



# SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL

*“Where People and Trees Have  
Deep Roots and Grow Strong”*



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## Winter Issues: A Report from the December Council Meeting

By Franny Peale, Council Member, Uppingham Street

At the December 7 Town Council meeting, there was a discussion of two winter maintenance issues: sidewalk snow removal and sledding on Cumberland.

### Sidewalk Snow and Ice Maintenance

Mayor Jeffrey Slavin (Warwick) and Town Manager Rich Charnovich had recommended that the Town contractor should clear and treat area sidewalks regardless of the amount of snow that falls in a snowstorm. Mayor Slavin emphasized the danger of icy conditions, which often exist after small amounts of snowfall. This proposal would mean a change to our current level of service and a corresponding change in the Town's sidewalk maintenance expenses. While the Council agreed with the overall goal of improving walking conditions across the Town's sidewalks during small-scale snow and ice storms, the budget for this fiscal year does not anticipate this service, and it is difficult to estimate the financial impact of such an incremental change. The Council agreed to defer action on this matter and to incorporate this goal into the budget-planning process for next year. It is important for residents to know that, for this winter, our Code STILL requires homeowners to “Remove and/or sand and/or salt snow on sidewalks in front and on the side of their property except for accumulations of two inches or more, which will be removed by a Town contractor.” (Code section 4.01.3c)



### Sledding on Cumberland Avenue

Mayor Slavin and Town Manager Charnovich had recommended a significant change to the Town's policy on sledding on Cumberland Avenue. As written, our Town Code authorizes the Mayor to leave Cumberland Avenue untreated and unplowed for a 48-hour period after a significant snowfall in order to permit its use as a sledding hill. Mayor Slavin cited his concerns about the safety of ALL of the residents who are affected by this policy, including the children who are sledding, and those who are walking or driving along the street during this period. Mayor Slavin also pointed out that municipalities across the country are restricting or banning sledding in public parks due to safety and liability concerns.

At the Council meeting, we discussed the pros and cons of continuing this tradition. Several Town residents came to the meeting to support the sledding

*continued on page 3*

### Calendar

#### Friday, January 1

Town Hall Closed

#### Tuesday, January 5

Christmas Tree Pickup

#### Monday, January 18

Town Hall Closed for  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

#### Monday, January 25

MVA Mobile Office

Don't forget to check the Town website throughout the month for an up-to-date calendar. Go to [www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com) and click on Town Calendar.



## On My Mind

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place

### End of Year Thoughts

While it seems as I grow older the years truly seem to fly by, 2015 was particularly speedy, perhaps fueled by my milestone 60th birthday. Furthermore, it's even more difficult to digest that another presidential election year is about to arrive. Had we even finished celebrating the last Inauguration yet?

In light of this, my message this month is twofold.

First, let's all take more time in 2016 to practice the science of gratitude. As many spiritual leaders have said, the benefits of this are endless. According to nationally known life coach Derrick Carpenter, "People who regularly practice gratitude by taking time to notice and reflect upon the things they're thankful for experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, sleep better, express more compassion and kindness and even have stronger immune systems. And gratitude doesn't need to be reserved only for momentous occasions." So let's participate in this rewarding activity daily.

Second, I implore you all to reserve more time to engage in the political process, at whatever level. Even if you are the nonpartisan type, the benefits are enormous. While the opportunities are infinite, at the very least please encourage everyone in your networks to VOTE, because levels of participation, even in well-informed Montgomery County, have been embarrassingly low. And think of all those folks who have risked their lives in recent history to give everyone this right.

As Somerset residents, we live in a Special Place on Earth. Don't ever forget that. I wish every one of you—and your families near and far—peace, good health and much happiness throughout 2016.



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**Barbara Marenus, Editor – [bmarenus@gmail.com](mailto:bmarenus@gmail.com)**

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

## General Permits



### Tree Removal Permits

4702 Falstone Avenue, 1 Black Walnut and 1 False Cypress

#### MAYOR

**Jeffrey Z. Slavin**, 5706 Warwick Place  
301-654-6767  
Town Hall Telephone: 301-657-2229  
[mayor@townofsomerset.com](mailto:mayor@townofsomerset.com)

#### MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

**Marnie Shaul**, Council Vice President  
5509 Uppingham Street  
301-913-5973  
[mshaul@townofsomerset.com](mailto:mshaul@townofsomerset.com)

**Barbara Condos**, 4706 Falstone Avenue  
301-656-0461  
[bcondos@townofsomerset.com](mailto:bcondos@townofsomerset.com)

**Dudley Fowlkes**, 4904 Falstone Avenue  
202-351-9398  
[dfowlkes@townofsomerset.com](mailto:dfowlkes@townofsomerset.com)

**Franny Peale**, 5521 Uppingham Street  
301-652-9695  
[fpeale@townofsomerset.com](mailto:fpeale@townofsomerset.com)

**Barbara Zeughauer**, 5412 Trent Street  
301-951-8560

[bzeughauer@townofsomerset.com](mailto:bzeughauer@townofsomerset.com)

#### TOWN MANAGER

**Richard Charnovich**

301-657-3211

[manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com)

#### TOWN ARBORIST

**Tolbert Feather**

[town@townofsomerset.com](mailto:town@townofsomerset.com)

#### TOWN CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

**Larry Plummer**

[town@townofsomerset.com](mailto:town@townofsomerset.com)

#### TOWN HALL

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

hill. Many of them mentioned this tradition as a sign of the small-town feeling that Somerset treasures. Some pointed out that over the years there have not been any reported accidents associated with the sledding hill. Others said that homeowners along Cumberland Avenue have been aware of this tradition for years, so why make a change to the policy now?

The Town Council conducted a survey of the residents of Cumberland Avenue affected by the sledding hill, and a majority of the anonymous responses indicated support for continuing the tradition. This survey also contained anonymous responses that detailed some of the practical challenges to Cumberland residents during the sledding hill period. Some of these residents referred to the dangers presented by living on an unplowed and untreated street, and others referred to the sledding hill as unfair and inconvenient. None of the residents present at the Council meeting voiced disapproval for the sledding hill tradition.

In the process of studying this issue, the Mayor and the Council consulted with the Town Attorney and with the defense attorney for LGIT, the Town's insurance carrier. We learned that the Town's financial exposure for the sledding hill policy is most likely governed by limitations set under the Local Government Tort Claims Act. We also confirmed that, in the event of an accident linked to the Town's choice to leave Cumberland unplowed for sledding, the Town would most likely be able to rely on its LGIT insurance policy to cover legal fees and damages.



Given the level of resident support for keeping the sledding hill tradition, the Council did not vote to end the policy. Instead the Council agreed to amend the Code to limit the sledding period to 24 hours, and to review the sledding rules for possible improvements. Residents should be aware that the sledding hill is neither supervised nor maintained by the Town during this period, and that there are no restrictions on through traffic or parked cars while the children are sledding.

### Current Sledding Rules

- Children Sledding – Drive Carefully!
- Be courteous to those who live on Cumberland.
- Respect parked cars and private property.
- Vehicles: Enter from top of hill and depart downhill.

## Council News: New Council Member Elected and Resolution for Cathy Pickar

By Marnie Shaul, Council Vice-President, Uppingham Street



New Council Member  
Dudley Fowlkes

At its December meeting, the Town Council elected **Dudley Fowlkes** (Falstone) to fill the remainder of **Cathy Pickar's** (Dorset) Council term. Dudley moved to Falstone Avenue in 2013, and he has a long connection with this area. He moved with his parents to Chevy Chase Village in 1971, and attended Somerset Elementary from 1973-79. He and

his wife **Jamie Miller**, also a native to the area and a vice-president at The Aspen Institute, have three young sons. Besides being a husband and father, Dudley is a cabinetry

and light construction artisan by trade. Dudley says: "I love having my family in Somerset and I can often be found cycling and playing with them in our parks and cul-de-sacs, and especially the pool in the summer. I believe in livable streets and community interaction." The Council set the election for two Council seats (including this one) and the Mayor for Tuesday, April 5 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The Council also passed a resolution of appreciation for Cathy Pickar upon her retirement from the Somerset Town Council. We cited Cathy's many contributions to the Town, including improving traffic management, creating the new Town Website, being the composer of the Town Anthem, and acting as liaison to the Town Pool and Tennis Committees. In addition, the Council declared January 4, 2016, as Catherine J. Pickar "Recognition Day" in the Town of Somerset. Cathy plans to attend the January 4, 2016 Council meeting to receive the resolution. I hope to see many of you there.

# On My Retirement

## Dear Residents,

I can't believe that as I write this letter my retirement will finally become a reality on December 31, 2015. Along with the Town of Somerset, my career includes 35 years working with the Maryland State Highway Administration and 7 years for the Town of Chevy Chase.

The Town of Somerset has played an integral role in my professional life for the past 12 years. It is a time and experience that I will hold close to me for a lifetime. I consider it both a privilege and an honor to have been involved with so many great people such as my co-workers. We have worked together, argued together, shared our problems and hopes together and established ourselves as a first-class team. I have come to see them, not only as business colleagues, but as my friends too!

My experiences with Mayor Jeffery Slavin and the Town Council have been exceptional. We may not always have been in agreement on some issues but we always had the same common goals of providing the most efficient government and a safe environment for Town residents.

I owe a great sense of gratitude to the late Mayor Walter Behr who saw fit to contract my services back in 2003. He had a passion for this Town that cannot be matched.

My personal success during my tenure here is a testimony to those mentioned above as well as the contractors and public officials that I had the privilege to have worked with during my time here. My interactions with the Town of Somerset's residents have been interesting and challenging; however, my focus has always been to share my professional knowledge as a resource tool for you.

I am most proud of the outcome of several public works projects that I supervised, specifically Falstone Avenue, Surrey Street and Dorset Avenue. I am equally proud of how the utility projects turned out on Essex Avenue and Cumberland Avenue.

Thank you for the happy memories that I will take with me, thank you for the opportunities that were offered to me, and thank you for the friendships forged over the years we spent together.

I am looking forward to the opportunities and challenges that await me in my retirement. I hope that they are many and varied.

*Sincerely,*

**Larry Plummer**

Town Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer





**Happy New Year to All Somerset Residents!**

## Christmas Tree Pickup

Unity Disposal will have a Christmas tree pickup on Tuesday, January 5, 2016. Please have your tree out before 7:00 a.m. that morning. If you happen to miss this date, Unity will also pick up Christmas

trees during normal refuse pickups on Tuesday mornings. Please make sure the trimmings from the tree are removed before placing it on the curb for pickup.

## Sledding Hill Rules on Cumberland

- **Sledders:** Sled at your own risk! The Town of Somerset does not monitor the sledding hill. It is the responsibility of parents to supervise children.
- **Motorists:** Drive Carefully! Children Sledding!
- **Be courteous** to those who live on Cumberland.
- **Respect** parked cars and private property.
- **Vehicles** should enter from top of hill and depart downhill. Vehicles are not permitted to travel up Cumberland from Devon Lane.
- **Residents** who park on Cumberland should strongly consider parking cars in your driveway if sledding is occurring.

## Winter Season Reminders



**Snow Removal:** Mulheron Tree Experts will again be the Town's contractor for snow removal. Regarding sidewalk cleaning, please be advised that the Town

Code states that when less than two inches of snow accumulate in the front or on the side of your property, it is the responsibility of the homeowner to keep those areas clear. The Town contractor is responsible for removing snow in excess of two inches.

**Snow Plows:** Please be mindful of the plows that clear our roads by doing your best to keep cars parked in driveways as opposed to on the streets. This enables the plows to do a better job.

**Batting Cage:** The batting cage is closed over the winter months and will re-open in the spring.

**Odd Jobs Helpers:** Finally, please keep in the mind the "odd jobs" list that can be distributed to Town residents upon request. If you are interested in hiring someone for snow shoveling or maintenance around your property during the winter months, take a look at this list. Contact the Town Hall if you need a new copy. You can also find a copy of the list by logging into your unique account on the Town website.



## Greystone Street and River Road Traffic Design

The State Highway Administration has attended several Town Council meetings this year to present a new

permanent traffic control design for the intersection of Greystone Street and River Road. The delineators that are there now are temporary, with a permanent design in the works and scheduled for 2016. If anyone wants to view the new plan for this intersection, please contact me at the Town Hall for a copy of the drawing.

## No Parking Near Driveways

Homeowners recently have contacted me about parking regulations near private driveways. Please keep in mind that Montgomery County's parking law 21-18 states that a person cannot park within 5 feet of a driveway. Violations should be reported to the Bethesda 2nd District Police Department Non-Emergency Number: **240-773-6700**.

## Email Addresses

One of the Town Hall's New Year's Resolutions is to make sure that we have the email addresses for as many of our Somerset residents as possible. We find it an essential means of communication with our residents. If you want to provide the Town Hall with your email address or update your email address, please email us at **[town@townofsomerset.com](mailto:town@townofsomerset.com)**. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## Somerset . . . Naturally



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

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

Two laws passed recently by the Montgomery County Council and the State Legislature will affect us and how we minimize damage in our region to land, water and ourselves.

The first, commonly known as the Healthy Lawns Bill (or by some, known as the Pesticide Bill), bans the use of EPA-registered pesticides in lawn care for most uses in Montgomery County (MoCo). The County Council passed the bill on October 6, 2015 by a veto-proof majority; the bill became law on October 20. At that point, MoCo became the largest county in America to ban the unnecessary use of pesticides and herbicides on lawns. The new law prohibits the use of pesticides for purely cosmetic reasons and endeavors to protect MoCo residents from toxic lawn chemicals, including those that may cause cancer, neurological damage, or other health problems. See <http://safegrowmontgomery.org/what-does-bill-52-14-do/> for more particulars.

The second is the Lawn Fertilizer Bill, passed in late 2013 and which has as its motto: Be Wise - Don't Over-Fertilize! The bill protects the Chesapeake Bay from excess nutrients entering its waters that create algae blooms which in turn block sunlight from reaching Bay grasses, rob the water of oxygen and threaten underwater life. If you hire a lawn care professional, that person must now be certified with the Maryland Department of Agriculture. If you care for your lawn, you are now required to obey fertilizer application restrictions. As seen in the webpage "MD's Lawn Fertilizer Law" at <http://mda.maryland.gov/pages/fertilizer.aspx>, these include:

1. A single fertilizer application may not exceed 0.9 pound total nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft which can include no more than 0.7 pound of soluble nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft.
2. Visit <http://extension.umd.edu/hgic> for seasonal and yearly nitrogen recommendations.
3. Lawn care pros should consult the Maryland Professional Lawn Care Manual at <http://mda.maryland.gov/SiteAssets/Pages/fertilizer/MDAProLawnCareManual6.24.13.pdf>.
4. Phosphorus may only be applied when a soil test indicates that it is needed or when a lawn is being established, patched or renovated.
5. Fertilizer may not be used to de-ice walkways and driveways.
6. It is against the law to apply fertilizer to sidewalks or other impervious surfaces.
7. Fertilizer that lands on these surfaces must be swept back onto the grass or cleaned up.
8. No fertilizer applications within 10 to 15 feet of waterways.
9. Do not fertilize lawns if heavy rain is predicted or the ground is frozen.
10. Do not apply lawn fertilizer between November 15 and March 1.
11. Enhanced efficiency controlled release products may be applied at no more than 2.5 pounds per year, with a maximum monthly release rate of 0.7 pound of N per 1,000 sq ft.

Even though I write this article on an unseasonably warm 70 degree day, please note especially the ban on using fertilizer to de-ice walkways and driveways in severe winter weather!

For our Tree City of Somerset and residents within the Little Falls Watershed, compliance with these bills means a healthier Nature and healthier selves.

**Please Save the Date: On Sunday, March 6, 2016 the PNRC will host another Town Talk on Sustainable Landscapes.**

## Community Service Day

By Barbara Condos, Council Member, Falstone Avenue

Dozens of enthusiastic, energetic volunteers gathered at the Town Hall on November 21st to participate in the Town's annual Community Service Day. The group made 400 sandwiches which, along with juice boxes, applesauce and granola bars, were delivered to the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless Men's Shelter. In addition, the group made toys for dogs and cats in the Montgomery County Animal Shelter. Thanks to all the volunteers as well as to **Mayor Slavin** (Warwick) who initiated this project and who, along with our **Town Manager Rich Charnovich**, always comes to help out and to Nicole Ventura who organized the event. It was great to work with so many neighbors, especially newer residents and young people.



Young Volunteers at Somerset's Community Service Day



## Letter to the Editor

### Warming up to Snow Removal

Full disclosure: I live on a corner, with a sidewalk. I strongly support Mayor Slavin's proposal to have the Town be responsible for all snow and ice removal, including when it is less than two inches. At the moment, anything less than two inches is the homeowner's responsibility. In the last issue of the Town Journal many good arguments were laid out to support this proposal. However, one important argument was not mentioned. Specifically, sidewalks are a public asset. They are used by all residents, including children, dog walkers, other pedestrians, and even those in wheel chairs. Since they are used by all residents, in my view, their maintenance should be the responsibility of all residents. The optimal way to effect this policy is for the Town to take responsibility for all snow and ice removal, and pay for it out of tax revenues. This way the burden of snow removal is shared equitably. Since snow removal is a recurring expense, the tax base should be raised permanently through a small increase in the property tax, so that we do not have to sacrifice the quality or quantity of other public services.

I do not have precise figures on the actual cost of snow removal (which depends on how much it snows), though I do know the Town has \$50,000 in the budget for snow removal, of which half is for clearing sidewalks. I would expect the marginal cost of clearing snowfalls of less than two inches (and any additional de-icing) to be only a fraction of the latter figure. For example, consider that if every household in Somerset paid an extra \$25 per year in property taxes—think how much many of you have paid for snow removal in the past—that would bring in about \$11,000 to the Town budget. The Town's cost of clearing a sidewalk should be much less than that of a homeowner, since having the Town clear snow is much more efficient than having hundreds of households do it.

I hope you will let our Town Council members know your views on this issue, which affects all of us, regardless of whether there is a sidewalk in front of your house.

Phil Young  
Greystone Street



## Planning Board Approves Draft Westbard Plan

By Marnie Shaul, Council Vice President, Uppingham Street

On December 17, 2015, the Montgomery County Planning Board approved transmission of the Westbard Plan to the County Council. The County Council is the final decisionmaker on the sector plan and has indicated that it will hold its first hearing on January 26, 2016. It is expected that the County Council will take a final vote on the plan around March 2016.

During the past few months, the Planning Board held four work sessions to discuss portions of the plan that the Montgomery County Planning Department submitted to the Board. Residents can read about the work sessions and see correspondence the Board has received at <http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/westbard/>. The version of the plan that was approved in December should be available at that site by the end of December.

The approved plan adds more housing than the original draft plan, 2470 units versus 2100 units. With this allowable buildout over the next 20 years, there could be about 3570 total housing units in Westbard. Currently, Westbard has about 1100 housing units. On December 17th, the total amount of retail space allowed by the revised plan was not available but the Board said the Department would calculate and provide that information.

At the conclusion of the work session, Planning Board Chairman Casey Anderson summarized his assessment of the benefits of the plan. These benefits are: (1) redevelopment of the shopping center with some public space amenities; (2) provision of affordable housing; (3) daylighting and naturalizing the Willett Branch; and (4) redevelopment of River Road which could support improving pedestrian and biker safety and the appearance of the roadway. He emphasized that there are trade-offs between the amount of development that is allowed and the amenities that would be made available.

The Somerset Town Council will be discussing next steps at its January meeting. This could include determining what positions we will take on various elements of the plan, working with other groups in the area on a petition for the County Council, and meeting with County Council members.

# Council Meeting Actions

The Town Council met in regular session on December 7, 2015. The Town Council took the following actions:

1. Appointment of Dudley Fowlkes to the vacant seat on the Town Council.
2. Approval of the November 2, 2015 Council Meeting Minutes.
3. Approval to name Council Member Barbara Zeughouser as the alternative check signer on the Town Council.
4. Adoption of a Resolution honoring Cathy Pickar for her years of service on the Town Council.
5. Approval confirming the Mayor's re-nomination of Patty Friedman to serve on the Town Parks and Natural Resources Committee for a term ending December 31, 2018.
6. Approval of the Mayor's re-nomination of Kathleen Kenyon to serve on the Town Parks and Natural Resources Committee for a term ending December 31, 2018.
7. Approval of the Mayor's re-nomination of Matt Fink to serve on the Town Tennis Committee for a term ending December 31, 2018.
8. Approval to set the 2016 election date for April 5, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.
9. Approval of a building permit application submitted at 4715 Cumberland Avenue. The applicants have been approved for the following:
  - Construct a 2.5 story addition in the rear of the house.
  - Restore and extend the deck in the rear of the house.
  - Restore the existing garage in the rear yard.
  - Replace the existing driveway flare with a parking pad.
  - Construct a stucco retaining wall along the new parking pad.
  - Relocate the HVAC Units.
10. Approval of a recommendation of the Town Council, acting as the Local Advisory Panel to the Historic Preservation Commission, on an application submitted at 4817 Dorset Avenue. The recommendation included the following:
  - Construct new steps in the rear yard adjacent to the new accessory building addition.
  - Rebuild two retaining walls adjacent to the narrower steps.
  - New limestone paving that will border a new gravel driveway.
  - A new exposed gravel concrete parking area at the end of the gravel driveway
11. Approval of an amendment to section 9-301 of the Town Code in relation to sledding on Cumberland Avenue. Sledding will only occur up to 24 hours after a snow event. After the 24 hours, the hill will be treated by the Town's snow removal contractor.
12. Approval of a bid to install a new emergency generator at the Town Hall. Approximately 75% of the project is to be funded by the Federal and Maryland Emergency Management agencies via a grant.
13. Approval of a Project Management proposal submitted by John Chadwick of the OGC Company, LLC for pool construction bidding and construction work at a cost of \$3,000.
14. Approval of a management services contract with Community Pools for the 2016 pool season contingent upon final review of a contract by the Town Attorney.
15. Introduction of an Ordinance entering into a franchise agreement with Comcast Cable as negotiated by Montgomery County, Maryland.
16. Mayor Slavin presented his monthly report to the Council. Due to timing issues, the Town Manager's Financial Report was deferred until January. A proposed Ordinance to amend section 4-103 of the Town Code in relation to snow/ice removal on Town sidewalks was tabled until a later date. A representative of the State Highway Administration was in attendance at the meeting to discuss SHA's plan for permanent traffic control at the intersection of River Road and Greystone Street. A copy of the plan can be obtained by contacting the Town Hall. Larry Plummer, Town Inspector, provided a final report to the Council and Mayor. Larry will be retiring in January of 2016 after 12 years of service with Somerset. Please take a moment to read his letter in this month's Journal. Council Member Condos, Council Member Peale and Town Manager Charnovich provided an update on the Town Code and Charter project with General Code. Future meeting dates were discussed and will be published. A Closed Session was held at the beginning of the meeting from 7:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. to obtain legal advice from the Town Attorney.





By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

Many thanks to all who once again contributed to our employee holiday fund so that we could collectively thank the loyal and hardworking individuals who help make the Town of Somerset such a desirable place to live. If you happen to read this before Christmas Day, there is still time to contribute to the second round of bonuses by leaving your check made payable to the Town of Somerset (with "Holiday Fund" on the note line) at Town Hall or my house.



Lots of Sandwiches Made on Community Service Day!

On a recent weekend, dozens of residents showed up at Town Hall to participate in our annual Community Service Day by making over 400 sandwiches for the homeless men sheltered at the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless on East Gude Drive in the Upcountry. It especially warmed my heart to see so many of our young people enthusiastically participating. We also made toys for pets that have been donated to the County Humane Society, which is appropriate for a municipality like ours that so highly values its furry friends. In addition, we have been collecting toys, canned food, and clothing which will be given to several Montgomery County nonprofits to assist needy families. And if you missed the deadline for contributing during the holiday season, Town Hall staff can recommend places to donate items throughout the year.

Last year at this time, I reported that it seemed that our U.S. mail delivery service had improved. I previously had received a number of complaints, took action on them, and brought them to the attention Congressman Chris Van Hollen, who went out of his way to assist us. However, Town staff and I subsequently received more complaints about the mail, and we were forced to take further action. I am now wondering how residents are feeling about the current quality of mail delivery. Accordingly, I would like to encourage anyone with a concern about the general quality of the mail service or a specific problem to write to me or the Town Manager so that we can bring such issues to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

Congratulations to the organizers of the Somerset Elementary School Educational Foundation's "Play It Forward Field Campaign," which was a phenomenal success this year. As you know, many of the organizers live in our Town. The Campaign's goal is to quickly raise funds to install a badly needed new field at our "home" public elementary school. This field will benefit many more folks than the children at the school. For more information, go to [www.somerset-foundation.org](http://www.somerset-foundation.org). I made a personal large donation to this effort many months ago, and I encourage all those in Town to consider making year-end donations as well.

Finally, and with some sadness, I want to report on the December 31 retirement of our long-tenured, hugely competent, good-humored Town Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer Larry Plummer who has served our municipality with great distinction. Larry's accomplishments over the past twelve years are too numerous to mention here but he has been a major contributor to the Town's high quality of life and to the attractiveness of our streetscape. I can't tell you how much I have learned from this man and am thankful that he chose to work in Somerset after a successful career at the State Highway Administration. The Council, Staff and I will appropriately thank and honor this Montgomery County native early in 2016.

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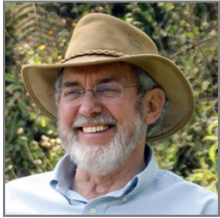
## Jan Kaufman's Paintings on Exhibit at Town Hall

By Barbara Zeughauser, Council Member, Trent Street

**Jan Kaufman**, a resident of Trent Street, is showing her work at the Town Hall through February 7, 2016, and we look forward to residents stopping by to see her lovely show.

Jan grew up in New Mexico and over the years has become an avid painter, both in the studio and *en plein air*. She enjoys dealing with the different challenges offered by painting indoors and outside. Over the past several years, Jan has combined her love of painting with her love of travel. She has been able to paint the coasts of Maine, France, Tuscany, Honduras, the Bahamas, the Czech Republic and Cuba.

In addition to the paintings currently on exhibit at Town Hall, more of Jan's art work can be viewed at the Griffin Art Center and at Gallery 322 in Frederick, Maryland.



## All About People

By Alan Dock, Falstone Avenue

Here we are again at the beginning of a new year. It is a time for reflection on the good and bad events of 2015, and a time of hope and promise for what lies ahead for each of us in our Town of Somerset.

“ Have a  
Happy  
Somerset  
New Year!

I hope you spent the close of 2015 with family and friends. I am guessing it was a very busy time for most of you since little news flowed into my inbox!

Do you watch the Charlie Rose morning show? If you do, you might have caught an appearance by our own **Bruce Tully** (Warwick) on the CBS Morning show and the CBS Sunday National Network last month. Bruce, a retired special agent in charge, Diplomatic Security Service, U.S. State Department, gave his expert input on security at the Paris Climate conference and the protection of the President.

”

**Anne Yap** (Cumberland) spotted my recent request for news on the listserv, penned from Haiti, and mentioned that she and her husband met in Haiti many moons ago, back in 1983. She also mentioned that her son **Nick** graduated last month from Colgate University in Hamilton, New York. Well done,

Nick, and good luck to you!

I can also welcome a new family to our town. **Ron Minsk** and **Gail Daumit** with their three children, **Miriam** (17 years), **Shira** (14 years), and **Oren** (12 years) have recently moved into a house on Surrey Street. We hope all of you have begun to find new friends in the community!

I look forward to catching up on more neighborhood news, and what plans you have for 2016. Drop me a note by the middle of this month to the usual address, and I will fill the February All About People column with the interesting news items that help to bind and make our community special.



## 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.



## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

# Preliminary Agenda

## Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting

Somerset Town Hall, Monday January 4, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will meet in regular session on Monday, January 4, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall. Agenda updates are posted on the Town website: [www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com).

**Council Work Session – 7:00 p.m.**

**Council Meeting Convenes – 7:30 p.m.**

**Presentation of Resolution:** Honoring Cathy Pickar for her years of service on the Town Council.

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

### CONSENT

1. **Motion:** To consider approval of the December 7, 2015 Council Meeting Minutes.
2. **Motion:** To consider approval of the December 7, 2015 Closed Meeting Minutes.

### NON-CONSENT

1. **Discussion:** Town Manager's December Financial Report – 7:35 p.m.
2. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of a permit application submitted by Guido Bracciale and Sharmeen Ahsan-Bracciale, 5800 Deal Place. The applicants are requesting to install a shed in the side yard – 7:40 p.m.
3. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of generator installation application submitted by Tom Eldridge and Jennifer Marron, 5605 Warwick Place – 7:55 p.m.
4. **Discussion:** Updated Report from O'Brien and Gere on Little Falls ESA project on Town parkland – 8:00 p.m.
5. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval of the removal of a Town tree at 5703 Warwick Plac – 8:10 p.m.  
– 1 Black Walnut
6. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider approval to amend Section 4-103 of the Town Code in relation to snow/ice removal on Town sidewalks – 8:15 p.m.
7. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To consider final approval of the Pool Management contract for 2016 – 8:25 p.m.
8. **Public Hearing / Motion:** To discuss testimony points and consider supporting a petition to the Montgomery County Council in relation to the Westbard Development Plan – 8:30 p.m.
9. **Public Hearing / Motion:** Comcast Franchise Agreement Ordinance – 8:40 p.m.
10. **Discussion / Motion:** Update on Council Liaison assignments – 8:45 p.m.
11. **Discussion:** General Code Update – 8:50 p.m.
12. **Discussion:** Mayor's Report – 8:55 p.m.
13. **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.



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