

Volume 45, No. 5 November 20, 2000

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MAYOR'S DEN

By Walter J. Behr

'CHANCE OF SNOW' -- ARE YOU READY?

Last month, we urged residents to make snow removal plans even though the weather was almost balmy. Now it is time to get serious as the mercury has dropped and the official forecast is "chance of snow."

In his column on page 5 of this *Town Journal*, Tom Carter reminds residents of their obligation to clear Town sidewalks, the options available for help and the procedure for signing up to have the Town contractor do the job.

Two details were not mentioned last month because they had not been finalized. They are as follows:

- If sanding is necessary to make the sidewalks safer, the contractor will supply and spread it for \$6 per public sidewalk (\$12 for corner lots with two sidewalks). This will be paid to the contractor by the Town along with the snow clearing charge and deducted from the \$100 deposited with the Town (\$200 for corner lots with two sidewalks). Please see contractor's snow shoveling charges on page 2.
- In order to prevent any misunderstanding, residents who desire the services of the contractor are asked to sign a simple, one-page "REQUEST," which summarizes the arrangement.

Whether you do your own shoveling and sanding or make arrangements with young residents or sign up for our contractor, Mulheron Tree Experts, to do the job, let's make our sidewalks safe for all pedestrians this winter.

Mulheron will also plow, sand and, if necessary, salt our streets. Obviously, they cannot do their job where vehicles are parked, so, **PLEASE**, if you can, park in your driveway until the street has been treated.

Priority streets for plowing, sanding and possibly salting are the dead end block of Essex, Greystone from River Road to Uppingham; and the Somerset

School "circuit": Warwick between Dorset and Cumberland; Cumberland between Warwick and Surrey; Surrey from Cumberland to Dorset; and Dorset between Surrey and Warwick. As always, a portion of Cumberland starting at Surrey will be blocked off for sledding.

MULHERON RATES FOR CLEARING SNOW

FROM TOWN OF SOMERSET SIDEWALKS

Hand shoveling 1" - 4"	1 - 10 houses
\$28.00	
	11 - 50 houses
\$22.50	
	51 - 75 houses
\$20.00	
	76 - 100 houses
\$19.00	
	over 100 houses
\$18.00	
Hand shoveling 4.1" - 8"	1 - 10 houses
\$36.00	
	11 - 50 houses
\$31.50	
	51 - 75 houses
\$28.00	
	76 - 100 houses
\$26.50	
	over 100 houses
\$25.00	
Hand shoveling 8.1" and over	1 - 50 houses
\$48.00	

\$42.50 51 - 100 houses

\$38.00 over 100 houses

Sanding: \$6.00 per sidewalk

Corner houses that have sidewalks on both sides will be considered two houses.

PERMITS RECEIVED FOR EROSION CONTROL PROJECT

The lengthy process involved in arranging to control erosion of the Little Falls Branch creek bed in Somerset is nearing an end. We have received both required permits - one from the County Department of Permitting Services, the other from the Maryland Department of the Environment on behalf of that department, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Bids (scheduled to be opened on November 22) will have been analyzed by the time this *Town Journal* is received, and action to award the construction-planting contract is on the agenda of the December 4 meeting of the Town Council.

The contract includes work on certain sections of the creek between Wisconsin Avenue and the swimming pool bridge and on only the right side (facing downstream) of the creek between the bridge and the end of Warwick Place. At our request, Montgomery County will be doing work below the bridge to halt the serious erosion on the left bank, behind the North Park and Irene Apartments.

Environmentally Friendly Techniques to be Used

A number of techniques will be utilized to restore and stabilize the stream banks. These include stone wing deflectors, emergent herbaceous plants and shrubs, and biologs similar to ones previously installed adjacent to the Town swimming pool.

In addition to the bank restoration, the stream channel will be relocated/diverted at three sites, away from the banks to the original locations. The County project will include a new 60-foot channel to divert flow from the eroded bank threatening to affect the structural integrity of the two apartment highrises.

If the contractor is able to start work within the next month or so and if there are no substantial delays, the job should be completed by the end of February. On the other hand, if the contractor cannot start promptly, we will schedule it to begin next October, after the swimming pool closes for the season. For environmental reasons, no work is permitted in waterways between March 1 and June 15.

FLU SHOT CLINIC TOO SUCCESSFUL

Our sincere apologies to the half-dozen or so residents who were turned away even though they were in line at the Town Hall for flu shots before the 7 p.m. deadline on November 3. The manager of the flu program at Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) shares our regret since she had assured us that everyone in line at 7 would receive a shot.

Turnout was tremendous. The nurses administered 150 flue shots, compared with 110 last year, when our session was one of VNA's busiest. In addition to the flue shots, nurses inoculated 16 persons for pneumonia this year.

I am extremely grateful to the Somerset volunteers who made the session possible by handling the paperwork and answering questions: Etsu Masaoka, who served from setup to cleanup, Corrine Stevens, Barbara Marblestone, Nyal Conger and Barbara Behr.

Get Your Flu Shots Nearby

Medstar Health Visiting Nurse Association will be giving flu shots, but not pneumonia shots, in the vicinity in accordance with the following schedule:

- **Thursday, November 30**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Safeway, 7625 Old Georgetown Road;
- **Saturday, December 2**, 1 to 3 p.m., CVS Pharmacy, 6917 Arlington Road;

- **Wednesday, December 6**, 10 a.m. to noon, CVS Pharmacy, 4701 Sangamore Road;
- **Saturday, December 9**, noon to 4 p.m., White Flint Mall, Bloomingdale Wing, second floor next to Franklin Mint Gallery.

Price is the same as in Somerset \$15 per shot, free for those who present a Medicare card.

We tried to schedule another session in the Town Hall, but VNA is booked up for the next several weeks.

Remember, you cannot get flu from a flu shot.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A COLLISION

If you are unfortunate enough to be involved in a traffic accident, do you know if you should call the police, whether to move your car out of heavy traffic and what information to gather and give? State and County police have prepared a flier that answers these questions, and they recommend that every vehicle have one in the glove compartment. Two copies are included with this *Town Journal*, and we have an additional supply in Town Hall for your convenience.

The flier is entitled **MOVE IT**, which captivates the main message: For your safety and that of other motorists, if you are involved in a property damage collision and your vehicle can be driven safely, **MOVE IT** off the road and then exchange information with the other party involved.

Of course, the first thing to do is call 911 if anyone has been injured. If none, and the car can be moved off the highway or arterial street, **MOVE IT**. Then exchange names, addresses, phone and driver's license numbers and vehicle and insurance information. The flier clarifies when to call police even if there are no injuries and when a police report is required.

The back of the flier is devoted to filling in the blanks so that the stress resulting from a collision will not result in failure to obtain $\frac{3}{4}$ and give $\frac{3}{4}$ information which is important in settling claims.

Town Hall Tidbits

By Tom Carter

OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

Town Hall office will be closed Christmas day, December 25, and New Year's day, January 1, which are Federal holidays. Tom will not be in the office from Friday, December 22, through Wednesday, December 27. The Mayor will be in Town and may be called either at home or at Town Hall. Some of the maintenance personnel will be in, so if you need their help, please call 301-657-1992 and leave a message. One of them will return your call as soon as he gets back in the garage office.

REMOVAL OF LEAVES

We are still vacuuming leaves and will be picking them up until the end of December. Our new machine is working great, with the men being able to pick up three loads a day.

As always, when the majority of the trees decide to drop, they do it at the same time and it is impossible to get to everyone at once. Please help us by parking in your driveways during the day so the men can get the leaf machine through. This is particularly important for those of you living on lower Essex Avenue, lower Trent Street and lower Warwick Place. Remember to rake your leaves to the curb, **NOT** into the street. You can also put them out in paper bags or reusable containers for pickup on Tuesdays and Fridays by J&J.

YARD WASTE PICKUP

Don't forget that yard waste will only be picked up on Tuesdays during the months of December, January and February. We do not resume Tuesday and Friday yard waste collection until March.

We have experienced several situations recently of branches and cuttings deposited loose at the curb. They are picked up only if tied in bundles or deposited in reusable containers.

WINTER STORM WARNING

Here is a reminder of what Section 4-103 of our Town Code asks all owners of property and occupants of dwellings to do:

(a) Maintain the land between their property and the street curb in good and orderly condition; and,

(b) Clean the Town sidewalk in front, and on the side, of their property; keep the sidewalk free from overhanging shrubbery; and, WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE LAST SNOWFALL OR FREEZE, REMOVE ICE AND SNOW TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE REASONABLY SAFE PEDESTRIAN USE OR, WHEN THIS IS NOT PRACTICABLE, SPREAD SAND ON THE ICE AND SNOW.

If you plan to be away during the winter or simply prefer to get help, please make arrangements to have someone clear your sidewalks after a snowstorm. Last month's *Town Journal* provided two options for shoveling this winter. You can make arrangements with one of our young people in Town who is on the list of helpers to shovel and sand sidewalks for a fee. Or you can provide a \$100 deposit to the Town (\$200 for corner lots) and we will have our snow removal contractor shovel public sidewalks alongside your property for you. Driveways and private walkways are not included in this option.

As we do every year, we will be setting out sand for vehicles that get stuck on our streets. Remember to get sand, kitty litter or ashes from your fireplace to spread on slippery sidewalks. If you have trouble finding sand for sidewalks, you may use the sand in the barrels. And, if you have trouble getting to the store, call the Town Hall and we will find a way to get sand or kitty litter to you as soon as possible.

PARKING

With winter weather in mind, please refrain from parking cars opposite other residents' driveways. While this is a common courtesy year-round, drivers who park in these locations when the roads become slick not only inconvenience their neighbors who are trying to back out onto the street, but also place their own vehicles in greater likelihood of damage.

Please report all illegally parked cars directly to the police at 301-279-8000. You do **NOT** have to give your name to file a report.

2001 CALENDARS

League of Women Voters calendars of the new year are available at the Town Hall for \$5 or call Betty Palmer at 301-654-1115.

LAST CHANCE FOR TOWN DIRECTORY REVISIONS

This is the final notice before the 2001 Town Directory goes to press. If you wish to be included for the first time, or if you want to amend your family's entry, the form enclosed with this *Town Journal* must be received at the Town Hall no later than **Friday, December 8**. Unless we receive a new form, your name will appear as it does in the current Directory.

You may want to add your e-mail and/or fax numbers. You may also want to add children's names or delete names of family members who have moved away.

If you are new in Somerset and have not completed a similar sheet in your newcomer's packet, you must submit this form to be added to the 2001 edition.

Don't hesitate to call Tom at 301-657-3211 with any questions.

PERMITS GRANTED

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

Trees:

Chris and Dee Dee Cross, 4721 Cumberland Avenue, to remove a diseased oak east of their garage.

James Regan, 5809 Surrey Street, to remove a scraggly black walnut on the south side of his lot.

Sara Anderson, 4802 Falstone Avenue, to remove a wild cherry tree on the east side of her back yard.

Dumpster: Tali Kamis, 5504 Trent Street, to park a dumpster on Trent Street during house renovations.

Legislation

At the November 6 meeting of the Town Council, Nat Finkelstein introduced legislation to change parking in the 5500 block of Uppingham Street (between Falstone Avenue and Trent Street) from the northwest (even) side to the southeast (odd) side. Action on the proposed Town Code amendment is scheduled for the December 4 council meeting.

Council Actions

At the November 6 meeting, the Council took the following actions:

1. Approved a contract with Lindsey & Salita, LLC, to audit our financial records for fiscal years 2001-2003 at \$4,500 per year.
2. Set the January 2001 meeting for Tuesday, January 2.
3. Approved a building permit for Diane Bloom, 5500 Greystone Street, to add a second story to her house.
4. Approved a building permit for Bob and Rita Verkouteren, 4801 Essex Avenue, to replace their garage with a new, larger one contingent upon verification of conforming to County height restrictions and receiving a County building permit.
5. Approved building, curb cut and tree removal permits for Sandy Spring Builders to construct a new two-story house with detached two-car garage in the empty lot at 4717 Essex Avenue contingent upon verification of the garage conforming to County height restrictions and receiving a County building permit.
6. Authorized the Mayor to have a traffic professional look at the feasibility of speed humps on all Town streets, including those currently having the humps.
7. Approved extension of the swimming pool management contract with Bethesda Aquatics for \$54,075, a three-percent increase. (Vote: 3-2. Kessler and Proctor for; Finkelstein and Gubser opposed. Mayor Behr broke the tie and voted for approval.)

8. Heard a report from Councilmember Anne Proctor about the Maryland Municipal League's Legislative Conference in Hagerstown from October 12 to 14.
9. Divided 12 nearby public and private schools so that each Councilmember and the Mayor will distribute copies of the Maryland Municipal League's book, *Maryland's 157: The Incorporated Cities and Towns*, to two schools.
10. Approved proposal by Hughes Landscaping to remove the leaves from the pool parking lot at intervals throughout the leaf pickup season for \$4,500.

Correspondence from Citizens

PINHOLE LEAKS: AN UPDATE

Last month I wrote about the phenomenon of pinhole leaks striking large numbers of residences in Montgomery County and Prince George's County and the investigation being conducted by WSSC. A dozen Somerset residents have answered my survey call and have informed me of their pinhole leaks, ranging from single to multiple leaks. Half have or will soon undertake complete repiping of their homes.

All cases fit the "profile" WSSC has compiled: Homes were built prior to 1970 (from late 1930s to 1950s) and leaks usually occurred in horizontal, cold water pipes. These homes are located on Cumberland, Warwick, Deal, Surrey, Trent, Falstone and Greystone; in other words, all over Somerset.

If you have not yet called me and have experienced pinhole leaks in your home within recent years, please do so. I can be reached at 301/656-3158. And if you have not yet experienced pinhole leaks, be conscious that they could suddenly appear. Turn off your water if you are gone for long periods of time. When turning your water main on again, do so gradually, rather than all at once, so as to not put any weak point under too much pressure.

L. Paige

Whitley, Cumberland Avenue

HOLIDAY CARDS BENEFIT CHARITIES

In the spirit of this season of giving, we'd like to share our collection of greeting cards that benefit charities which support children, health, the environment and other nonprofits. As a community service, we put our collection on the web at <http://www.beanstalking.com>, where good wishes do good work. We have personally reviewed each site for ease of use, simplicity of shopping and time-saving features. We also have links to museums and popular greeting card companies for your convenience.

If you visit beanstalking, we'd like some feedback. And feel free to add a site for us to review.

Gayley Knight, Cumberland Avenue

Gail Werner, Surrey Street

Jean Quine, Cumberland Avenue

County Matters

LIBRARY IS FOR READING AND BREAKFASTING

The Little Falls Library is celebrating its 40th anniversary by inviting the public for breakfast from 10 until noon on Saturday, December 2. Included on the program will be dedication of a new children's mural, sharing special memories of the library and introduction of civic leaders.

Sponsor of the event is the Friends of the Little Falls Community Library, which is at 5501 Massachusetts Avenue, next to Westland Middle School. Guests who are so inclined will be able to join the organization at the birthday party.

TASK FORCE WANTS YOUR TRANSPORTATION, LAND USE IDEAS

Citizens with ideas and concerns on transportation and land use are encouraged to attend one or more community forums being conducted by the Montgomery County Planning Board and the Transportation Policy Report (TPR) Task Force.

Finding workable solutions to the County's transportation challenges is the Planning Board's highest priority. The comprehensive TPR is intended to address this challenge. The TPR Task Force will provide guidance to the Planning Board staff and the Board itself as alternative land

use/transportation scenarios and implementation strategies are developed and evaluated. Recommendations of the TPR will be formulated to reflect perspectives from the County's diverse communities and their interests.

Following is a schedule of community forums:

- Tuesday, November 28, 7-9 p.m., Paint Branch High School Cafeteria, 14121 Old Columbia Pike, Burtonsville;
- Monday, December 4, 7-9 p.m., Seneca Valley High School Cafeteria, 12700 Middlebrook Road, Germantown;
- Thursday, December 7, 7-9 p.m., Herbert Hoover Middle School Cafeteria, 8810 Post Oak Drive, Rockville.

Our Neighborhood High School

2 SOMERSET GIRLS ON CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

Two Somerset residents played on the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School field hockey team, which won its seventh consecutive State championship last Saturday at Goucher College in Towson. Liz Schlossberg of Trent Street, playing goalie, kept Hereford scoreless in the championship game. Catherine Goold, Surrey Street, played offense. Both are sophomores.

B-CC won more games (19-0), scored more goals (106) and had more threats than any of its predecessor teams. The total of 106 goals for the season compares with just 6 scored against our high school team.

In winning its seventh straight title, B-CC tied a national record set by Virginia Beach in 1989-1995.

Amy Wood, the B-CC coach, said that this year's team was the best she had ever had. She added, "They're the most athletic, and they're selfless. They didn't care who scored. They wanted to win for the team."

Wood has a career record of 127 wins, 8 losses and 3 ties.

POINSETTIA SALE WILL AID B-CC ATHLETICS

By Joanne Steller

Decorate for the holidays and support athletic teams at our neighborhood high school, Bethesda-Chevy Chase. Potted poinsettias in a dazzling array of colors and sizes, plus green garlands, will be available Saturday, December 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Bethesda Elementary School, 7600 Arlington Road. Prices begin at \$6.

Sponsored by the volunteer B-CC All-Sports Boosters Club, this annual sale will again be held off campus since B-CC is being rebuilt around its historic original buildings. The new B-CC will reopen for the 2001-2002 school year.

Agenda

REGULAR MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2000 - 7:30 P.M.

1. Approval of minutes of the November 6 regular meeting --7:30.
2. Discussion of financial report -- 7:35.
3. Confirmation of the Mayor's reappointment of Ellie Fink to Board of Supervisors of Elections for a three-year term -- 7:40.
4. Action setting dates for nomination and election of three Councilmembers for two-year terms. (Suggested dates: nominations, Monday, March 5; elections, Monday, April 2.) -- 7:45.
5. Action on tennis fees for 2001 -- 7:50.
6. Action on tree removal permit application by Marc Geffroy, 4808 Essex Avenue, to remove four dying dogwoods in his back yard -- 7:55.
7. Mayor's report -- 8:05.
8. Developments/plans in the vicinity of Somerset -- 8:20.
9. Suggestions and questions from residents -- 8:30.
10. Action on recommendation by traffic consultant Everett Carter to change parking in 5500 block of Uppingham Street (between Falstone Avenue and Trent Street) from northwest (even) side to southeast (odd) side -- 8:40.

11. Introduction of ordinance amending the Town Code to permit rental of the Town Hall for social, educational and cultural gatherings not only by Somerset residents, but also non-residents sponsored by a Town resident -- 9:00.
12. Introduction of amendment to Building Code to require certain building permit applications to include information on front setback, height and percent of lot coverage -- 9:05.
13. Action on extended proposal by Hughes Landscaping to remove the leaves from the pool parking lot throughout the leaf pickup season at \$4,500 per year for the years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 -- 9:10.
14. Action awarding contract for Little Falls Branch erosion control -- 9:15.
15. New business -- 9:20.

DONATE TOYS FOR AREA'S NEEDY CHILDREN

The Town of Somerset will coordinate with the Bethesda Fire Department drive to collect toys for Christmas. These toys will be distributed to needy children in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area. New toys may be dropped off at the Town Hall during normal business hours through Monday, December 18. The Fire Department will then pick up the toys and distribute them to the children before Christmas.

PAINLESS WAY TO HELP SOMERSET SCHOOL

Are you maximizing your spending every time you go to the grocery store? If you haven't already done so, tell Safeway and Giant to credit Somerset School for every dollar you spend by linking your shopper card number to our school code.

You can do this by leaving your shopper's card number in the PTA Grocery Receipts Committee mail box in the school office, visit the following websites (**Safeway:** www.prohqtrs.com/safeway, Somerset's code is #0797. **Giant:** wwwfood.com. Somerset's code is #06545). It only takes a few seconds.

Your support can mean the difference between one new computer and four new computers for our students. Encourage your neighbors, extended family and friends to support our school too. You don't have to have a student enrolled at Somerset to support this program. Everyone in our community can help. Any questions? Contact Suzanne Massey at (301)652-6875 or smassey@bellatlantic.net.

CALLING ALL CELL PHONES

The Cell Phones for School Bus Safety Campaign is still underway. Most MCPS school buses are NOT equipped with communication systems. The Montgomery County Council plans to upgrade the current communication system in public safety vehicles within 24 months and then will switch the current equipment over to our school buses. Until then, the Council is asking the Montgomery County public to recycle their old cell phones and chargers for school bus use. Phones and chargers can be dropped off at the Somerset School main office.

Classified Ads

RENOVATION PLANNED FOR BETHESDA LIBRARY

The Bethesda Regional Library is scheduled to be closed for renovation for approximately one year starting next summer. Renovations will include replacing the heating and air-conditioning systems, wiring and plumbing as well as reconfiguring the interior space. The interior space will be slightly enlarged and furnishings and shelving will be replaced. Library staff will be reassigned during the renovation period, but a bookmobile to be available on site.

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The *Town Journal* is the official publication of the Town of Somerset, Montgomery County, MD. Post Office

address: 4510 Cumberland Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815. It is edited by the Mayor.

MAYOR

Walter J. Behr, 4809 Grantham Ave., 301-654-1258/654-0224

CLERK-TREASURER

Tom Carter

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

4:30

TOWN HALL - Open 9 to

Judy Frankel, Council V.P., 5528 Uppingham St., 301-657-8875 301-657-3211/Fax 301-657-2773

Nat Finkelstein, 5527 Surrey St., 301-654-0322
clerk@townofsomerset.com

E-mail:

Peter Gubser, 4517 Cumberland Ave., 301-654-5137

Richard Kessler, 4914 Cumberland Ave., 301-654-2699
December 13

DEADLINES Ads:

Anne Proctor, 4900 Cumberland Ave., 301-652-4717
December 14

Copy: