

The Bugle

Published by the Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association

Fall 2011

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Annual Meetings November 17th

It's time again for our annual community meetings. Both the Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association and the Strathmore Bel-Pre Recreation Association annual meetings will be held on Thursday evening, November 17th, beginning 7:00 PM at the Bel Pre Elementary School on Rippling Brook Drive. Please come to hear the year in review, future plans and elect officers and board members for each organization.

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STRATHMORE-BEL PRE CIVIC ASSOCIATION 2011-2012 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

**The annual Civic Association membership drive is in
progress**

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**Membership Dues - \$15.00
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Directory only - \$10.00**

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

THE BUGLE

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Brian Lev, Editor 301-460-1048

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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** and organizes the annual Yard Sale and 4th of July festivities. The SBPCA Board of Directors meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Genesis Center Nursing Home on Bel Pre Road. The Civic Association's annual meeting is in November just before the BPRA annual meeting.

Civic Association Officers

President	Nancy Bechtol	301-871-3679	Vice President:	Bill Hammond	301-871-5074
Treasurer	John Bogasky	301-460-1604	Secretary:	Linda Bea	301-460-0497
Co-Webmaster	Bill Hammond	301-871-5074	Co-Webmaster	Adam Shepard	727-871-0393

Civic Association Board of Directors

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

Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA)

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

Bel Pre Recreation Association Officers

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

Bel Pre Recreation Association Board of Trustees

John Adamo	301 460-3275	fijimaster@juno.com	Dan Entwisle	
Lou Ann Rector	301 603-805		Arthur Meister	301 438-7869 ustation@aol.com
Paulette Ladas	301 674-7742	pauletteladas@remax.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 SPBCA President's Corner

-by Nancy Bechtol, President SBPCA

What an amazing summer this has been, and continues to be as the rain continues to fall while I write this letter. I am hoping everyone has survived the summer's series of weather events with dry basements, power on, trees still standing, and your health! No one could have ever imagined we would suffer a serious earthquake, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee all in the same two-week period. I think our neighborhood has held up well through it all.

Our Board, led by Lilla Hammond and Harry Klapper yet again this year, put together another fun-filled 4th of July celebration that began with a fabulous parade and ended with a lovely dinner under the pavilion before heading off to see our local fireworks displays. This day's events are a tradition in our neighborhood and if you still haven't enjoyed these fun-filled events you must make the effort to attend next year.

I am hoping to see each of you at the Annual Meeting of the Bel Pre Recreational Association and the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association on November 17, 2011, at 7:00pm at the Bel Pre Elementary School. We only all get together once a year, so please plan on attending to vote for new members of these associations and discuss current issues affecting our community.

Please plan to join us at any of our monthly meetings this fall and winter. We meet the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm at the Layhill Center off Bel Pre Road. We recently invited Bonnie Cullison, a Delegate from District 19 to speak with us and

Errors and Omissions – In the Summer, 2011, edition of the *BUGLE* there were several omissions in the BPRA President's Message by Dan Keating. These occurred during the edit or layout steps in the preparation of the *BUGLE*. The article submitted by Mr. Keating was complete and the *BUGLE* team apologizes for the errors.

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President's Message Continued –

discuss how we can help our County and our local schools. She encouraged us to volunteer and to get involved in our neighborhood schools by offering to read to children, or serve as a mentor. Contact any of our schools as they all have many volunteer opportunities to suggest.

Several neighbors have called me recently to discuss what we can do to make our neighborhood roads safer for pedestrians, bicycles and our vehicles. If we would all remember to always follow the speed limit, that would help a lot. We will be looking into other possible ways we can make a difference in making our community safer over the next several months.

50 Plus Club News

-by Maurice Potosky

The 50 Plus Club continued its activities over the summer with meetings at the BPRA Pool pavilion in July and August. Each meeting provided an evening of socialization and continuing community friendship.

Over the summer the group went to Toby's Dinner Theater to see "Anything Goes", the Cole Porter musical, which was enjoyed by all. Our next show will be "Chicago" on September 21.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 16 at the home of Maurice and Charlotte Potosky. All community residents age 50 and over are invited to join the group; please call Charlotte at 301-460-9008 if you are interested.

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Gleanings from Meetings & More

-By Max Bronstein

The June meeting of the Montgomery County Taxpayers League had Edward L. Blansitt, the new county Inspector General, as its speaker. The task of the Inspector General is to impartially investigate matters of fraud, impropriety, and criminal activity in county government that come to the attention of his office. Some of the matters are discovered by the Inspector General, other items are referred by members of the community. The Office of the Inspector General employs just a few staffers and has a limited budget; therefore, only very important cases are undertaken, and then only those that would result in great benefit to the county if followed to their conclusion. Mr. Blansitt was previously the IG at the Department of Commerce for many years. (Incidentally, the members of the Taxpayers League were very impressed with his obvious ability, the philosophy he would employ in running his office, and the personal honesty & integrity that were evident from his interview.) At the July meeting, the League's guests were Phil Kauffman, member of the Board of Education; Marshall Spatz, MCPS Director, Management, Budget & Planning; and Alan Xie, student member of the Board of Education. All guests and attendees had a very candid discussion of matters pertaining to actions & decisions of the school system and the Board of Education as well as County Council actions that impacted the school system. Unfortunately, space & time constraints prevent a detailed reporting of the meeting but rest assured, it was quite "educational."

The Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board meeting in June included a discussion of the need to replace or renovate the Farquhar Middle School in Olney. This would entail either busing students one hour each way from Farquhar to the Tilden Holding Center site on Tilden Lane (far across the county), or having them stay put while a new school is built close to their present school. The final decision has not been made, but it seems the latter scenario is favored. Another topic addressed at the meeting was the retirement of Natalie Cantor, director for 16 years of the Mid-County Service Center. Ms. Cantor was instrumental in getting many important & needed facilities built, plus beneficial programs instituted, for the mid-county area. She was very highly regarded and will be missed.

The 828th session of the Montgomery County Civic Federation, serving the public interest since 1925, took place on June 13. The meeting's program featured a panel discussion of charter schools, with panel members from Montgomery County and the District of Columbia. Washington has about 40 charter schools overseen by a separate charter school board. The State of Maryland in May 2003 passed the Maryland Public Charter School Act, allowing the 44 public charter schools that currently exist in the state, none of them in Montgomery County. However, shortly after the June meeting, the county's Board of Education approved the first charter school in the county. It will be located just west of the Westfield Wheaton Shopping Center at the Crossways facility, a former public school. Charter schools in Maryland are treated the same as any school in the local school system, of which they become

Gleanings Continued –

a part, and the teachers & employees of the charter schools become employees of the local school board. Another lively discussion dealt with the subject of locating new schools on parkland. It was rightly pointed out that both schools & parks are equally important as meritorious elements of Montgomery County and schools should not be located in parks.

On July 9th the long awaited Mid-County Community Recreation Center celebrated its grand opening. It was a most heartening event that was the culmination of efforts begun over 20 years ago. This writer was among those cutting the ribbon for the opening, ably assisted by County Executive Ike Legget, County Council members Phil Andrews, Mark Elrich & Nancy Navarro, long-time civic activist Dick Kauffunger, and Susan Johnson of the Mid-County Community Work Group. The Center offers programs & activities for all age groups, and has meeting rooms, a social hall, a kitchen, a fully equipped exercise room, and a full-size basketball court. It is located on Queensguard Road, one block south of Layhill Road. Additionally, on August 2nd, the center served as one of the locations for "National Night Out", an event whose purpose is to reduce crime in the community. If you have not been to the Center, be sure to visit -- after all, you're paying for it.



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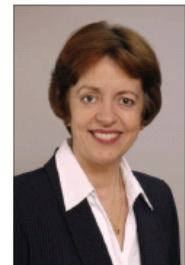
Flood Coverage - Most policies cover water damage that occurs from above the ground, such as roof leakage, storm water pushed through window voids, and burst plumbing. Water that rises or seeps into a basement from the ground is considered a flood and is not insured. If you are concerned about ground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

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

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

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

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The 2011 Independence Day Celebration (July 4th, 2011)

-by Lilla Hammond

This past July 4th was truly a grand celebration, starting with a parade of over 120 children accompanied by their parents, grandparents, other family and friends to remember and pay tribute both to our country's history and to those who served to preserve our freedom as Americans. The paraders ranged in age from newborns to teenagers, all sporting red, white and blue! Would you believe... three fire trucks and two emergency vehicles arrived to lead the parade. The paraders were joined by our community's Cub Scout Troop 763; Bob and Ruth Wolpert's car to control traffic; and members of the Dolphins Swim Team in a long, black limo driven by Greg Miller! At the Pavilion, our favorite magician Joe Oleszczuk delighted a large audience. Children then had a great time at the field games, which wrapped up with the popular coin toss in the community's pool. Later, everyone enjoyed the picnic, which volunteers helped set up and serve. Once again, music was provided by the Wolperts. The attendees recognized the American veterans at the picnic with applause. As always, they also helped with the clean-up so everyone had time to enjoy the fireworks.

Paraders: Andrew Kominski, Nadia Kominski, Tibor Szabo, Kathy Szabo, Kathy Szabo, Nicki Szabo, Tommy Szabo, Leo Hosh, Danny Landry, David Dorsey, Hannah MacFarland, Grace MacFarland, Jianah Belfon, Kevin Bhargava, Kendra Beatty, Bianca Beatty, Arella Beatty, Terrin Jackson, Tatiana Jackson, Nico D'Orazio, Wintana Samson, Miriam Lev, Sky Geary, Riley Geary, Camille Bearman, Olivia Miller, Owen Miller, Emerson Miller, Daryn Lam, Hope Van Tuyle, Aaron Van Tuyle, Mark Van Tuyle, Sam Van Tuyle, Luke Van Tuyle, Sarah Staggs, Lamdan Nguyen, Nene Narh-mensah, Tete Narh-mensah, William McNamee, Charlotte McNamee, Marshall McNamee, Andreus Brijbasi, Julius Brijbasi, Marius Brijbasi, Joey Moeller, Lucas Moeller, Tyler Kominski, Erik Staggs, Isabell Duran, Jonas Duran, John Beatty, Cara Sanneman, Luke Sanneman, Paul Vidal, Moses Vidal, Kayla Geary, Josh Bearman, Johnathan Hosh, Anna Hosh, Joanas Yockelson, Lilan Miller, Winston Miller, Tessa Miller, Piper Yockelson, Ava Yockelson, John Purdy, Claire Purdy, Rafael Pinero, Nadira Roberts, Adrian Roberts, Daniel Arthur and others



July 4th Continued –

Troop 763 Parade Leaders:

The following Cub Scouts and leaders took part in leading our community parade.

Christian Jenkins, Tanya Jenkins, Khalil Abdul-Wakeel, Malek Washington, Mr. Guilford Queen, Mrs. Shaari Arthur and Cub Scout Master Bill Totten

July 4th Volunteers:

Our sincere thanks go to all those who made the special day even more special!

Parade: Dan Thomas, Joe and Marilyn Biviano, Reuben and Marilyn Lev, Bill Hammond, Bob and Ruth Wolpert, Joe and Molly Story, Max and Susan Bronstein.

Entertainment & Field Games: Harry Klapper, Sharon Chua and Michael Hammond.

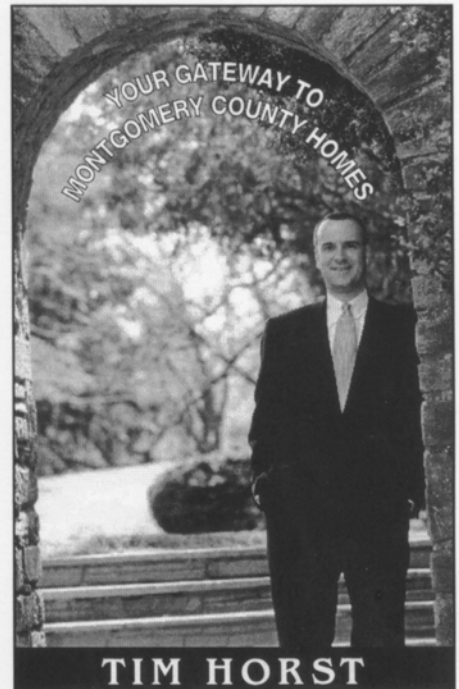
Picnic: Harry Klapper, Joe and Molly Story, Ruth and Bob Wolpert, Linda and Charlie Bea, Bill Hammond, Dan Thomas, Elizabeth Hammond, Pedro Figueredo, Hugo Figueredo, Adam Shepard and John Bogasky. And, special thanks to the lifeguard Loretta who helped facilitate the day's events at the pool.

July 4th Celebration Co-Chairs: Harry Klapper and Lilla Hammond.



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Bel Pre Recreational Association Annual Meeting Note

-by Dan Keating, BPRA President

The Annual Meeting of the Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) is scheduled for November 17, immediately after the Civic Association meeting, at Bel Pre Elementary School. We have some special business this year, so we really hope to see as many families as possible.

The BPRA succeeded the original developer (Levitt Homes) with responsibility for the common areas: the pool, tennis courts, pavilion, playground, volleyball court, bath house, snack bar, and parking lot. Your annual assessment of \$225 is used almost entirely for the maintenance and operation of the common property.

The developer created two kinds of governing documents that pertain to the BPRA and the common property, and those documents are attached to your title. One is the covenants, which spell out rules. The other is the bylaws, which spell out the procedures for elections, board actions and other activities.

Because clear and consistent bylaws can prevent misunderstandings that can lead to larger problems, seven members of the association went to great trouble three years ago to carefully assemble and review the bylaws, then make recommendations for updates and changes. None of the changes were dramatic, and they are unlikely to be noticed by any resident of our association; they simply clarify how the budget and audits should be prepared and made available to the membership, resolve a question about meeting quorums and correct many inconsistencies (e.g., one bylaw calling for a 45-day notice of an event and another bylaw saying five weeks for the same event), as well as other technical details.

The Governing Documents Committee, under the leadership of Elliot Chabot, finished making its recommendations in the fall of 2008 shortly before the Annual Meeting. Unfortunately, by the time the BPRA reviewed the recommendations, time was very short and the board did not have adequate time to explain the reasons for the changes to the BPRA membership. Although the changes received support from a majority of the membership, they were not adopted because they did not receive votes from the required two-thirds majority. The board hopes that with a better chance to explain the changes before the vote this fall, the membership will agree to tidy up the bylaws.

I realize the description I gave in this article is vague. A detailed description of every change and a copy of the full document will be sent out with the Annual Meeting notice this fall and we will discuss the changes at the annual meeting before voting on them, providing the membership an opportunity for questions and opinions.

The Annual Meeting will also give us a chance to discuss management of the pool property and other changes that happened in 2011 and that are on tap for 2012. We look forward to seeing everyone at Bel Pre Elementary School on the night of November 17.



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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.

Dolphins Update

-By Claire Pak

-It's hard to believe that another season is over! The Dolphins finished 1-4 this year against extremely talented competition in the top division of the Prince-Mont Swim League. This was a season of meets that went right down to the wire and of great team and individual performances.

Special congratulations to Morgan Hill, who set a new LEAGUE record in Girls' 11-12 50 Butterfly with a time of 31.09. The previous record of 31.53 had stood since 1997!

Congratulations are also due to Joanna Ladas, who broke a 23-year-old team record on July 9, swimming the Girls' 15-18 Backstroke in 33.53. The Dolphins were also well-represented at the League All-Star Meet on July 30. Winners at All-Stars included the Girls' Medley Relay Team (Morgan Hill, Joanna Ladas, Laura McGehee, Simone Brown) and Morgan Hill (Girls' 11-12 50 Butterfly, Girls' 11-12 50 Freestyle).

Our annual awards dinner took place on Wednesday, July 27. Awards were presented to the top 3 swimmers in each age group (based on total number of points scored) and to swimmers selected by the coaches for individual awards. The winners were:

AGE GROUP TOP 3

8 & Under

Boys

Eamon Hoye

Ian Virga

Asa Virga

Girls

Nicole Szabo

Lauren Hill

Camille Bearman

9-10

Boys

Dale Gotcher

Chihnam Nguyen

Josh Bearman

Girls

Olivia Miller

Riley Geary

Carrie Hill

11-12

Boys

Emerson Miller

Caelin Hoye

Evan Bearman

Girls

Morgan Hill

Rebecca Wesley

Sarah Staggs

13-14

Boys

Sky Geary

Winston Miller

Connor Ruppert

Girls

Emma Bearman

Gabriell Maupin

Kayla Geary

15-18

Boys

Mark Kessler

Nick Wesley

Matt Wesley

Girls

Joanna Ladas

Laura McGehee

Simone Brown

Coaches' Awards

Hardest Working:

Beginner (Developmental): John Purdy

Novice (8 and under): Piper Yockelson

Junior (9-14): Olivia Miller

Senior (15-18): Winston Miller

Most Improved:

8 & under: Isabelle Duran

9-10: Denise Mack

11-12: Rafael Pinero

13-14: Kayla Geary

15-18: Sarah Ruppert

Most Dependable: Collin Dobbins, Emma Shuster

Most Spirited: Simone Brown, Joanna Ladas, Laura McGehee

"B" Swimmers of the Year: Buddy Spencer and Nadira Roberts

"A" Swimmers of the Year: Mark Kessler and Morgan Hill

Most Valuable Dolphin: Brandon Harris

Our board election is underway, so please check the next issue of the Bugle for the announcement of the new officers' names. If you'd like to learn more about the team, or if you'd like to receive Dolphins email updates, please contact me at

cdaltonpak@yahoo.com.

A Paved, Graded Entrance with a Handrail Coming Soon to the Trail Near You -by Marilyn Biviano

The Montgomery County Executive, Isiah Leggett, has promised to have the deteriorating entryway to the Matthew Henson Trail (located on one side of the Ripplingbrook Drive dead-end) replaced with a paved, graded entrance with a handrail. Thank you, Mr. Leggett!

Many of us use the steps at the Ripplingbrook dead end to access the Matthew Henson Trail. The stairs, while steep, deteriorating and without a hand rail (see picture below of current steps entryway) provides access to the Trail at only a short walk from our homes. The campaign to improve this entryway to the Matthew Henson Trail this year began back in March, after quite a few of us complained about the condition of the steps on the community list serve. Neighbors cited safety as the main issue. After conferring with a prominent member of the SBP Civic Association, Arlene Thorne, I contacted the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC or "Parks") about the entrance. I finally reached "the right" office and I sent a picture of the steps along with our (email) request to, at a minimum, secure the loose steps and add a handrail.

After two months of calls and follow-up calls with Parks, I thought we were close to getting the repairs. Parks indicated that they were sympathetic and interested in providing safer, better access to the Trail for our community. I was told that they had even come up with a plan to improve the Ripplingbrook entrance but then discovered that the entrance steps are not on Montgomery County Parks' property, rather they are on the Montgomery County (MC) Department of Transportation's property. [Deep sigh.] Then, I contacted the MC Department of Transportation and, several calls later, I got to the Bike Paths and Sidewalks Office. They said they were the right office and they were interested but after several discussions and emails, they were too busy with budgeting and planning activities and would not commit to repairing the steps. [Deep sigh.]

In the beginning of July (over three months into the effort), I contacted the County Executive, Ike Leggett's office pleading our case and asking for his help. A week later, I got an email from the MC Department of Transportation Office saying that Mr. Leggett had advised them of my (our) concerns and they would assess the Ripplingbrook steps but still set no date for the repairs. Then, on August 4, I received an email letter from Isiah Leggett saying that *"the Montgomery County Department of Transportation will address the drainage issue and improve the grading to provide a paved trail access with a handrail for your neighborhood.... This effort will take several months.... Thank you for informing me of this important issue to you and your community. I hope this improvement allows your entire community to enjoy the Matthew Henson Trail."*

Stay tuned, neighbors. In the next issue of the Bugle, I hope to report that a nice, safe entrance has been installed and we will include a picture of it.