

# The Bugle

*Published by the Strathmore-Bel Pre Civic Association*

*February 2012*

*Issue: 12.01*

## The President's Corner

- by Nancy Bechtol

Welcome to our winter edition of The Bugle, and our first issue this year. I would like to thank Charlie Bea for his years of service as our Bugle layout person extraordinaire. He pulled together all the articles and advertisements for each issue and somehow made this content look fabulous for us all to enjoy. He has asked to step down from this volunteer position, and luckily Chris Swan and Elliot Chabot have both agreed to step right in and take over this huge job. This is the first issue they have developed, and I am most pleased with this seamless transition. I can't thank Charlie enough for all these years of service, and for Chris and Elliot's willingness to fill in. Brian Lev continues to assist with editing every issue and I am most grateful for his continued support making sure each article looks its best. This is indeed a volunteer organization and everyone involved in our civic association duties plays a critical part in our success.

We welcomed the largest crowd in recent history to our combined annual meeting of the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association and the Bel Pre Recreational Association on November 17, 2011. We had 107 people sign in that night, and we voted for new board members and possible by-law wording changes. We voted in renewed terms for Max Bronstein, Maury Potosky, Dan Thomas and I at this meeting for the Civic Association board as well as new BPRA board members that evening. We also discussed and handed out the newly written 2011 Annual Report for our Civic Association which was written again this year by our Treasurer, John Bogasky. This is a fabulous document which helps us keep track of all the great community effort going on within our neighborhood each year.

We completed rebuilding our community sign at Hathaway and Layhill Road thanks to John Bogasky for project managing this effort, and our same contractors who have assisted in rebuilding this sign a second time this year. It is beautiful yet again and we hope it stays that way for at least a couple decades this time! I wanted to also mention a new initiative to update our Civic Association website. We have two board members, Bill Hammond and Adam Shepard whom have teamed up to tackle this much needed effort. We all can't wait to see what they come up with later this Spring.

As you can see, your Civic Association board is busy helping in our community as best we can. Please let us know if you have any ideas, want to assist with our activities or just want to attend one of our meetings. We welcome your interest and ideas, anytime!

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# THE BUGLE

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**Brian Lev, Editor 301-460-1048**

Layout: Chris Swan/Elliot Chabot 301-871-1113

Advertising: Harry Klapper 301-460-9645

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Send information for The Bugle to: [blev@his.com](mailto:blev@his.com) or to 2701 Bellmawr Court by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

## **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

Co-Webmaster: Bill Hammond 301-871-5074

Co-Webmaster: Adam Shepard 727-871-0393

### **Civic Association 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

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: Ed Frantz 301-603-8055

[ed\\_frantz@comcast.net](mailto:ed_frantz@comcast.net)

Vice President: Karen Potocki 609-947-1256

[karenpotocki@yahoo.com](mailto:karenpotocki@yahoo.com)

Treasurer: Keith Yockelson 301-460-8555

[number1pools@verizon.net](mailto:number1pools@verizon.net)

Secretary: Dan Keating 301-603-8162

[dtkeats@gmail.com](mailto:dtkeats@gmail.com)

### **Bel Pre Recreation Association Trustees/Directors**

Robert Bowser 301 460-3444 [r.tbowser@verizon.net](mailto:r.tbowser@verizon.net)

Paulette Ladas 301 674-7742 [pauletteladas@remax.net](mailto:pauletteladas@remax.net)

Dan Entwisle 301-871-9363 [twisles@msn.com](mailto:twisles@msn.com)

Lou Ann Rector 301-603-8805 [louann.rector@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:louann.rector@fsis.usda.gov)

Sue Hoyer 301 603-9559 [sue@hoyes.org](mailto:sue@hoyes.org)

Anthony Wormack 202-468-3565 [awwormack@gmail.com](mailto:awwormack@gmail.com)

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

Admin Asst: Brenda Henry 301-871-6298

Pavilion Usage: Louisa Hoar 301-871-2954

## Gleanings From Meetings + More

-by Max Bronstein

September's meeting of the Montgomery County Civic Federation centered around a discussion of "sustainability," defined as "...development that meets the needs of the present; without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Something to think about.

The October meeting's program concerned public safety and speakers were Police Chief Tom Manger and Dr. David Wilson, Chair of the Criminology, Law and Society Department at George Mason University. The major topic was a proposed curfew law. Dr. Wilson related that 8 studies show that curfews do not have much effect in reducing crime. Chief Manger pointed out that with the inability to enlarge his staff of officers due to financial restraints, a curfew would serve as a "force multiplier" to, in effect, make his police more efficient in carrying out their duties. Councilmember Andrews also spoke and felt the anti-loitering law he proposed was a better solution than the curfew bill. As it turns out, both proposed laws have been tabled for the time being.

The meeting in November was about the county's five Regional Service Centers. The directors of those offices all spoke. They all told the meeting that they were the one-person gang now running those offices. In the past the regions all had several staff members, but fiscal restraints caused the loss of those staffs. Our community (continued on page 6)

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## Bel Pre Recreation Association Notes

-by Ed Frantz, President

The Annual Meeting of the Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) was held on November 17th. Three new Board members were elected to serve three year terms: Karen Potocki, Robert

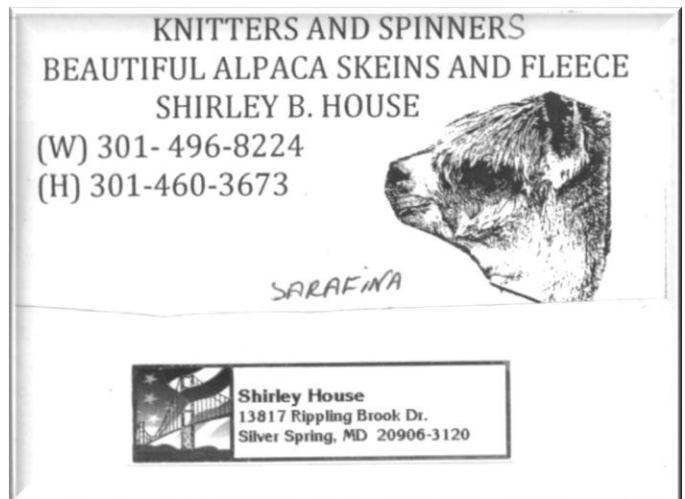
Bowser and Anthony Wormack. Congratulations to all three new members on behalf of the entire Board. The newly elected members will serve with remaining Board members Sue Hoye, Paulette Ladas, Lou Ann Rector, Ed Frantz, Keith Yockelson and Dan Entwisle.

At our first Board meeting following the November annual meeting, the Board elected officers to serve for the next year. I will serve as President, Karen Potocki as Vice President, Keith Yockelson as Treasurer, and Dan Keating, while no longer a Board member, has agreed to assist the Board by serving as Secretary.

I would like to thank outgoing Board members John Adamo, Dan Keating and Arthur Meister for their many years of volunteer service to the community.

All BPRA members should have received annual assessment letters at the beginning of February. Your annual assessment will remain unchanged again this year. Your \$225 is used almost entirely for the maintenance and operation of the pool & tennis courts and maintenance of the remainder of the common property. Most members send in their assessment payments promptly each year -- thank you for doing so again this year.

In closing, a reminder: the BPRA Board usually meets on the 4th Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. During the summer, we meet at the pool pavilion, and the rest of the year we meet in the Bel Pre Elementary School library. All members are welcome to attend.



## Strathmore Bel-Pre Civic E-Mail ListServe

-by John Bogasky

-Have you heard the very latest? Join the Civic Association listserve and catch up on the news.

The SBPcivic listserve is open to all Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association members. If you are a Civic Association member who has not yet joined the listserv, the easiest way to join is to send me an email at [johnbogasky@hotmail.com](mailto:johnbogasky@hotmail.com). Please include your name and street address so I can confirm your Civic Association membership.

Not a Civic Association Member? Join now for the annual \$15 membership cost. Please mail your check, made out to "SBPCA", to: SBPCA Treasurer, P.O. Box 6836, Silver Spring, MD 20906.

Be sure to include a note with any email addresses for your household, so they can join the SBPcivic listserve, and catch up on the news.

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## Gleanings (continued from page 3)

is located in the Mid-County Region, and its service center is located on Reddie Drive in Wheaton across from Dunkin' Donuts. The director is Ana Lopez van Balen, phone # 311.

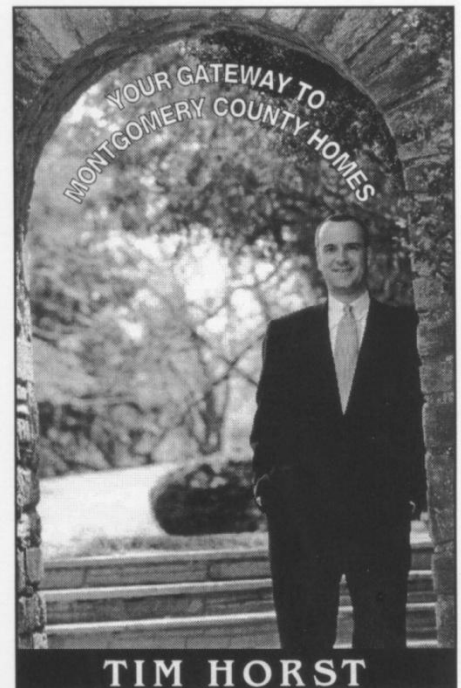
December's meeting featured information about public transit in our county. Currently the county is served by Metrorail, Metrobus, Ride-On, and Metro Access which serves elderly as well as handicapped individuals. Metro Forward, a \$5 billion, 6 year rebuilding program for improving service and reliability, was also discussed. It is no secret that Metro/WMATA currently has many problems and challenges: a \$116 million budget shortfall; escalator breakdowns; equipment maintenance needs; and planned fare increases & higher parking charges. "Get out your bikes and pogo sticks".

The January meeting covered the process involved in erecting cellphone towers. One award has been appealed to the courts and no final decision has been made. See more on the Federation online at [www.montgomerycivic.org](http://www.montgomerycivic.org).

The Montgomery County Taxpayer's League meeting in October was about the comparison between Montgomery County and Fairfax County, VA, in regard to their respective programs and efforts for encouraging economic development. Guests were Steve Silverman, Director, Department of Economic Development, Montgomery County; and Gerald Gordon, President, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. Mr. Gordon stated that Virginia and Fairfax have been proactive for 30 years in attracting and retaining businesses; that they have a yearly budget of \$7 million; have overseas offices; that both the state and the county grant incentives to attract businesses; and there is presently a 13% office space vacancy rate.

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## **Gleanings (continued from page 6)**

In comparison, Mr. Silverman stated that Montgomery County has a budget of \$5 million; no overseas offices; staff of 28; the county alone grants incentives for locating businesses in the county; and there are currently 4 million square feet of vacant class A office space. It was pointed out that the presence of the Dulles Airport in Fairfax was a major advantage for that county.

In December the League hosted the Director of Montgomery County's Department of Health & Human Services, Uma Ahluwalia. The ensuing discussion brought out a number of interesting items. Among them: the department provides more than 60 programs & services to residents with a total budget of \$242 million; however, this is a reduced amount that has been made up by longer hours & harder work by employees; and about 120,000 residents have no health insurance. On a related subject, Bill 40-11 has been introduced to exempt group homes for the developmentally disabled from county oversight, but State monitoring would continue. This writer raised the question as to whether other types of group homes would be included in the bill. No answer yet. See more on the League online at [www.mctaxpayersleague.org](http://www.mctaxpayersleague.org).

The September meeting of CivicLink, with County Executive Ike Leggett, discussed a range of subjects. Among them: an expected budget shortfall of \$100 million; that property reassessments for property taxes are behind schedule (property tax collections are consequently less than they should be, particularly for business property); ongoing problems with unlicensed contractors; and a discussion of the current test for approval of new construction known as PAMR vs. a new test introduced over a year ago labeled TPAR.

At the January CivicLink meeting many issues previously discussed came up again including: a report on a 5 month delay in filling a request to trim a large branch dangling dangerously from high up in a county maintained tree next to a homeowner's mailbox; more questions about Bill 40-11 & group homes; issues concerning condo communities & assigning of a task force to examine those issues; and a suggestion that Mr. Leggett use his "bully pulpit" to advocate for the implementation of TPAR, now languishing 18 months since it was formulated at a cost of \$110,000.

There was short meeting in late October about replacement of the McDonald's in Plaza del Mercado. The plan is to replace the current structure with a slightly larger building without a play area in front. A special exception hearing on the project was scheduled for January 23d. Incidentally, a phone conversation with a Federal Realty Investment Trust (Mercado's owner) representative bore out that they are still trying to get a tenant for the space vacated by the Giant in Mercado. (continued on page 8)

## Gleanings (continued from page 7)

A meeting was held in November at Leisure World to disseminate information regarding replacement of the vacant Vitro office building near Aspen Hill Rd. & Connecticut Ave. with a Walmart store. Representatives of the property owner (Lee Development Group) & Walmart conducted the meeting. Another small meeting on this subject took place in December with a Walmart representative & community members who served to help fashion the Aspen Hill Master Plan which was approved in April 1994. Yes, those youngsters are still with us, including Elliot Chabot, currently a board member of the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association. The next meeting was scheduled for January 18th at the Aspen Hill Library.

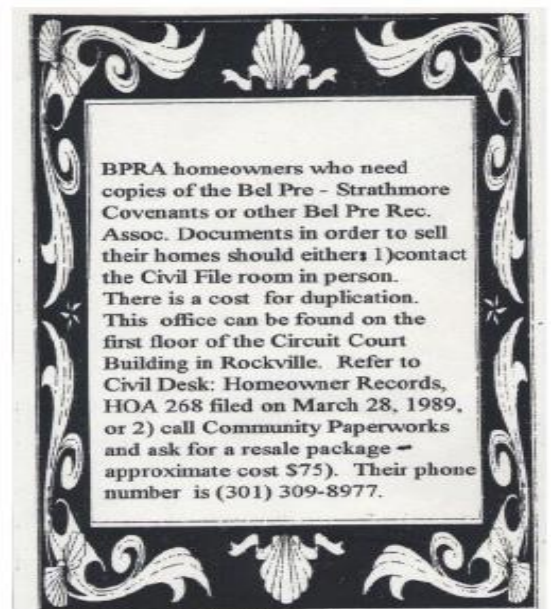
The project proposed for Privacy World, also known as Glenmont Metrocentre, delayed since August of 2008, has revived with a hearing scheduled for February 10, 2012. This is to give the applicant a chance to show that the up to 1550 units plus retail space proposed there would not adversely affect nearby traffic. Some of the elements involved are the grade separation at Georgia Ave. & Randolph Rd. with completion in approximately 2017, plus the fire house due by early 2014 on the west side of Georgia, just north of the new Metro garage. Do you feel that with all the items mentioned that a greatly expanded community just north of the Glenmont Metro would not have an adverse effect on nearby traffic?

Stay tuned for more notes from THE BUGLE!

### 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 [echabot@usa.net](mailto:echabot@usa.net)

One of the original logos for our subdivision –





## 50 Plus Club News

-by Maurice Potosky

The 50 Plus Club continues its activities. We will be meeting monthly at various members' homes. The February meeting was scheduled for February 15th at the home of Carl and Marilyn Kessler. Our meetings normally include socialization, discussion of community affairs, and planning of activities for the winter and early spring. On Wednesday, March 14, we will attend Toby's Dinner Theater to see their production of "The King and I". The show is preceded by a lavish buffet, with doors opening at 6:00 PM. Congratulations to Winnie Cowgill on her 90<sup>th</sup>! For further information on our activities, please contact Charlotte Potosky at 301-460-9008.

## Yard Sale!!

-by Chris Swan

Save the date: The annual Civic Association Yard Sale will be held June 2, 2012!

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 June!.



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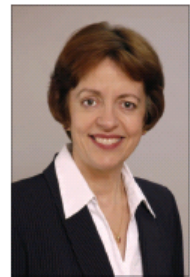
**Flood Coverage** - Most policies cover water damage that occurs from above the ground, such as roof leakage, storm water pushed through window voids, and burst plumbing. Water that rises or seeps into a basement from the ground is considered a flood and is not insured. If you are concerned about ground 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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## **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!! Last year we delivered more than 700 postcards from the Aspen Hill Library, and our library was the only Montgomery County library to get a special line item in the County Council's budget. The Council's decision turned out to be right -- we are the only Montgomery County Public Library with a 2011 **increase** in circulation.

### **Construction at the Library**

Wondering about all that construction going on outside the Library? The state and county funded storm water management project at the Library is underway. Several new water drains have been installed, and the fundamental hardware and shape of the bio-retention pond and rain gardens built. The plantings and the reforestation will take place in the spring. The project is being run by the County Department of Environmental Protection, with input from the Library Department, the Aspen Hill Garden Club, Friends of the Aspen Hill Library, and the Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee.

### **Annual Meeting**

April 21, 2012, is the date for the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Library, held in the Community Room at the Aspen Hill Library. Everyone is welcome to attend, and to join the Friends of the Aspen Hill Library. Help us support your library. For more information, contact the Friends at [aspenhill@folmc.org](mailto:aspenhill@folmc.org) or (301) 871-1113.

### **Spring Book Sale**

The Spring Book Sale will be Saturday, May 19, 2012, from 10 am to 3 pm, at the Library. In addition to over 10,000 books, this sale will also feature hundreds of vinyl LPs, and DVDs, CDs, and puzzles. The books are organized into over 30 subjects, including large selections 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, records, or puzzles for the book sale, contact the Friends at [aspenhill@folmc.org](mailto:aspenhill@folmc.org) or (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 fourth annual Caribbean-American Heritage Celebration will be held at the Aspen Hill Library on Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, from 1:30 pm to 4 pm. Good music, fun food, and dancing!



## Volunteers Needed for July 4th Planning

- by Lilla Hammond

***The 2012 July 4th Planning Committee is looking for a few good 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.

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

Marilyn Biviano: [biviano@verizon.net](mailto:biviano@verizon.net)

Harry Klapper: [hjksbk@msn.com](mailto:hjksbk@msn.com)

You may also check Strathmore Bel Pre's community's website at [www.strathmore-belpre.org](http://www.strathmore-belpre.org) . Updates will be posted as they are available. Thanks!!!

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