak	(301) 460-4388	kye_pak@msn.com
Anthony W. Wormack	(202) 468-3565	awwormack@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

The President's Corner

by Nancy Bechtol, President Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association

The sun is shining today as I write this article, but it has been a very long time since we have seen blue sky and warm temperatures. I am savoring the day! This winter has challenged even the toughest souls. I am happy to see March arrive, with this winter gone, yet placed in the history books as one of the coldest winters in the DC area in over two decades. It was good fun to see neighbors out shoveling snow and the kids walking to and from the best sledding hills, but all in all, it will be good to see this winter behind us!

Membership and ListServ

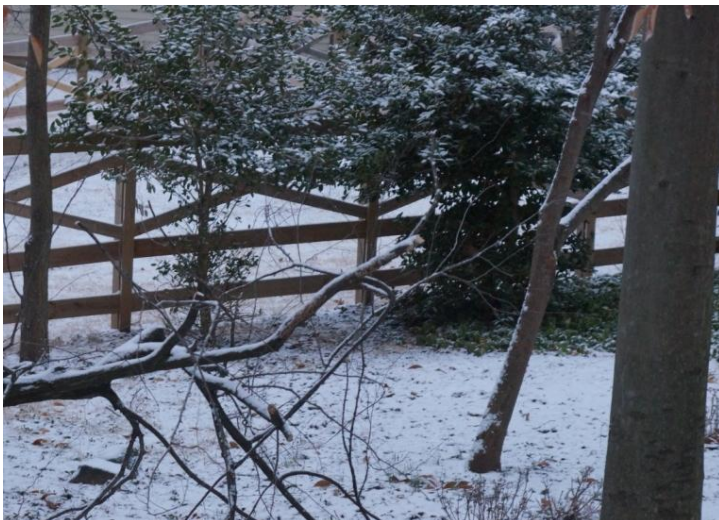
Our Civic Association membership is growing and is higher today than it has been in recent years. We are very close to having 300 members in the Association and on our listserv. The listserv had a lot of activity this past fall, some of which has been hurtful to neighbors and in turn to our community. Listservs should police themselves, so that eventually reason and civility prevails, but sometimes not before hurtful comments are made. I encourage use of our listserv and trust that everyone will be mindful and respectful of one

another, and of our diverse and varied opinions. One of the most wonderful aspects of our neighborhood is its diversity, we are all unique. So, let's celebrate this and be grateful for the wonderful neighborhood we all enjoy.



New Board Members

We welcomed two new Board members this fall to our Association Board, **Rita Vaught** and **Sharon Adamo**. Both have been welcomed additions and have settled in very nicely into our group and are already offering much help and assistance. They come with creative ideas, professional talents and energy to assist with our programming. The Board can't thank them enough for joining in on the fun of running this Association!



– Continued on page 5 –

Gleanings From Meetings + More

by Frank Corrigan

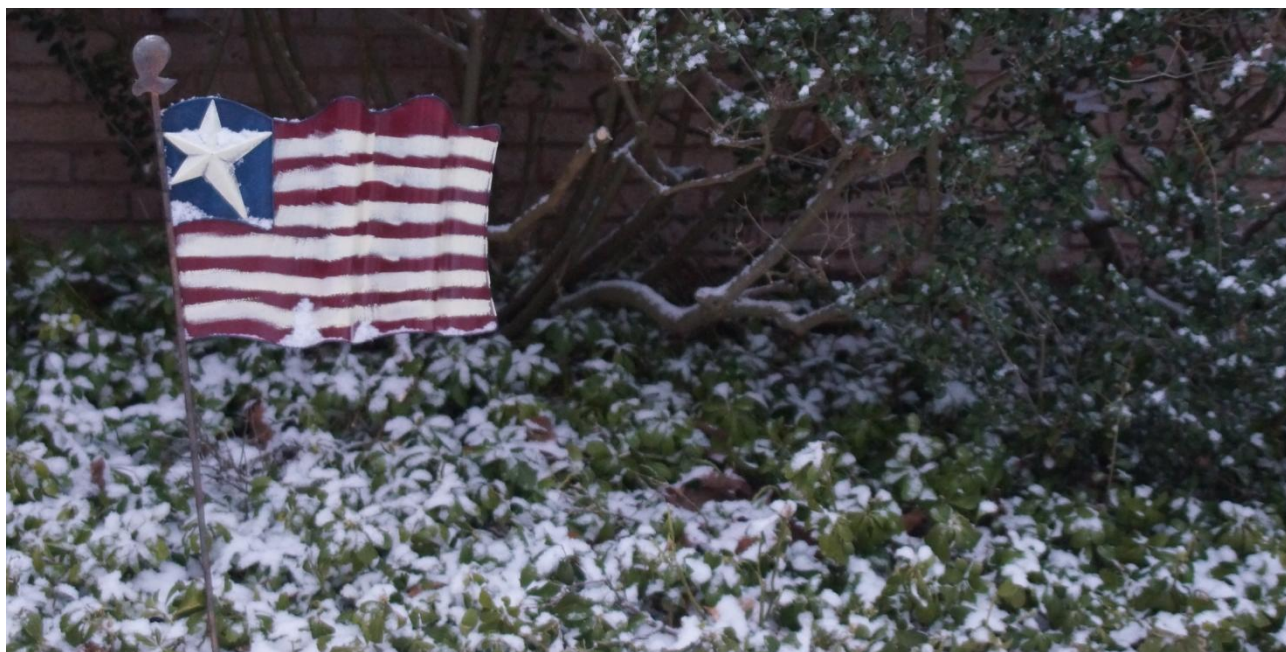
County Executive Meeting – December 2, 2013

A number of representatives from the eastern side of the County met with County Executive Ike Leggett to discuss topics pertaining to their areas as well as countywide. Carol Barth (President of the Montgomery County Civic Federation and a White Oak resident) expressed concern about construction proceeding in the White Oak area before the revised Master Plan was adopted. A representative from Privacy World raised a water metering dilemma. Since Privacy World has a master metering system, condo owners pay a portion of their entire building's water usage rather payments based upon their own use, as would be indicated by individual unit meters. As a consequence and because some units housed six or more adults, many unit owners felt they are being overcharged.

Other topics broached with the County Executive were the development of the Rockville Science Center and the presumption that development in the area of Rockville Pike is heading into gridlock. A \$1.5 million study from the State Highway Administration concluded an additional lane would be needed. One of the participants suggested that all that was needed was to "paint an additional turn lane". Efforts are underway to address this concern through the County's delegation to the State legislature.

Mr. Leggett mentioned that the County would be leading on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) installations, and that the County administration has decided not to accept the ceiling cracks in the Silver Spring Transit Center. The County expects that it will not have to pay for any additional work until the Transit Center is fixed to the County's satisfaction.

– Continued on page 6 –



President's Message

(Continued from page 3)

Summer Activities

Your Civic Association board has been busy this winter planning our upcoming summer events and trying to increase the membership to our Association. We have planned a great summer season of activities we hope you can attend. We will continue to offer our traditional Yard Sale in May (this year!) and the 4th of July activities, but we are also planning four new entertainment evenings at the pool. We piloted three programs last summer. This year, we hope by setting the dates earlier, everyone can put them on their calendars now and plan to attend. For the dates, see the Summer Entertainment article in this edition of *The Bugle*.

Movies and Music – OH MY

We will have two music and two movie nights this summer. Thanks to the hard work of board members CHRIS SWAN and ELLIOT CHABOT we will have music, and thanks to ADAM SHEPARD, we will have movies to enjoy this summer. We hope you will bring the entire family to the pool to enjoy these programs. We host these programs to bring our neighbors together to have some fun while enjoying our fabulous community, and our excellent facilities.



New Committee

We also are partnering with the Rec Association in a **joint Entertainment and Recreation Committee**. This newly formed committee is a first, and is a joint effort to broaden and enhance our community activities. You are welcome to help out, just join this committee. See the Committee article in this Bugle and on the listserv for more information.

I look forward to seeing everyone around the neighborhood soon as this weather improves! Please let me or any board members know if we can be of assistance, our contact information is listed in this Bugle on page 2.

Gleanings (Continued from page 4)

Public Schools: Taxpayers League Meeting – December 12, 2013

The Taxpayers League meeting featured Larry Bowers, the Chief Operating Officer for the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Mr. Bowers provided some facts and figures:

- 21,000 plus persons are employed by MCPS
- 2,700 new students are anticipated next year
- 2,000 new students is the average new student increase
- \$ 650 to \$700 million in capital improvements is anticipated
- 50 % of the school bus service supports special education
- Incentives for exceptional teachers to stay and/or go to high-need schools are in progress

Mr. Bowers indicated that expenditure information can be found on the MCPS website. He noted that the County Board of Education approves all contracts in excess of \$25,000. The Office of Legislative Oversight of the County Council conducts reviews as does the State Legislative Office every five (5) years. According to Mr. Bowers, MCPS are subject to “. . . extensive review and auditing . . .” that emphasizes “compliance” not “efficiency” or “effectiveness”.

67 elementary schools are in a Red Zone, as focus schools where students in Kindergarten through Grades 1 and 2 receive extra funding and lower pupil/teacher ratios. Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) that readily raise \$50K or more are in a Green Zone, as “non-focus schools”. Red Zone PTAs lack that fund raising ability.

Cost per student per grade for 2015 :

Kindergarten/elementary: \$ 14,454

Secondary: \$ 13,932

Average for all grades: \$ 14,181

FY2105, proposed Budget is \$ 2,281,809,121.

FY 2014, the budget is \$ 2,225,421,052.

Staffing for FY2015:

Executive positions	21
Administrative	198
Business Operations	89
Other professional	190
Principals/Asst. Prin.	495
Teachers	10,999
Special Ed Specialist	508
Counselor	468
Instruct. Aid & Asst.	2,647
Clerical Support	983
Building Service	1,377
Transportation	1,685

FY 2015 personnel total : 21,583

FY 2014 personnel total : 21,243

(Totals include assorted positions)



– Continued on page 13 –

Bel Pre Recreational News

by Elliot Chabot, President
Bel Pre Recreational Assoc.

New Opportunities

Join your friends, family, and neighbors to enhance and grow our community! Several new neighborhood committees have been formed, and you are invited to join them. Your help is needed, please.

Please volunteer for any or all 4 of these newly created committees!

Entertainment and Recreation Committee

This Committee is a joint effort by the Recreational (BPRA) and the Civic (SBPCA) Associations. The Committee will plan, promote, and actually conduct entertainment and recreational programs, events, and activities for the community, especially at the community pool property. Last year, the Civic Association held 2 music nights and a movie night at the pool, as well as the 4th of July Celebration and the annual June Community Yard Sale. We're hoping that -- with the 2 organizations working together -- we can do even more this year. But it takes volunteers!

Neighborhood Dispute Resolution Committee

The Recreational Association is trying to come up with a better way to help members of the community who have disputes with other members of the community resolve those disputes. If you have training in **Alternative Dispute Resolution**, we especially need your help. We hope to ultimately make this a joint effort with the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association.

Finance Committee

The Recreational Association needs people who are willing to participate in the process of preparing the Association's annual proposed budget. This Committee also will advise the Recreational Association Board of Trustees on the Association's assessments, debt collection/liens, Insurance coverage, book keeping and financial records, and financial transparency.

Governing Documents Committee

Folks on this Committee will advise the Recreational Association Board of Trustees on proposed changes to the Association's by-laws, plan of organization, articles of incorporation, covenants, and geographic boundaries.

How to volunteer

If you have an interest in any of these Committee, please get in touch with me at echabot@usa.net or at (301) 871-1113.



– Continued on page 9 –

Covenants and the County Code

by Adam Shepard

Did you know that many of our covenants are similar to regulations that are enforceable by the county? The Montgomery County Code Enforcement Section is a division of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Its mission is "to maintain and preserve the quality of life in Montgomery County in general, and that of our neighborhoods and housing stock in particular." The Code Enforcement Section administers housing and building maintenance standards, solid waste, and weeds.

A full handbook about the section and code enforcement can be found on the web at http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/Resources/Files/community/code/handbook_eng.pdf

According to the Montgomery County building code, owners and occupants both have several responsibilities. All exterior components of the house must be kept in good repair, and the dwelling and premises must be maintained so that they are clean and sanitary. Occupants must also maintain grass below 12 inches in the yards of single family dwellings. All solid waste must be disposed of in proper containers, and it is unlawful to store unused vehicles for more than 30 days on private property.

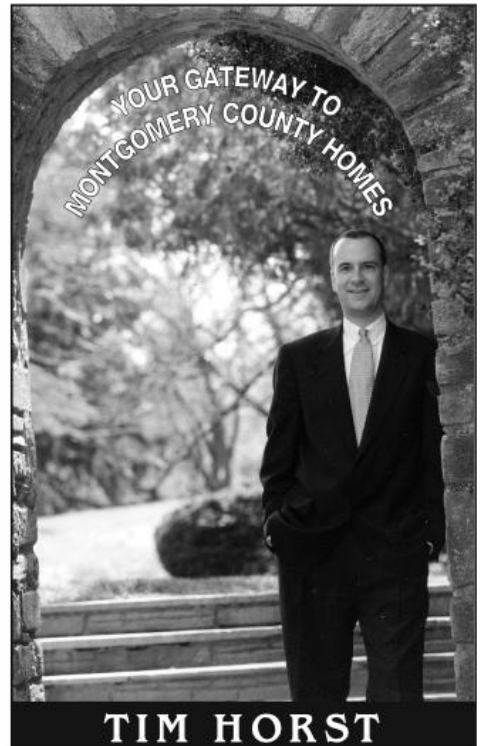
A guide to code enforcement is available online at: http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/Resources/Files/community/code/guide_to_ce.pdf. Questions can also be directed to the Code Enforcement Section by calling 311 or writing to:

Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Code Enforcement
100 Maryland Avenue, Suite 260
Rockville, MD 20850-2322



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

***The experience is there...
let it work for you.***



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

- Expansion of our website (<http://strathmore-belpre.org/bpra/>), thanks to the efforts of the Association's webmaster ADAM SHEPARD. The website now includes the BPRA by-laws, articles of incorporation, and plan of organization; copies of contracts signed by the BPRA; minutes of Board of Trustees meetings; a comprehensive collection of the covenants governing our community; plat maps; Montgomery County Commission on Common Ownership Communities decisions concerning the BPRA; and links to the county master plans that govern land use in our community,
- Ponte Mellor Architects, Ltd. has been commissioned to assist in the development of a 10-year capitol projects and maintenance plan for the BPRA. Thanks to DAN KEATING for coordinating this contract.
- Contracts for lawn maintenance for 2014 and to paint the metal fence around the baby pool are about to be issued. Thanks to PAULETTE LADAS for coordinating these 2 contracts.
- Began a review of needed parking lot lighting repairs. Thanks to KAREN POTOCKI and KIM WATERS for coordinating this effort.
- Began a review of the security system on the pool property. Thanks to KYE PAK for coordinating this effort.

– continued on page 10 –

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Thanks!

To the extent that the Recreational Association is successful, it is because of the work that previous volunteers have invested in our organization. Thank you to

- ED FRANTZ, who recently completed his term as Treasurer and as a member of the Board of Trustees (Ed had also previously served for 4 years as President of the BPRA)
- LOU ANN RECTOR, who recently completed her term as a member of the Board of Trustees, having served from 2003 to 2013.
- DAN ENTWISLE, who recently completed his 3-year term as a member of the Board of Trustees.
- DAN KEATING, who recently completed his term as President and who is now serving as Treasurer and as a member of the Board.
- KAREN POTOCKI, who recently completed her term as Vice President, and also served for several months as Treasurer.
- PAULETTE LADAS, who recently completed her term as Secretary and who continues to serve as a member of the Board.

Current Litigation

As we go to press, the Bel Pre Recreational Association is the defendant in two law suits:

Henry v. Guirand (Case 2325, Maryland Court of Special Appeals). A suit among other things to compel the BPRA to take actions against the "growing fence" at 14017 Breeze Hill Lane. On January 10, 2014, the Court ruled in favor of the BPRA (i.e., dismissed the BPRA portion of the suit). On February 7, the plaintiffs asked the court to reconsider its decision.

Guirand v. Bel Pre Recreational Association, Inc. (Case 383580, Montgomery County Circuit Court). A suit to enjoin the BPRA from taking actions against the fence at 3200 Bustleton Lane. The BPRA filed a motion to dismiss on February 10, 2014.

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2014 Summer Entertainment Series!

By John Bogasky

The Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association (SBPCA) has planned four events - two movies and two concerts - for the 2014 Summer Entertainment Series. Every event is on a Saturday night at the Pool Pavilion and grounds. All Strathmore Bel Pre residents, families, and friends are invited. Be sure to mark your calendars today!

Know any Bands?

It's too soon to know the specific movies and performers. If you know of a band that we should consider for the summer concert dates, please contact any member of the Civic Association board. Page 2 of any *Bugle* issue has our contact information.

Find Out More Information

Watch *The Bugle*, the Civic Association listserv and the Pool Bulletin Board for details on the performers and movies.

Financial Support

The 2014 Summer Entertainment Series partially is made possible with the support of our lead sponsors, LILLA HAMMOND of Long & Foster, PAULETTE LADAS of RE/MAX and TIM HORST of Long & Foster.

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



2014 Summer Entertainment Series

5/31 – the Summer Kickoff with a Movie

6/21 – Saturday night with a Concert

7/19 – Saturday night at the Movies

8/16 – Saturday night with a Concert

Save the dates!!



The Summer Entertainment Series Needs Your Support

by John Bogasky

Donations Needed, please!

The Civic Association received great feedback on the 2013 Summer Entertainment series, so the Civic Association Board has voted to host 4 events this year. Yet in order to make this a new STRATHMORE BEL PRE tradition, we will need additional financial support from the community.

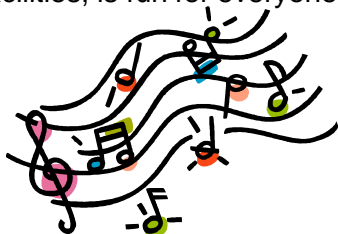
We have a great start! Each of our lead sponsors have already pledged at the SBP Superstar level. SBPCA Board members have committed an additional \$200. We, however, need your support to fully fund our planned events.

Level	Amount
SBP Superstar	\$500
Community Champion	\$250
Oscar Winner	\$100
Band Leader	\$25
Super Fan	\$10

You can be a BAND LEADER! A SUPER FAN? How about an OSCAR WINNER? **The perfect gift for your 2014 Summer!**

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.

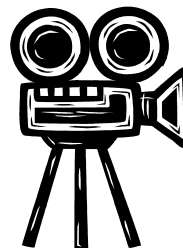
With your support, we can create a new community tradition that takes advantage of our beautiful pool facilities, is fun for everyone, and brings our community together!



2014 Summer Entertainment Series

5/31 – the Summer Kickoff with a Movie
6/21 – Saturday night with a Concert
7/19 – Saturday night at the Movies
8/16 – Saturday night with a Concert

Save the dates!!





Gleanings (Continued from page 6)

Open Government and Transparency

Montgomery County Civic Federation (MCCF) meeting – January 13, 2014

Presenters were Robert Cobb from the County Ethics Commission, Alisha Green of the Sunlight Foundation and Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, of Common Cause. 40% of people already seek data on-line about County and State Government. One source for information relating to all 50 states is <http://openstates.org>.

Mr. Cobb and two staff members administer the County Ethics Law, which covers some 87 County boards and commissions, as well as the County Council and County employees. The Ethics Commission reviews individual actions such as lobbying, outside employment, conflicts of interest, prohibited holdings, misuse of office, gift rules, and use of government resources for private purposes. Lobbyists spending \$500 or more on County legislative action(s) must register with the Ethics Commission. Non-profit representatives spending \$1,000 or more must register, and pay a fee to the County of \$125. The Ethics Commission also deals outside employment requests and has a close relationship with the County's Inspector General's Office.

Ms. Bevan-Dangel, of Common Cause, noted that the threshold for lobbyist reporting at the State level is \$2,500. One of her objectives at the State level is to improve access to lobbyists' and representatives' disclosure information. She expressed concern about the brief waiting period for a legislator to resign and become a lobbyist – one legislative session. She also expressed reservations about the level of accessibility available to the public, due to numerous exemptions and the fees. In some instances, a requestor is restricted to reading certain supposedly public information under observation. Much information in Annapolis can be obscure and difficult to access.

– Continued on page 14 –

Gleanings (Continued from page 13)

County Council President Rice: Taxpayers League meeting – January 16, 2014

The meeting featured Craig Rice, newly elected President of the County Council. President Rice observed that he represents Gaithersburg and the upper County, including Damascus, but that he had grown up in the Layhill area. He addressed his remarks to a variety of issues, in response to questions submitted in advance by the Taxpayers League.

Education Issues

President Rice noted that approximately 50% of the County budget is devoted to education. With respect to the Capital Budget, he described the significant need for more space at Poolesville High School. Students are eating in shifts in the halls and the cafeteria is also being used for gym classes. In response to a suggestion that portable classrooms be used as an alternative to school construction, President Rice said they might be used as a “stop gap measure” but that he strongly favored buildings. In response to a query about the level of taxation in the County, he expressed concern but defended the merit of current taxes in paying for the County needs.

The discussion about the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) imposition by the State on each of the counties was fairly limited. The Maintenance of Effort state law requires public schools to continue their funding levels from year to year, and is used as standard by the State and some Federal agencies. Unfortunately, Montgomery County significantly exceeded its State-defined Maintenance of Effort requirement during years in which tax receipts were strong. The County has found itself struggling to meet this higher level of commitment with the lower levels of tax revenues. It was mentioned that the teachers’ union and the State are strong MOE supporters.

He expressed strong support for more School Resource Officers while noting that some citizens as well as some County Council members did not believe that Resource Officers were warranted

New Initiatives by President Rice

President Rice informed the Taxpayers League that he was appearing on Channel 9 to spell out his initiatives and priorities and was utilizing radio as well. One specific initiative for him is to increase participation in Government on the part of lower earning individuals and families.

– Continued on page 18 –



News from Georgian Forest's Neck of the Woods

by Megan Virga

The Georgian Forest Elementary School Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is delighted to submit our debut article in *The Bugle*! We want to cultivate relationships with our local community, and thank the Civic Association for this chance to share information about what's going on at our school. We hope future issues will include news from other schools that serve our community.



Bird's eye view of new inner courtyard

In that spirit, our PTA hopes to further strengthen our ties with our Strathmore Bel Pre neighbors. Whether or not you have a past, present, or future pupil at Georgian Forest or any other of our neighborhood schools, we all have an interest in the success of our local schools.

Huge thanks are due to our 2013-2014 "Community Sponsors" for their generous support:

Erickson & Hong Orthodontics

Hill Pediatric Dentistry

Lilla Hammond, Long & Foster

Paulette Ladas, Re/MAX

Robert Pence Remodeling, Inc.

Tim Horst, Long & Foster

Montgomery Child Care Association, Inc.

We are also grateful to all SBP families who have participated in our school Spirit Nights! We hope these types of events, which support local organizations and businesses, will help foster a shared sense of community in our area.

We hope to see you in our neck of the woods! <https://sites.google.com/site/gfespta/>
Sincerely, the Georgian Forest ES PTA

The Georgian Forest Grizzlies are having a great year! At the start of the school year, the Montgomery County Public School system completed a major addition to our school. Originally designed for only 350 students, our building now features a colorful two-story wing with enough classrooms for all 600 of our students. We have a new Acting Principal as well. Under Mrs. Kimberly Rogers' leadership, collaboration among school staff, students' families, and our community is flourishing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Georgian Forest ES Beautification Day

Saturday, April 5th 11am - ??

(rain date: April 12th)

Bring your rakes and yard waste bags and lend a hand! We will pick up debris, spread mulch, enjoy some fresh spring air, and the opportunity to meet your neighbors.

**SSL HOURS OFFERED!
DONATIONS WELCOME!**

Kindergarten Orientation

May 15th and 16th

10 am – 2:30 pm

50's Plus

by Charlotte Potosky

The 50 Plus Club heard the Rockville Concert Band play swing music on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014. We attended the Hexagon Players performance of Midterm Madness on March 29.

Our last meeting was on Sunday, Feb. 23, at the home of MARILYN AND CARL KESSLER. At that meeting, ELLIOT CHABOT, as President of the Recreational Association, talked about volunteer opportunities available through the Rec Association. MAX BRONSTEIN talked about plans for development around the Glenmont Metro station, and the plans for an Aldi food store to come to Plaza Del Mercado.

The next 50s Plus meeting is tentatively scheduled for April. The May meeting is planned for May 28 at the Pool Pavilion. We eagerly await the summer months to enjoy our beautiful pool and recreation area.

If you are a resident at Strathmore and would like to join us for our meetings/trips and are not yet a member of the 50 Plus club, please call CHARLOTTE POTOSKY at 301-460-9008, or send an e-mail to maury3505@aol.com.

GETTING CONTROL OF YOUR PAPER FLOW..A FEW TIPS!

Is your desk or counter top attracting papers? Sometimes the paper piles can seem uncontrollable. Here are a few tips from Elizabeth Mayhew of *Real Simple* magazine:

Establish a system for organizing mail: 1) Designate an in-box for the mail - big enough to hold a week's worth of papers, but no more, so you can't let things pile up. 2) Deal with mail when you get it. Throw away junk mail before taking your coat off. Put catalogs and magazines in a separate basket to go through later and put mail in your in-box. 3) Keep a large wastebasket near your in-box. Getting rid of bulk makes the paper you have to deal with less intimidating. 4) Pick a regular time to sort through your in-box. Whether it's one hour a week, or a couple minutes a day, pick a schedule that fits your lifestyle and stick to it.

Types of mail: 1) Invitations - decide quickly if you will attend, mark invitation once you have replied, put the invitation in a visible place, put the date in your calendar right away and toss the invitation after the event. 2) Bills—use a portable filing system. Keep everything you need together: checkbook, stamps, and a pen in your organizer. Choose a labeling system that works for you. Pay the bills daily or use a weekly system. Once bills are paid, move them to a file cabinet or storage box.

Stop junk mail: 1) The Credit Reporting Industry Pre-Screening Opt-Out hotline (888-567-8688) removes your contact information from four major credit bureau lists for pre-approved credit card solicitations. 2) Contact your bank and credit-card companies to make sure your name is removed from shared mailing lists.



or Buying?
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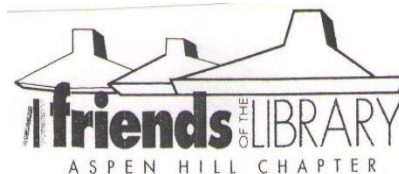
If you're thinking of Selling... The market is good due to low inventory!

For more information about the market and what it means for you, call Lilla!



Library News

by Chris Swan & Elliot Chabot



Support Your 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. Postcards are available at the Library. Later in the spring, the Friends will hand-deliver them to County Council members. Our postcards do matter!! If you want the best access to books, e-books, even databases, let the County Council know .

Film Festival!

New this year, the Friends are running a Film Festival. The kickoff is Monday, March 24, with the "Best Exotic Marigold Hotel." Films will be shown the 4th Monday of most months: April 28, June 23rd and July 28th. Films begin at 7:30. As the films are chosen, the Aspen Hill Library website will post the titles, at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/branches/aspenhill.html.



Annual Meeting Day – April 26

Library meeting day, April 26, 2013, 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! **John Kelly, Washington Post columnist will be speaking at the meeting!** For more information, contact the Friends at aspenhill@folmc.org or call (301) 871-1113.

Spring Book Sale – May 17

The Spring Book Sale will be Saturday, May 17, 2013, from 10 am to 3 pm, at the Library. In addition to over 10,000 books, the sale has DVDs, CDs, and puzzles. The books are organized into over 30 subjects, including a large selection of History & Politics; and Science Fiction. Proceeds from the book sales are used to purchase books, 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.

Caribbean-American Heritage Celebration

Save the Date!!

The sixth annual Caribbean-American Heritage Celebration will be held at the Aspen Hill Library on Saturday, June 7th, from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Good music, dancing, fun times, and more!

Yard Sale!!

by Chris Swan

Save the date: The annual Civic Association Yard Sale will be held May 31, 2014!

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!



Gleanings (Continued from page 14)

Meeting with the County Executive Ike Leggett – January 27, 2014

The County Executive, Ike Leggett, held a public meeting at the Queensguard Recreation Center regarding the proposed Montgomery County budget for fiscal year 2015. After a series of countywide public hearings, Mr. Leggett will submit his proposed 2015 budget to the County Council on March 15, 2014.

At the Budget Forum, individual citizens as well as those representing particular organizations or special interest groups engaged in a colloquy with Mr. Leggett about their issues and concerns. Most of the speakers thanked Mr. Leggett for his past support relating to their area of interest and urged him to increase the County's commitment as much as possible. Areas of particular concern included more funding for mental health-related needs, more assistance for low income housing, libraries and developmental disabilities. One community member referred to the area as a supermarket desert because of the difficulty in getting a replacement for Giant at Plaza del Mercado.

Think Pool, Think Dolphins!

by Claire Pak

Believe it or not, Summer is coming, and the Dolphins are getting ready to get back into the pool!



Dolphin Membership

The Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins, your community swim team, are open to all Strathmore Bel Pre community children ages 4 to 18. Grandchildren can also join the team. We also offer sponsored memberships for swimmers who reside outside the community. Contact any board member for additional information.

Swim Practice

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.



Dolphin Joys

Swim team participation offer 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 will remain friends long after their swimming days are over. Our team enjoyed great success during the 2013 season, finishing with a 4-1 regular season record and placing second in the very competitive B Division championships. Many of last season's new swimmers made huge contributions to that success!

Join the Dolphins!

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

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, and 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!

Volunteers Needed for July 4th Planning

by Lilla Hammond

The 2014 July 4th Planning Committee needs a few neighbors!

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 Children's Parade, Afternoon Entertainment, Field Day Activities and the Picnic. Any and all help is welcomed.

Planning Meeting

A planning meeting will be held on Saturday, May 31st at the Pool Pavilion, from 10 am to 11 am.

Call or email to help, and to get more information!

Joe Story: joestory@mac.com

Harry Klapper: hjksbk@msn.com

You may also check Strathmore Bel Pre's community's website at

www.strathmore-belpre.org.

Updates will be posted as they are available.



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**Contact Harry Klapper at 301-460-9645 or at
hjksbk@msn.com**