



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL



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Town Council Elections

Nomination Day is March 7

Nominations for three Council seats are scheduled for Monday, March 7, at 8:10 p.m. in the Town Hall. Incumbents Tom Elridge, Judy Frankel, and Rick Kessler have indicated that they will run for the Council.

Any resident may nominate any other resident for Council, provided the nominee is a citizen of the United States, a resident of Somerset for a least 18 months preceding the April 4 election and a qualified voter in the State of Maryland.

Additional nominations may be made by petition of 20 registered voters filed with the Clerk-Treasurer by 4:00 p.m., Monday, March 14.

Are You Registered to Vote?

A member of the Board of Elections will be at the Town Hall on Monday March 7, from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. to register new voters. In addition, Town residents may register at the Town hall Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or by mail (call Tom Carter, (301) 657-3211, to mail the registration form to you). The deadline to register for the April 4 election is 4:30 p.m. on March 21.

If you are currently registered to vote in Montgomery County, you are eligible to vote in the Town of Somerset elections.

Qualifications for voting in the Town of Somerset are:

- o At least 18 years old by April 4, 2005;
- o Be a resident of Somerset for 14 days preceding the election (actual residency is required except for individuals absent from the Town only temporarily and intending to return, such as students, military and other overseas government employees);
- o Be a citizen of the United States or an alien legally authorized to reside in the country; and
- o Be registered to vote in the Town of Somerset and/or Montgomery County.

Calendar

- Saturday, February 26,** — PNRC Meeting
- Tuesday, March 1,** — Resume twice weekly garden refuse collection
- Monday, March 7,** — Town Council Meeting and Council Nominations
- Tuesday, March 15** — Town Meeting — Town Hall Renovation
- Monday, March 14 thru Thursday 17** — Drop off books for sale
- Thursday, March 17** — Journal deadline, Ads
- Friday, March 18** — Journal deadline, Copy
- Friday, March 18 thru Saturday, March 19** — Used Book Sale
- Tuesday, March 22** — Batting Cage Information Session
- Friday, April 1** — Submission deadline *If I were Mayor* essay contest
- Monday, April 4** — Somerset election
- Saturday, June 18** — Swim season officially begins

If you have any questions about whether you are registered in the Town, call Tracy Truman, chair of the Board of Supervisors of Elections, at (301) 652-4596.

Absentee Ballots Available

Absentee ballots will be available in the Town Hall beginning Tuesday, March 15. Qualified voters who will be absent from Town on election day, or who are incapacitated, may obtain absentee ballots from the Clerk-Treasurer by writing him at 4510 Cumberland Avenue or by calling (301) 657-3211. Ballots will be counted if returned to the Clerk-Treasurer or the Board of Supervisors of Elections before 9 p.m. on election day, April 4.

Mayor's Den

By Walter J. Behr

School Construction 80% Complete



By the time this *Town Journal* is distributed, the new Somerset School should be about 80 percent complete, according to the supervising architect, John Thorp of Muse Architects. Also, by the time you read this, trucks should be carrying away vast mounds of dirt from the site.

According to the contractor, Pantech Construction, the building will be "substantially complete" on April 19. "Substantially complete" means that the move back from the Radnor location could begin, although a long list of "punch card" items might remain unfinished. In any event, there is little doubt that the move can be completed in time for the new building to open for students on August 29.

The current cost of the new school is \$11,452,590.

Let's Have Salt-Free Sidewalks

Salt on sidewalks burns dogs' paws, we learned following the last snowfall. As a result, we have instructed our snow contractor not to salt sidewalks without specific instructions from the Mayor or Clerk-Treasurer.

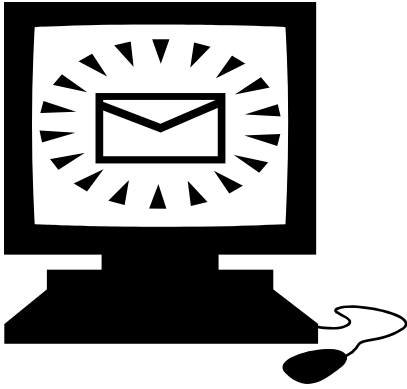
Since it is the responsibility of residents to remove sidewalk snow and ice that is less than two-inches deep, this is a request that you follow suit if you have a sidewalk on your side of the street. Kitty Litter is a good substitute for salt on slippery surfaces.

Is Once a Week Yard Waste Pickup Enough?

When the Town Council votes on a refuse/recycling contract for the next three years, it will have to choose between bids for the same service now being provided and bids for the same service except that yard waste would be collected just once a week year-round.

Once a week pickup of yard waste is the service provided by Montgomery County to all of the homes in non-incorporated parts of the County. Obviously, this reduced service would be less costly, although we don't yet know the amount of the saving since bids are not due until February 24. Action on a refuse/recycling contract is scheduled for 9:45 p.m. at the March 7 Town Council meeting.

E-Mail Addresses Reach 300



The three-hundredth address has just been added to the Town e-mail network, and we're going for 400. To sign on, simply e-mail, write or call Tom Carter at Town Hall (clerk@townofsomerset.com or 301-657-3211) with your e-mail address.

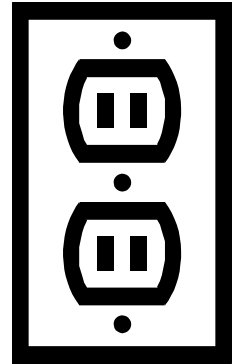
What, you may ask, is the purpose of the network? Its chief uses are for updates and instructions in case of emergency, information on delays of refuse and recyclable collection, committee meeting schedules and Town Council agenda items added after the *Town Journal* has gone to press.

For those who are interested only in emergency information, we have a separate e-mail network. Sign-up procedure is the same as for the regular network. You are not limited to a single e-mail address per family. In fact, you may include any number - at work as well as at home.

Effort Underway to Lower Electric Bills

One of the three Maryland Municipal League priority legislative efforts this year is for the General Assembly to pass a law allowing "opt-out" arrangements for aggregation of electricity for the purpose of reducing the cost for residents. Towns and cities in the State, acting individually or jointly, would negotiate with power companies for bargain rates that would apply for all residents - except those who opt-out of the arrangement.

At the February 7 meeting, the Town Council authorized me to sign a letter endorsing opt-out legislation and pledging to consider joining an entity for joint purchase of electricity on behalf of municipal residents if an opt-out bill becomes law.



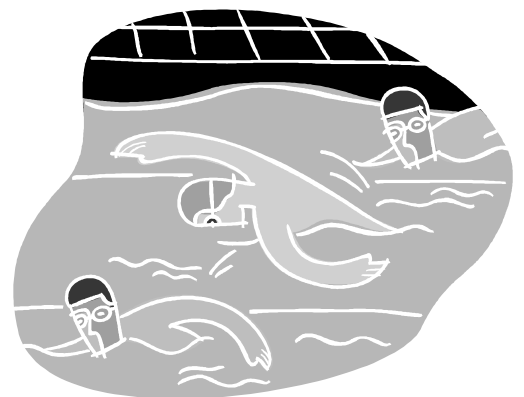
Sarah Morse Named Outstanding Volunteer



Hurray for Sarah Morse, who has been selected by the County Commission on Children and Youth as the Outstanding Volunteer for Service to Youth! The award will be presented Wednesday, March 2, at 7 p.m. at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 10801 Rockville Pike. I hope that many of Sarah's Somerset admirers will be present to applaud her.

Most Town residents know that Sarah is the enthusiastic, tireless, highly successful swim team representative. She is also an active Girl Scout leader and organizer of numerous community service projects. For years, she has worked with Somerset School fourth graders and their teachers to monitor the plant and animal life in Little Falls Branch.

Thanks to Rick Kessler for the letter nominating Sarah and for letters of support from Pool Committee Chair Josh Bobeck and pool contractor Chuck Montrie.



Town Hall Tidbits

By Tom Carter

REMEMBER SOMERSET IN YOUR TAX RETURNS

One of Somerset's two biggest sources of revenue is its share of the State income tax paid by Town residents. But Somerset will not get its share of income taxes unless its name appears on the Maryland income tax form in the box marked, "City, Town or Taxing Area." Please remember to complete this section when filing your taxes. A sample of the form appears below.

FORM 502 MARYLAND RESIDENT INCOME TAX RETURN
RESIDENT
OR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING 2004, ENDING



SOCIAL SECURITY #		SPOUSE'S SOCIAL SECURITY #	
Your First Name	Initial	Last Name	
Spouse's First Name	Initial	Last Name	
PRESENT ADDRESS (No. and street)			
City or Town	State	Zip Code	
Name of county and incorporated city, town or special taxing area in which you were employed on the last day of the tax period (See Instructions)	Maryland county MONT.	City, town or taxing area TOWN OF SOMERSET	

SIDEWALKS

Our contractor will clear two inches of snow or more from your sidewalks after a storm, but remember it is your responsibility by Town Code to keep it clear thereafter. The maintenance men are responsible for the Town sidewalks where there are no houses.

TRASH PICKUP

It is Town policy to put trash at the curb no earlier than the night before pickup. Following this rule is important in keeping our streetscape clear and clean. It is also a common courtesy to your neighbors.

GARDEN REFUSE PICKUP

J&J resumes twice-a-week collection of garden refuse March 1. Pickups will be on Tuesdays and Fridays as in the past.

Please note that yard waste should either be placed in paper bags or loose in trash cans that are **prominently marked as "Yard Waste"** for easy recognition by the driver. Do not mix with trash or they will leave the entire can! Branches must not be over four feet long or three inches in diameter. Large branches must be trimmed to meet these dimensions. All branches not placed in trash cans must be tied into bundles no larger than 36 inches in diameter.

HVACR CONTRACTORS

Please be aware that all heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) contractors must be licensed by the State. To check if a HVACR contractor is licensed go to the State Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Web site: www.dllr.state.md.us and click on "Occupational and Professional Licensing." For questions or complaints e-mail jsliwka@dllr.state.md.us or call (410) 230-6260.

SOME SPRINGTIME ACTIVITIES REQUIRE PERMITS



Spring is coming and in the next few months residents will begin to add to their houses, redo their gardens and beautify their yards. Remember, for some things you will need a permit. Below is a list:

1. **Building permit** - needed for any construction or demolition which changes the exterior dimensions of a house or accessory structure. This includes building or enlarging a tool shed.
2. **Tree permit** - needed to take down trees which are four inches or more in diameter, four feet above the ground.
3. **Fence permit** - needed for any new or replacement fence or wall.
4. **Driveways** - repair or repaving of the section of the driveway on public right-of-way as well as a driveway apron may not proceed without a \$300 deposit to insure restoration of Town sidewalks, curbs and other public property. Replacement aprons must meet County standards.
5. **Dumpsters** - may not be parked in the street without permission of the Mayor.

PERMITS GRANTED

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

Trees: Lilian Paul, 5702 Warwick Place, to remove a dying wild cherry along the side of her driveway.

Fences: Tom Eldridge, 5605 Warwick Place, to erect a fence in his back and north side yards.

Curbs: Patty Friedman and Blair Levin, 4911 Grantham Avenue, to widen their driveway apron.



Legislation

At the February 7 meeting, the Council postponed introduction of Town Charter and Code amendments increasing fines for removal of trees without a permit.

Council Activity



At the February 7 meeting, the Council:

1. Heard a report from Howard Byron on the progress of the Town Hall Renovation Committee. The committee is finalizing a question-and-answer publication to be sent to residents in early March in advance of the March 15 public meeting on renovation options.
2. Heard a report by Josh Bobeck, chair, on the progress of Pool House Survey Committee. Work continues on a survey to be mailed to residents seeking their input on improvements to the pool bathhouse.
3. Denied permits to Marc Fleisher, prospective owner of 4904 Essex Avenue, to install a pool, pergola and fence and remove four trees, all in the back yard.
4. Postponed action on a Town position regarding Zoning Text Amendment 03-27, modifying rules on height of houses in the R-60 zone (as in Somerset). The County Council committee is not close to a recommendation yet.
5. Approved a building permit for Dan and Betty Clemmer, 5527 Trent Street, to add a porch and room to the front of their house, subject to receipt of a County permit, Town fees and deposit, and a sediment control plan and redirecting the storm water flow to Trent Street from the addition.
6. Approved a building permit for Cathedral Investments (Marc Reshefsky), 5403 Trent Street, to demolish the existing structure, build a two-story house with attic and attached two-car garage, and erect a fence, subject to receipt of a County permit and the Town fees and deposit, and removal of any asbestos slab under the hearth in accordance with the law.
7. Approved a building permit for James Mahoney, 4905 Cumberland Avenue, to add a one-story addition to the rear of his house, add two bay windows to the front, change the front entry and replace the driveway, subject to receipt of a County permit and the Town fees and deposit.
8. Approved a request from Friends of Norwood Park for a \$2,500 contribution for improvements to park playgrounds.
9. Postponed action on the agenda items of Police Enforcement, Speed Humps, Web Site Disclaimer and Web Site Information (Names) until the March meeting.
10. Approved a corrected amount of \$68,484 for the pool management contract for the 2006 season.

Somerset supports Norwood Park Playground Renovation

by Council members Tom Eldridge and Lesley Simmons

At the February 7 Council Meeting the Council approved a request from the Friends of Norwood Park (FONP) for \$2,500 to support the renovation of the Norwood Park Playground. While some Council Members were reluctant to consider the request because the item had not been included on the agenda nor written up in the Town Journal, others felt it should be considered because (i) the request was made on an emergency basis (funding commitments are required by February 15) (ii) some dozen Somerset families who use the park wrote to Council members urging that the Town provide support, and (iii) neighboring

Municipalities have committed significantly more support than the amount Somerset was asked to consider. (During the discussion it emerged that the requested amount was far smaller than intended, due to a communication error.) The fact that the item was to be discussed was disseminated as widely as possible using the Town e-mail list.



Working in partnership with the County Parks and Planning Department (MCPD) the Bethesda Chevy Chase Rotary Club has provided a generous grant to renovate the Norwood Park playground. However, because of concerns that the proposed equipment will not keep the interest of children over age 5, the upper playground is to be reduced in size, and the lower playground is to be phased out entirely, several Chevy Chase West residents created a working group to try to save the lower playground and the eastern side of the upper playground. The MCPD agreed it could do so, provided it raises the funds to cover costs.

The working group began acting quickly to raise the necessary funds by February 15, hence the need for Somerset to consider the request at its February meeting. After a presentation by FONP and some discussion, Council Member Tom Eldridge moved, seconded by Lesley Simmons, to approve a \$2,500 donation to support the project .

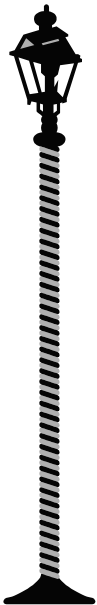
At the time of writing, other local Municipalities have pledged as follows:

- Chevy Chase West -- \$5,000 and they have indicated they will give up to \$2,500 more later.
- Town of Chevy Chase -- \$5,000 with an invitation to come back in the summer if pledges are insufficient to complete the lower playground.
- Drummond -- \$7,500 at a first ever emergency-vote held between meetings to meet the deadline.
- Village of Chevy Chase -- \$7,500.

FONP are also approaching Edgemoor and Kenwood in the near future and are also looking for other opportunities such as business donations and possibly grants. They also need volunteers and individual donations. Somerset residents interested in learning more about FONP or any aspect of the playground renovation should call Adele Medina O'Dowd at (202) 255-0728 or write adele@chevychasewest.org or call Sandra Aresta (301) 654-9680 or write Sandra.Aresta@verizon.net.

Street Light Demonstration

by Howard Byron



Have you seen the new street lights on Trent Street? The Lighting Committee and Security Committee have started a six month demonstration of new style lights, which have been proposed for the Town. The demonstration lights use high pressure sodium, which is 30 percent more efficient than the old and hazardous mercury vapor lights currently installed throughout the town. The demonstration lights are the recommended technology for Montgomery County and throughout the world for new and upgraded street lighting. Additionally, the new lights do not lose their light output as quickly as the current lights do thus reducing dark areas in town and providing safer visibility for pedestrians. Another feature of the new lights is their "dark sky society" lenses, which greatly diminish stray light that pollutes the atmosphere and shines into windows of nearby homes.

The six lights in the demonstration start at the intersection of Falstone Avenue and Trent Street and end at 5512 Trent. The light in the intersection is 100 watts while the others are 70 watts. This complies with standards, which use brighter lights in intersections where there is a greater risk of accidents with cars and pedestrians. These lights are somewhat brighter than the old style, while using less energy.

Take a walk under these lights some evening and decide if you think they are worthwhile for the Town. A survey will be mailed to all residents in the months ahead, but meanwhile, let your council members know what you think. They will vote on them this summer.

Town Council Review 2004: Through the Seasons

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

Our little town has an extraordinarily industrious Mayor and Council who are constantly working, with little fanfare, to maintain the high quality of life that residents have come to expect and deserve. Following is a seasonal summary of the major actions taken during the past year, which has been another highly successful one.

Winter: The Council continued to monitor the progress of the Town Hall Renovation Committee and authorized the hiring of an architect. It approved five building permits; set the dates for nominations to Town Council and for Mayor; reviewed sledding policies; heard a presentation from PEPCO on power outages; updated the Mayor's job description and undertook a salary review; hired a landscape architect to design plans for the Dorset/Wisconsin entrance; and approved a contract with a firm, which would allow Somerset to participate in the County aggregated group competitive procurement of electricity supply for all power, including streetlights.

Spring. Lesley Simmons was elected and Jeffrey Slavin reelected to the Town Council, and Walter Behr was reelected Mayor. The Council confirmed 12 residents to committees; approved four building permits; agreed to a landscaping plan for the Dorset/Wisconsin entrance; oversaw improvements to the pool bathhouse; passed legislation to increase fines for construction noise violations and requiring contractors to post signs; approved the hiring of an architect to start preliminary designs for the Town Hall; adopted the budget; and authorized establishment of a Pool House Survey Committee.

Summer. The Council decided on a trial period for several new stop signs; approved four building permits; voted to retain an engineering study to prepare a plan and estimates for undergrounding of utility wires; authorized a new traffic study; confirmed five residents to committees; passed a resolution in support of Project Ladybug; voted for installation of a basketball hoop at the pool; and continued to hear regular reports on the Town Hall renovation.

Fall. The Council approved two building applications on Essex Avenue, which included setting up citizens committees to monitor construction; approved four other building permits; voted for legislation to require Council approval for the removal of any Town owned tree in excess of four inches in diameter; agreed to a landscape plan for the Greystone entrance; confirmed the appointment of three residents to committees; voted for a Town code amendment in order to retain the stop signs that had been on trial; agreed to a plan to have a six month demonstration of new street lights; and approved a request by the History Committee for the purchase of copies of a new book on Somerset to help celebrate the upcoming centennial.

Of course, these are just highlights of the year. For further information on these or other Town issues, visit the town website www.townofsomerset.com for back issues of the Journal, committee reports, minutes of Town meetings, and many other useful items to keep you in touch with what's going on in your Town. Or get in touch with your Mayor and Town Council members.

Resident's Letters -- Dear Neighbors...

Do you have a used swing set you would like to donate to housing for homeless families? For my Eagle Scout project, I am installing swing sets at several transitional houses for homeless families run by *Mary House*. These homes, which provide free housing for families for up to one year, are located near Catholic University. I'm looking for at least two or three used swing sets. My plan is to remove them from their present locations, fix them up, and install them at the Mary House homes this spring. I will provide all the labor needed to remove the swing sets.

To learn more about Mary House and the services they provide, you can go to their web site at www.maryhouse.org. Please call me at (301) 907-3298 or e-mail tobsteroven@hotmail.com if you have a swing set to donate.

Toby Kathan (Dorset Avenue)

Previously I gave a bad estimate of the cost for renovating the town hall. Almost \$2,000,000 is the budget reported by the professional estimator to the Renovation Committee last year. Three estimates were done based on the three concepts the Committee chose, all of which fulfilled 100% of the 'Findings' in their 1/23/04 report and more. The proposed changes trigger building code requirements that simply repairing the building would not.

The professional estimates for the 3 concepts are between \$1.6 and over \$1.7 million dollars plus (to quote the professional estimator) 20% contingency. This is triple the \$0.6m budget set by the Council and exceeds all the town reserves. I proposed at the Renovation Committee meeting in October that the 'Findings' would need to be prioritized and compromises made to reach an affordable design. I still recommend that course.

Andrew Resnick (Grantham Avenue)

Editor's Note: While \$500,000 for Town Hall renovation is in the fiscal year 2005 budget, the Council has not approved a price or set a ceiling for the project. Options and issues will be presented to the Council and residents, by the Town Hall Renovation Committee, at a Town-wide public meeting on March 15th.

Committee News

New Landscaping for Greystone Entrance

by Corrie Morsey, Chair Parks and Natural Resources Committee (PNRC)

The PNRC will meet at Town Hall Saturday, February 26th, at 9:00 a.m. to view proposed landscape plans drawn up by Melissa Gildea, of Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture for the Greystone entrance into Town. (At the request of the PNRC, the Town Council in November 2004 approved funds for these plans.)

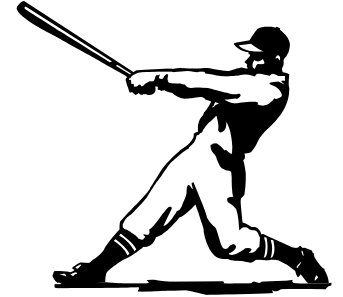
PNRC meetings are open to Town residents. We anticipate that the landscape plans will also be available for review by residents in the Town Hall from February 26, during normal business hours. Presentation of the plans and a funding request for their implementation are on the agenda for the Town Council meeting on Monday, March 7, at 8:00 p.m.

Play Ball!

by Richard Furcolo, Chair, Batting Cage Committee

The Batting Cage Committee is gearing up for the coming season and invites all residents to stop by the Town Hall on Tuesday, March 22, 2005, beginning at 7:00 p.m. for an informational session on the Batting Cage, to talk to committee members, and learn more about upcoming events. Any questions or concerns? Call Richard Furcolo, Chair, at (301) 718-4562.

The Batting Cage Committee is also trying to put together a spring kick off-event. If you are interested and would like your base ball swing evaluated by a professional coach, or you would like instruction or hitting tips call Richard Furcolo (301) 718-4562. If there is enough interest we will plan for an early April event date.



Pull out your photo albums for an evening of nostalgia...

by Lesley Anne Simmons, History Committee Chair

... and see if you can help the Town document its history. The History Committee is searching for photographs for its Centennial book project – the Town turns 100 years old on April 5, 2006 and we are preparing a book to document the entire period from our incorporation to our birthday. Photographs from any period are potentially useful to us. Although we cannot promise that we will use your photograph why not take a look through your albums for any that you think illustrates a period in the history of our Town? If you find some, contact History Committee member Ursula Dehejia at (301) 986-0696 or by e-mail at ursamak@aol.com indicating the subject and date of the photograph and whether you are willing to either donate it, or make it available for copying.

We are particularly looking for pictures (any date from the 1890s – 2005!) of:

1. July 4th picnic and parade
2. Community Activities (garden and Woman's Clubs, Town meetings, etc)
3. Somerset Elementary School's "Back to School Classic" race
4. People playing on the tennis courts
5. the Dog Swim
6. The Swim team – early years and up to today
7. Photographs of new houses in the 50s and 60s as well as vintage photos of the early houses

News from the Swim Team

by Sarah Morse

Summer is coming. Well, maybe not soon, but it's never too early to make plans for the swim team and season planning is well under way. So, mark your calendar with the following important dates so you don't miss out on any of the fun when making camp and vacation plans.

Swim season officially begins on June 18 with an away meet against Bannockburn. The Somerset Swim team has moved up to the 'I' division. Seeded third, we will also swim Norbeck Hills, Stonegate, Chevy Chase Recreation Association and Inverness Forest.

There are dual meets every Saturday until the final Divisional championship meet on July 23. Home meets will be on June 25, July 2 and July 16. The relay carnival for A-meets has not been scheduled, but must fall between June 26 and July 10. For more MCSL league information, check out their web site at www.mcsl.org

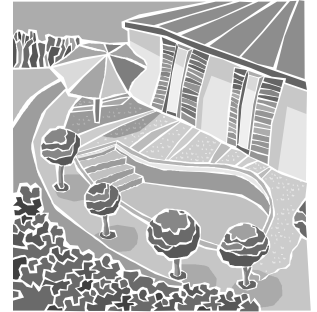


The B-meets begin on Wednesday night, June 22 with a home meet against Little Falls. We will swim four or five Wednesday night meets until the season ends. So far we are scheduled to swim Little Falls, Mohican, Palisades and North Chevy Chase.

The social calendar begins on Friday, May 27, with a welcome back party and team sign-up. The end of the season banquet is Saturday, July 23 at 6:00. Other social events will be scheduled as the season draws nearer.

Want to join the team? For those new to the neighborhood, the swim team is Somerset's only town sponsored sports team. It is open to all swimmers up to age 18 whatever their ability. (No try-outs, but fabulous uniforms for boys and girls. And no speed-o's required for the boys. They wear fashionable "jammers"). We practice every weekday from June 1 to July 23. We have meets on Wednesdays and Saturdays starting in late June. There is also a developmental team, the Minis, for kids under 8 years old who can swim at least 15 yards. These younger swimmers practice only 3 days a week in the afternoon.

So when you're making your summer plans, leave some time for the swim team. Whether you're here for 3 weeks or the whole season, whether you can practice 3 times a week or everyday, whether you're the fastest breast-stroker or can barely get across the pool - we want you on the team. It's fun, it's healthy and you get to meet a lot of your neighbors and kids of all ages. A strong swim team builds a strong community. Call Sarah Morse (301) 907-3298 for more information.



REMINDER

TOWN MEETING

**TO HEAR ABOUT TOWN HALL RENOVATION OPTIONS: MARCH 15, 2005:
7:30 P.M. SOMERSET TOWN HALL**

(Watch for Special Mailing in early March)

On My Mind

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

Over the past month I have learned a great deal about Norwood Park and have been impressed by the area leaders, including several Somerset residents, who are currently seeking to raise funds to improve the playgrounds there.

While the Norwood Park is not within Somerset's municipal limits, we have nothing comparable in our Town and so it is used by many residents on a daily basis, especially those with children and/or dogs. Norwood Park is a vital part of our neighborhood and from e-mails and phone calls I have received the park appears to be one of the reasons people choose to live in Somerset. I often talk about community pride and community spirit and I believe that this should be extended to the wider community – in this case an important local gathering place that makes a major contribution to our quality of life. I don't think anyone would dispute the tremendous value of such a public park.

The public-private partnership now at work to raise monies deserves credit. The proposed playground improvements will not only be state of the art in terms of safety but will provide equal access for those with disabilities. It is my view that these goals are shared by a majority of us and this is the type of park we need and deserve.

At the January Town meeting, the Council agreed to a "last minute" contribution of \$2500 to this worthy cause. In basically waiving our regular notice requirements, we recognized the hard work of the most ardent supporters who convinced us that there were many residents who shared their views. Since then, even more townspeople have contacted the Council and a Somerset family hosted a very successful private fundraiser. Because of this, the Council will be considering an additional funding pledge at the March meeting, which I will strongly support. Should this succeed, it will be example of the success of our political process.

Meet the Town Staff

by Council Member Lesley Simmons



The Town is staffed by five employees and this column will introduce each of them over the coming months.

Tom Carter has been Somerset's Town Clerk-Treasurer since July 1, 1995. Tom joined the Town because his wife felt he was enjoying being a househusband too much and needed to get back to work. Before coming to Somerset, he was a lieutenant colonel with the U.S. Army for 23 years.

Tom takes care of all administrative and financial functions of the Town and is an active member of the Town Hall Renovation Committee. He is also active with the Maryland Municipal League (MML), being treasurer for both the Maryland Municipal Clerks Association and the Maryland Municipal Information Technology Association, and a member of the MML's Information Technology Committee. He says he gets the most satisfaction from handling the Town's finances and resolving residents' problems.

Tom commutes to Somerset each day from Herndon, VA, where he lives with his wife Maggie, Communications Director for the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), and 14-year-old daughter Amanda.

When he isn't working with the Town, Tom enjoys gardening and reading.

Calling All Somerset 4th Graders

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

Vice Chair, Communications Committee, Maryland Municipal League (MML)

I hope that all 4th graders in Somerset-- from public, private and parochial schools -- will enter MML's *If I were Mayor ...* essay contest. The deadline for submission is April 1.

The competition gives students a chance to creatively use cognitive and grade-specific language arts skills and civics/social studies knowledge to respond to a thought provoking question. This year's topic allows entrants to tell others about the changes they might make to their town's budget because they will have less money to spend during the next year.

Eleven regional winners will each receive a \$250 savings bond and an award plaque. In addition, the Communications Committee will select a participant from each district, at random, to receive a \$25 Barnes and Noble gift card.

A brochure, application form and study guide are available through the MML website at www.mdmunicipal.org If you have any questions, feel free to call or email me.

Thanks to Mayor Behr for visiting Somerset Elementary School to talk to more than 80 students to drum up interest. The Mayor reports that he found it exciting and gratifying to speak to the youngsters and is convinced that some of them will run for office in the future!

Make a Clean Sweep: Donate Books to Somerset ES

by Susan Puritz



Somerset Elementary School's Annual Used Book Sale is set for Friday, March 18th from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 19th from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the All Purpose Room at the Radnor Center, 7000 Radnor Road, Bethesda. Stop by and be ready to browse and buy from a great selection of books!

The Used Book Sale fundraiser is one of the school's most popular and successful events thanks to Somerset families and neighbors that generously donate children's books, videos, games, audio tapes and cds. It's a great system -- clean off your shelves, pass your books on to another reader and help raise money for the school. The more you donate the more successful the sale will be.

Donations will be accepted on the stage of the Radnor Center's APR starting, Monday March 14th thru Thursday, March 17th. Please drop off your books between 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., or 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. to avoid the morning and afternoon rush. All donations to the sale should be packed in good, strong cardboard boxes if possible.

If you'd like to give credit to a Somerset student for all your book contributions find out who their teacher is and mark it on the box. The class that donates the most books to the Used Book Sale will be celebrated with an ice cream party.

For additional information, please call Julieta Pacanins at (301) 657-1376 or Catherine McCann at (301) 656-3322.

All About People

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

JACK and VICKI FRINK (Cumberland)--who look way too young for this role -- are the proud and happy grandparents of a second grandchild, **SAMANTHA PAULINE FRINK**, born this month in Columbia, Maryland. Samantha is the daughter of **CHRISTOPHER and TRACY FRINK**, and the little sister of 6 year old **ALEXANDRA**, who, according to her grandma, is "quite the little mother at age 6"...One of Somerset's premier artists, **FLORENCE GANG** (Falstone), will have a solo show at Ozmosis Gallery in Bethesda from March 8 through April 6. The opening reception, open to all, is on Friday, March 11 from 6-9 p.m. at 7908 Woodmont Avenue. Florence will also be at the gallery on Saturday, March 12 for those who can't attend in the evening and if you have questions, call her at (301) 656-3430...Advance kudos to the entire **GERBER FAMILY--JACK, LYNDSEY, AMANDA, BRADFORD and CLAYTON** (Cumberland)--who will organize the first ever *Kids for the Cure* and *Teens for the Cure* events as part of the *Komen National Race for the Cure* on the Mall on Saturday, June 4. There will be activities and entertainment for all ages after the walk/race. The Gerbers want to put together a Somerset team and would love everyone to get involved. Please contact them by phone (301) 654-2984 or email at Lgerber@covad.net For more information on the highly respected *Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation*, visit www.nationalraceforthecure.org ...**SAM LIPSCOMB** (Dorset), son of **JOE LIPSCOMB and LAURA WILL**, won the Cub Scout Pack 82 Pinewood Derby and is now moving on to the regionals. We all wish him the best...Two names I failed to mention last month from the Washingtonian Magazine's list of the areas top lawyers are both Dorset Avenue residents--**HERB BELLER** is a tax expert and **LEIZER GOLDSMITH** practices employment law. Furthermore, by the time you read this, Leizer will have been recognized as lawyer of the year by the Metropolitan Employment Lawyers Association, reports proud wife SHARON BRAY...One of the lawyers I did mention, **PAT MALONE** (Essex), is the incoming President of the Washington Trial Lawyers Association, according to wife **VICKI**, who also tells me that son **CHRISTOPHER MALONE** is once again on the Dean's List at Bucknell and will graduate in

May before heading to Tulane Medical School...Our own concert pianist **LOUISE KUPELIAN** (Falstone) has had several gigs this month that were attended by **ALICE ROWEN** (Warwick) and **LILIAN PAUL** (Warwick) among others and hopefully we can provide advance notice of upcoming performances so that even more can attend...**MAURY ATKIN** (Uppingham) writes from Marco Island, Florida that "sun, surf and sand" are great along with the reviews he is getting for his new book, *Life's Voyage, Dedicated to Making A Difference*. This work is an anecdotal memoir of Maury's career as a consulting economist working in many parts of the globe, with a heavy emphasis on Israel. The book is available from on-line bookseller Amazon.com, Maury's publisher or from Maury when he returns to Town in April. More on that in the future....

Editor's Note: He is too modest to note it in his own column, but Gayley Knight (Cumberland) reports that **JEFFREY SLAVIN** (Warwick) has been accepted to participate in the 2005 *Leadership Maryland Program*. Leadership programs are designed to broaden the base of leaders through the development of individual interests, knowledge, and leadership ability that can be applied with power, influence and authority for the greater good of cities, counties or states. It is a highly competitive and rigorous application program. Jeffrey is a graduate of Leadership Montgomery, class of 1991.

Jeffrey has also been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the *Montgomery County Community Foundation* (MCCF). MMCF, part of a network of more than 600 community foundations around the country, was established to create and build a permanent fund to provide for the present and future well-being of our community. The 21-member board oversees operations, including investments and charitable distributions and is chosen to represent the public interest. Members are elected for a three-year term.

County News and Announcements

The Montgomery County Council is seeking applicants for:

- (i) A position on the Montgomery County Planning Board. The term of John M. Robinson, Democrat, will expire on June 14, 2005. Mr. Robinson has indicated that he will apply for reappointment. For information on Board membership criteria, function and responsibilities, meeting schedule and reimbursement visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council go to "Council Agenda" click on January 25, 2005 and scroll down to page 5. The deadline for letters expressing interest is 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 30, 2005.
- (ii) A citizens' advisory committee to study compensation of elected officials. Letters of interest must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 20, 2005.

Notices with full information for both of these committees and the addresses for letters of interest, are posted on the notice board outside of the Somerset Town hall and more information is available from Justina Ferber at (240) 777-7938.

A reminder that Montgomery County Public Libraries hold numerous activities for toddlers. For information visit the Chevy Chase Library at 8005 Connecticut Avenue, call (301) 986-4313 TTY (301) 657-0830 or visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library

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. This issue edited by Lesley Simmons.

MAYOR

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

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Judy Frankel, Council V.P., 5528 Uppingham St., 301-657-8875
Tom Eldridge, 5605 Warwick Pl., 301-656-3354
Lesley Simmons, 4723 Cumberland Ave., 240-497-1876
Richard Kessler, 4914 Cumberland Ave., 301-654-2699
Jeffrey Slavin, 5706 Warwick Pl., 301-654-6767

CLERK-TREASURER

Tom Carter

TOWN HALL

Open 9 to 4:30
301-657-3211/Fax 301-657-2773
Web site: www.townofsomerset.com
E-mail: clerk@townofsomerset.com
TTY users call Maryland Relay

Deadlines: Ads, March 16, Copy March 18

Classifieds

SERVICES

PIANO & FLUTE lessons (with THEORY) Wash. Post music critic. CBS RECORDINGS writer. FACULTY: G.W.U., MARYLAND U., SIDWELL. Music Degrees: A.B. Harvard; M.A. Columbia; Ph.D. Maryland. Studied: PEABODY CONSERVATORY & BERLIN (GERMANY). 30 years teaching all ages, levels. Call Cecelia Porter, 301-654-2165.

HOME REPAIR CONTRACTOR. We have been very pleased with contractor - carpentry, dry wall, cabinet repair, painting, roof repair. Call us for a reference. Howard Simkowitz or Katherine Lacy, 301-656-5637.

MY VERY COMPETENT, DEPENDABLE HOUSE-KEEPER for 25 years is available for 25 hours a week. She is excellent with babies, children and seniors. Call Virginia Mitz at 301-652-0353.

SERVICES

ACADEMIC TUTOR. M.A. in Biology and Special Ed. Fifteen-years experience in remediation, enrichment and work with learning disabled. Math through Algebra; study and organizational skills; French; test preparation: SSAT, PSAT, SAT. Call Sheryl Gilbert, 301-656-1753.

HEBREW TUTOR (native speaker) with more than 20 years experience teaching reading and conversation to children, bar/bat mitzvah and adults. Excellent references. Will teach at your house or mine. Call Varda Daniels at 301-986-4836.

FOR SALE

1992 INFINITY G-20, auto., PS/PD/PW, AM-FM, 144K, excellent condition, asking \$2,250/obo. Great second car or kids car. Call Sam Leiken, 301-951-5851.

FOR SALE

1993 MERCURY VILLAGER MINIVAN, 125K, auto., PS/PD/PW, AM-FM, excellent condition, new front tires, asking \$2,850/obo. Call Sam Leiken, 301-951-5851.

MISCELLANEOUS

SUNNY, FRESH ONE-BEDROOM APARTMENT available in Willoughby Building on Western Ave. near Hecht's. All amenities (gym, rooftop pool, sauna, library, restaurant, mini-mart, etc.). 24-hour fully-covered front desk. Steps to Friendship Heights Metro. Free shuttle to Metro and to Westbard Shopping Plaza. Parking available. \$1,450/mo. Contact goodartz@aol.com or 301-656-5929.

I NEED A HOUSE June 20-26 and a second house June 23-26 in which my visiting family can stay. We will cook and eat at my house on Falstone. If you are vacationing those dates and are interested, please call Sara Anderson, 301-986-7926.

Ads are printed as a courtesy to Town residents. The Town makes no representations as to quality, safety or otherwise regarding the goods and services advertised. Readers should make their own inquiries. TO PLACE AN AD, submit typed or neatly printed copy to the Clerk-Treasurer. \$1 for 25 words or less; \$2 for 26-50 words. Check or exact change. MUST INCLUDE A SOMERSET PHONE NUMBER.

PELIMINARY AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2005 - 7:30 P.M.

1. Approval of minutes of February 7 regular meeting -- 7:30.
2. Discussion of financial report -- 7:35.
3. Report by Caroline Cooper, chair, Town Hall Renovation Committee -- 7:40.
4. Confirmation of Mayor's reappointment of Alan Dock, Bonnie Lewin, Barbara Marblestone and Sarah Morse for two-year terms on Special Events Committee -- 7:50.
5. Confirmation of Mayor's reappointment of Richard Furcolo and Chris Lane for two-year terms on Batting Cage Committee and reappointment of Richard Furcolo as chair for another year -- 7:55.
6. *Presentation of proposed Greystone entrance landscaping plan by Melissa Gildea, Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture, and action on recommendation by Parks and Natural Resources Committee to request bids for the proposed work -- 8:00.
7. *Nominations for three Council member positions for two-year terms and date for candidates forum -- 8:10.
8. Fact finding hearing, recommendation to Historic Preservation Commission and action on Town building permit application by Bonnie Thomson and Eugene Tillman, 5808 Warwick Place, to add a two-story addition to the rear of their house -- 8:20.
9. Fact finding hearing and action on Town building permit application by Dana and Jeffrey Macher, 4725 Cumberland Avenue, to extend the width of their deck by five feet -- 8:30.
10. Report by Josh Bobeck on progress of Pool House Survey Committee -- 8:35.
11. Action on contract with Aloha, Inc. to replace current pool heater with two smaller heaters for \$5,500 -- 8:45.
12. Mayor's report -- 8:55.
13. Developments/plans in the vicinity of Somerset -- 9:05.
14. Suggestions and questions from residents -- 9:15.
15. Five-Year Fiscal Plan hearing and discussion -- 9:25.
16. *Action on three-year contract for refuse and recycling service beginning in April -- 9:45.
17. Introduction of amendments to Town Code Section 6-308(b), Decisions on Building Permit Applications, and Section 8-208(c), Appeal of [Tree] Permit Decisions, extending deadline for written Council decisions to 40 days from date of hearing -- 9:55.
18. **Discussion of hiring police to enforce speed limit and STOP signs in Town -- 10:00.
19. **Discussion of adding more and/or raising the height of the Town speed humps -- 10:20.
19. Introduction of Town Charter and Code amendments to increase fines for removal of trees without a permit from \$400 to \$1,000 -- 10:30.
20. Action on Arbor Day proclamation -- 10:35.
21. *Action on proposal to add \$5,000 to the \$2,500 authorized last month for renovation of Norwood Park playgrounds -- 10:40.
22. Action revoking 1978 resolution concerning driveways at 5403 Trent Street and 5001 River Road since the property owners have reached an amicable resolution of the issue -- 10:50.
23. New business -- 11:00.
24. Adjournment -- 11:05.

Items marked * have an accompanying report in this Journal. Items marked ** had accompanying reports in last month's Journal, which is available on the web or from the Town Hall.