



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL

*"Where People and Trees Have
Deep Roots and Grow Strong"*



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Winter Issues: A Report from the January Council Meeting

By Franny Peale, Council Member, Uppingham Street



At the January Council meeting, we discussed the issue of snow and ice removal on the Town's sidewalks. **Mayor Jeffrey Slavin** (Warwick) and **Town Manager Rich Charnovich** recommended that the Town contractor clear and treat the sidewalks regardless of the amount of snow that falls in a snowstorm. Council members reported hearing a high level of resident support for this proposal. The Council discussed the difficulty of predicting the Town's annual expenses for snow and ice removal. The Town Manager pointed to funds available in the current budget that had previously been designated for deferred bridge repair work. The Council agreed that clearing the snow and ice from the Town's sidewalks was an important municipal service, and voted to amend the Code to eliminate the "2-inch" rule. Going forward, the Town will track sidewalk maintenance expenses separately. More information about this service will be available at the February 1 Council meeting. **This change took effect immediately,**

which means that the Town's contractors will clear the sidewalks of ice and snow this winter.

Town Election Scheduled for Tuesday, April 5th

By Phyllis Wiesenfelder, Chair, Board of Supervisors of Elections, Warwick Place

Mark your calendars! On **Tuesday, April 5, 2016**, the Town will hold an election for Mayor and two Council seats. Nominations for these positions will be accepted at the Town Council meeting scheduled for Monday, March 7th. Additional nominations may be made if 20 registered voters sign a petition and it is filed with the Clerk-Treasurer by March 15th.

The Town Charter requires its elected officials to be:

- Citizens of the United States;
- Residents of the Town of Somerset for at least 18 months preceding the election; and
- Qualified voters in the Town of Somerset and the State of Maryland.

If you are registered in Montgomery County, you are automatically registered in Somerset and can vote in the Town election. If you are not a U.S. citizen, you may vote in the Town election by filling out a voter registration form. You can register in person at the Town Hall on Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or by sending a completed registration form to the Town Hall. If you would like a registration form, please call the Town Hall at 301-657-3211 or email **Town Manager Rich Charnovich** at manager@townofsomerset.com. The deadline for registering to vote is **Tuesday, March 22nd**.

Calendar

Sunday, February 21

Town Hall Art Show Opening

Monday, February 22

MVA Mobile Office

Saturday, February 27

CPR Training at Town Hall

Sunday, March 6

Town Talk on Sustainable Landscaping

Tuesday, April 5

Town of Somerset Elections

Tuesday, April 12

PNRC Book Group Discussion

Don't forget to check the Town website throughout the month for an up-to-date calendar. Go to www.townofsomerset.com and click on Town Calendar.

The Preliminary Agenda for each month's Town Council meeting is posted on the Town website (www.townofsomerset.com) seven days prior to the meeting. A copy is also posted on the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch.



On My Mind

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place

We Do Listen to You

All of us spend lots of time learning to speak and learning to speak up. But when it comes to the art of listening . . . that's another story.

Several years ago, Seth Horowitz wrote in the *New York Times*, "Listening is a skill that we're in danger of losing in a world of digital distraction and information overload." While this is something that I often preach, I think it often falls on deaf ears! Fortunately our own Town Council members' skillset in this regard appears to go against the trend.

For example, last year, the Town Manager and I proposed a change in Somerset's sidewalk snow removal policy. In the beginning, a majority of the Council seemed skeptical, and no change was approved. Subsequently, however, after speaking with residents and listening to their views, some Council members eventually changed their minds, and this month the Council indeed created a new policy. This is not a first-time occurrence. We are fortunate to have such a group of "listening" elected officials and we can all learn from them.

As Horowitz concluded in his story: " 'You never listen' is not just a complaint of a problematic relationship, it has also become an epidemic . . . The richness of life doesn't lie in the loudness and the beat, but in the timbres and the variations that you can discern if you simply pay attention." Touche!

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General Permits



Fence Permits

4804 Falstone, replacement of the 6' privacy fence and gate in the rear yard

4505 Cumberland, installation of a 6' privacy fence in the right side yard

Barbara Marenus, Editor – bmarenus@gmail.com

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www.townofsomerset.com

If you prefer to receive the Journal via email, please provide your request to manager@townofsomerset.com or call the Town Hall at **301-657-3211**.

Deadline for copy and ads is the 15th of the month at 4:30 p.m.

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Open: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday thru Friday
301-657-3211
Fax: 301-657-2773
TTY users call Maryland Relay

Save the Date

CPR Class on February 27th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall

By Diane Horn, Chair, Ad Hoc Wellness Committee, Surrey Street

February is National Heart Month and the Somerset Ad Hoc Wellness Committee is offering a class on CPR and use of AED (automated external defibrillators). Somerset owns two AEDs which can be used in the event of an emergency; one is located at the pool, and the other is located at Town Hall in the event of an incident there or at the tennis courts.

The class will be held on Saturday February 27th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. The cost of the basic course is \$40.00 per person. If you would like to be certified as a “Heart Saver” for the purpose of life guarding or babysitting, etc. the cost is \$45.00 and will require some extra time for practice.

Please reserve your spot as soon as possible and contact me with any questions at diane.b.horn@gmail.com. You can make a difference in the health of another!

Somerset Elementary School’s “Play It Forward” Field Campaign

By Franny Peale, Council Member, Uppingham Street

At the February 1 Council meeting, we will discuss and vote on whether or not the Town of Somerset should make a one-time contribution of \$10,000 to the “Play it Forward” Field Campaign to raise funds for a new and improved field at Somerset Elementary. I believe that the Town should participate in this important effort because of the many benefits that a renovated school field could offer to the Town’s residents, regardless of their age. The new turf field would be accessible to our residents for games and for exercise. It would improve the quality of our neighborhood school, which would benefit all of our homeowners. The Town of Somerset donated to Somerset Elementary’s landscaping fund when the school was renovated in 2005, and supported the nearby Norwood Park playground when it was renovated the same year. Many of our community members who were involved in the 2005 school renovation consider the field “unfinished business.” Accordingly, I think that it would be appropriate for the Town of Somerset to support our local elementary school at this time by making this donation. Please come to the February 1 Council meeting to express your views on the matter or send an email.

Here are some of the key points made by the “Play it Forward” Campaign:

- A strong and well-maintained local school has a critical impact on home values and quality of life.
- The outdoor field at Somerset is largely unusable for its primary purpose: giving kids a place to play outside.

After many failed attempts at reseeding and sodding, the field remains a hard-packed, uneven, muddy surface that is unsafe and a health hazard.

- The estimate for the field renovation is \$550,000. The campaign has currently raised \$535,478, of which \$367,000 has been collected. Funds have come from current and past families, grandparents, local businesses, Chevy Chase West, the Village of Drummond, and Somerset teachers.
- This campaign has brought us together as a community. Beyond the very generous personal donations we’ve received, we have students selling lemonade and crafts, parents offering tennis lessons and photography sessions, local businesses providing promotions, and alumni and community members hosting a range of events to help us reach our goal.
- The renovation includes significant stormwater management measures that will address the current runoff issue for little Cumberland Street and Deal Place.
- This is a onetime, yearlong effort—a capital campaign ten years in the making. There will not be another ask for this.

You can read more about the Campaign by accessing <http://www.somerset-foundation.org/play-it-forward-field-campaign/>.





Town Website . . . townofsomerset.com

Just a friendly reminder to visit the Town's new website and become acquainted with its many new features. Go to townofsomerset.com

Town Election

The Somerset election will be held on **April 5, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** in the Town Hall. Please mark your calendars!

FY17 Budget and 5-Year Fiscal Plan

In the next few months, Town elected officials will be working on the FY17 budget and 5-year fiscal plan. There is a work session scheduled for **March 10, 2016 at 12 noon** in the Town Hall. Any interested member of the public is invited to attend and listen to the discussion.

New Sidewalk Snow Removal Policy

On Monday, January 4, following much discussion and debate, the Town Council passed an amendment that changed the Town Ordinance on the treatment of sidewalks in inclement weather.

Old policy: If 2 inches or more of snow accumulated on sidewalks, the Town snow removal contractor would clear and treat sidewalks. If less than 2 inches of snow were on the sidewalks, it was the responsibility of the property owner to clear the snow in the front and on the side of one's property.

New policy: The Town contractor, when needed, will be clearing and treating the sidewalks in Somerset no matter what the level of snow. The 2 inch rule is no longer in effect.

This new policy does not prohibit a property owner from clearing one's sidewalks as a neighborly gesture. This obviously would help to make the Town's sidewalks as safe as possible for pedestrians.



WSSC Project in ESA Area

WSSC and its consultant, O'Brien and Gere, will be in attendance at the February 1, 2016 Council Meeting to further discuss completion plans for a badly needed sewer rehabilitation project.

O'Brien and Gere provided an update on this topic at the January Council meeting and explained their latest alternatives memo which can be located on the Town website. For further information, please see Council Vice President **Marnie Shaul's** (Uppingham) article on this topic in this month's Journal.

Town Code and Charter Update Ongoing

Town officials continue to meet on the Code and Charter update project. There are 4 meetings scheduled in coming months, with the dates being published each week on the Town's email blast notices. This project will likely last until the end of 2016 and possibly beyond.

Odd Jobs List Updates

If you would like to add a family member to the Town Odd Jobs List, please contact Nicole Ventura at the Town Hall to discuss requirements for being added to the list.

Private and Town Tree Removal and Trimming Reminder

This is a reminder that the Town of Somerset must approve any trees to be removed within the Town, whether they are Town trees or privately owned. Please make sure that you contact the Town Hall to obtain a permit in advance of removing any trees from your property. Violators of this Ordinance are subject to fines in accordance with the Town Code. Please also note tree trimming on private property does not require a permit.

Permits Required for HVAC, Generators, Dumpsters, and Storage Units



HVAC unit

Just a reminder that a **Town permit is required to install or replace any type of HVAC unit or emergency generator for your home.** Noise level requirements must be met for these units to protect your neighbors. Permits also are required for both **temporary dumpsters and portable storage units on private property.**

Please contact the Town Hall or visit the Town Code which can be located on the Town website for specific information on these requirements.

Somerset . . . Naturally

(An occasional post from the Parks & Natural Resources Committee about Nature in Somerset)

Looking Forward . . . Save the Date

Town Talk on Sustainable Landscaping, March 6 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



“The front lines of the battle for nature are not in the Amazon rain forest or the Alaskan wilderness; the front lines are our backyards, medians, parking lots, and elementary school . . . This book is dedicated to anyone who can influence a small patch of land.”

— From the Introduction of *Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes*

By Paige Whitley, Member, Parks & Natural Resources Committee, Cumberland Avenue

The Parks and Natural Resources Committee is once again sponsoring a Town Talk on Sustainable Landscaping for the Town of Somerset on **Sunday, March 6, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.** Our featured speaker will be Thomas Rainer. A resident of Arlington, VA, and a landscape architect and educator, Rainer is a self-described horticultural futurist. He has designed landscapes for the United States Capitol grounds, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and the New York Botanical Garden. He has been featured in a range of publications including the *New York Times*, *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, and *Home & Design*. (To view his own modest Arlington home garden, see this link: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/21/garden/hell-try-anything.html?_r=0.)

Recently Rainer has co-authored the book *Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes* with Claudia West. According to Timber Press, “This groundbreaking guide presents a powerful alternative to traditional horticulture: designed plantings that function like naturally occurring plant communities. Thomas Rainer and Claudia West, two leading voices in ecological landscape design, reveal how plants fit together in nature and how to use this knowledge to create landscapes that are resilient, beautiful, and diverse. As practical as it is inspiring, *Planting in a Post-Wild World* is an optimistic manifesto pointing the way to the future of planting design.”

In addition to Thomas Rainer, we will hear about recent Montgomery County Rainscapes projects completed in

Somerset, and we will learn about driveway options that solve water run-off problems.

Come and learn how we can influence our own small patches of ground. Copies of the book will be available for sale.

Results of the Traffic Study

By Barbara Condos, Council Member, Falstone Avenue and Marnie Shaul, Council Vice President, Uppingham Street

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to do traffic counts and to former Council Member **Cathy Pickar** (Dorset) for leading the traffic study effort. Sabra, Wang and Associates, the consultants who conducted the study, came up with seven findings based on the most recent traffic counts. Here is the “conclusions” section of their report:

1. The majority of traffic entering Somerset and entering Kenwood is not cut-through traffic.
2. About ¼ of the traffic entering Somerset from the intersection of Dorset and Wisconsin represents cut-through traffic. Of the traffic entering Somerset from the intersection of Dorset and Wisconsin, about 3% and 8% (in the AM and PM, respectively) cut through both Somerset and Kenwood to get to River Road.
3. Greystone/Warwick is generally not used as a cut-through between Wisconsin and River.
4. Cumberland sees much less incoming traffic and less cut-through traffic than Dorset, though it does see some cut-through traffic to Little Falls Parkway.
5. Despite having turn restrictions in the commuting peak periods at Dorset and River, 60 vehicles and 40 vehicles still enter into Kenwood from River during this time; of these about 30% and 20%, respectively, cut through to Little Falls. Very little of this traffic cuts through all the way to Wisconsin.
6. About 30% of the traffic entering Brookside cuts through to Little Falls. A small percentage cuts through all the way to Wisconsin Ave. About 3% of entering traffic cuts through to Bradley, via Kennedy.
7. The overall traffic volumes are generally low on the major cut-through routes and are consistent with traffic counts conducted by SHA in November 2012, indicating that the traffic has not increased in the past 3 years.

The report concludes that “while cut-through traffic exists, the majority of traffic entering Somerset (or Kenwood) appears to be residents and not cut-through traffic.” The entire report is available on the Town’s website under the “Our Community” tab and includes maps of the traffic flows that readers may find of interest.

Council Update: New Liaison Positions for Council Members

By Marnie Shaul, Council Vice-President, Uppingham Street

At the January meeting, the Council approved some new liaison assignments of Council Members to Town Committees:

Dudley Fowlkes (Falstone) is the Council alternate for the Pool Committee and the lead for the Swim Team Committee. He is also the lead for the Ad Hoc Communications Committee.

Franny Peale (Uppingham) is the Council lead for the Tennis Committee and **Marnie Shaul** (Uppingham) is the alternate.

Barbara Condos (Falstone) is the Council lead for the Traffic Committee.

Barbara Zeughauser (Trent) is the alternate check signer and the lead for the Ad Hoc Wellness Committee.

Marnie Shaul (Uppingham) is the alternate for the Ad Hoc Wellness Committee.

The complete list of committees and liaison assignments can be viewed in the “Government” section on the Town’s website.

WSSC Will Present Plans for Work in Somerset at February Public Hearing

By Council Vice-President Marnie Shaul, Uppingham Street



A public hearing will be held at the February Council meeting to hear about WSSC’s plans for work in the Environmentally Sensitive Areas in Somerset to repair the sewer system and correct the overflow of raw sewage into the creek. In October 2014, 39 residents attended a presentation by WSSC and its contractors, and asked questions about the proposed route for accessing the problem areas in order to conduct the necessary work. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was agreed that WSSC would provide a detailed evaluation of access routes and include three alternatives to the route proposed: south of the current access route, through Somerset House property, and through the area near the Somerset pool. The report from this 2014 meeting can be found on the Town website in the “Our Community” section and under Traffic/Utility Reports.

At the January Council meeting, a representative from O’Brien and Gere, WSSC’s engineering consultant, presented an analysis of its three alternatives. The firm is recommending a route similar to the one it recommended more than a year ago and explained why this is its preferred route. The route enters off the southbound lane of Wisconsin Avenue just south of Dorset. The consultant said placing the staging area in the Somerset Park would result in the removal of fewer trees and also be partly concealed from Town of Somerset residents. This report is posted on the Town’s website.

Residents are encouraged to attend the public hearing to learn more about the proposed work. After the public hearing, the Council could decide whether to approve, reject, or modify the proposal, or to gather more information.

Save the Date

Cathy Abramson’s Town Hall Art Show Opens on February 21st

Cathy Abramson has been a Somerset resident for 26 years and lives with her husband, Barry Gottfried, on Uppingham Street. They have three grown sons, David, Steven and Jonathan. After many years working as an art director, graphic designer and occasionally as a book illustrator, Cathy retired and now devotes most of her time to painting. She has a studio at Artists & Makers Studios in Rockville where she takes classes at the Compass Atelier and teaches figure drawing and painting classes.

For the past several years, Cathy has been exploring the urban landscape of Washington, D.C., Bethesda, and other locations. She attempts to capture an ordinary moment, a chance encounter or a fragment of urban life that repeats hundreds of times a day. Ordering lunch or a cup of coffee, passing an art gallery, going to a farmer’s market, or glancing in a window are actions we all undertake without a second thought. Even though these moments seem unimportant, together they examine the transient nature of our experience. Catching those moments and representing them in oil paint raises the consciousness of the joys and frustrations of the urban rhythm.

Please come to the opening reception for this artist on Sunday, February 21, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., at the Town Hall. Examples of her work can be seen at www.cathyabramson.org.

Council Meeting Actions

The Town Council met in regular session on January 4, 2016. The Town Council took the following actions:

1. Approval of the December 7, 2015 Closed Meeting Minutes.
2. Approval of a permit application at 5800 Deal Place to install a shed in the side yard.
3. Approval of a permit application at 5605 Warwick Place to install an emergency generator.
4. Approval to amend Section 4-103 of the Town Code in relation to snow/ice removal on Town sidewalks.
5. Approval of an Ordinance of the Town of Somerset entering into a Cable Franchise Agreement with Comcast Cable. The franchise agreement will be managed by Montgomery County.
6. Approval of an updated Council Liaison list (the new list can be located in the Town website).
7. At the beginning of the meeting, former Council Member Cathy Pickar was honored with a Resolution for her dedicated years of service on the Council.
8. Mayor Slavin presented his monthly report. Town Manager Charnovich presented the December Financial Report. O'Brien and Gere, consultant for WSSC, was in attendance to provide an update on alternatives for the proposed sewer rehabilitation project proposed on Town Parkland. A copy of their written report can be located on the Town website. A black walnut tree at 5703 Warwick Place was considered for approval but not approved. The Town Arborist was tasked to look into trimming the tree. The Town Council discussed testimony points for the public hearing on January 26 on the Westbard Sector Plan before the County Council. The Council determined it would hold a special meeting on January 11, 2016 at noon to discuss this project specifically with members of the Planning Board staff. Council Member Condos, Council Member Peale and Town Manager Charnovich provided an update on the Town Code and Charter project.

Westbard Plan Being Considered by County Council

By Marnie Shaul, Council Vice President, Uppingham Street



The County Council is considering the Westbard plan, which the Planning Board transmitted on December 17, 2015. It will hold hearings on January 26th and 28th from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in the County Council Building at 100 Maryland Avenue in Rockville (third floor hearing room).

At its January meeting, the Town Council voted unanimously to support and circulate a petition developed by the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH). The petition was sent out to residents in a Town eblast on January 14. The

Council also voted on supporting key points that would be made when the Town testifies on January 26th.

Material on the Westbard development plan can be reviewed the Town's website under "Community" and Nearby Development. The Town's testimony on the plan also will be posted on the website. CCCFH and Somerset have encouraged citizens to attend the January hearings and to send comments to the County Council. The hearing record will likely be open until the end of January

Looking Forward . . . Save the Date

Book Group Discussion on Tuesday, April 12 Sponsored by the Parks and Natural Resources Committee (PNRC)

By Kristen Khanna, Member, PNRC, Uppingham Street

Somerset is fortunate to have beautiful gardens and parks, and more than 17 acres of green space and accompanying wildlife. For those of you interested in the outdoor aspects of living in our town, we invite you to join us in reading *The Nature Principle* by Richard Louv. Mr. Louv's mission is to inspire us to take a break from all of our various screens (e.g., TV, phone, computer) and experience the natural world (<http://richardlouv.com/books/nature-principle/>). He is also the author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*.

Please join us on Tuesday, April 12, from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at 5412 Uppingham Street to discuss this book. Feel free to come by even if you have not read the book! Refreshments will be provided.



By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

The Council and I want to thank the large number of residents who contributed last month to our third annual Holiday Fund for Town employees. Because of the extreme generosity of our residents, we once again were able to give generous checks to our valued staff, matching our gifts in 2014. We must always remember that our employees work hard, are deserving, and are all subject to the high cost of living in the D.C. metropolitan area. I greatly appreciate the response

to my numerous last minute reminders!

I also want to call your attention to the letter of appreciation (published in this month's Journal) that the Town received from the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless for the sandwiches and drinks we contributed as part of the Town's annual Community Service Day. Please share this letter with your families.



Cathy Pickar receives certificate from Marnie Shaul



Larry Plummer and wife, June

The Park and Planning Commission has voted on the new Westbard Sector Plan, which incorporates many changes that will allow increased development in our area. Upon final approval, this new Plan will ultimately lead to new development projects that will have a huge impact on our quality of life—and not all of it will be positive. The next step in the process is for the Plan to be considered and voted on by the County Council. The Town Council and I have closely followed the procedures, have taken a public position, have participated in the development of a petition that we encourage all to sign, and have testified before the County Council. We continue to invite participation from residents. Details of the Plan are available online but there is also an easy to read hard copy in my office at the Town Hall which all residents are invited to come by and peruse.

I want to let you know that we will be holding our popular Brown Bag lunches this year in March, May, August and November to accommodate the schedules of our Council Members. Stay tuned for Save the Date announcements in the Journal and on our website.

In December, Council Member **Cathy Pickar** (Dorset) retired from the Town Council, and at the January Council meeting we presented her with a beautiful ceremonial resolution of appreciation. On the same day, we celebrated the retirement of Town Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer **Larry Plummer** with a lunch attended by Council and Town staff. We look forward to seeing both of these fine individuals as private citizens at Somerset events throughout 2016 and beyond.

Finally, in the past month I have personally lost two lifetime father figures who lived locally, legendary sportscaster Jim Simpson and real estate magnate Richard "Dickie" Dubin, both of whom greatly influenced my life. I bring this up on the eve of Valentine's Day as a reminder of how much we must all appreciate and stay in close contact with precious loved ones. Nothing is more important for true happiness.



Obituary

Death of Jim Pines, Somerset Resident for Thirty Years

Jim Pines died at home on January 10, 2016. He was 89, and had lived in Somerset for 30 years with his companion, Janet Lowenthal.

Jim received a BA degree from Bard College in 1946 and a master's degree in economics from Harvard in 1948. He then taught economics at the University of Massachusetts, before going to Yale Law School. After graduating in 1952, he worked at the N.Y. firm of Winthrop, Stimson, Putnam & Roberts, returning to Peekskill two years later to join his father's firm, Pines, Sterling & Sterling. A decade later, disenchantment with the law led Jim to enter the newly formed Peace Corps as associate representative in Guayaquil, Ecuador and then as acting director of planning and program review. Subsequently, over more than three decades as a consultant on nutrition, food aid and program evaluation, he undertook assignments with the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and numerous non-governmental organizations in more than 60 countries.

Jim was deeply interested in art, poetry, Jewish history and thought, and the history of religion more generally. He abhorred waste in any form, including food, note paper and words, and he had an amazing way with small children. He was a lifelong amateur musician who played the trombone, piano, and banjo. Jim was also an avid reader, walker, traveler, and collector of sheet music.

Jim will be deeply missed for his warmth, wisdom and dry wit, his endearingly quirky ways, and his thoughtful take on the world.

Letter from Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless



Celebrating 25 Years of Providing Solutions to
End Homelessness in Montgomery County

December 21, 2015

Jeffrey Z. Slavin
Town of Somerset
4510 Cumberland Avenue
Somerset, MD 20815

Board of Directors

Dick Pettit, Chair
Pettit Companies

Tom Ewers, Vice-Chair
Sandy Spring Bank

April Asare
*Journey's Crossing
Counseling*

Ellen Copley
Community Member

Michele El-Gamil
Geico

Michael Lichtenstein
*Shulman, Rogers, Gandal,
Pordy & Ecker, P.A.*

Ruth Martin
Community Member

Raquel D. Montenegro
Ballard Spahr LLP

Lori Ulanow
Community Member

Cameron Whitman
Community Member

**Affiliations are
for identification
purposes only.*

Susanne Sinclair-Smith
Executive Director

Dear Mayor and Residents of Somerset:

Thank you for your generous donation of sandwiches and drinks, received on 11/21/2015. I apologize for sending you an acknowledgment letter several weeks after receiving your donation. I went on maternity leave five weeks prior than anticipated, causing a slight delay in mailing out this letter to you. I appreciate your understanding.

Your donation truly makes a difference in the lives of clients across our programs, clients like Vincent.

After severing relationships with relatives and friends, twenty-one year old Vincent found himself sleeping in parks. After he arrived at our shelter in July 2014, Vincent gained a sense of awareness and began taking control of his life. He stopped drinking and enrolled in courses at Montgomery College, where he is studying graphic design and maintaining a 3.2 GPA.

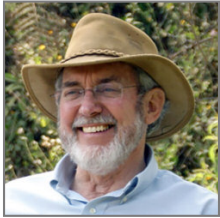
On behalf of our clients, thank you for your partnership in providing solutions to end homelessness so even more men, women, and children can have a safe, stable, and affordable place to call home.

I wish you and your family the happiest of holidays and a wonderful new year!
Sincerely,

Naira Hirz
Meal Program Coordinator

P.S. Save the date for our 2016 Gala on Thursday, April 21, 2016!

*Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
and acknowledges that no goods or services were provided
in return for this contribution.*



All About People

By Alan Dock, Falstone Avenue

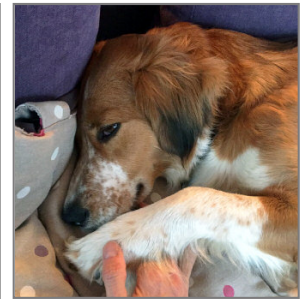
I'm reminded in our recent run of low (seasonally normal) temperatures of the poet Percy Shelly in his *Ode to the West Wind* some two hundred years ago who cried "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

“
Have a
Happy
Valentine's
Day!
”

Our own Parks and Natural Resources Committee under the leadership of **Patty Friedman** (Grantham) is organizing a spring event that will have you reaching for your gardening tools. **Paige Whitley** (Cumberland) describes the event in this month's Journal. Check out the details and circle Sunday, March 6 on your calendar.

Most months, I report that at least one new family has discovered the delights of Somerset, and this month is no exception. Welcome to **Maximilian** and **Wendy Teleki**, and their children **Tibor** (11 years), and twins **Ava** and **Naoma** (9 years). They are putting down roots on Warwick Place. We hope you settle in and soon feel part of our community.

Here is a very special story about a dog named Thea from **Cinzia Furlanetto** of Dorset Avenue. Cinzia writes: "my special story for the holidays would be the adoption of Thea, my new dog. Abandoned in Granada, Spain when she was a puppy, she spent months in the terrible "perrera" (high kill shelter), in Granada then Malaga. Why go so far to adopt a dog? I loved her from when I saw her pictures on FaceBook and realized that she was terrified of everything! Once the adoption formalities were complete, she was taken to Milan Italy. I flew there on December 8th and brought her home with me on the 13th." The photograph is of Thea on her second day at home in Somerset.



New neighborhood dog, Thea

Keep an eye out for Thea as she joins the dogs of Somerset on their walks around the neighborhood. Speaking of which, there has been quite a lot of discussion on our listserv about the possibility of a Somerset dog park. **Nat Finkelstein** (Surrey) had a good suggestion that I would fully support. The area of undeveloped land behind the pool is a place where I and many other dog owners frequently walk our dogs. It is partially fenced, although some sections are in disrepair. With a little thought and not too big a financial outlay, we could turn this area into a wilderness park for the enjoyment of Somersetters and their dogs. What about it Town Council? Worth consideration?

Barbara Levine (Uppingham) writes that her daughter **Shoshana** has recently returned from a trip to Israel arranged by the Barnard/Columbia Hillel chapter with the Birthright organization. Shoshana describes her trip: "I had a great time, we spent 10 days touring around Israel for free. We went from the border of Lebanon all the way down to the Dead Sea. I had such an amazing time getting to know the Israeli soldiers who joined us for 5 days on the trip and taught me about Israeli culture and life in the army. I really loved everything about the trip: the people, the staff, the country and the food. I was so blessed to have had this opportunity, and if I'm lucky, the memories I made there will stay with me for years to come."

Here is some news about another Somerset artist and neighbor. **Carol Barsha** (Essex) will be exhibiting new work at McLean Project for the Arts in McLean, VA from January 14 to March 5, 2016. The exhibition will focus on "*Les Fleurs du Livre: New Paintings*" featuring paintings that playfully explore the role of the book as an entryway into the world.

Let me end with a truly inspiring tale about one of our younger residents. **Commander Stephen Surko USN (Ret)** and his wife **Elizabeth Thompson** (Uppingham) told me their son **Jack Thompson** has recently been recognized by the Glen Echo Fire Department as the 2015 Rookie of the Year. He was recognized for his tireless efforts in making Glen Echo a safer neighborhood through the strengthening of the fire department. Over the last year, **Jack** has successfully completed his EMT and Firefighter training, and now proudly wears the yellow helmet of a fully qualified firefighter. He must be one of the youngest firefighters in Maryland since he started his training as soon after turning 16 as allowed. (Yes, Jack was riding the fire truck that paraded through Somerset in December.)



Classified Ads



Miscellaneous

BOZEMAN, MONTANA: Ski Big Sky & the Bridgers! Enjoy our furnished four-bedroom+ home on 20 acres with spectacular 360 degree vistas. Only ten minutes from downtown Bozeman, 30 from skiing at Bridger Bowl, and 60 from Big Sky Ski/Resort. Hiking/biking trails everywhere! And then there's the fishing! Weekly/monthly rentals. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** for more details at srpvacationhomes@gmail.com or **301-652-1207**.

PARIS, FRANCE: Paris is affordable again. Enjoy our furnished, one-bedroom, well-located apartment in the heart of historic Paris. Walk to the Louvre, the Pompidou Center, the Seine and two Metro stops. Available to rent on a weekly or monthly basis. For additional information, contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at srpvacationhomes@gmail.com or **301-652-1207**.

LIFESTYLE AND WELLNESS COACHING: Would you like to get unstuck and upgrade your lifestyle and wellness habits? Small changes can make a lasting difference. If you are curious to see if coaching is right for you contact Certified Wellness Coach **Diane Horn RDH CHHC** at **301-654-0310** or diane.b.horn@gmail.com.

HAVING TROUBLE WITH TECHNOLOGY? Let me untangle it for you. Hire your own personal technology concierge, who helps you figure out what to buy, how it works, and keep it working. I am available for any question or issue. Call **Jonathan Horn** at **202-557-1151** or email Jon.m.horn@gmail.com.

DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR INCLINATION TO TACKLE ALL YOUR TO DO'S? Please let me help you troubleshoot, research and resolve those problems hanging over your head. Think of me as an extra set of hands to complete whatever projects need attention. Contact **Rob Albert** at **202-436-1115** or email Rob@DependableDad.com.

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. Ads must include a Somerset phone number.

Price: \$5 per advertisement per issue. Check or exact change. **Fifty word** limit per advertisement.



Somerset's Helping Hand Is Just a Phone Call Away

If you need a ride, someone to pick up some groceries or a prescription, or even if you just want to get to a friend's house, give us a ring. We have a list of 30 Somerset volunteers who can help. Call **Zola Schneider** at **301-654-7481** or Council Member **Barbara Zeughauser** at **301-951-8560** and we will set it up.

Preliminary Agenda

Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting

Somerset Town Hall, Monday February 1, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will meet in regular session on Monday, February 1, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall. Agenda updates are posted on the Town website: www.townofsomerset.com

Council Work Session – 7:00 p.m.

Council Meeting Convenes – 7:30 p.m.

Comments: Public Comment Period – 7:30 p.m.*



Council Members: Barbara Zeughauser, Franny Peale, Dudley Fowlkes, Marnie Shaul, Barbara Condos

CONSENT

1. **Motion:** To consider approval of the December 7, 2015 Council Meeting Minutes.
2. **Motion:** To consider approval of the January 4, 2016 Council Meeting Minutes.
3. **Motion:** To consider the Mayor's nomination of Jennifer Marron (Warwick) to serve on the Town Parks and Natural Resources Committee for a term ending 12/31/18. (replacing Steve Surko).
4. **Motion:** To consider the Mayor's nomination of Carrie Wofford (Essex) to serve on the Town Tennis Committee for a term ending 12/31/16 (replacing Sue Besharov).
5. **Motion:** To consider the Mayor's nomination of Robin Orseck (Dorset) to serve on the Board of Supervisor of Elections for a term ending 12/31/18.
6. **Motion:** To consider re-appointment of Dr. Alexis Carmer (Essex) to serve as the Pool Committee Chairwoman for calendar year 2016.
7. **Motion:** To consider moving the regular Council Meeting date in July to July 5, 2016.
8. **Motion:** To consider moving the regular Council Meeting date in September to September 6, 2016.
9. **Motion:** To consider moving the regular Council Meeting date in October to October 4, 2016.

NON-CONSENT

1. **Discussion:** Town Manager's January Financial Report – 7:35 p.m.
2. **Discussion:** Pre-winter season report from our snow removal contractor Ed Mulheron of Mulheron Tree Experts – 7:40 p.m.
3. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of permit request submitted by the WSSC to complete a pipe rehabilitation project in Town parkland adjacent to Wisconsin Avenue – 7:50 p.m.
4. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider final approval of the Pool Management contract with Community Pools for 2016 – 8:35 p.m.
5. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider a \$10,000 grant to the Somerset Field Campaign – 8:40 p.m.
6. **Discussion:** General Code Update – 8:50 p.m.
7. **Discussion:** Mayor's Report – 8:55 p.m.
8. **Adjourn:** – 9:00 p.m.

Key

Public Hearing Item: Agenda item where public comment is permitted.

Discussion Item: Agenda item limited to discussion among the Council, Mayor and Town Staff.

Motion Item: Agenda item requesting action, limited to Council discussion.

Comments: Opinions and Questions from Town residents.

* Residents who wish to be present for a particular Agenda item are advised to arrive 20 minutes ahead of the item's scheduled discussion time since discussions sometimes run ahead of schedule.

This is a preliminary Agenda prepared to meet the Journal press deadline, which typically is two to three weeks prior to the next Town Council meeting. During this period, there will likely be changes to the timing of items, and some items may be added or deleted. Please contact Rich Charnovich at Town Hall if you are interested in what has been added, or consult the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch or the Town website/email blasts for the most up-to-date Agenda.