

Volume 45, No. 1 July 25, 2000

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## **The Mayor's Den**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL CONFIRMS VOTE ON TRAFFIC STUDY**

At press time (Tuesday afternoon, July 25) the County Council voted to stand by its decision of last month to require traffic studies of only four intersections before it acts on the rezoning application for the Chevy Chase Center parking lot. The studies will be conducted by the Chevy Chase Land Company, owner of the shopping center.

The four intersections are:

- Dorset and Wisconsin
- Bradley and Wisconsin
- Bradley and Connecticut
- Western and 41st Street, N.W.

Traffic counts will be conducted after Labor Day, when schools are in session and most vacations are over. Vehicles will be counted from 4 to 6 p.m., not until 6:45 as requested by the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights. Some studies have found traffic to be heaviest after 6 p.m. Also, the studies will not be "comprehensive," which would require inclusion of traffic expected to be generated by nearby developments that have already been approved.

#### **Last Month: Unanimous; This Month: Split**

Last month's unanimous vote garnered only six votes this time. Councilmembers Nancy Dacek, Blair Ewing and Marilyn Praisner voted against the "order of remand" since they favored a more comprehensive study. Phil Andrews favored the comprehensive study and voted with the minority on a key preliminary vote. He switched to the majority side when it became clear that only the watered down version would pass. Howard Denis, the Councilmember from our district, voted with the majority on the key and final votes.

Following completion of the traffic counts, Hearing Examiner Philip Tierney will conduct new hearings on the rezoning application and again submit recommendations to the County Council.

That body will then also hold new hearings and eventually vote again on whether to change the zoning from R-60 (which is the zone throughout Somerset) to TS-M (Transit Station-Mixed Uses).

Our Town Council meeting on August 7 includes the following agenda items scheduled for 8:55 p.m.

*Action on proposal to share the cost with Chevy Chase Village and Town of Chevy Chase of traffic study of Dorset/Wisconsin and three other intersections to compare results with those of similar study by Chevy Chase Land Co., ordered by County Council.*

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## **BE PART OF THE IN CROWD**

Be part of the Somerset crowd that's in the know by joining the Town's e-mail database. Almost 100 families are already part of this group that will be notified about such subjects as changes in trash and recycling collections, irregular Town office hours and temporary parking restrictions.

Actually, the system was inaugurated last Monday with a notice about temporary NO PARKING notices signed by "Bureau of Police." The signs had been authorized so that a contractor could seal cracks in streets throughout Town. The wording, specifically, the "Bureau of Police" part, had not been authorized. (The contractor, a Pennsylvania company, alleges that this is the approved wording in that state.)

To be included in the database, send an e-mail to [clerk@townofsomerset.com](mailto:clerk@townofsomerset.com) or call Tom Carter at 301-657-3211. If you aren't certain whether or not you have already joined the network, we will be glad to check for you.

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## **PUBLIC WORKS - IF IT DOESN'T RAIN**

Sealing of cracks in the street pavement, mentioned above, is not the only public works project planned for this summer  $\frac{3}{4}$  and now rescheduled to start on August 7.

Another undertaking by the Town, to improve the safety of children walking to Somerset School, is slated to begin on July 31. It involves widening the sidewalk on Cumberland Avenue between Warwick Lane (alley) and the school parking lot from four to six feet. Also included are three new handicap ramps adjoining the new sidewalk.

Across the driveway into the school entrance, on the south side near the Pepco pole, we are building a new handicap ramp in a slightly different location from the existing one and replacing some curbs and cracked sidewalk sections.

When the contractor finishes the concrete work, our maintenance men will paint a wider, slightly realigned crosswalk at this intersection.

### **The Long and Short of Pepco Poles**

Earlier this month, one other public works project was completed that, I'm sure, few residents noticed. Ever since the horrendous windstorm of 1989, we have had double Pepco poles at three locations ¾ Greystone at River Road, Surrey at Cumberland and between 4709 and 4719 Dorset. After 11 years, the older, shorter poles were finally removed.

As mentioned in last months' *Town Journal*, Pepco poles with red rings painted a few feet above the ground will be replaced, probably in August, with taller poles in order to accommodate wires for Starpower. The Pepco subsidiary has advised us that they will be offering cable TV in Somerset this fall and, later, Internet access and telephone service.

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## **SIDEWALK MAKES TRAIL ACCESS SAFER**

Accessing the Capital Crescent Trail at Dorset Avenue in Kenwood is now a lot safer as a result of a sidewalk completed last week on Dorset between Little Falls Parkway and the hiker-biker-skater-jogger path.

Efforts by the Town of Somerset were a major factor in convincing the County to act despite objections by Kenwood House apartments. Residents there refused to grant an easement, but after a survey, the County was able to narrow the street a bit and build the curb and sidewalk strictly in County right-of-way. No cherry trees or landscape plantings were affected.

Gravel, pipes and heavy equipment you may have observed at the corner of the parkway and Dorset, on the Kenwood side, have nothing to do with the sidewalk. The site is the staging area for a contractor who is replacing or lining all of the water mains in Kenwood.

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## **REVENUE FROM LEAF VACUUM, SNOWSTORM**

It is a pleasure to report that the Town received two checks this month that were not budgeted, but were nonetheless welcome.

U.S. Lawns of Olney paid \$3,000 for our ancient leaf vacuum, which we replaced with a new, more powerful model late last fall. The deal was welcome not only for the money, but also because it resulted in removal of an eyesore from the Town Hall parking lot.

The other check was from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), reimbursing the town 75 percent of the cost of snow clearing following the serious storm last January 25. The \$7,060 check would not have been possible without detailed reports on our expenditures prepared by Tom Carter.

## **Making Waves**

### **POOL IS NOT JUST FOR SWIMMING**

By Alan Proctor, Pool Committee Chair

The Pool Committee has arranged a number of events over the coming months and some may be of interest to you and your family.

*Idea:* please read through this summary, and if you see something of interest, write it down on your calendar now. We've had some good times already and more are in the making. They'll be even greater if they include you and your family.

· Family potlucks are scheduled for Sunday, August 13, and Saturday, August 26, at 5:00 p.m. in the picnic area. These are a simple, fun way to cover dinner. Bring a salad, dessert or other side dish and join in the potluck. The Pool Committee provides hot dogs, drinks and paper plates and utensils.

· We also have movie nights planned for Saturday, August 26, and Saturday, September 9. Where else can you get a free movie under the stars, with drinks and popcorn for children of all ages, and be able to cool off in the pool while you're watching?

· And sometime during the last two weeks of August, we will reschedule the teen party that was canceled earlier this season because of rain.

Be there, or be square!

The Pool Committee would also like to thank Katie Stellar for her participation as a member of the committee over the past year. Katie served as "teen rep" on the committee and, in addition to her enthusiasm and energy, brought an extra element of diversity to the committee. Thanks, Katie.

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### **SWIM TEAM WINS 4 OUT OF 5**

By Sarah Morse

The swim team season is almost over. By all measures, it was a successful one. The Somerset Dolphins finished with a four and one record. Dominating in

the 8-and-under age group events, they beat Forest Knolls, 402 to 343; Tanglewood, 387 to 364; Connecticut Belair, 402 to 356; and Parkland, 440 to 277. Only top-seeded Old Farm was able to defeat them and only by 21 points with a score of 378 to 357. As Somerset was seeded fifth in the M Division, it proved to be a very exciting season.

The Division M Championship meet was Saturday, July 22. Only the top swimmers from each team in the division competed. Somerset swimmers swam hard and many personal bests were achieved. They captured 13 first places. Unfortunately, the team finished in fifth place, giving them a fourth place standing in the division.

More swimmers swam faster than in recent years. Seven distinguished themselves by swimming All-Star qualifying times in 11 events. Eight new pool records were set. One swimmer, Adam Bookman, and four relay teams are advancing to the

All-Star meets. Leah Loversky, age 8, placed fourth in the Coaches Invitational Long Course 50-meter free style. Only eight swimmers from the entire Montgomery County Swim League were invited to this event.

#### **Fourth, Fifth Place Swimmers Make Difference**

Meets, however, are not won just by first-place swimmers. Fourth- and fifth-place swimmers make the points that result in team victories. Every time a fifth-place swimmer swims a little faster and comes in fourth, the team gets one more point. With 50 events per meet, these single points add up to a win. So, congratulations to all Somerset swimmers. It is clear from the win record that fourth- and fifth-place swimmers were doing their jobs.

Somerset participated in three other meets this year. For the first time, the team swam in two Wednesday night meets (B-meets) against Bethesda and Palisades. These mid-week meets, while not counted in the division standing, gave every swimmer a chance to compete in any stroke he/she liked. Head Coach Maleka Vrana and Assistant Coaches Ian Mitchard, Jake Goss and Nina Kessler did a terrific job of keeping all these meets straight and swimmers well prepared.

There was also a special home meet just for the mini team. The swim team acted as timers and officials, while the minis competed in free style, back and kick board. Everyone had fun watching these new swimmers race. It was the first time that some children made it across the pool, a real achievement. Many thanks go to minis coach Jake Goss and assistant coaches Sarah Sullivan, Katie Steller, Adam Bookman and Maurie Kathan for making the developmental team possible.

#### **Banquet Marks End of Season**

A little afternoon rain did nothing to stop the season finale, the team banquet. This much-anticipated event featured trophies, trophies and more trophies. Every swimmer on the team received a small participation trophy. The coaches also recognized each swimmer with a personalized "paper plate" award, highlighting some aspect of the swimmer's season. To name just a few, Abby Kathan got the "no award" for successfully guarding the brownies after practice one day. Matt Helfgott was awarded the "frijita face" plate for his expertise in making faces out of tortillas. Faith Greiner and Leah Loversky got the "Siamese twin" plate aware because they were never seen apart.

The coaches also gave six more serious awards for achievement. Katie McDougal and Jacob Heller received awards for the most improved swimmers. Anna Wisniewski, Merril Fortier, Brooks Lape and Luke Greiner received awards recognizing their hard work and contributions to the team.

Swimmers are also awarded trophies based on how many points they score for the team in Saturday meets. A first place is 6 points, second 4, third 3, fourth 2 and fifth 1. Michael Young, Tristan Kessler, Sarah Sullivan and Clare Hanlon scored over 100 points. Adam Bookman scored more than 125.

There were two 75-point winners <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Leah Loversky and Kevin Young. Fifty-point trophies went to Bess Pickar, Katie Steller, Faith Greiner, Merrill Fortier, Maurie Kathan, Isaac Sorenson, Toby Kathan and Pat Sprehe. Twenty-five-point trophies went to Mark Berry, Miles Batson, Matthew Bookman, Jack Berry, Nicky

Kessler, Ben Sullivan, Tom Belikove, Brooks Lape, Jerome Josz, Anna Wisniewski, Katie McDougal, Alexandra Lis-Perlis, Erin McDougal and Esther Sorenson.

### **Parent Volunteers Score in First Place**

Many thanks are due parents who work very hard to make Somerset such a fabulous team. Sandy Levick coordinated the many timers needed for each meet. Donna McDougal, Penny Helfgott and Mary Wisniewski ran the concessions. Alison Fortier acted as clerk of course at every meet, making sure that swimmers got to their races. Hali Edson was clerk of course for the B-meets. Hats off to her for taking on that challenging job. Jerry McDougal and Gerry Helfgott did a yeoman's job of keeping on top of all the team data.

David Kathan, Joanne Steller, Pamela Cox, Bob Bookman and Jim Berry are seasoned, certified officials. Frank Loversky and Mark Perlis took the training this year to join them. David Kathan took on another job as a certified starter, joining Joanne Steller. John Sullivan continues to be the best head timer in the league. Joan Rabinor was responsible for all those ribbons and making sure that everyone had directions to the meets.

Taking on the job of announcer, David Batson added a new dimension to the home meets with his wonderful music. Melanie Krynitsky acted as banquet chair and did a fabulous job. Sarah

Morse continued as team rep. Countless other parents volunteered to time, run social events and do errands. If points were given to parents for their part, Somerset would always win first place.

## **Town Hall Tidbits**

By Tom Carter

### **OFFICE SCHEDULE IN AUGUST**

Town Hall office hours for the week of July 31-August 4 will be from 9:30 to 4:30 to allow Tom to drop off his daughter at a summer camp in Centreville, Virginia. Tom will be away on vacation from August 28 through September 7. Corrie Morsey will be in the office on Thursday, August 31, and Tuesday, September 5.

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### **NEW EMPLOYEE**

Enrique Cabrera has joined our maintenance staff as a laborer after two months as an independent contractor for us. Enrique came highly recommended by fellow employee Felix Vasquez and immediately fit in with the team. Both Enrique and Felix hail from the Dominican Republic.

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### **TOWN TREES AND GROUNDS**

Don't forget to help us by watering the Town trees in your yard when no rain has fallen in several days.

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### **REMINDERS TO DOG OWNERS**

The Town Code requires that you keep your dog on a leash whenever the pet is not on your property and that you pick up the feces after your dog does its duty. Please keep our parks and your neighbors' yards clean from dog messes. Fines of up to \$100 can be imposed!

Do **not** dispose of your dog's droppings in the Town trash receptacles. It is a violation of County rules to dispose of excrement in the trash. The proper place for it is in the toilet.

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## POOL PASSES

Just a reminder that we have two types of guest passes for the pool:

**Weekly:** A 7-day pass for out-of-town houseguests that can be purchased at the Town Hall for \$5 each.

**Daily:** A 5-visit pass for one day per visit that is sold at the pool for \$10 (\$2 per visit).

Remember, both types of passes must be purchased with a check made out to "Town of Somerset." Cash cannot be accepted.

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## PERMITS GRANTED

The following permits were issued by the Mayor during the past month: (Building permits are approved by the Town Council.)

Curb Cut: Faye and Sheldon Cohen, 5518 Trent Street, to redirect storm water drainage.

Driveway Apron: Caroline and Stephen Springer, 4824 Dorset Avenue..

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## ODD JOB HELPERS

The following residents have asked to be listed to do **odd jobs** for other residents at a price to be negotiated between them [general chores (G), baby-sitting (B), pet care/walking (P)].

Alex Baldinger (P), 301-657-4613 Maurie Kathan (B), 301-907-3298 Michael & Patrick McGarrah (G), 301-652-7385

5533 Warwick Place 4920 Dorset Avenue 4608 Dorset Avenue

Michael Finkelstein (GP), 301-654-0322 Toby Kathan (P), 301-907-3298 Patrick McGhee (GBP), 301-986-0880

5527 Surrey Street 4608 Dorset Avenue 5407 Surrey Street

Cate Helfgott (GBP), 301-657-3010 David Marx (GBP), 301-951-9593 Katie Steller (B), 301-718-7382



5513 Uppingham Street 5402 Trent Street 5407 Greystone Street  
Adam & Daniel Heller (G), 301-654-5497 4803 Falstone Avenue

## **Council Actions**

At the July 10 meeting, the Council took the following actions:

1. Heard the Mayor's report of the following transfers in June, all in the General Fund:

Amount From To

\$ 500 GF Contingency GF Tennis

500 GF Contingency GF Pool

500 GF Contingency GF Batting Cage

2. Approved the following transfers in the General Fund and Capital Projects Fund:

Amount From To

\$ 1,000 GF Salaries GF Refuse

4,000 CPF Contingency GF Pool

2,500 GF Contingency GF Pool

3. Approved a building permit for Luz Froehlich, 5531 Warwick Place, to move her gazebo from Town parkland to her back yard.

4. Heard a presentation by Bonnie Mann, Executive Director of Seniors' Interfaith Resource Center, describing her outreach services and opportunities for volunteers.

5. Authorized payment of annual dues of 2,844.30 to Maryland Municipal League for FY-01 and an annual premium of \$4,380.00 to Montgomery County Self-Insurance Program.

6. Confirmed the appointment of Bridget Cowie to the Swimming Pool Committee.

7. Determined that no building permit was required for Judy and Tom Bowles, 5816 Surrey Street, to build an arbor and trellis in their yard.

8. Approved a resolution authorizing the Somerset Elementary School PTA's request to close the Wisconsin Avenue entrances on September 24 from 7:45 to 9:30 a.m. for their annual 8-kilometer race.

9. Authorized street crack sealing work by E. J. Brenneman, Inc., at the rate of \$20 per gallon of sealant plus hiring Bill German as our inspector at \$20 per hour.

10. Voted to continue our contract with Davey Tree Expert Company at the new rate of \$44 per man-hour.

11. Approved \$6,500 for Fort Myer Construction to widen the sidewalk on Cumberland Avenue between Warwick Lane and the school parking lot, replace three handicap ramps and add a fourth.

12. Authorized the Mayor to hire a traffic consultant to look at the issues of parking on Uppingham and other Town streets, pedestrian safety at Somerset School and the possibility of widening the Dorset Avenue entrance at Wisconsin Avenue.

## **Legislation**

At the July 10 meeting, the Council:

1. Introduced an amendment to the Building Code to require building permit applications to include the

name and phone number of contractors and Maryland Home Improvement Commission license numbers.

2. Approved an amendment to the Town Code limiting access to the Town Attorney.

## **‘CODE RED’ MEANS UNHEALTHFUL AIR**

Sunny, sultry days have been few and far between so far this summer, but they could occur anytime in the next two months. If they become unhealthful, the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) will designate them as "code red" days, and major television and radio stations will broadcast warnings.

On code red days, the County's Ride-On bus service will provide free rides to encourage use of mass transit by people who otherwise use cars. All buses, including Metro (WMATA) buses operating in Montgomery County, will cover their fare boxes for the day. Subway rides will **not** be free.

COG suggests four ways for individuals to help control pollution:

- Refuel after dark;
- Refrain from topping off at the filling station;

- Turn off your auto engine rather than letting it idle while you are parked;
- Postpone cutting grass with gasoline-powered mowers.

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## **Why Doesn't Anybody Read My E-Mails??**

By Gail Werner

Have you ever wondered if all those e-mails you send out to friends, family, co-workers and others are actually read? Or do they end up deleted, with your important message or announcement ignored? In these days of the LOVE BUG and other viruses that can wreak havoc on a computer, many people are trashing e-mails without opening them.

The key to getting your e-mails read is composing good subject lines. Often that's the only part of the correspondence that **is** read. Viewers scan the message titles in their in-box, deleting anything that seems suspect or out of line. It's good policy to write a subject line with your audience in mind. Think about what your reader will need to know, not what you want to tell him/her. And be as concrete as possible, giving much detailed information. A single identifying word can make a world of difference.

For example, a recent e-mail I received had the heading "Adult Party." Since I did not recognize the sender, I discarded it <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> fearing a porn attack. Had the concrete identifying word "Town" or the place or the occasion for the party appeared in the subject box, I would have read the message <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and so would others. The lesson to be learned from this is: when writing your subject line, include relevant details so your recipients understand why the letter is directed personally to them.

Reminder: View our Town site at <http://www.townofsomerset.com>.

## **Luau Theme**

### **81 FROLIC AT ADULT PARTY**

By Penny Helfgott and Donna McDougal

A threat of rain didn't dampen the spirit of 81 people who attended the July 15 adult party at the pool. Despite dire predictions of a downpour, the weather for the evening was glorious. Partygoers dined on a sampling of tropical dishes, in keeping with the luau theme.

Sparkling lights, glittering palm trees and festooned tents added to the island atmosphere. The ever-popular tiki bar made its return with rum punch served in carved-out coconuts and pineapples.

Thanks to those who lent a hand in setup and cleanup and a special thanks to all those who attended. Plans are underway for next year's party, to take place around the same time. The theme is a secret  $\frac{3}{4}$  let's just say we're "keeping it under our sombreros"!

## **Correspondence from Citizens**

### **ATTENTION, PSYCHOTHERAPISTS**

I am a psychologist with a part-time private coaching and counseling practice in Somerset. It seems that quite a few other psychotherapists also have practices in Somerset. I am wondering if there is any interest in meeting on a regular or occasional basis to discuss issues of common interest and identify ways that we might be helpful to one another professionally.

If you would like to talk about this further, please call me at 301-907-8805 or send me an e-mail at [jkreiser@earthlink.net](mailto:jkreiser@earthlink.net), with any questions and/or expressing your interest and the times it would be convenient to meet.

I hope to hear from you.

Jeanette Kreiser, Ed.D.

Falstone Avenue

## **Obituaries**

### **GEORGE SNOW, 73, DIES OF STROKE**

George A. Snow, 73, a University of Maryland professor emeritus who was recognized for his work toward establishing the standard model of particle physics, died June 24 at a hospital in Vancouver, B.C., after a stroke. He was in the city visiting his daughter.

A resident of Essex Avenue, he served four years on the Town Council, part of that time as Vice President of the Council. While chairman of Montgomery Municipal Cable, he worked as cameraman and editor for an art program produced by his wife, Lila. In 1972, George and Lila taught the first course on women's studies on the College Park campus.

He was a native of New York, a graduate of City College, a Fulbright fellow, a Guggenheim senior research fellow and a National Science Foundation fellow in Geneva. He earned master's and doctoral degrees in physics from Princeton.

Dr. John S. Toll, former President of the University of Maryland, said, "George Snow has been the university's equivalent of Fermi, equally adept at theory and experiment, teaching and research." George served on the university faculty from 1958 to 1992 and, as an emeritus professor, continued his research there until his death.

In addition to his wife, survivors include three children, Zachary Snow of New York, Andrew Snow of Bethesda and Sara Snow of Vancouver; two brothers; and eight grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Tuesday, August 29, at 10 a.m. in the University of Maryland Memorial Chapel. Contributions may be made to the George A. Snow Scholarship for Women in the University of Maryland Physics Department.

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## **AMOS WILDER DIES AT 30**

Amos Todd Wilder died aboard his boat on July 5. He was 30 years old.

He was born in New Haven, Connecticut, and moved to Somerset with his parents, Robin and Tappan Wilder, and his younger sister, Jenney, in 1979. Amos attended Somerset Elementary School and Westland Middle School. He graduated from St. Stephen's School in Alexandria, Virginia; received a B.A. from New England College, Henniker, New Hampshire; and was a graduate of the Chapman School of Seamanship, Stuart, Florida.

He studied and traveled extensively in England, Western and Eastern Europe and the Far East. In 1994, he studied Mandarin at Shenzhen University in China.

He worked for several years in office administration with Bond Beebe, an accounting firm in Washington, D.C., and as crew on private yachts. At his death he was sailing his yacht to his summer home in Maine.

Contributions in Amos' memory may be made to Hurricane Island, Outward Bound, 75 Mechanics Street, Rockland, ME 04841 or the Epilepsy Foundation of the Chesapeake Region, Attn: K. C. Chou, 300 E. Joppa Road, Ste. 1103, Towson, MD 21286.

# **Help for the Elderly**

## **SIRC PROVIDES SERVICES, NEEDS VOLUNTEERS**

At the July Town Council meeting, Bonnie C. Mann, Executive Director of the Seniors' Interfaith Resource Center, appealed for able-bodied residents to join SIRC in serving the elderly in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase, East Potomac and Kensington areas.

Friendly visitors provide conversation, grocery shopping and/or transportation to medical appointments at no cost. In addition, visitors help arrange such services as homemaker and home maintenance, personal care, legal and financial counseling and house calls by health care professionals.

SIRC is a nonprofit organization that is supported by, and works with, the Montgomery County government, religious congregations, businesses and individuals. More information about services provided and volunteer opportunities is available at the Town Hall and by calling SIRC at 301-962-0820.

## **SWITCH ELECTRIC SUPPLIERS OR DO NOTHING**

Customers may now choose the company that supplies their electricity. In the past, electricity was provided by one utility that serviced the customer's area. Electricity was a "bundled" product, with generation, transmission and distribution sold together. Buying electricity was simple, and now it still can be.

Only generation is deregulated. There are three parts to an electricity product: generation of the power at the power plant; transmission of the power over long distances; and distribution of the power to local homes and businesses. That means that the company that delivers power to your home will still be the same, no matter whom you buy generation from. Reliability of service should not be affected, but if you have problems, you will still call Pepco.

Customers do not have to do anything. Choosing a supplier is optional. If you do not make a choice, you will continue to receive power under what is called the "standard offer service."

It is easy to get help with your decision. The County provides information through the Office of Consumer Affairs at 240-777-3636 and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) at 240-777-7700. You can get information at the DEP website at [www.askDEP.com](http://www.askDEP.com). The Maryland Public Service Commission has a brochure, "Consumer Guide to Electric Choice," available by calling 1-800-800-4491 or from the web at: [www.md-electric-info.com](http://www.md-electric-info.com).

The purpose of deregulation is to create competition, which should result in lower prices for consumers in the future.

# Vacation Time

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR HOME SECURE

Here are some suggestions from the Montgomery County Police Department on how you can make your home secure during this vacation season:

- Double-check all door and window locks to ensure that they're locked.
- Give your home a lived-in look, even when you're not on vacation.
- Connect telephones to a recorder or a phone-forwarding service.
- Leave lights on timers in several locations inside  $\frac{3}{4}$  sunset to midnight.
- Leave lights on timers outside, whenever possible  $\frac{3}{4}$  sunset to sunrise.
- Leave a radio on a timer. Locate it in the rear interior area. Turn the volume up loud enough so if someone is near your home, they may hear it  $\frac{3}{4}$  sunset to approximately 10:00 p.m.
- Arrange to have your lawn mowed.
- Have a neighbor or relative pick up newspapers and mail daily. Don't let them stack the newspapers and the mail where someone outside could see the stacks.
- Hide your garbage cans or ask a neighbor to use them occasionally.
- Leave the air conditioner on. You may use a higher temperature setting than usual.
- Don't leave all the blinds, shades, shutters or curtains in one position. Mix them.
- Don't advertise your vacation plans. Tell only one relative or neighbor you can trust.
- Don't leave vacation plans and dates in open view inside your home.
- Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on your home. Return the favor when that neighbor is away.
- Ask a neighbor or relative to park a car in your driveway if you don't have a car of your own to leave behind.
- Secure your valuables in a safe-deposit box.

Good security habits are just as important as improving the physical security of your home. Make sure your relative or neighbor knows how to reach you in case of an emergency. Every extra precaution can help. Ask that your neighbors or relatives checking your home call the

police if there are signs of suspicious activities or crimes. To call the police, dial **911** for emergencies, and **301-279-8000** for non-emergency.

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