

Volume 45, No. 12 June 19, 2001

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Mayor's Den

By Walter J. Behr

18 APPOINTED TO LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Response from residents interested in serving on the Long-Range Planning Committee has been most gratifying. It has not been easy trying to balance membership on the basis of location within Somerset, age and years of residence in Town, as required by the authorizing motion passed unanimously by the Town Council, but I have done my best.

Here are the volunteers whose names I am submitting to the Council for confirmation at the July 2 meeting:

Walt Auburn, Falstone Avenue Gayley Knight, Cumberland Avenue

Sue Besharov, "Little" Cumberland Avenue Bonnie Lewin, Cumberland Avenue

Howard Byron, Essex Avenue David Lynn, Surrey Street

Bridget Cowie, Uppingham Avenue Rob McGarrah, Dorset Avenue

Tom Eldridge, Essex Avenue Andrew Resnick, Grantham Avenue

Nat Finkelstein, Surrey Street Leslie Simmons, Cumberland Avenue

Richard Furculo, Grantham Avenue Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place

Marc Geffroy, Essex Avenue Bill Spitzer, Trent Street

Charles Haywood, Trent Street Phyllis Wiesenfelder, Cumberland Avenue

It is also my responsibility to appoint the chairman of the committee, and my choice is former Councilmember Nat Finkelstein, who is largely responsible for selling the Town Council on the desirability of such a committee. He also, with Gayley Knight, drafted motions authorizing the functions, composition and schedule for the committee.

Eldridge Named as Councilmember on Committee

I regret that the authorizing motion limits the committee to one Councilmember. All were willing to serve, but I decided on newly-elected Councilmember Tom Eldridge for two reasons. First, he is not only willing, but eager, to serve. Second, he has been a resident for a shorter time than most applicants, and he has young children, which again is not true of most applicants.

Judy Frankel, who is Vice President of the Council and senior Councilmember, was also eager to serve and could contribute a great deal to the committee because of her wealth of knowledge about the Town and its government, accumulated during her 20 years of active service on the Council. Frankly, it was difficult not to appoint Judy to the single Council slot, but I hope that committee members will take advantage of her wealth of knowledge about the Town and the Town government.

Meetings of the Long-Range Planning Committee and subcommittees will be open to the public (a requirement of State law), and members will be eager to hear the views of residents. The committee will submit interim reports to the Town Council and recommendations within six months (beginning with confirmation of appointments on July 2).

The final community meeting of the schematic design phase for Somerset School modernization will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 27, in the school music room. Early in July, plans will be sent out for cost estimates.

NEW TENNIS SURFACE WILL DEBUT IN AUGUST

Tennis in Somerset will be a bit less taxing on knees, backs and other body parts beginning sometime in August. All three courts will be resurfaced with Premier Court beginning on July 23 and finishing in two weeks *if work is not delayed by rain*.

Premier Court is a rubber-like mat that is guaranteed against cracking for 15 years. My experience on this surface and that of all eight references I checked is that playing on it is something like playing on HarTru, which is a clay-like material, but without the occasional bad bounces experienced on HarTru.

One reference I talked with about Premier Court is Rod Dulaney, Washington Golf and Country Club longtime pro, who teaches many hours a day. He told me that the surface is "easier on legs and quieter...great...no problem. No one doesn't like it." Plato Cacheris of Alexandria (who is Robert Hanssen's attorney) has had a Premier Court surface at his home since 1992. He said "No problem. It is easier on my legs. I love it."

Vote for Your Favorite Colors

Do you have a choice of colors? If so, call, write or e-mail your preference. All of the usual colors are available: dark green and red, which we now have; light green; light and dark tan; gray; blue; and brown. You are welcome to inspect color chips at the Town Hall before casting your vote.

Public courts in the vicinity that you might want to use while ours are out of commission are:

- 16th and Kennedy in Rock Creek Park, N.W.
- Westland Middle School, 5511 Massachusetts Avenue, Bethesda
- Leland Recreation Center, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase

- Norwood Park, left off of Wisconsin Avenue before Bradley Boulevard. (These courts are badly cracked.)

BUGLARS ATTEMPT 2 BREAK-INS

Two residents of the 4900 block of Cumberland Avenue experienced attempted break-ins within the past three weeks. In both cases, good locks apparently made the difference between attempted and actual burglaries.

Good locks on hinged doors means deadbolt locks that extend a minimum of three-fourths of an inch. Some high quality, modern sliding doors have good locks built in. Older sliders can be secured with charlie bars.

Commander Luther Reynolds of the Bethesda Police District earlier this month reiterated that his department still feels that the recent homicide on Drummond Avenue was an isolated incident, not connected to several other unsolved homicides in the County within the past year. He assured us that the police are "actively working on the case." The husband of the victim has moved back into the house.

DRIVE WITH CARE -- WALK WITH CAUTION

Thanks to Councilmember Rick Kessler and his son, Nicholas, for placing appropriate signs on Dorset Avenue on June 10, when Chevy Chase and Bethesda observed Safe Neighborhood Day. The most popular sign advises "Drive With Care. Walk With Caution."

Pam Miller of Whittier Boulevard in Bethesda organized the drive to persuade people to think about pedestrian safety and remind drivers that when they speed in residential neighborhoods, they only save a few seconds while putting pedestrians at risk.

Making Waves

POOL IS FOR SWIMMING AND MUCH MORE

By Norm Schneider, Chairman, Swimming Pool Committee

Our Town Swimming pool is enjoying a busy season so far and I hope you've been down to swim and relax. One of the joys of visiting the pool is seeing your friends and meeting new ones. So if you haven't already done so, please drop by and see why those of us who use the pool regularly cherish it.

The facility is a refuge for some, a health club, a social club, a reading room and a playground for others. We must remember that balancing these uses requires some patience and tolerance of the needs of the other users. We cannot (and don't want to) police every minor infraction of the rules and of general good sense, but we would ask each person to act thoughtfully and with understanding.

Occasionally this year the pool and picnic area have become crowded with birthday and class parties and general usage. The Pool Committee is working on guidelines for managing this situation, and we will be forwarding the proposal to the Town Council for debate and adoption. If you have experienced any problems with overcrowding or can suggest solutions for balancing individual and group usage, please give me a call or an e-mail. We are also working on proposals regarding guest fees and guest usage, and your comments on these issues are also welcome. For now, please be considerate of other people using the facilities and try to share your space and be patient.

Some Like It Hot; Some Like It Cold

Now that summer has come to the mid-Atlantic, the pool heater will probably not be utilized, but if you find the water is too hot or too cold, please tell the pool management so that an adjustment can be made. Unfortunately, the heater only operates on the water added to the pool, so don't expect a quick change of temperature. As always, there is an attempt to balance the temperature to accommodate those who are just wading and those who are swimming laps.

Remember: A lap swimming lane is always available (except when the pool is closed to the public), even if it looks like the swim team or rafters are using it. Just ask the guard or the swim team coach to open the lane for you. Please note that lap lanes can be - and should be - shared.

Several parents have asked me to remind drivers when backing out of parking spaces to be aware that there are often small children walking and biking. Please move slowly to avoid an accident.

Suggestion Always Welcome

If you encounter any problems at the pool or wish to make suggestions, feel free to call me at (301)652-5509 (home 6 - 9 pm) or (202)347-5141 (office 9 am - 5 pm) or e-mail me at nschneider@kamerowlaw.com. Many of you have taken the time to speak and write to me, and I thank you for pointing out your concerns and making suggestions. Sometimes action can be taken immediately; sometimes things can take a while to sort through.

The calendar of pool activities that was included in last month's *Town Journal* is posted at the pool. Occasionally, events are rescheduled because of weather or other unforeseen circumstances, so please remember to check this calendar to avoid surprise changes.

You are welcome to attend Pool Committee meetings, which will take place throughout the summer. Please check the message board at the pool for dates and times.

DOLPHINS OUTSCORE TOP-SEEDED FOREST KNOLLS

By Sarah Morse, Swim Team Representative

Braving a steady rain, the Somerset Dolphins started the season on June 16 with a surprise 383 to 378 victory over top-seeded Forest Knolls. In this exciting meet, Somerset was behind by six points going into the final two events, the 14-and-under graduated relays. The boys team of Matt

Bookman, 8; Isaac Sorenson, 9; Toby Kathan, 12; and Michael Young, 13, finished first by a fingertip, closing the gap by two points.

Then, it was up to two girls teams to bring home a victory. With eight points for a win and four points for second place, winning the meet was a real possibility. Strong swimmers in both of the girls teams gave Somerset easy first and second places. The meet was ours.

Bookman, Sullivan Have Perfect Records

On the individual level, Freddie Mondale, 8, showed excellent form, shaving six seconds off his breaststroke time to win with an All-Star nominating time of 25.66. Somerset received 25 other first-place finishes out of a total of 45 individual events. Adam Bookman and Sarah Sullivan continued their careers of perfect swimming by winning all of their races. Toby Kathan won four of his five races.

However, it's not just first-place swimmers who win a meet. A five-point victory means that five sixth places swimmers swam just a little faster to finish fifth and score a point for the team. So congratulations to these swimmers who pushed a little harder in their races - Miles Batson, 11; Abby Kathan, 10; Kelsey Siegel, 11; Eliana Sigelman, 7; Duncan Kessler, 9; Katie McDougal, 10; Ben Wisniewski, 14; Bess Pickar, 13; Michael Lape, 12; Marian Herbick, 11; Brooks Lape, 15; Anna Wisniewski, 15; Jacob Heller, 13; Maurie Kathan, 14; Erin McDougal, 13; and swimming-up in the 15-18 group, Astri Sorenson, 13.

80 on Dolphin Team, 40 on Minis

The Dolphin team continues to grow. With four coaches and 80 swimmers, the team is developing into a real powerhouse. Head Coach Ben Graham is joined by assistant coaches Tara Zimmerman, Rachel Benjamin and our own Tristan Kessler.

The developmental team, the Minis, has become a very popular afternoon activity. More than 40 swimmers participate. Coach Tara is ably assisted by returning teenage coaches Maurie Kathan, Katie Steller and Adam Bookman.

Social Events Galore

Social events have also been very successful. Despite the threat of a downpour, the season opened with a pizza party attended by almost 200. The first eight days of morning practice feature breakfast with the coaches, always a popular event. The team is also planning T-shirt making, a beach trip, relays for fun, the 31st annual spaghetti dinner and Minis meet.

Swim season continues until July 21. We have two home meets, Saturday, June 23, at 9:00, warm-ups at 8:00; and Saturday, July 7, at 9:00, warm-ups at 8:00. The division championship meet is on July 21, followed by the season's finale, the team banquet. Please check the team bulletin board to follow our progress and join us at the pool to help cheer the swimmers to victory.

Town Hall Tidbits

By Tom Carter

OFFICE SCHEDULE IN JULY

The office will be closed Wednesday, July 4. Tom will be on vacation the week of July 2 - 6. Corrie Morsey will be in the office July 2, 3 and 5.

TOWN E-MAIL

Our Town e-mail system is up and working. Its purpose is to inform those on the network of important matters that cannot or should not wait until the next *Town Journal* arrives. If you are a Somerset resident and would like to be included, please notify Tom at the Town Hall. Call 301-657-3211 or send an e-mail to clerk@townofsomerset.com.

DRIVING SAFETY

School is out, so please drive slowly through Town. Our maintenance men also appreciate your consideration while they are working in the streets or driving one of our slow-moving tractors through Town. Please exercise caution when approaching them.

SOMERSET QUIET HOURS

Don't forget Town noise limitations between the hours of 9 p.m. and 9 a.m. daily. This applies to noise from sources associated with residential living, such as blowers, power mowers and chain saws.

The same hours apply to construction on weekends and holidays; that is, it may occur only between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. On weekdays, it is legal to start at 7 a.m.

VACATION PRECAUTIONS

A few precautions may enhance your vacation this year. Consider these before you leave:

1. Cancel your newspapers and get a neighbor to pick up newspapers and flyers that are deposited on your property.
2. Arrange to have your lawn cut while you are away.
3. Give a key to a neighbor just in case of emergency.
4. Arrange to have a neighbor, friend or relative know how to turn off your security system if it is activated.
5. Consider putting timers on some of the lights in your home and set them to come on at different times. You might even turn a radio on or put it on a timer.

LOCK DOORS, CARS AND GARAGES

It's that time of year when you are out in your back yard and you have left your front door unlocked. This makes it very tempting for unwanted visitors. Please lock your doors.

It would also be a good idea to remember to lock your car and garage doors. Bikes can easily be taken out of unlocked garages.

TOWN TREES AND GROUNDS

With summer here and spring rains expected to let up, we ask you to please water the Town trees in your yards when no rain has fallen in several days.

Don't forget, the Grounds Ordinance states that it is the duty of owners of all dwellings to maintain the land between their property lines and the street curb in "good and orderly condition," to clean the sidewalks in front of their property and keep them free from overhanging shrubbery.

Please do not put grass down the storm drains. Also, do not use the trash containers around Town for your personal household trash or yard waste. Additionally, there is no dumping at the pool parking lot or at the end of Warwick Place.

PERMITS GRANTED

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

Trees: Jeffrey Slavin and Douglas Miller, 5706 Warwick Place, to remove a diseased black locust from the property line in their back yard.

Sara Anderson, 4802 Falstone Avenue, to remove a dying cherry from her back yard.

Ethan Burger, 4509 Dorset Avenue, to remove a dying box elder next to the garage in the front yard and a holly behind the garage because it is too close to a large oak tree to thrive.

Aprons: Joyce Somsak and Donald Kosin, 4709 Trent Court, to replace their driveway and apron.

David and Jan Kaufman, 5413 Trent Street, to expand their apron and driveway.

Brian and Marcy Frosh, 4810 Grantham Avenue, to remove an unused driveway apron.

Judy Frankel, 5528 Uppingham Street, to replace her apron and section of curb.

Mary and Marc Geffroy, 4808 Essex Avenue, to repair their driveway and apron.

Tom Eldridge and Jennifer Marran, 4806 Essex Avenue, to repair their driveway and apron.

Tennis Tournaments Scheduled

By Bridget Cowie

Round robin doubles tennis tournaments are scheduled for Saturday, July 7, and Saturday, July 28, at 5:30 at the Town courts. These events are open to all Somerset residents, and players of all levels are encouraged to participate.

Each round will consist of four game matches, alternating serve, with no ad scoring. Players will alternate partners each round.

Participants should plan to bring a picnic. We will eat and socialize between rounds and following the tournament. Anyone interested in participating, please call me at 301-654-7152 or e-mail bmcecowie@aol.com.

If you can't participate but would like to be informed of future tennis events and/or are interested in reactivating the Tennis Committee, please let me know by e-mail.

Residents Speak Up

PLANT CLINICS EVERY SATURDAY

Aphids on your nasturtiums? Rhododendron leaves drooping? Wonder about the identity of that plant?

Bring us a sample and challenge the "Master Gardeners" every Saturday from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. through April at the Davis Library, 6400 Democracy Boulevard in Bethesda.

The Cooperative Extension Service provides training for the plant clinics and for a hot line (301-590-9650), which you can call with your gardening questions from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays.

Sue Prindle
Cumberland Avenue

Census 2000 Counts 1,124 in Somerset

Census takers counted 1,124 residents of Somerset last year and a total of 406 occupied housing units. Of these, 377 are owner-occupied and 29, renter-occupied. Other totals are reproduced below.

Obituary

JANE HOY ROBERTS DIES AT 71

Jane Hoy Roberts, 71, died the morning of May 24 from a massive heart attack suffered while playing tennis at the Town courts.

She was born in South Orange, New Jersey, but spent most of her young life in Lake Forest, Illinois. She graduated from New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois, where she excelled both academically and athletically. She went on to graduate from Smith College and spent one year at the University of Geneva in Switzerland.

Jane then worked a few years at the National Security Agency before meeting and marrying her husband in 1954. They bought their home on Dorset Avenue in 1960. She was active in the Town administration as the bookkeeper and later as a member of the Audit Committee. She also taught handicapped children how to ice skate. In between accompanying her husband to various postings abroad, she returned to college at American University, where she earned a degree in accounting. She remained a practicing CPA until her death.

She is survived by her husband, Rowland E. Roberts; a son, Brian; a daughter, Elizabeth; and three grandchildren.

Make a Difference

'DOMESTIC PEACE CORPS' NEEDS YOU

AmeriCorps, the "domestic Peace Corps," is looking for someone willing to spend a year as a Volunteer Maryland Coordinator (VMC), mobilizing students or others to meet such critical community needs as tutoring youths, renovating low-income housing, cleaning Chesapeake Bay and helping frail seniors live independently.

As AmeriCorps members, VMCs receive a living allowance of \$11,000, a post-service education benefit of \$4,725 and health insurance. Applicants must be at least 17 years old, have a high school diploma and be a United States citizen or permanent resident alien. Also required are leadership potential, a positive attitude and communication and problem solving skills.

Applications must be received by July 15. The service year will begin August 6 and end on June 28, 2002. Further information is available at the Town office or from Volunteer Maryland (410-514-7270) or from Seniors' Interfaith Resource Center (301-962-0820).

Archaeology Workshop

Have you always wondered what archaeologists do? If you are at least 16 years old, you can find out by attending a workshop from Monday, August 6, through Friday, August 10, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The workshop will be conducted by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) at the Needwood Mansion in Derwood. The fee is \$200.

Participants will learn in a small group, hands-on setting. Activities will include digging on an archaeological site, lab work with prehistoric and historic artifacts and a field trip. No experience is required.

To request an application, call the M-NCPPC Office of History and Archaeology at 301-840-5848.

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