

# The Bugle

*Published by the Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association*

*Winter 2010*

*Issue: 11.01*

## The President's Corner

by Nancy Bechtol,

The joint meeting for the Bel Pre Recreation Association (BPRA) and the Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic Association (SBPCA) was held on November 18th at 7:00PM. Fortunately a quorum was present so that elections could take place for new BPRA Board members. We appreciate everyone who came out that evening to participate in the meeting and in these elections. It was great to see everyone!

The SBPCA presented the 2010 Annual Report to everyone in attendance and discussed the highlights of this report at the meeting. If you missed the meeting and would like to see a copy, it is available on our website. John Bogasky, our SBPCA Treasurer, is the author of the report, and did a fantastic job capturing the work of your SBPCA last year. Highlights included our publishing four editions of the Bugle containing 32 articles and over 50 ads. We created a new email listserve for our community (SBPcivic-subscribe@yahoogroups.com), with over 55 members by the end of 2010. Quite an accomplishment for our inaugural year! We continue to organize our community activities on the 4th of July holiday and the yard sale. Several SBPCA board members are active on various monthly community public meetings and attend and represent our community and often speak on our behalf. We managed the total replacement of our community's sign on Layhill Road at Hathaway Drive.

The year was packed full, but with such a fabulous board and a large group of volunteers who each do their share, the work happens and your community is well represented. As of the end of January we had 268 neighborhood homes submit their SBPCA membership dues. If you are interested in becoming a more active part of the SBPCA please let any of the current board members know. We meet the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm at Genesis Healthcare's Layhill Center (3227 Bel Pre Road, opposite the 7th-Day Adventist Church, near the speed cameras). Our meetings are open to anyone interested in attending. Please consider lending a hand and helping with any of these activities mentioned above. I look forward to working with you in the spring!

### Contents:

President's Message	1
SBPCA & SBPRA Boards	2
Gleanings from Meetings	3
Community ListServe	4
BPRA Notes	5
Trading Post	6
Clean Currents	7
Dolphins News	9

# 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](mailto:Strathmo@strathmore-belpre.org)**

**Web site: [www.strathmore-belpre.org](http://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 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities. The SBPCA Board of Directors meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Genesis Center Nursing Home on Bel Pre Road. The Civic Association's annual meeting is in November just before the BPRA annual meeting.

### **Civic Association Officers**

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

### **Civic Association Board of Directors**

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

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## **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	<a href="mailto:dtkeats@gmail.com">dtkeats@gmail.com</a>
Vice President:	Ed Frantz	301-603-8055	<a href="mailto:ed_frantz@comcast.net">ed_frantz@comcast.net</a>
Treasurer:	Keith Yockelson	301-460-8555	<a href="mailto:number1pools@verizon.net">number1pools@verizon.net</a>
Secretary:	Lou Ann Rector	301-603-8805	

### **Bel Pre Recreation Association Board of Trustees**

John Adamo	301 460-3275	<a href="mailto:fijimaster@juno.com">fijimaster@juno.com</a>	Gladstone James	301 460-7292	<a href="mailto:gladstonj@msn.com">gladstonj@msn.com</a>
Sue Hoyer	301 603-9559	<a href="mailto:sue@hoyes.org">sue@hoyes.org</a>	Arthur Meister	301 438-7869	<a href="mailto:ustation@aol.com">ustation@aol.com</a>
Paulette Ladas	301 674-7742	<a href="mailto:apladas@aol.com">apladas@aol.com</a>			

### **Bel Pre Recreation Association Volunteers**

Admin Asst:	Brenda Henry	301-871-6298	Pavilion Usage:	Louisa Hoar	301-871-2954
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## Gleanings From Meetings & More

-by Max Bronsteinan

[Editor's Note: This article is presented essentially as written by the original author and is in "op ed" style.]

The October meeting of the Montgomery County Civic Federation featured a presentation promoting bicycling as an optional means of transportation in the county. The presenters, Casey Anderson & Richard Layman, pointed out the environmental and health advantages of traveling by bicycle. They also advocated for more bike lanes & secure bike parking facilities as a means of encouraging this mode of travel.

In November, the Montgomery County Civic Federation's meeting program was given by Edgar Gonzalez, Assistant Director of the county's Department of Transportation. The subject was a new transportation test for proposed developments. As background, whenever an application for a new development is received by the Planning Department, part of what is required from the applicant is a traffic study regarding traffic to be generated by the new project. The new test is known as Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR); it considers the effects on traffic in the policy area, and there are 21 policy areas in the county. When accepted by the County Council TPAR will replace the current test, known as Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR). Additionally, any new project must also pass a Local Area Transportation Review, which is a test for a smaller, nearby area. Take my word for it, TPAR is much more citizen-friendly than PAMR and a much better, more understandable test. The fact that I served with a large group involved in TPAR's formation is just incidental. (continued on page 12)

**Civic Association Listserve  
Now Exceeds 115 Members**

by John Bogasky,  
SBPcivic group moderator

In less than a year, **the Civic  
Association email listserve has  
grown to more than 115 members!**



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That is great progress toward our goal of providing SBP Civic Association members with an interactive communication channel to supplement *The Bugle*.

Many Civic Association members signed up using the checkoff box on last year's membership renewal form.

If you are a Civic Association member and now want to join the listserve, the easiest way is to send me an email at [johnbogasky@hotmail.com](mailto:johnbogasky@hotmail.com). Please include your email and street address so I can confirm your Civic Association membership.

The Civic Association listserve is a Yahoo group. If you are comfortable using Yahoo, you can also join that list serve using that site. Simply search for the "SBPcivic" group.

Joining via Yahoo will give you more options for how you receive SBPcivic messages.

Not a Civic Association member? Joining is easy. All Strathmore Bel Pre residents can join the Civic Association at any time simply by paying the \$15 annual membership fee.

Look at the inside cover of this Bugle for a description of the Civic Association and our mailing address.

Please remember that any SBPcivic member can send a message to the entire listserve membership simply by sending an email to [SBPcivic@yahoogroups.com](mailto:SBPcivic@yahoogroups.com). Please send the email from the same email address that you used to join the group or Yahoo won't recognize you as a member and will block your message. The listserve can't be an interactive communication channel until we all use it to *send* as well as receive messages. All of us on the Civic Association Board hope that all members will join this group. We are excited about the possibilities the group offers to improve our ability to work together as a community. If you have any questions about the group, please contact me.



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## Bel Pre Recreation Association Notes

-by Dan Keating, President, BPRA Board

The Bel Pre Recreation Association had a very productive annual meeting in November. We appreciate so many neighbors turning out for the election and the discussion. In the election for members of the association board, three openings were decided. Ed Frantz and Lou Ann Rector were re-elected, and new member Dan Entwisle was elected. The board thanked outgoing board member Gladston James for his years of service.

The annual meeting included a discussion of covenant enforcement in the community. The board created a committee two years ago for the purpose of clarifying the community approach to enforcement of covenants pertaining to use of property.

The first task facing the Board is to examine the existing written covenants to see which covenants would have strong public support for enforcement. Some covenants – such as requiring metal trash cans – may no longer be relevant; others may be covered by county code enforcement and others may be difficult to enforce because there are so many existing non-compliances, such as sheds. The committee is supposed to review the covenants and propose a plan for enforcement that will draw community support. The plan can also include how to deal with any existing violations, e.g., "grandfather" them in permanently, or for some period of time or until the property is sold. (continued on page 10)



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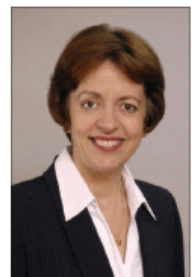
**Flood Coverage** - Most policies cover water damage that occurs from above the ground, such as roof leakage, storm water pushed through window voids, and burst plumbing. Water that rises or seeps into a basement from the ground is considered a flood and is not insured. If you are concerned about ground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

**Consult Your Insurance Agent** - For insurance information, your agent has definitive answers. Long & Foster Insurance Agency can provide information and competitive quotes. Contact them at [www.longandfoster.insurance.com](http://www.longandfoster.insurance.com)



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# THE TRADING POST

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

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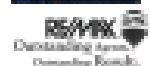
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## CLEAN CURRENTS GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD CHALLENGE UPDATE

- by John Bogasky

The Civic Association would like to thank the 26 families that switched their electricity to wind power during Clean Current's 2010 Green Neighborhood Challenge. On October 28<sup>th</sup>, Clean Currents presented the Civic Association with a check for \$260. We plan to use that money to plant a new tree on the pool grounds to replace a tree felled by last summer's thunderstorms. Clean Currents has launched a new Green Neighborhood Challenge (GNEC II) which continues until Earth Day 2011. Under that program, your Civic Association will continue to receive \$10 for each new Strathmore Bel Pre family that signs up and identifies themselves to Clean Currents as a Strathmore Bel Pre household.



John Bogasky receives GNEC I check on behalf of the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association

However, electricity choice is now more complicated. I first signed up for Clean Currents wind power back in 2009. Back then, Maryland allowed competition in electricity generation but there was little to be found. Clean Currents wind power was one of the few alternatives and was cheaper than Pepco generation. Today there are many more choices. As of 2/4/11, I counted at least 11 companies vying to be your electricity generation provider. The other big change is that Pepco's generation rates have fallen substantially. As late as September, Pepco's standard generation rate was 11.8¢/KWH. Its currently 9.885¢/KWH and will fall to 9.163¢/KWH on June 1. More choices and lower Pepco rates have made it much more complicated to choose your electricity generation provider.

The table below summarizes electricity generation rates for our area as of 2/4/11. Wind power is no longer cheaper than standard power but the added cost to support wind power remains small. In most cases, Clean Currents continues to provide the best rates for wind power.

PROVIDER	STANDARD POWER		WIND POWER				COMMENTS
	Applicable Rate Period	Rate	1 ye ar 50%	2 ye ar 50%	1 ye ar 100%	2 ye ar 100%	
Pepco Generation	10/1/10-5/31/11 6/1/11-9/30/11	9.885 ¢ 9.163 ¢					
Clean Currents			9.5 ¢	9.9 ¢	10.0 ¢	10.5 ¢	SBPCA receives \$10 for each new sign up
Washington Gas		9.2 ¢	10.0 ¢	10.6 ¢	11.0 ¢	11.8 ¢	
CQI Associates		9.1 ¢	9.9 ¢	10.5 ¢	10.9 ¢	11.7 ¢	
Constellation Electric	1 year fixed price	9.3 ¢			10.3 ¢	10.2 ¢	
	2 year fixed price	9.2 ¢					
Direct Energy	10/1/10-5/31/11 6/1/11-9/30/11	9.193 ¢ 8.705 ¢					Guaranteed 7% savings off Pepco Guaranteed 5% savings off Pepco
NEXtera Energy	1 year fixed price	10.1 ¢			10.6 ¢	10.7 ¢	
	2 year fixed price	10.2 ¢					
Viridian			9.9 ¢	9.9 ¢	11.4 ¢	11.4 ¢	Rates vary by month, 20% not 50% wind
Energy Plus	No quoted rates on web site. You can get airline miles and other rewards for electricity use.						
Horizon Power & Light	No quoted rates on web site. Must call to request a quote.						
Patriot Energy	No quoted rates on web site. Must call to request a quote.						

Rates as of 2/4/11. Check current rates and reviewed detailed terms and conditions before choosing your electricity generation provider. (continued on page 8)

(Clean Currents continued from previous page)

I have highlighted the deals that looked best to me, but your choice may differ. Rates may also change by the time you read this in March or April. Its also important to review the terms and conditions for each rate offer. Some providers lock you into your rate for 1-2 years while others offer more flexibility but do not protect you from price increases

If you still choose wind power and Clean Currents, remember to mention Strathmore Bel Pre when you sign up with Clean Currents so that our community receives credit. If you signed up with Clean Currents and are not sure if Strathmore Bel Pre received credit, simply send me an email ([johnbogasky@hotmail.com](mailto:johnbogasky@hotmail.com)) with your street address and I can follow up with Clean Currents.

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## Bel Pre Dolphins News

-by Claire Pak

It's just three months, give or take, until Memorial Day and the start of another amazing Dolphins summer! Here is the 2010 season recap we promised in last issue. We finished 1-4 in regular season dual meet competition in the very competitive "A" Division, the Prince-Mont Swim League's top division. Developmental Coaches Julie Pinero, Joanna Ladas, and Laura Entwisle worked all summer to help nearly all of our Developmental swimmers (who start at age 4) to make it across the pool and earn their trophies; and all of our swimmers made substantial improvements in times and technique, thanks to the dedicated hard work of Head Coach Terry Kominski and Assistant Coach Sarah Bechtol. Individual winners in each age group (rankings are based on total points scored) are listed below.

### Top Three Scorers by Age Group

	Boys	Girls
<b>8 &amp; Under</b>	1. Chinham Nguyen 2. Ben Spencer 3. Eamon Hoye	1. Olivia Miller 2. Nicole Szabo 3. Melati Maupin
<b>9 &amp; 10</b>	1. Emerson Miller 2. Rafael Pinero 3. Josh Bearman	1. Carrie Hill 2. Sarah Staggs 3. Lamdan Nguyen
<b>11 &amp; 12</b>	1. Winston Miller 2. Conner Ruppert 3. Bayani Spencer	1. Morgan Hill 2. Rebecca Wesley 3. Ivana Olivares
<b>13 &amp; 14</b>	1. Nick Wesley 2. Trant Frizzel 3. Sky Geary	1. Emma Bearman 2. Lilian Miller 3. Gabriell Maupin
<b>15 to 18</b>	1. Reed Brown 2. Matt Wesley 3. Mark Kessler	1. Joanna Ladas 2. Laura McGehee 3. Julie Pinero

(Continued on Page 11)

*Andrea J. Lev*

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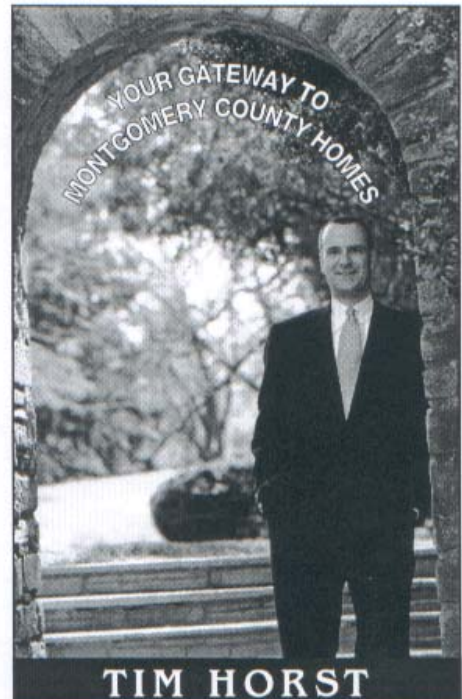
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- ◆ Assistance with completion of Medicaid application
- ◆ Assistance with placement (nursing home, assisted living)
- ◆ Caregiver support and counseling

## BPRA (Continued from Page 5)

The other task is to research other homeowner associations to find a plan of rules for enforcing covenants. Would a complaint have to be brought by a community member? Would the board seek out violations? Would a neighbor be required to present evidence like a prosecutor? Would the board appoint fact-finders to investigate, or rely on the affected parties to present evidence? Other communities do this, so assembling a plan for accepting complaints, gathering facts, making rulings, handling appeals, enforcing opinions and preserving records can be cobbled together. That task includes some assessment for determining the cost of enforcement. While the committee was created two years ago, it has not moved forward. Fortunately, we had several volunteers at the annual meeting who said they would like to work on the committee. Anyone else interested in working with the committee, please contact a board member. Thank you. In the next Bugle, we'll talk about plans for the pool for the summer.

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## **Dolphins (Continued from Page 9)**

### **Coaches' Awards**

#### **Hardest Working:**

Beginner (Developmental): Kaspar Teter  
Novice (8 and under): Eamon Hoyer  
Junior (9-14): Emma Shuster  
Senior (15-18): Reed Brown

#### **Most Improved:**

8 & under: Willow Teter  
9-10: Emily Frantz  
11-12: Nicholas Thornton  
13-14: Sarah Lomax  
15-18: Katie Lomax

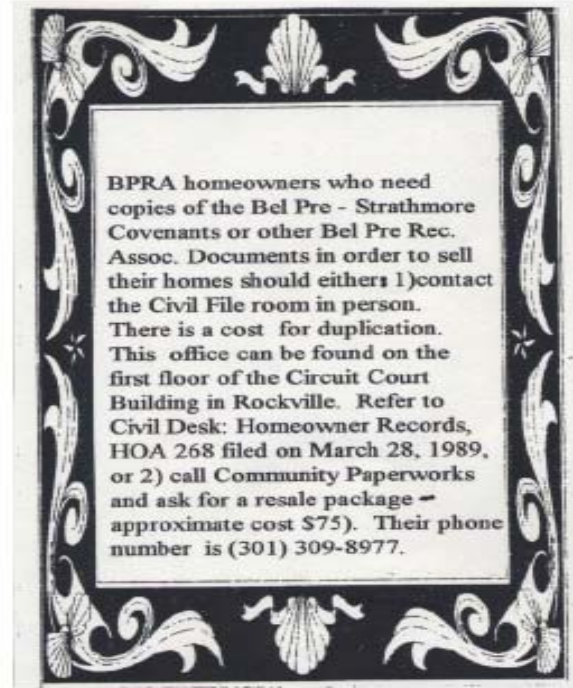
**Most Dependable:** Brandon Harris

**Most Spirited:** Laura McGehee

**"B" Swimmers of the Year:** Jake Stocky and Laura Entwisle

**"A" Swimmers of the Year:** Nick Wesley and Morgan Hill

**Most Valuable Dolphin:** Laura Entwisle



### **Team Records**

11-12 Girls' 50m Butterfly: 33.03 - Morgan Hill

Girls' Medley Relay: 2:18.01 - Joanna Ladas, Simone Brown, Lilan Miller, and Laura McGehee

### **All-Star Winners**

Morgan Hill, 11-12 Girls' 50m Butterfly - 33.37

Simone Brown, 15-18 Girls' 50m Breaststroke - 37.89

Congratulations to all of the age group and coaches' awards winners, and special congratulations to our record-setters and All-Star winners. If you have seen the records board, you know that some records stand for 20 or more years, so setting a record is no small feat. Also, the invitation-only All-Stars meet is a competition of the best of the best, so a win at All-Stars is a tremendous accomplishment!

Please watch your mail this spring for our annual fundraising mailer. Our 2010 fundraiser was a huge success thanks to our community's generosity, and 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 relationships among team families that make our community a wonderful place to live. If you'd like information about the team and how to participate next summer, please feel free to contact any member of the Board:

Greg Miller     President     winstonhen@aol.com

Scott McNamee     Vice-President     scott.mcnamee@fda.hhs.gov

Claire Pak     Secretary     cdaltonpak@yahoo.com

Maribel Pinero Treasurer     Maribel@mtpcpa.com

Andrew Ladas A Meet Manager     apladas1@aol.com

Paulette Ladas     B Meet Manager     apladas@aol.com

Please watch future issues for more information about how to join the team, and for a calendar of Dolphins events (many of which are open to the entire community). We look forward to seeing you at the pool!

## Gleanings (continued from page 3)

The Civic Federation's December program was about selecting a new MCPS superintendent, and was held with a five-member panel that spoke about various aspects involved in the selection. In addition, some members of the panel spoke to advocate for charter schools, services for students with alternative methods for learning, or more services and support for gifted & talented students. One panelist, Phil Kaufman, member of the Montgomery County School Board, mentioned that the same search firm that presented us with Superintendent Jerry Weast 11 years ago has been engaged to find a new superintendent as Mr. Weast is leaving the post in June. After reviewing Mr. Weast's contract, it appears his pay began at around \$268,000/year with benefits included, plus additional yearly raises equal to the area Consumer Price Index plus three percent, which roughly brings his current base salary to \$315,000. There were other payments for moving here from North Carolina etc. that came to about \$15,000, a \$750 monthly auto allowance, plus an expense account. Bear in mind that MCPS serves about 144,000 students, has about 14,000 employees, and receives just over half the county's budget of \$4.4 billion -- so the Superintendent has enormous responsibilities. The message of this story: Get involved in the forums to be held regarding the selection of the next Superintendent. That post will have received about \$3,000,000. during its eleven- year span; you the taxpayers are footing the bill, so get involved or forever hold your peace!

On January 10, 2011, a most interesting program was presented at the Civic Federation meeting by the County Council's Office of Legislative Oversight which is headed by Karen Orlansky. The report's subject was "Achieving a Structurally Balanced Budget in Montgomery County". As everyone knows, this county, as well as the great majority of jurisdictions around the country, are in their own financial recessions. Plus, since this country and other nations around the world are in a difficult financial situation, the problems are interrelated and magnified. Valerie Ervin, President of the County Council, also attended and joined the panel for the question and answer period. As a former School Board member and current chair of the Council's Education Committee, she was helpful in answering question related to MCPS's budget which receives 57% of the county's total budget of around \$4.4 billion. Our county's financial situation is going to dominate the political discussion as well as have a major effect on our quality of life for an unknown number of years, so it is important to focus attention on this subject. For more in depth, very interesting information you can view the Office of Legislative Oversight's report online at the County's website ([www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)). It's very long but you can get the gist from the executive summaries. The report is in 2 parts; the first looks back ten years and the 2nd looks forward six years. Altogether the summaries total 11 pages.

(continued on page 13)



## **Gleanings (continued from page 12)**

Construction of the second garage for the Glenmont Metro Station is due to start around February and be finished in early 2012. It will hold 1200 autos and, when added to the current garage's capacity of 1700 spaces, there will be around 3000 autos arriving in the morning and leaving in the evening. Plus, the firehouse at Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road will be relocated to just north of the new garage. Just across from all this is the Privacy World apartment complex. There was a development application filed several years ago to replace the 350 rental units currently on the property with a 1550 unit mixture of townhouses, condos and apartments; that project is currently in limbo, as there has been a 2½ year lapse since the last hearing on the matter was postponed. With a possible 4000 residents there if the request is fully approved, it is my opinion that 1550 is far too many units for that location.

The Mid-County Recreation Center is due to open around July 2011. That's much later than planned, due to serious budget cuts to recreation centers in general. Final checkout and furniture deliveries are occurring presently.

Remember the Clarksburg situation that began about six years ago with the finding of many transgressions committed by the developers? Well, guess what? The people of Clarksburg are still waiting for the problems there to be solved and promised amenities & transportation to be delivered. Community leaders from that town have not been quiet about the failures but county politicians have done very, very little to ameliorate the problems of that long suffering area. If you wish to find the culprit, Cherchez La Developer(s).

By the way, if you look out your windows at night & notice your streetlight is not lit, call 311 & report it.