



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL



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Mayor's Den

by Walter J. Behr

Street Closings No Secret

We know that the blocked streets, which are an inevitable part of installing new water mains and sanitary sewers, are a dreadful nuisance. A new system is in place that should eliminate driving around in circles.

The Town will do its best on weekdays to post street closings on the Town Web site at www.townofsomerset.com. Closings will appear just under the address/phone information on the main page of the site, in bold and red. We hope that this service will make navigating through Somerset less stressful.

Callahan Pipeline, Inc., the WSSC contractor, advises that some drivers ignore the "Road Closed" sign and are upset when they reach the construction site and have to turn around. As in the past, if you live in the "Road Closed" block, you can always get home. If necessary, operations will cease and machinery will be moved.

Town Revenue May Exceed Estimate

In recent years, about two-thirds of Town of Somerset revenue has come from a portion of State income taxes paid by residents that is refunded to the Town by the Comptroller. Our current budget (for fiscal year 2006) includes \$537,000 from this source, which is 66 percent of the \$817,000 total income expected.

The good news is that we will probably receive more than budgeted because figures just received from the State show a huge increase in net taxable income for calendar year 2004.

Net taxable income of Somerset residents for the past five years was as follows:

<u>Calendar Year</u>	<u>Net Taxable Income</u>
2004	\$107 million
2003	58 million
2002	64 million
2001	59 million
2000	69 million

Please note that taxable income from year to year can decrease as well as increase. We should certainly not count on the huge 85 percent jump in income between 2003 and 2004 to be repeated between 2004 and 2005.

Kids' Dog Duty Still Doable

Under the new County animal control law it is not necessary for dog walkers to be 18 years old and physically able to restrain the animal unless the animal has been officially designated as dangerous or potentially dangerous.

The new County law, like the long-standing Town ordinance, requires all dogs not on the owner's property or in an official dog exercise area to be on a leash. No minimum age for dog handlers is specified unless the pet is officially determined to be dangerous or potentially dangerous.

I regret the error in last month's Town Journal.

Safety on Capital Crescent Trail

Did you know that between Bethesda and Georgetown the only two grade crossings of the Capital Crescent Trail and streets are near Somerset? One is at Little Falls Parkway this side of Arlington Road, and the other is at Dorset Avenue in Kenwood. Because of dangerous conflicts that occur between trail users and motorists at these crossings, Park and Planning has organized a task force to consider what should be done to make the intersections safer.

County Park Police have stepped up enforcement of the STOP signs on the trail at these two intersections, but many of us who drive on the parkway and through Kenwood know that trail users sometimes ignore the signs and run, ride or skate right through them.

Until a fail-safe improvement is installed, please drive extra carefully at these two locations.

Record Number of Flu Shots

Somerset residents and employees turned out in record numbers on October 28th to get flu shots at the Town Hall. Two nurses from the Visiting Nurses Association administered 144 vaccinations between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Thanks to superb planning by **Barbara Marblestone** and the efficiency of the residents who handled the paperwork, the entire process went flawlessly. Besides Barbara, those who volunteered are **Barbara Condos, Alan Dock, Ruth Ephraim, Lucy Freeman, Jim Pines** and **Jerry Roschwalb**.

Next year – at the suggestion of Jeff Lape -- we are going to try to schedule the shots in the late afternoon so that more working residents and students can participate.

Maximum House Height Lowered a Bit



After almost two years of working groups, public hearings, debates and revisions, County Council member Howie Denis's bill to reduce the maximum height of houses in our R-60 zone has become law. Main provisions:

- Maximum of 2 ½ stories. Cellars, which must be more than half below the average elevation of the finished grade, do not count as stories.
- Building height is measured from the average elevation of finished ground surface along the front of the building. However, at no point may the finished grade be higher than the pre-development grade.
- Height may not exceed: (1) 35' when measured to the top of a gable, hip, mansard or gambrel roof or (2) 30' to the mean height level between the eaves and ridge of the above type roofs or the top of a flat roof. (Until now, the 35' maximum was measured to the middle – not the top- of sloped roofs.)

Somerset Street Lights

by Council member Richard Kessler

At the last Town Council meeting I voted in favor of replacing the Town street lights with lights and light fixtures endorsed by the Dark Sky Society, an organization that fights to reduce light pollution and to ensure we can see the stars at night. The proposed lights would have resulted in a significant decrease in light reflected into Somerset bedrooms and would have provided more focused light on our streets and sidewalks during both clear and rainy nights to the benefit of both pedestrians and drivers. They would have provided the Town with an immediate benefit, both in terms of reducing light pollution and making our sidewalks and streets more secure.

I realize that some people preferred the current blue, mercury vapor lights to the yellow, high-pressure sodium ones that were proposed. I thought quite a bit about it and looked at several different locations. Whether blue or yellow, neither light is “natural” and any choice would be a matter of personal aesthetics.

Rather than making a judgment on personal aesthetics, I chose to make a judgment based on light pollution and security.

My vote was based on an honest balancing of the facts as presented to the Council in over two years of deliberation on this issue.

On Street Lighting

by Council member Lesley Simmons

I have been against the proposed changes to our street lights since I was elected to the Council. While I agree that the current lighting is inadequate in places, I believe the main problem is the placement of light poles, not the type of bulb. Many poles are on the same side of the street as the sidewalk and illuminate the road rather than the walk. In many cases the tree foliage also blocks the light from the walks.

Despite my personal views, I believed the Council needed to know residents’ opinions of the proposed high-pressure sodium lights and I recommended a survey be undertaken at the end of the demonstration period. That survey had a low response rate, but two-thirds of those who returned the survey voted for the new lights. Thus, at the October Council meeting, I reluctantly indicated that I would adhere to those wishes. But the action decision was postponed.

Subsequently, almost as many residents who voted for the new lights in the survey sent e-mails or phoned to say they were against them. I no longer felt comfortable that the survey was an accurate gauge of our residents’ views, and I decided that I should vote purely on the merits of the case, which I believed were that the costs far outweighed the benefits.

I am sorry this issue became so divisive. I hope we can now turn to smaller-scale solutions for the light-impaired spots in Town where an additional street light or some judicious tree pruning can make a difference.

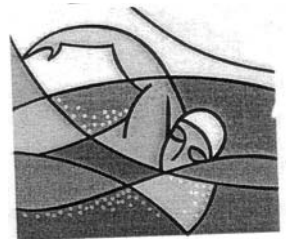
Council to Consider Code Amendment on Pool Committee

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

In response to requests from several residents, this summer I drafted and introduced an amendment to the Town Code to improve the way the Swimming Pool Committee operates and to ensure that the Code reflects the reality of how the committee does business. I hope that passing these changes will help this important committee to be even more efficient and effective. This amendment will be considered by the Council in December.

The final draft is available on the Town Website at www.townofsomerset.com. You can read and compare what language would be added and what would be subtracted. To summarize, the amendment clarifies the membership of the swim team representative, redefines the term lengths, provides for an attendance requirement and eliminates some officer positions that have never been filled. Now that the complete Town Code is also available on our Website, those interested in more serious study can look up Chapter 5 of the document and do more research on these changes I am suggesting.

Please note that this version of the amendment is significantly different from the version I originally introduced as I have made revisions in reliance on the advice and suggestions from many citizens, including Swimming Pool Committee Chairman Josh Bobeck, Sarah Morse and the entire Pool Committee. I thank them for their input. Should anyone have further questions or concerns, please call me at (301) 654-6767 or e-mail me at jzslavin@aol.com.



Water Main and Sewer Report

By Jason Hipkins, Director of Operations, Callahan Pipeline Inc.

Work Completed This Month



We have completed all the water house connections on Warwick Place and Essex Avenue. We have also completed the hook-up to the bottom of Dorset Avenue, and the new water main is live on this street. New valves were installed at the intersection so that each street can be isolated for any shutdowns in the future. Paving on Warwick Place is almost complete although there is an area at the intersection of Warwick and Dorset that will have to wait until a weekday when school is out. Paving on Essex has begun.

What's Next?

We have 22 of the 96 water house connections left to complete. The final 22, all on Dorset, are in the process of being done now and will be completed before the end of the month. Three intersection need to be tied into the new mains: Dorset and Surrey, Surrey and Essex, and Warwick and Falstone. To do this we will need to shut down water to some streets again. As of now, plans are for Dorset to be shut down one more time, Essex twice, and Warwick and Falstone once.

We plan to begin new sewer installation December 1st. The following streets will be affected: four different sections of Essex, Dorset between Warwick and Surrey, and near the intersection of Warwick and Falstone. This work is to be completed by end of February 2006.

Concerns

We have new ROAD CLOSED signs. These are 4ft x 4ft signs and very visible. We are closing the road in certain areas for our safety and the safety of those driving in the area. We have experienced many, many people driving right through our ROAD CLOSED signs and then having to turn around in the street. We have DETOUR signs directing traffic around us. PLEASE! Do not drive through ROAD CLOSED signs. These signs are there because the road is closed.

We have had people drive through our signs and through our open trench while we are paving. One resident who started to drive through our area became angry and very offensive to our workers when they had to yell at her to stop her from damaging her vehicle at the open trench.

This past week on Dorset Avenue a lady drove through our ROAD CLOSED & DETOUR signs and then drove right up to where we were working. She proceeded to yell profanities at our foreman. We have instructed our workers to remain calm, which they have. In future cases if a person comes at us yelling with profanities, we will ignore the person until they calm down.

On the other hand, we have had many pleasant experiences with neighbors in the area. This is a very beautiful community and we know you want us to be done today. We ask for a couple more months of your cooperation as we finish this winter.

As always, do feel free to contact me with any concerns at jason@callahanpipeline.com or if you prefer by phone at 1- 301- 898-3003.

Calendar

Saturday, December 3 – Community Service Day

Monday, December 5 – Town Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 14 – Journal Deadline, Ads

Thursday, December 15 – Journal Deadline, Copy

Monday, December 26 – Town Office Closed

Monday, January 2, 2006 – Town Office Closed

Sunday, April 30, 2006 – Town Centennial Celebrations

Town Hall Tidbits

By Tom Carter

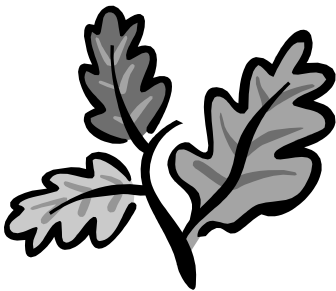
Office Holiday Hours

The Town Hall will be closed the Monday after Christmas, December 26, and the Monday after New Year's Day, January 2, which are Federal holidays. Tom will be in the office only sporadically between December 22 and December 30. Please call first before coming to the office to be sure he or Corrie is in. The Mayor will be in Town and may be called either at home or at Town Hall. Some of the maintenance personnel will also 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.

Found

A set of two keys was found in front of 4507 Cumberland Avenue and another set of five keys at the basketball court the first week of November. Please call Tom at (301) 657-3211 if you think they belong to you.

Leaf Removal



We are still vacuuming leaves and will be picking them up until the end of December. Our machine is working great and only the occasional rain has slowed the men.

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. The men will try to notify owners of parked cars the day before if they have time. 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 by J&J.

Yard Waste Pickup

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

Winter Storm Warning

The Town will have our snow removal contractor shovel and sand public sidewalks alongside your property for you as we have in the past. If you want help clearing your driveway or the walkway to your house, you can make arrangements with one of our young people in Town who is on the list of Odd Job Helpers (save the insert from this issue of the Journal).

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 out to go 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 and Driving Courtesies

Please refrain from parking cars opposite other residents' driveways unless there are no other spaces in the vicinity. While this is a common courtesy year-round, drivers who park in these locations when the roads become slick not only inconvenience their neighbors when they are trying to back out onto the street, but also place their own vehicles in greater likelihood of damage.

If vehicles are parked illegally, call the police at (301) 279-8000. You do NOT have to give your name to file a report.

As you know, our streets are narrow. Please remember that traffic on the side of the street where no parking is allowed has the right of way. That doesn't mean that courtesy doesn't work both ways. With house construction projects and WSSC street work in progress, it behooves all of us to be considerate of our fellow drivers.

MVA Mobile Office

There will be no MVA mobile service in Friendship Heights in December due to the State holiday schedule.

2006 Calendars

2006 League of Women Voters calendars are available at the Town Hall for \$6, or you may call Nancy Soreng at 301-986-1916.

Permits Granted

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

TREES

Jocelyne Albert and Robert Hecht, 4910 Cumberland Avenue, to remove a dead walnut in their back yard and a hornbeam crowding the rear corner of their house.

Deborah Randall, 4825 Essex Avenue, to remove a dead hackberry in her back yard and a dying dogwood in the side yard.

Laura Will, 4722 Dorset Avenue, to remove a dead holly in her front yard.

Steven Shapiro and Lauren Rubenstein, 5602 Surrey Street, to remove a failing red oak, close to, and leaning over, their house.

Paul and Gayley Knight, 4808 Cumberland Avenue, to remove a dying twin-trunk redbud in their front yard.

FENCES

Matt Morley and Joy Abel, 4801 Grantham Avenue, to replace their back yard fence.

Jonathan Diesenhaus and Jill Lesser, 4711 Trent Court, to erect a wood fence along their east property line on top of a retaining wall.

Legislation

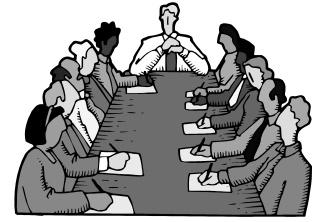
At the November 7 meeting, the Council:

1. Approved a Town Code amendment to require the removal of existing fences outside of new fences when the former are visible from a neighbor's property. (Vote: Frankel, Kessler and Simmons for; Eldridge and Slavin opposed. Motion passed 3-2.)
2. Introduced a Town Code amendment removing the section allowing residents to prune Town trees with a permit from the Mayor.
3. Introduced a Town Code amendment to eliminate the option of insurance for contractors to cut down a tree as a result of a new State law requiring them to have a Maryland tree expert license.
4. Approved a resolution authorizing the establishment of a Town 100th Anniversary Task Force.

Council Activity

At the November 7 meeting, the Town Council:

1. Heard the Audit Committee's comments on the auditor's report for fiscal year 2005.
2. Approved a building permit for Richard Feldman, 5517 Uppingham Street, to expand the kitchen and family room and add a deck to the rear, add a portico to the front and remove four trees, subject to receipt of a County permit, the Town permit fee and deposit, and installation of sediment control devices, and a tree removal permit for four trees, based on the Mayor's assessment of the two trees in the back yard with a requirement for the replacement of two 2" caliper trees of Mr. Feldman's choice and location if the Mayor determines there is sufficient room for them. A tree replacement deposit of \$200 per tree would also be required if the Mayor requires replacements.
3. Approved a six-month extension of the building permit for Fauzia Najm, 4602 Dorset Avenue, to complete an addition of a foyer to the front, a second story to the west side and an extension of the living room to the rear of her house.
4. Approved a building permit for Josh Rozen and Thuyhoa Nguyen, 5525 Uppingham Street, to add one-story additions to the front and south side, a second story to part of the existing house and replace the driveway apron, subject to receipt of a County permit and the Town permit fee and deposit.
5. Approved a building permit for Tom and Jennifer Joseph, 5604 Surrey Street, to add a screened porch and two-story addition to the rear of their house, subject to relocating the air conditioning units at the eight-foot line, receipt of a County permit and the Town permit fee and deposit, and establishing a sediment control plan.
6. Heard the police report regarding enforcement during October.
7. Voted against the recommendation of the Street Light Committee to replace all Town mercury vapor street lights with high-pressure sodium lights at a cost not to exceed \$30,000. (Vote: Frankel and Kessler for; Eldridge, Simmons and Slavin opposed. Motion failed 2-3.)
8. Heard a proposal by Council members Lesley Simmons and Jeffrey Slavin to move forward with plans for major renovation of the Town Hall and establish a plan to determine specific improvements to the swimming pool/bathhouse.
9. Set the date of the January 2006 Council meeting for Tuesday, January 3.



Parks and Natural Resources Committee Activities

by Corrie Morsey, PNRC Chair

The Parks and Natural Resources Committee (PNRC) met in late October. A summary of the discussions and the Committee's recommendations follows:

A few residents had requested more elaborate signage and plantings at the **Dorset/Little Falls Entrance to Town**. The PNRC feels this entrance, as others into Town, is unique. The land on which it stands is owned by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) not the Town. M-NCPPC's traditional sign welcoming all to Somerset is in the same style as their other signs along Little Falls Parkway and historically has always welcomed residents and visitors to this entrance. We feel neither the need nor urgency to change it. However, M-NCPPC, at the Mayor's request, has agreed to refurbish the sign. The Town staff has enlarged and cleaned up the planting bed beneath the sign, added some background shrubs and planted tulip bulbs and pansies, which hopefully will provide a showy display for the Town's centennial kickoff celebration on April 30, 2006.



The Potomac Conservancy's Good Neighbor Handbook was brought to our attention by resident George Wyeth. Plans are underway for an article on this subject in a future Town Journal and a presentation to the Town early in 2006.

Additional **Tree City Signs**, specifically at the Greystone entrance into Town, were requested by a couple of residents. The PNRC feels the Town is overrun by signs and it does not encourage erecting more.

The matter of the Town **requiring residents and/or contractors to plant trees of a specified size in connection with issuing a building permit** was raised. The PNRC recommends that trees planted in the Town's right-of-way comply with the Town's monoculture. However, it decided not to discourage planting large caliper trees.

The PNRC agreed that the Town needs to continue monitoring erosion along Little Falls Branch. In a similar vein, it should also remain diligent in addressing stormwater runoff in and around Town.

On My Mind

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

The proposal that Council member Lesley Simmons and I are making towards addressing the long term needs for our two most important capital assets -- the Town Hall and the Pool House -- is included as an insert to this Journal. I would like to publicly thank Lesley for her leadership on this important project and to recognize the time and thought she has put into it.

I would invite everyone in Town to read the proposal with a critical eye and be prepared to make constructive comments. We have been talking about making repairs on the Town Hall for more than five years and while we may not have agreement on the extent of the repairs, I think most people do concur that something needs to be done and that we cannot delay the decisions much longer. We have a constituency here in Somerset that needs to be served and we have programs to implement. These are not possible without a safer and better functioning Town Hall. We do need to have more discussion on what features are most important to us, but I believe we need to do this expeditiously. And of course we need to look at all of this in the context of our budget.

At the same time, the type of hard work and attention that has already been paid to the Town Hall must be similarly paid to the Pool House, and I feel that our proposal jump-starts this process. We don't need to pit one project against another, but we are suggesting that they be considered at the same time.

I realize that making decisions with public dollars takes much longer than many of us would like, especially those with business or military backgrounds, and I understand those frustrations. And as we are all stakeholders in this, we must respect each others' views and not lose sight of the ultimate goal.

I look forward to hearing from a large number of you.

Somerset Community Service Day Set for Saturday, December 3

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

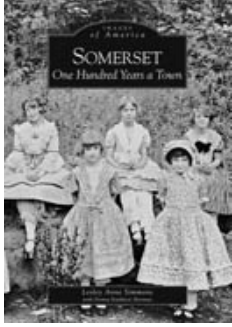
Our Town will continue our yearly tradition of helping others in need by holding a Community Service Day on Saturday, December 3, starting at 2:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. This important activity is open to residents of all generations.

Once again we will make sandwiches to benefit the Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place and the Gude Drive Men's Shelter in Rockville. In the past we have made over 1,000 sandwiches and we hope to break records this year. We will also assemble mailbox "surprises" for patients at NIH's Children's Inn and probably have one or two additional projects.

For those unable to attend, please consider donating canned/dry goods and/or excess unopened toiletries (especially in small plastic bottles) by dropping them off at the Town Hall while we are working. Obviously, these items

are especially appreciated during the holiday season, so now is the time to clean out the clutter in your kitchen or bathroom and help others at the same time.

If you plan to bring groups of children, please let us know in advance by contacting me or my co-chair, Sarah Morse, at (301) 907-3298 or by e-mail at momorse@hotmail.com. We are looking forward to once again having a big group.



Town Centennial Coming Up – Mark Your Calendars

In big red letters. The Town will celebrate its 100th year of incorporation on Sunday afternoon, April 30th, 2006, with a street party, ice cream social and lots of other activities. Look out for further information in the Journal. If you would like to help with planning and organizing contact Lesley Simmons at Lesley.simmons@earthlink.net or (240) 497-1876.

Residents' Letters

A Delicious Discovery

from Janet Baldinger, Surrey Street

Recently while visiting my daughter, Jill, in Baltimore, we made the decision to dine at a highly recommended restaurant in Fells Point. Upon perusing the menu, we noticed the chef's name listed, Damon Hersch. He was a classmate of my daughter's at Somerset Elementary School and the two hadn't seen each other in many years. Damon was most eager to catch up on all that is happening in Somerset. He wished to be remembered to his former neighbors and hoped he could spark an interest in forming a reunion with his former classmates. He can be reached at Lousiana Restaurant, 1708 Alicianna Street, Fells Point, (410) 327-2610.



Incidentally, the food was outstanding and lived up to all the raving. After dinner Damon sent over a "signature dessert" and provided us with the "cook's tour." He would love to hear from his friends.

Editor's Note: How about organizing that reunion to take place at the celebration of the Town's one-hundredth birthday on April 30, 2006?

Compost Made Easy -- A Tip from Organic Gardening Newsletter

via Lauren Rubenstein, Surrey Street

- Fill a plastic garbage bag with leaves and some grass clippings.
- Poke some holes in the bag and wet the leaves.
- Scoop a shovel-full of soil into the bag and shake it.
- Shake the bag every few weeks and moisten the leaves if they dry out.
- Next spring you'll have dark, crumbly leaf mold.

County News

Flu Shots

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services has completed its flu vaccination clinics scheduled for this year. Residents are urged to continue to check with their health care provider to see if flu vaccinations will be available from them in the future. A limited supply of vaccine is available for children under the age of 18, and two evening clinics will be held while supplies last on: Thursday, December 1, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Dennis Avenue Health Center, 2000 Dennis Avenue, Silver Spring, and Monday, December 12, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Germantown Health Center, 12900 Middlebrook Road, Germantown.

For information about flu prevention, call the County's Immunization Information Line at (240) 777-1050.

All About People

by Council member Jeffrey Slavin

ROBIN and TAPPY WILDER (Warwick) are pleased that their daughter **JENNEY** (a Somerset and Westland alum) received her Master's degree from the Bank Street College of Education in New York City recently and has moved back to our area to join The School Counseling Group in the District as an educational consultant. Congrats. Robin, by the way, is a former Somerset Council member and remains very active and interested in Town issues...



PAT and EARL SILBERT (Essex) have a new grandson, **ANDREW ZEN SILBERT BEST**, born on October 21. His mother is daughter **SARAH SILBERT** and she and son-in-law **ERIC BEST** live on a farm in Randolph, Vermont. Sarah grew up in Somerset and is a graduate of Maret, Harvard and Bennington, where she obtained her MFA in writing. She teaches English and creative writing at Vermont Technical College, also in Randolph. The couple lives a 15 minute walk from town on 200 acres of pasture and woods and hills. Sarah loves the country and "wearing" baby Andrew and she takes long walks up her quiet road, passing horses, sheep, and cows--like Somerset when it was founded! Pat was in Vermont recently to attend to the "little darling," the "most fabulous grandchild she has ever had" (her first, naturally). Pat is also a former Council member...

BOB and JEANNETTE KREISER (Falstone) have double pleasure to report. They became grandparents for the first time in May when daughter **DEBORAH KREISER-FRANCIS**, wife of **MICHAEL FRANCIS**, gave birth to **JULIA ALISON FRANCIS**. The couple resides in East Walpole, Massachusetts. In addition, this month Bob and Jeannette's son **JOSH** was married to **JESSICA GABER** in a wonderful ceremony at Temple Shalom in Chevy Chase. Joah and Jessica had originally planned to be married in New Orleans, but Hurricane Katrina intervened. An article about their experience with planning the relocated wedding appeared in the November 9 online edition of the Washington Jewish Week. The happy couple resides in Wheaton...



Kudos to **NATHAN RESNICK** (Grantham), son of **ANDREW RESNICK and ROCHELLE ZEIDMAN**, whose MSI Classic Division 1 soccer team recently won first place in their league...Finally, as we have police patrolling the Town, be extra careful about speeding, running stop signs and parking in fire lanes. Have a safe and healthy holiday season and send me some end of the year household news.

Help Available for Medicare Recipients

County seniors and persons with disabilities receiving Medicare, and their caregivers who need information and counseling on Medicare's new prescription drug program, can contact the County's Senior Health Insurance Counseling program by calling the Senior Health Insurance Counseling Program at 301-590-2819.

Beginning January 1, 2006, prescription drug coverage will be available to all individuals with Medicare, and consumers may now begin enrolling in one of the drug plans. Staff and volunteers from the counseling program are also visiting sites around the community to discuss the new Medicare program and answer questions about it.



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.

SERVICES

ACADEMIC TUTOR: 20 years experience teaching all ages, subjects. Math through Algebra II. Reading comprehension and writing. Test preparation, organizational/study skills. M.A. in Biology and Special Ed. Call Sheryl Gilbert, 301-656-1753.

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.

WANTED

SEEKING RENTAL HOUSE. Somerset homeowners looking for a 3+ bedroom rental house in Somerset to live in through our renovation. Lease term 12-18 months. Start time flexible, but ideally before March 2006. Call Sally Shea Christian, 202-352-7292 or sshea&trs-realestate.com

MISCELLANEOUS

A SOMERSET-CHEVY CHASE GIRL SCOUT TROOP is collecting gently used bikes and scooters for a large family in Louisiana that lost its home and belongings in Hurricane Katrina. The children are two boys (7 & 14) and three girls (5, 8 & 11). If you can help, please call Neva Grant, 301-652-4016.

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.

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

CLERK-TREASURER

Tom Carter

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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

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 December 14, Copy December 15

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Text versions of ordinances to be introduced or that are scheduled for action at the regular Town Council meetings are available, in full, on the Town Web site at www.townofsomerset.com.

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL

Monday, December 5, 2005 - 7:30 P.M.

1. Approval of minutes of the November 7 regular meeting – 7:30.
2. Discussion of FY 05 annual audit by Jim Lindsey and Bob Diss of Lindsey & Associates and Town Audit Committee – 7:35.
3. Discussion of financial report – 7:50.
4. Confirmation of Mayor's reappointment of Tracy Truman to Board of Supervisors of Elections for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2008 – 7:55.
5. Introduction of resolution amending Town Charter to increase number of members of Board of Supervisors of Elections from three to five – 8:00.
6. Confirmation of Mayor's reappointment of Donna Harman, Zola Schneider and Lesley Simmons to three-year terms on the History Committee and reappointment of Lesley Simmons as chair for three more years – 8:05.
7. Action setting dates for nomination and election of Mayor and two Council members for two-year terms (suggested dates: nominations, Monday, March 6; election, Monday, April 3) – 8:10.
8. Action on dates of April, July, September and October 2006 and January 2007 Council meetings (suggested: Wednesday, April 5; Wednesday, July 5; Tuesday, September 5; Tuesday, October 3; and Tuesday, January 2) – 8:15.
9. Action authorizing the Council to meet as a committee of the whole, chaired by the Vice President of the Council, to recommend the Mayor's salary for term beginning in 2006 – 8:25.
10. Action on tennis fees for 2006 – 8:30.
11. Mayor's report – 8:35.
12. Developments/plans in the vicinity of Somerset – 8:45.
13. Suggestions and questions from residents – 8:55.
14. Report by Tom Eldridge on Chevy Chase Village police enforcement in Somerset – 9:05.
15. Report by Alan Proctor, chair, Undergrounding Committee, on engineer's study of burying cables in Somerset – 9:15.
16. Action on proposal by Shemro Engineering to design repairs to pool pump room ceiling at a cost of \$1,920 – 9:30.
17. Action on amendment to Town Code Section 5-303, Swimming Pool Committee to clarify membership of swim team representative, redefine term lengths, add attendance requirement and eliminate officer positions that have never been filled – 9:35.
18. Action on Town Code amendment removing section allowing residents to prune Town trees – 9:45.
19. Action on Town Code amendment to eliminate option of insurance for contractors to cut down a tree as a result of new State law requiring them to have a Maryland tree expert license – 9:50.
20. Introduction of Town Code amendment changing the publication and adoption dates of the annual budget to comply with Montgomery County submission requirements – 9:55.
21. Action on recommendation of Davey Tree to remove a northern red oak, #31, 4707 Cumberland Avenue, with considerable dieback – 10:00.
22. New business – 10:05.
23. Adjournment – 10:10.