



Low Attendance, Much Criticism At Council's First Listening Session

by Cathie Meetre

On Thursday, December 21, Greenbelt City Council held a listening session at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center gym. Its purpose was to capture the views of Greenbelt residents living in the western segment of the city on the appointment of a councilmember to replace Councilmember Ric Gordon, who died suddenly shortly after the election this November. Perhaps the only thing everybody at the meeting agreed on was the high esteem in which Gordon was held and the loss his death was to Franklin Park's residents.

Mayor Emmett Jordan introduced the meeting, at which about 25 members of the public were present, only a handful of whom lived in Franklin Park. He explained the meeting's purpose was not to engage in debate but for councilmembers to hear what residents thought about the methodology and criteria adopted to identify and qualify candidates for the position. He listed criteria council would use to decide among the candidates. Unfortunately, the list was not entirely audible. Asked later for

the list of criteria, Jordan said, "The questions/lists shared at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center Listening Session last week are 'rough drafts,' to be finalized during our worksession on January 3. This will allow for the inclusion of suggestions from the public, as well as additional thought and consideration by council ... The SHLRC gathering was a 'listening session' or public hearing, so council has not formally discussed the merits of suggested criteria on that 'rough draft' list. This 'decision-making matrix' will shape the questions to be asked during interviews."

Whether it will alter the outcome remains to be seen, but in the latter part of the meeting, 15-year Franklin Park resident Kevin Lockhart (known fondly to generations of kids in Franklin Park as Coach Kevin) expressed a desire to be on council so that Franklin Park residents would have a voice. He noted that he hadn't known how to accomplish the requirements for this but was keen to submit if it was possible.

See **COUNCIL**, page 8

Honk! Situation Band Leads A Solstice Parade of Lights

by Bonnie Schrack



PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLOW

The Greenbelt Honk! Situation plays at Roosevelt Center at the end of the Solstice Parade.

Greenbelters of all ages turned out on Friday evening for an enjoyable new way to celebrate the season: a parade of lights that began at the Firefly Sanctuary and ended at Roosevelt Center with a concert. Lights of all kinds were carried and worn by the participants, including handmade lanterns of great artistry along with examples of the latest in technology. The revelers marched and danced to the irresistible beat of Greenbelt's own Honk! Situation band. Honk! leader Dan Gillotte and his merry band have amped up the fun level in Greenbelt, as Gillotte brought with him to his

new home a great repertoire of musical numbers from Austin, Texas, where he played with the Dead Music Capital Band for 10 years.

The marching music featured upbeat numbers such as the ever-popular We Got That Fire, that kept feet moving forward as people enjoyed the cool, clear night. Once the Center was reached, the band arrayed themselves across the central plaza and the assembled onlookers were treated to a reprise of many of the boisterous and mischievous "scarols"

See **PARADE**, page 12

Parents, PTSAs Call for Crossing Guards at All Greenbelt Schools

by Cavit Ireland and Jon Dennis

Parents and students in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) are increasingly concerned by the lack of crossing guards at their schools and many know it's an extreme safety hazard.

These concerns were made tragic reality on November 20, when two Riverdale Elementary School students, Sky Sosa and Shalom Mbah, were killed in a crosswalk on their way to school. There had previously been a long-term crossing guard at that crosswalk but they had retired over the summer and the county had been unable to fill the position since, said Prince George's County Police Chief Malik Aziz. The painful incident has sparked calls for action from parents and community members.



PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLOW

Afternoon crossing guards at Eleanor Roosevelt High School help students, cars and buses navigate the intersection that spans six lanes on Greenbelt Road. There are currently no crossing guards at the school in the mornings.

"It has been a challenge for Prince George's County Police Department to hire school crossing guards," said Aziz. "It has been a challenge to bring people

on board in this post-pandemic age of society that we are living in."

See **GUARDS**, page 7

Holiday Publication Deadlines

The News Review office will be closed on Monday, January 1. Submission deadlines will be two days early.

- Saturday, December 30, 2 p.m. Articles/photos over 700 words, display ads (not camera ready).

- Saturday, December 30, 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300-word limit).

- Tuesday, January 2, 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.

What Goes On

Saturday, December 30 10 a.m. to noon, Listening Session for Appointment to Fill City Council Vacancy, Greenbriar Community Building, 7600 Hanover Parkway
Monday, January 1 New Year's Day holiday: City Offices Closed, No City Council Meeting
Wednesday, January 3 7:30 p.m. Council Worksession: Candidate Interviews for City Council Vacancy, Municipal Building

See the city ad on page 5 or the meetings calendar at greenbeltnmd.gov for more information.

Bring Along a Shopping Bag Starting on Monday, January 1

On January 1, the City of Greenbelt's Bring Your Own Bag ordinance and Prince George's County's similar Better Bag Bill go into effect to reduce single-use plastic bag use and litter.

What Does This Mean?

Greenbelt retail establishments will be prohibited from providing plastic carryout bags to shoppers. If a customer requests a paper bag or reusable bag at the point of sale, the customer must pay at least 10 cents for each bag, with certain exceptions.

Who Is Affected?

All retail stores, restaurants, grocery stores or any other establishment that provides single-use plastic bags to its customers, whether for-profit or not-for-profit.

Why?

To protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the city and to prevent and remove public nuisances. To protect the environment and marine life. Plastic carryout bags are rarely recyclable and impose costs to local and county government and taxpayers in the form of removal of litter, and wear and tear on recycling machinery due to the improper disposal of plastic bags in recycling bins. Single-use plastic bags are made from fossil fuels, contributing to climate change.

Which Bags Are Banned?

Only single-use plastic film bags given at the point of sale

are banned. It does not include a plastic or paper bag used to package or contain bulk items such as fruit, vegetables, nuts, grains, candy or small hardware items; fresh meat or seafood; flowers, potted plants or other damp items; unwrapped prepared foods or bakery goods; dry-cleaned clothes; or to take live fish, insects, mollusks or crustaceans away from a retail establishment.

How Does the Paper Bag Fee Work?

Greenbelt retail establishments must charge at least 10 cents for each paper or reusable bag provided at the point of sale, except for paper bags containing prescription medications provided by a pharmacy; given by full-service

See **BAGS**, page 11



Letters to the Editor

A Touching Story For the Holidays

I heard the sirens and knew Santa would arrive at Lakeside North a little before 7 p.m. I stepped outside my apartment onto the porch to see Santa and get a picture as he passed by. A young boy came racing up the stairs looking for Santa. I said, "Are you looking for Santa? He went that way; if you hurry you might see him." The boy took off and I heard someone from downstairs calling for him. I told her he had run down the hill to see Santa.

The boy came back a few moments later and got a light scolding, but he was grinning from ear to ear.

Thank you, Greenbelt firefighters, for bringing the joy of Christmas to the kids at Lakeside North and all over Greenbelt.

Kathryn Beard

Indian Springs

The November 23, 2023, edition of the News Review just

caught up with me. I enjoyed the article Indigenous People Were Here. It brought back fond memories of life in Greenbelt, especially around the Lake and Indian Springs. I spent a lot of my younger years exploring that area in the '50s.

After the Beltway was built, I was left wondering what became of Indian Springs. Was it buried in concrete or sitting, inaccessible, in a cloverleaf of the highway? I was happy to learn a few years ago that the Springs were intact, shoehorned between an office building parking lot in the Golden Triangle and the Beltway.

My first visit to the Springs in many years brought back memories of Boy Scout camping trips there, as well as just wandering those woods with my friends. I was happy to learn that the city still maintains the site, and that there are picnic tables and charcoal grills available. The rustic charm is gone but Indian Springs lives on.

Robert Haslinger

Corrections

The Golden Age holiday luncheon pictures that appeared in last week's paper were taken by Robin Olson.



The Bus

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Electronically, that is.
editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com

Letters Policy

Deadline for letters is 6 p.m. Monday. Submission does not guarantee publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words (shorter letters are more likely to be published). Letters may be edited for clarity, grammar, civility and space constraints. The News Review may add a comment from the editor if deemed necessary. All letters must include the letter writer's name, physical address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published; the News Review will consider requests for the name to be withheld.

Greenbelt News Review

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- Monday 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300 word limit).
- Tuesday 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.
- Tuesday 6 p.m. Classified ads and camera-ready display ads.
- Email submission is available. Hardcopy submissions (delivered by respective deadline) may be mailed to the address above or left in the Co-op grocery store drop box or GNR external office door mail slot, as shown below.
- Payment must accompany ads except by prior arrangement

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION: \$55/year

Greenbelt Community Center at 15 Crescent Rd.
OFFICE HOURS: Monday 2 - 4 p.m., Tuesday 2 - 4, 6 - 8 p.m.
Office is currently closed to the public. Please phone or email.
GNR external office door mail slot is located up a few stairs 25 yards left of the Community Center's east door near the municipal building.



PHOTO BY JOAN DUNHAM

Perhaps this piebald deer, seen in the Greenbrook Estates neighborhood on November 10, was still wearing a Halloween costume.

On Screen at Greenbelt Cinema

The Color Purple

A story of love and resilience based on the novel and the Broadway musical, *The Color Purple* is a decades-spanning tale of one woman's journey to independence. Celie faces many hardships in her life, but ultimately finds extraordinary strength and hope in the unbreakable bonds of sisterhood. "A powerful and electric film, this is an amazing theatrical experience. Director Blitz Bazawule delivers a lavish old school Hollywood musical, yet also the most modern and honest adaptation of *The Color Purple* to date," said critic Grace Rudolph of *Beyond the Trailer*. "A must see."

Wonka

Based on the character at the center of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Roald Dahl's most iconic children's book and one of the best-selling children's books of all time, the film tells the story of how the world's greatest inventor, magician and chocolate maker became the Willy Wonka we know today. The film stars Timothée Chalamet, Hugh Grant and Calah Lane. Said Emily Zemler of the *Observer*: "The film is charming and warm-hearted, much like *Paddington* and its sequel, and the onscreen delight is infectious."

Stage Fright

The police think actor Jonathan Cooper (Richard Todd) is a murderer, and now they're on his tail. He asserts that it was his lover, the famous actress Charlotte Inwood (Marlene Dietrich), who killed the victim (not coincidentally, her husband). He seeks shelter with his ex-girlfriend Eve (Jane Wyman), a budding actress. Convinced Jonathan is innocent, Eve plays detective and assumes multiple disguises. But once she is entangled in a web of deception, she fears everyone in fact wears a mask.

Greenbelt Cinema
129 Centerway
301-329-2034
www.greenbeltcinema.org
Members Always \$6.50!
Member kids are always FREE!
Adults \$9, Kids \$6,
Senior/Student/Military \$8
All shows before 5 PM:
Adults \$7, Kids \$5
OC = Open Captions
CC = Closed Captions
DVS = Descriptive Video Service

SHOWTIMES: DECEMBER 29th - JANUARY 4th

The Color Purple (PG-13) (CC) (DVS) (2023) (140 mins)

Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Fri. 5:00 PM, 8:00 PM
Sat. 5:00 PM, 8:00 PM
Sun. 2:00 PM (OC)
Mon. 4:00 PM
Tues. 7:00 PM
Wed. 7:00 PM

Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Sun. 5:15 PM
Mon. 2:30 PM
Thurs. 7:30 PM

Wonka (PG) (CC) (DVS) (2023) (116 mins)

Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Sun. 5:00 PM
Thur. 5:30 PM

Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Fri. 5:15 PM, 8:15 PM
Sat. 5:15 PM, 7:45 PM
Sun. 2:30 PM
Mon. 12:00 PM, 5:30 PM
Tues. 7:30 PM
Wed. 7:30 PM

Stage Fright (NR) (1950) (110 mins)
Free Cinema Classic!

Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Mon. 1:00 PM
Thurs. 8:00 PM

Community Events

All Year Round, Help Feed Those in Need

Greenbelt PORCH is continuing its program to collect food in January as scheduled below:

Sunday, January 14 – by 11 a.m., for 1-8 Courts Ridge and Crescent Roads

Saturday, January 20 – by 10 a.m. for 14 and 15 Courts Laurel Hill

Sunday, January 21 – by 4 p.m. for the 9 and 12 Courts Ridge Road, the 11 and 13 Courts Ridge Road and Boxwood Village; by 5 p.m. for Lakeside Drive.

To help out, leave a donation of nonperishables or hygiene products by the front door marked RUAK or PORCH visible from the street. Ensure donated items have not expired. If not part of a regular pickup route, contact Robert Goldberg-Strassler by noon on Sunday, January 14 at spreadruak@gmail.com. He will come to your porch and pick up your donations.

Volunteers who would like to expand Greenbelt PORCH to additional neighborhoods in Greenbelt are always welcome; especially needed are coordinators in Greenbelt East. Anyone who has questions or who is interested in being a volunteer or starting a new neighborhood for monthly food collection with Greenbelt PORCH, contact Goldberg-Strassler at spreadruak@gmail.com.

Bus Transfer Lights At Greenbelt Metro

On Sunday, December 17, at the Greenbelt Station, Metro began full implementation of bus transfer lights to ensure customers can make a reliable connection to their bus on low-frequency routes. Metro first tested the system in July.

When a train approaches the station during off-peak hours (9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to midnight), a strobe light will signal to bus operators to wait up to five minutes before departing so that Metrorail customers have time to make it from the station platform to the bus.

Toastmasters Meet

The Greenbelt Toastmasters Club invites all to join them online every first, third and fifth Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The club provides a fun and friendly environment for anyone interested in improving their public speaking and leadership skills. Learn more at greenbelt.toastmastersclubs.org.

Greenbelt Chess Club Meets in New Spot

The Chess Club will meet on Monday, January 8, 6 to 8:30 p.m. in the Youth Center. Note the change of location. For more details, call Effie at 443-415-1053.

Council Seeks Input On Filling Vacant Seat

Greenbelt City Council is gathering community feedback on the qualities residents wish to see in a new councilmember. Join in to provide input on Saturday, December 30 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Greenbriar Community Building.

Additional comments can be sent to council@greenbeltmd.gov for those unable to attend in person. If Spanish or ASL translation is needed, email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov.

Sign up for city communications and alerts at greenbeltmd.gov/alerts.

Senior Nutrition Program Luncheon

The Senior Nutrition Food and Friendship program provides lunch for seniors Monday through Friday at the Community Center beginning at 11:30 a.m. Note the updated start time. Meals must be reserved two weeks ahead so that enough food is ordered. Participants must complete a registration form in person at the Community Center office, on Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. There is a suggested donation. Call 301-397-2208, ext. 4215 with questions.

Two menu options, one vegetarian, will be offered for each luncheon. All meals, which provide at least one third of recommended dietary allowances for older adults, include margarine, coffee or tea and skim milk.



Calling Artists

Join the citywide African Americans and the Arts Art Exhibit curated by Shaymar Higgs at the New Deal Café and other city locations. This exhibit will showcase the profound impact of Black Americans on visual arts, music, cultural movements and more. The deadline for submissions for this exhibit is Wednesday, January 3 by 5 p.m. Submit art entries to shaymar@freeartforall.org to be included in this show. All artwork must be well prepared and ready to hang.

At the Library

All Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) libraries will be closed Sunday, December 31, through Tuesday, January 2, for the New Year's holiday. The libraries will reopen on Wednesday, January 3 at noon. Passport Acceptance Service at PGCMLS libraries is suspended from December 22 through January 5.

Regular hours for the Greenbelt Library are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays; noon to 8 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays; and 1 to 5 p.m., Sundays. Face masks are recommended for all customers over the age of 2 in PGCMLS buildings.

In-person events at all PGCMLS libraries are on hiatus through Friday, January 5.

Français, s'il vous plaît: French at the Café

A group of people interested in speaking French meets at the New Deal Café every Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. All ages, all levels of fluency are welcome.

Novel Endings Open for Business

Novel Endings is the used book room within the Greenbelt Library. Sales of books and other media from this room support special programming and the Library.

Maintained by volunteers for the Friends of Greenbelt Library, Novel Endings receives donations of book discards from the library as well as donations from the community by special arrangements. To donate books, email friendsofgreenbeltlibrary@gmail.com. Cash and check donations are also accepted in the black box next to the Library's front desk.

Come see what Novel Endings has to offer and support the Greenbelt Library at the same time.

Kwanzaa Karamu At The SPACE

The Greenbelt Black History and Culture Committee in collaboration with Chiquita Jackson Enterprises, The SPACE and RUAK is hosting a Kwanzaa Karamu on Saturday, December 30 at The SPACE 2nd floor site, from 4 to 7 p.m. Registering with Eventbrite is suggested.

For more information, contact blackhistoryandculturegb@gmail.com or partnerships@cjenterprise.co.

Golden Age Club January Activities

The club meets on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in the Community Center. They will begin collecting 2024 dues in January; a part of the dues goes toward the annual luncheon in April, so early payment is appreciated. Upcoming activities:

January 3, Business meeting, installation of officers, dues collection and a chance to meet City Manager Josué Salmerón

January 10, A singalong with Chris Cherry and Stefan Brodd

January 17, January birthdays celebration; bring lunch and a dessert or finger food to share

January 24, Bingo

January 31, Tea; bring finger food and reading materials to share.

Merrily We Roll Along At Greenbelt Arts Center

The Greenbelt Arts Center presents Merrily We Roll Along, "A musical comedy about fame, friendship and fate. Stephen Sondheim's score is his best ever! The recent revival in N.Y. has enjoyed great success." Directed by Roy Hammond with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, based on the book by George Furth. Performances are January 5 to 20: Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays January 7 and 14 at 2 p.m.

Greenbelt Part of Annual Christmas Bird Count

Greenbelt will be part of the 124th Christmas Bird Count, a movement of more than 75,000 volunteers in 2,600 locations throughout the Americas, all finding and counting birds for one day. Ornithologists use the data collected to study trends in bird populations due to species interactions, habitat loss and climate change.

About 50 bird species are commonly found in Greenbelt during the winter, and other rarities are possible. A group will meet at 7:30 a.m. on New Year's Day (Monday) at the Buddy Attick Park parking lot to walk together and count birds. There will also be an afternoon walk. Experienced birders will answer questions and can provide tips on using binoculars and sound to identify species. The group will stay on trails and sidewalks.

This local count is coordinated by the Patuxent Bird Club and the Prince George's Audubon Society.

Volunteers are also welcome to count birds outside their homes on January 1 and provide counts to the Greenbelt coordinator, John Stith, by calling 301-502-3634 in advance to make arrangements.

Artful Afternoon On January 7

Greenbelt Recreation Arts invites guests of all ages to welcome the new year with an afternoon of free music and art activities on Sunday, January 7 in the ground floor east space at the Community Center. From 1 to 2 p.m. or from 2 to 3 p.m., create ornate modeled flower magnets out of Sculpey clay with Community Center Artist-in-Residence Gina Mai Denn. At 3 p.m., enjoy a special family concert with the worldclass Relic Ensemble, a baroque chamber orchestra.

For additional program information, visit greenbeltmd.gov/arts.

This Week at the New Deal Café

SUPPORT Greenbelt's only venue with BOTH dinner AND a show!

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113 Centerway, Roosevelt Center, Greenbelt, MD
Hours: Mon/Wed/Th 8am-9pm; Tues 8am-9:30pm; Friday/Saturday 8am – midnight; Sunday 9am – 9pm, UNLESS NOTED.

TH 12/28	FRI 12/29	SAT 12/30	SUN 12/31	
Kim's Grand Rounds 7-9pm Songwriters' Circle, Bluebird Cafe style!	PIANO STYLINGS OF PETER REPERT, 6-7:30 Still Standing 8-11pm The best rocking' blues and rockabilly!	The Bob Band 8-11pm A faithful musical journey of Bob Dylan's songs	NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH HONEY SOL! 9pm - 12:30am Funk, soul, and rock 'n roll; toast the New Year in at midnight!	
MON 1/1	TUES 1/2	WED 1/3	TH 1/4	SPECIALS!
The Monday Mauveness Karaoke SPECIAL TIME! 12noon-3:30p CAFE CLOSED AT 4:00PM	S.A.W. Open Mic 6-9:30pm Hosted by Lynn Hollyfield. SIGN-UPS AT 6PM	The Campfire Sessions 7-9pm A monthly "listening room"	Wolf's Blues Show and Sit-in Jam 6:30-10pm Big, bodacious blues jam	HAPPY HOUR 4-7pm \$1 OFF BEER AND WINE WINE WEDNESDAY \$1 OFF PER GLASS \$5 OFF A BOTTLE

Join or renew your membership. Go to www.newdealcafe.com, click on "ABOUT", then "BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW."
***For more information on these and other events, visit the NDC CALENDAR page on our website.**
FUNDING FOR THESE ADS PROVIDED BY A GENEROUS DONOR.

Greenbelt Access Television

Dec. 23, Sat - Dec. 29, Fri

Verizon FIOS Channel 19 • Comcast 77
(School Programming on Your Cable Guide)
Streaming on www.greenbeltaccessstv.org

THIS WEEK on GATE • Your Community Access Station

Featured Film (9am, 3pm, and 8pm)

Santa Claus Conquers the Martians (1964)

Campy, comedic, and oh-so-festive. Blast off to Mars with Santa in this science-fiction cult classic!

New This Month

TeaFairy & Friends Storytime Adventures - Christmas Special

Get in the holiday spirit with TeaFairy, Jennifer, and all their friends! In this special episode, we sing along with Melissa Sites, see how animals celebrate Christmas, and get a sneak peak into the lives of gnomes!

All this and more on the GATE channel this week! Check greenbeltaccessstv.org for the full broadcast schedule, and visit [Greenbelt Access Television on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) for new video productions.

Greenbelt Community Church Celebrates Christmas of Giving

Greenbelt Community Church completed its season of giving with its free-will offering collected at the Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve. The money goes toward the retirement of ministers in the United Church of Christ. The annual Christmas concert held at the church on December 16 raised nearly \$1,000 for Help-By-Phone through the generosity of the 80 attendees in another free-will offering.

Church members bought gifts for underprivileged families. The first names and ages of 100 individuals were provided and their gifts were collected by the charity outreach of the Holy Family Catholic Church in Bowie. Mitten trees erected in the narthex and the sanctuary of the church were adorned with mittens, gloves and caps for children in need at the Greenbelt Elementary and Springhill Lake Elementary Schools.

The church also celebrated the holiday with a Christmas craft-making and activity fair, capped by an impromptu Christmas Play.



The Greenbelt Community Church provides gifts for underprivileged families in cooperation with Holy Family Catholic Church in Bowie.



Mittens, hats, scarves, gloves and more adorn the Mitten Tree.

- Photos by Rick Ransom



Obituaries

The News Review publishes obituaries of Greenbelt residents, past or present.

You write it or we will if you prefer. We try to include information about participation in various activities and organizations, where the person lived and something about the family. A photograph and service information should be included. There is no charge.

Remembering Julie Andrus

by Li'l Dan Celdran

I first met Julie Andrus while working at the Greenbelt Aquatic & Fitness Center in 1998. To me, she was the matriarch of our work family. Always available to provide a listening ear, expertise, advice on relationships, pet care or child rearing, Julie was a stable and consistent figure in my life. I remember many a get-together with coworkers, family and friends where she shared her love of her Italian heritage, favorite recipes, culture and expressions.

She was especially helpful

by babysitting our son when he was young while I took her mom (Nana) to exercise class. Julie enjoyed preparing his breakfast of scrambled eggs and veggie links, taking him for walks, reading stories and making art. She even let him reorganize her refrigerator.

Over the decades we shared our life's happenings; we laughed, we cried. Julie was always there for me. After every call, she'd end with "Love you!" I love you too, Julie Nana. Thank you for your friendship. Rest in peace.



A male hooded merganser duck, left, and a male red-bellied woodpecker hang out at the Lake.

- Photos by Kathryn Beard

"Do not allow your minds to dwell on the present, but with eyes of faith look into the future, for in truth the Spirit of God is working in your midst." – 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Greenbelt Bahá'í Community

www.greenbeltbahais.org

Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church

40 Ridge Road, Greenbelt

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301-474-9410

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Saturday morning services at 10:00am

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For further information, call (301) 474-4223 www.mishkantorah.org

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St. John's Episcopal/Anglican Church

11040 Baltimore Avenue Beltsville, MD 20704

301-937-4292 www.saintjohnsbeltsville.org

The Reverend Joseph M. Constant, Rector

Sunday, December 31

First Sunday after Christmas: Haiti Independence

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

All services will be held In-Person, streamed live via Facebook and YouTube.

Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church



3215 Powder Mill Road, Adelphi
Phone: 301-937-3666 www.pbuuc.org

Welcomes you to our open, nurturing community

December 31 3 p.m.

Guiding Lights: The Principles Of Kwanzaa

Margaret Morrison, PBUUC Diversity/Anti-Racism Transformation Team (DARTT) with Worship Associates Lula Beatty and Carol Carter Walker

Paint Branch's Diversity/Antiracism Transformation Team presents the 15th annual Kwanzaa Service. How the lights of the kinara can guide us in understanding and living the seven principles of Kwanzaa will be explored.

Streaming to our Facebook page, on Zoom and in person at 3:00 at: University Christian Church, 6800 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF GREENBELT MASS

Sunday 10:00 a.m.
City Council Room
25 Crescent Rd

ALL ARE WELCOME!

OR - Join us on ZOOM!
For ZOOM link:
CCG1985+owner@groups.io

Greenbelt BAPTIST CHURCH

Christ-centered
Biblical
& Reformed

Sunday Morning Worship 10:30am
Sunday School 9:15am
Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00pm

101 Greenhill Rd. Greenbelt, MD
www.greenbeltbaptist.org

The Bible Says...
Happy New Year!
This is what the Lord Almighty says:
"Give Careful Thought To Your Ways."
Haggai 1:7
What will you do to make 2024 your best year yet?

IN PERSON Sunday Worship Services
10a-11:15a @ Greenbelt Elementary School
MCFcc.org

Greenbelt Community Church UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

One Hillside Road

Join Us Sunday 10:15 AM for Worship and Church School

We are an Open and Affirming Church

www.facebook.com/GCCUCCMD
www.greenbeltcommunitychurch.org

ST. HUGH OF GRENABLE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- Daily Mass: Mon-Fri 7:15am*, Sat 9am*
- Sunday Mass:
 - Sat vigil 5pm*
 - Sun 8am, 9:30am, 11am
- Confessions Saturday 3pm - 4pm.

Masks for the unvaccinated encouraged.

*Live-streamed on Facebook and available on our YouTube page later.

CELEBRATE WITH US
135 Crescent Rd.
www.sthughofgrenoble.org

Fly Me to the Moon, Jupiter's Moon, Europa

NASA's Europa Clipper spacecraft will be exploring Jupiter's ocean world, the icy moon Europa. NASA invites all to help them send a Message in a Bottle: Names will be engraved on a microchip that will travel 1.8 billion miles (2.6 billion kilometers) to Europa. Submit a name by December 31 at <https://europa.nasa.gov/message-in-a-bottle/sign-on>.

Europa Clipper is being assembled at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and is set to launch from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in October 2024. By 2030, it will be in orbit around Jupiter. It will gather detailed measurements to determine if Europa has conditions suitable for life. Learn more about Clipper and Europa at <https://europa.nasa.gov>.

Volunteers Needed

The Greenbelt MakerSpace is seeking volunteers to staff the tool library and organize classes and other events. People are asking for more open hours. Help is needed for the tool library to expand. Sign up for shifts at signup.com/go/UNkLnqk or email staff@make125.org if interested in other times or jobs.

The Greenbelt MakerSpace is down the outside stairs on the west side of the Granite Building at 115 Centerway.

Donate Sneakers For People in Need

Greenbelt Community Church, United Church of Christ (GCC) is collecting athletic shoes by partnering with GotSneakers. This sneaker recycling program helps to keep sneakers out of landfills, where they have harmful effects on the environment.

A donation box is located outside the Fellowship Center (the small building behind the church) for people to drop off sneakers at any time.

Community Orchestra Welcomes Musicians

Greenbelt Community Orchestra rehearses on Thursday evenings and welcomes new members, especially string players. For more information, visit GreenbeltOrchestra.org.

Cookies on the Bridge Seeks Volunteers

It's time for some sweetness for the students. This is a call for volunteers who are looking for something fun and worthwhile to do: consider Cookies on the Bridge. On weekdays from 3:15 to 4 p.m., volunteers meet at the Spellman Overpass to offer cookies (and carrots) to students coming home from Eleanor Roosevelt High School. The goal is to ensure the safety of the students as they make their way home.

Those interested or who have questions should contact Robert Goldberg-Strassler, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness), at spreadruak@gmail.com or 301-345-8755 and leave a message.

Crisis Hotline's Number is 988

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline dialing code is 988. Calls and text messages are confidential and free.



City Information & Events

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

MEETINGS FOR DECEMBER 25 - 29

Saturday, December 30 at 10 am, **LISTENING SESSION FOR APPOINTMENT ON FILLING COUNCIL VACANCY - (GREENBELT EAST - GREENBRIAR COMMUNITY BUILDING)**

MEETINGS FOR JANUARY 1 - 5

Monday, January 1, **NO MEETING**

Wednesday, January 3 at 7:30 pm, **WORK SESSION - CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS FOR COUNCIL VACANCY**

Thursday, January 4 at 6 pm, **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS BOARD MEETING**

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov. This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation that a meeting is being held call (301) 474-8000. For information on public participation for the meetings above, visit the meetings calendar at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

City Offices will be closed on Monday, January 1, in observance of the New Year's holidays. **THE GREENBELT CONNECTION WILL NOT BE OPERATING.**

REFUSE/RECYCLING SCHEDULE

Week of January 1
Monday Route – Collected Tuesday
Tuesday Route – Collected Wednesday
Wednesday Route – Collected Thursday
Thursday Route – Collected Friday

There will be no appliance, odd metals, hard plastics, or yard waste collections on Friday, January 5.

CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION TO ONE OF THE CITY'S CHARITABLE FUNDS

Agency Funds are managed but not financed by the City. All donations to the funds are used for the listed charitable purposes. The City of Greenbelt receives no portion of these funds nor does it charge an administrative fee for processing the donations

GOOD SAMARITAN FUND: This fund provides financial assistance to Greenbelt residents facing food insecurity and financial difficulty in paying for utilities (Electric, Phone, Internet, Water and Gas). This program receives funding from generous individuals, as well as Greenbelt faith communities and other civic associations. During the Coronavirus Pandemic, the Good Samaritan Fund is collecting monies to support the St. Hugh's Food Pantry and residents struggling to pay their utility bills.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND: Established to accept and disburse donations received to assist Greenbelt residents to pay rent to avoid possible eviction. Approximately a dozen individuals receive assistance from these funds each fiscal year.

GREENBELT RECREATION: Greenbelt Recreation receives contributions from various sources. The monetary donations are used to support camp scholarships, special events and other designated programs as specified by the donor. Monies are transferred to the General Fund to offset the program as appropriate.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION: Contributions are made to the Advisory Committee on Education (ACE). These monies fund ACE initiatives such as its scholarship fund.

NOW YOU MAY DONATE ONLINE AT WWW.GREENBELTMD.GOV/DONATIONS

You can also mail a money order or check to: City of Greenbelt, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770. Please notate which fund in the notes section of the check. You may also use the drop box on the flag side of the building. Receipts will be provided and mailed out to you.

ANIMAL SHELTER SEEKING DONATIONS

The Greenbelt Animal Shelter is in need of new and unopened dog toys, cat toys, Pine Cat Litter, wet adult cat food (any brand), Authority Adult and Kitten Cat Food (dry), Authority kitten wet food, Blue Buffalo Food (dry), Kong's (all sizes), essential oils that can be used for enrichment such as lemon, lavender, vanilla, feliway multicat diffuser for cats, pheromone plug ins for dogs, laundry detergent, bleach, dishwashing liquid, dog treats, Easy Cheese spray cans.

[Click here](#) to view our Amazon wish list or visit our website at www.greenbeltmd.gov/animalshelter for more information.

EMERGENCY DIAPER DISTRIBUTION

The Emergency Diaper Distribution supports Greenbelt families in need of diapers. Greenbelt residents only, you must sign-up each month.

To register: <https://forms.gle/28TFe4T1y83B9E8u8> or (240) 424-0302.

CURRENT CARES PROGRAMS

CARES is happy to provide the following programs FREE of charge this fall: Emergency Diaper Program, Family and Unpaid Caregiver Resource Fair, Alzheimer's Awareness Month Webinar Series, Coffee & Conversations, two Free Produce Distribution events, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Older Adults webinar, Staying Strong webinar, and more.

For descriptions and information, visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/CARESprograms.

APPLY TO CITY COUNCIL VACANCY

Due to the loss of Councilmember Ric Gordon, a seat is vacant on City Council. After discussing next steps during the **Monday, December 11, 2023 Regular Council Meeting** (view at www.greenbeltmd.gov/municipalTV), the Greenbelt City Council is seeking to appoint this seat to any qualified voter who meets the qualifications of a regular City election, as stated below.

Any qualified voter who is at least 18 years of age may be nominated for the office of member of council:

- Upon filing at the office of the City Clerk a nominating petition signed by not fewer than fifty (50) voters;
- A written acceptance of the nomination;
- Such other statements as may be required by this charter or by law, including an affidavit of candidate;
- Completed financial disclosure form;
- A statement of intent will be required. Please explain why you are seeking to fill the vacant council seat. One (1) page maximum.
- A résumé.

Upon the finding by the City Clerk that the nomination petition, the written acceptance, and such other statements as may be required are in order, the name of such nominee shall be authorized to be brought forth to Council for consideration of appointment to the vacant council seat.

Tuesday, December 12

is the first day to obtain papers and file a nomination petition.

Wednesday, December 20 by 5 pm

is the last day to file a nomination petition.

Wednesday, January 3, 7:30 pm, Council Chambers, Work Session - Candidate Interviews for Council Vacancy

Saturday, December 30 at 10 am Listening Session for Appointment on Filling Council Vacancy at Greenbriar Community Building

A link to all forms (printable or digital) and an outline of next steps in the process can be found at www.greenbeltmd.gov/councilvacancy.

For more information, contact the City Clerk at elections@greenbeltmd.gov, or by calling (301) 474-8000.



COMMITTEES & BOARDS VACANCIES VOLUNTEER TODAY!

Volunteering for City of Greenbelt Committees & Boards is an excellent opportunity to engage with your community and make a difference. Choose from a number of committees & boards such as the **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, the Youth Advisory Committee, or the Advisory Committee on Education, Arts Advisory Board, Board of Elections, Community Relations Advisory Board, Employee Relations Advisory Board, Forest Preserve Advisory Board, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability, or the Park and Recreation Advisory Board** and make a difference in Greenbelt!

By dedicating your time and expertise, you will help shape the future of Greenbelt and create a community that values the voices of all its residents. Take the first step towards making a positive impact and apply for one of these committee vacancies today!

Call (301) 474-8000.

GREENBELT SAVE OUR SENIORS GRANT PROGRAM Are you homebound and need help with personal care?

The Greenbelt Assistance in Living Program, in partnership with Pickett Fences Senior Services, has been awarded a grant to provide temporary home health support, bathroom safety assessment, and equipment to residents 60+ or 50+ with a disability, who reside within incorporated Greenbelt. During this time staff will work to identify and link residents with long-term support programs.

Benefits:

- RN Assessment
- Bathroom Safety Assessment and Equipment
- Home Health Visits

Limited spots are available!

Please email Trinity Cephas, GAIL Student Intern, for more information at tcephas@greenbeltmd.gov or call the Bilingual Health Caseworker, Brendy Garcia, at (240) 424-0302 or bgarcia@greenbeltmd.gov.

BRING YOUR OWN BAG ORDINANCE

Effective January 1, 2024, the City of Greenbelt's Bring Your Own Bag bill aims to reduce single-use plastic bag waste and litter in our local waterways and tributary system.

The Bring Your Own Bag bill will prohibit a retail establishment from providing a plastic carryout bag to shoppers and can charge at least 10 cents for each paper bag provided to a customer at the point of sale.

For more information on this bill, visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/BYOBag.



CITY FIBER OPTIC INSTALLATION PROJECT UNDERWAY

We're making our connectivity better! Please pardon our appearance as a City fiber optic installation project will take place on Crescent Road beginning the week of December 4, 2023, and is projected to last two months. Thank you!

A Musing on the Downsides Of the Proposed FBI Building

by Cathie Meetre

Assuming the General Services Administration (GSA) gets its way over the Greenbelt FBI site, the plan seems to resemble that of the 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The 2015 DEIS was discussed at a council briefing reported by Diane Oberg in the News Review issue of December 15, 2015 (greenbeltnewsreview.com/news-stories/coming-soon-to-a-parking-lot-near-you-fbi-eis-challenges). She noted that the project "refers to development of the entire site as a mixed-use community including 800 residential units, 1.4 million square feet of retail space, 1.86 million square feet of office space and two hotels, totaling 550 rooms."

The impact is complex. This article focuses on the potential downsides to city residents, and while one group benefits, another may lose out.

Economic Effects

The presumed benefit to the local economy in such a project accrues from the increase in the workforce living and spending nearby. Over time, FBI's well-paid employees will likely migrate outwards on the Maryland side of the Beltway seeking single-family homes (few are nearby) and perceived better schools and lower crime rates in Howard, Montgomery and Anne Arundel Counties. For them, apartments won't be desirable and many, if not most, won't live in Greenbelt or even Prince George's County.

Development Effects

The City of Greenbelt has no control over zoning (it's a county power) and little or no influence on what gets built and where. County government, however, is highly motivated to approve whatever is proposed by project stakeholders and developers.

This development could breathe new life into previously mooted projects, proposed earlier but shelved. These include the razing of Franklin Park and its redevelopment at higher density and new apartments to the east of Greenbelt Road at its intersection with Cherrywood Lane. It will likely revive Beltway Plaza's redevelopment plan. Each means hundreds of additional apartments and impacts on schools, social services and public safety.

Traffic Congestion

At the time of the original FBI proposal, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) building on the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center was not even a twinkle in the federal eye. The combined impacts of the FBI and BEP facilities may have negative synergy in terms of traffic. Each anticipates 24/7 operations and their impacts should be analyzed together.

The 2015 DEIS No Build option refers only to the FBI building not being built – the mixed-use development is presumed to already exist – understating the impact of the project as a whole.

The 2015 traffic management plan allocates (for a projected 11,000 employees) 3,600 employee parking spaces and 3,735 overall with visitor parking. Walkable housing and Metro ridership is expected to reduce daily trips.

Road improvements are pre-

sumably a cost to state and county governments, not the developer, and are not included in the GSA \$26.2 million estimate.

Public Transportation Options

Metro serves the D.C./Virginia corridor and would provide little advantage to employees dispersed through a wide swath outside the Maryland Beltway into other counties.

Offsetting this, the Purple Line (if it's ever completed) tracks the Beltway to some advantage and MARC, especially with some expansion of services, is also a viable commuter alternative running from/to Laurel and Baltimore.

Otherwise, employees will mostly drive, especially those doing shift work, impacting I-95, the Beltway, the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, Kenilworth Avenue and Edmonston Road.

Cost/Benefit and Taxes

Federally owned buildings are not subject to real estate taxes. To be taxed, the building must be privately owned and leased to GSA (which seems unlikely, given the purchase agreement already foreseen with WMATA and the state). Road and infrastructure improvements are a cost to local and state authorities. The payoff to local authorities is from the activity and earnings of the extra people working there, much more so if they live and spend their money here – which is not guaranteed.

If the FBI building is such a financial windfall, why is Washington, D.C., not fighting a vigorous rearguard action? It's because the FBI pays no real estate tax and their leaving will allow a private entity to redevelop the D.C. site and pay taxes (estimated at \$28M per year in a Revenue and Job Impact Analysis commissioned by the D.C. Government in 2013). D.C. is ahead by the taxes.

Environmental Damage

The 2015 EIS spoke of damage to the environment as minimal because the current site is already mostly impermeable and the wetland area suffers little incursion. Indeed, substitution of modern permeable surfaces may improve matters over the current parking lot.

Property Values

Greenbelt's property values and rental rates will likely go up because of the increased demand, assuming over-building is avoided. This uptick in value benefits homeowners only when they leave – those who stay pay more in tax or rent. For our more vulnerable residents, this is also a form of gentrification, which squeezes out those on fixed or low incomes.

Conclusion

The city will have little influence on decisions that are made, at best obtaining minor concessions. Greenbelt West will be most affected. For some, it may be a plus but many will see increased congestion and higher housing costs. The likely significantly increased prevalence of apartments in Greenbelt is unlikely to be a positive as the city is already disproportionately multi-family housing. The new workforce will require a wider range of housing possibilities and will likely drive their cars to obtain them outside this city and probably outside this county.



School News

Entire Music Dept. Performs At Roosevelt Winter Concert

by Mary Moien

The Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS) Music Department held its Winter Concert on Thursday, December 14. Dr. David Yarbrough, orchestra director, commented that this was the first time in nine years that every group in the music department participated in a single performance. In addition to Yarbrough, Cullen Waller directed the bands and Aubree Salters led the choral groups.

The program led off with a holiday medley from the Concert Band directed by Waller, who is relatively new to ERHS. This was followed by traditional and contemporary pieces from the Combined Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble. The music included Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella, and All I Want for Christmas Is You.

Salters introduced the A Capella Choir, which had choreographed their own musical selection. The Concert Choir, under Salters' direction, sang Agnus Dei and Carol of the Bells. There also

was an a capella song entitled No Room, meaning no room for Jesus in Bethlehem.

Yarbrough directed the Combined Symphony and Chamber Orchestras. He commented that during the fall, this group had played these pieces at three county schools to introduce students to the joys of music. Since the presentations were in the fall, one of the pieces had a "ghostly" sound to it. Their final selection was from Swan Lake.

The Gospel Choir sang rousing renditions of Go Tell It on the Mountain, Alleluia, Salvation and Glory, and We Sing Praise.

The sheer numbers and playing quality of students participating, and the depths of individual groups, cannot be overemphasized. This is a sign of a serious band or orchestra. The choral groups were professional and enthusiastic. The support by parents and by other students in attendance was obvious from the attention to all the performers and the appreciative applause by all.



New Deal Cafe's New Year's Eve Bash

Last Chance for Tickets!

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM GREENBELT CO-OP!

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Non-alcoholic Drinks

Local Collard Greens!

New Year Dinner

Sparkling Drinks

Easy Appetizers and New Year Roasts

School News

GUARDS continued from page 1

The school's Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) was not content with these responses and urged the police to take immediate action to ensure the safety of students throughout 2024.

Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS) PTSA is one of several in the county dissatisfied with this response and is calling on police to take immediate action to ensure the safety of students throughout 2024. At the PTSA's meeting on December 11, Vice President Jenni Pompei (who is also a Greenbelt City Councilmember) shared a letter co-signed by 11 parent-teacher organizations from schools in the county. The letter, whose signatories include Greenbelt Elementary School Parent Teacher Association Board and the ERHS PTSA, is addressed to Prince George's County Police Department and calls on them to immediately fill any vacant crossing guard positions.

"We call on the Prince George's Police Department (PGPD) to take immediate action and fill all vacant crossing guard positions by January 1, 2024, or sooner," states the letter. "If more funding is required in order to offer the increased competitive pay and benefits needed to successfully fill these positions, we urge county officials to provide it." The letter asks that if the PGPD cannot fill the vacant positions, unspent funds be provided so municipalities and schools can "recruit, hire and pay their own crossing guards on an emergency basis."

Finally, it calls for additional infrastructure like crosswalks and traffic-calming measures, increased funding for traffic enforcement around schools and deterrents like stop-sign cameras, to create safer routes to schools. "No more excuses. No turf wars or passing blame between various departments or levels of government. Every child has the right to get to and from school safely – and our kids can't wait," closes the letter from the PGCPD parent leaders.

Greenbelt's City Council discussed the crossing guard vacancy crisis at their December 14 meeting (see article on p. 7 of the December 21 issue of the News Review). At that meeting, council decided to draft a letter to the county and to ask for clear information about the crossing guard staffing situation at Greenbelt schools.

A Dangerous Situation

On the last school day of 2023, two Prince George's County Crossing Guards were posted outside ERHS, directing students, cars and buses at an intersection where four roads meet and the main road, Route 193, spans six lanes. They are there every

day from 3:20 to 3:40 p.m., a crossing guard told the News Review. In the mornings, however, a similar volume of students and traffic have to navigate the roads without assistance.

ERHS students describe their pick-up area as disorganized, like a free-for-all. "When I'm walking across the street it's kind of dangerous," said ERHS student Noah Finney. On any given day, the parking lot and pick-up and drop-off area is congested with buses, cars and pedestrians, all moving about with little to no guidance. "The buses need to be directed and so do the kids," Finney said.

There had been a crossing guard at the intersection of Greenbelt Road and Frankfort Drive morning and evening for years, until this school year. "That's a six lane stretch of highway and right now there are no crossing guards there [in the mornings]," said Pompei. Parents of ERHS students have been pushing to get a crossing guard there since the beginning of the school year, Pompei told the News Review. There's a residential neighborhood on the other side of Greenbelt Road, opposite the school and parents believe the intersection is too dangerous. It's irresponsible to not have a crossing guard there, many feel.

"It's important that we do something before someone gets injured, so that we don't end up with a situation like what happened in Riverdale Park where, you know, those children were doing all the right things, they were crossing inside the crosswalk, they had an adult with them," said Pompei.

Safe Routes to School Coalition

Concern for children's safety on their way to and from the school has brought parents and community leaders together in shared advocacy. The Safe Routes to School Coalition for Prince George's County is comprised of parents, teachers and community members, and has started a petition, based on the

community letter, to bring further awareness to the issue, which can be found at OurKidsCantWait.com.

"The more we talked, the more we realized that we needed parents to come together to advocate not only for our own children at our own schools, but all of our children at all of our schools," said Pompei, who is a member of the coalition.

According to the Safe Routes to School Facebook page, the movement has been receiving more support and traction with each day. The page has supporting groups including: Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, the City of Mount Rainier, Climate Parents of Prince George's County and a number of other parent-teacher organizations and community groups.

Other Greenbelt Schools

Some local schools do have crossing guards. Greenbelt Elementary School has two long-time guards helping children cross on Ridge Road. However, both Greenbelt Elementary and Springhill Lake Elementary could use more crossing guards for the intersections around the schools.

Located just a few minutes down Greenbelt Road from ERHS, Dora Kennedy is well-equipped with crossing guards before and after school every day, according to teacher Phil Held. This is despite the fact that the K-8 school has a very small walking population compared to ERHS. What they do have are plenty of buses, and they're located adjacent to a bus lot. "We're a special program and kids come from all over the North side of the county. There are not that many who live in the local neighborhoods," said Held. According to the PGCPD website, Dora Kennedy has almost 30 buses that come in and out each day. Held stands out there almost every day, before and after his teaching duties, helping direct buses and cars coming and going at the entry-

way on Greenbelt Road that the school shares with the bus lot. It's an entryway that doesn't seem to fall under the jurisdiction of Greenbelt, the State Highway Association or the county. So, the teacher directs the traffic there himself, in no man's land. Meanwhile the crossing a few yards away on Greenbelt Road has two guards, "For those few kids who do walk, there are two crossing guards out on Route 193 every morning and afternoon," Held says.

Low Wages

A large factor that has contributed to the lack of crossing guards in Prince George's County has been the low wages for the occupation which has turned away many potential job applicants. In Maryland, crossing guard hourly pay falls below the national average, starting at \$15 per hour compared to the national wage of \$17. According to ZipRecruiter, Maryland also ranks number 34 out of 50 states nationwide for Crossing Guard salaries annually. Which for Maryland crossing guards comes out to approximately \$30,000 per year. Thus, low pay is a deterrent when trying to fill these crucial positions, in a climate where other companies are offering higher base pay for entry level jobs. Not one town or city in Prince George's County is among the top 10 in the state regarding compensation for crossing guards. According to ZipRecruiter, in Maryland animal crossing guards are currently paid \$21.79, more than any school crossing guards in the state, let alone Prince George's County.

As companies work toward raising wages and making cost of living adjustments in efforts to retain employees and fill vacancies, it's likely many individuals would rather apply for jobs that don't involve weathering the outdoors and navigating sometimes dangerous traffic. For example, a barista at Starbucks can expect to earn \$15 to \$24 an hour and total

compensation of roughly \$27 per hour including benefits, according to a recent press release from the company. It also said it will begin to boost wages by at least 3 percent, effective January 1, with longer-serving employees eligible for bigger raises. Employees of five or more years could see a pay boost of 5 percent.

PTAs Call for Action

Concerned parents and PTSAs are now, more than ever, emphasizing the importance of crossing guards at schools, and insisting increased pay for them as a priority in the budget for 2024.

Crossing guards in the Greenbelt area have stated they are "unable to comment" on the matter at this time.

"Now is the time to act and the longer we wait, the more danger our children are in," said Pompei.

Cavit Ireland and Jon Dennis are University of Maryland students at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism writing for the News Review.



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Merrily We Roll Along

January 5-20, 2024
 Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm;
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COUNCIL continued from page 1

This added to a call (voiced by several others then and at other times) to extend the deadline for candidate submission. It also inspired offers by two already-submitted candidates, first James Whipple and then Julie Winters, to help walk Lockhart through the process.

Timing

If there was consensus among the audience, it seemed to be that council's actions had been too hasty and that information was not sufficiently circulated, especially to residents of Franklin Park for which Gordon had been the champion and where communication to residents has historically been problematic. Jordan countered that the two-year term of office meant that spending more time on a replacement would be too large a percentage of the term and that council had pressing business to accomplish. Some suggested that alternative approaches would require a charter change, which would also take too long.

Speaking from the floor, resident Ed Fallon noted that when the city wanted to change the charter for its own purpose of allowing the appointment of a nonresident city manager, they had no trouble acting quickly. Councilmember Kristen Weaver pointed out that though the time to change the charter was relatively quick, the waiting period before a charter change could be enacted was 40 days, adding to the initial delay.

According to Jordan, the city has had funds set aside for some time for a comprehensive overhaul of the city charter.

Applicants

After some pressing by the audience, Jordan read out the names of those whose applications were still at that time in the process of being vetted (Matthew Inzeo, Amy Knesel, Leon J. Schachter, James Whipple, April Tantor and Julie Winters, all of whom except Inzeo and Tantor were present); none is a resident of Franklin Park. Mentioned several times was a desire that the city be divided into wards, each of which elected its own representative – with Schachter citing his own experience in Cheverly as a councilmember for Ward 4 where, even though some wards in areas with a majority of apartments elected their representative on the basis of a handful of voters, that sector of the city is still always represented.

Dissent

Councilmember Rodney Roberts several times interjected his disapproval of council's process, having earlier voted against it. At one point he remarked, "It's all baloney" and noted that there was "time to change the process." He stated that he was "embarrassed" by the stance taken by council and felt like the council meeting at which the strategy was decided was "snarky" and "like the Keystone Cops."

The Electorate

A core element in the discussion was the nature of Franklin Park's electorate, why it didn't turn out in force for municipal elections or meetings and the difficulties inherent in encouraging participation. Longtime Franklin Park residents Carolyn Lambright-Davis and Reverend Ray Raysor and his wife René Raysor were eloquent in describing the diversity of Franklin Park's

population and the issues in the city's ability to communicate effectively.

Lambright-Davis noted that with 2,877 residences and over 9,000 residents (approximately 40 percent of the city's population) it seemed that more resources could be addressed by council to reaching out.

Raysor said, "Gordon worked hard to make a bridge and that's gone." He felt strongly that the new councilmember should be a resident of Franklin Park. René Raysor noted that the elementary school had difficulty in getting enough parents to form and maintain a PTA. She felt that residents had "checked out." She characterized town hall meetings as a "middle-class type of response."

Lambright-Davis stressed the positive – the signing of the contract for a new playground, for example – and stated that a few residents such as herself and the Raysors were constantly working in the community to try to bring it together. She described herself as optimistic for the development. Jordan noted that the city didn't have the resources to put a flyer on every door.

Factors raised as causes of Franklin Park residents' lack of participation included a substantial fraction of residents who may not read English, families where the breadwinners were working two or more jobs to make ends meet and inadequate communication by the city. The scarcity of News Review boxes for newspaper distribution was also noted as a factor (see note below).

City resident Michael Hartman speculated that the reason Franklin Park residents did not show up for such meetings was that they had come to have low

expectations of the city and therefore didn't see the point of bothering because nothing would come of it.

Flawed Location

Unfortunately, the meeting was much hampered by the venue. A low-pitched but very loud and invasive roar from an air handling unit made the meeting partially inaudible in the room and apparently even less audible electronically. A request to turn off the loud unit couldn't be carried out.

Nonetheless, attendees battled on with frequent exhortations to hold the mic closer and the occasional piercing squeal from sound system feedback.

(Editor's Note: About five years ago, the management of Franklin Park requested that the News Review not be distributed door to door. Of an original two outside boxes and one inside rack put in place in the development at that time, one box was set on fire and the rack stolen leaving only one all-weather box in the development. To make up for this lack of physical access to the newspaper, Franklin Park agreed to email a provided summary and link to its residents every Thursday. This has been faithfully provided by the newspaper but not 100 percent distributed to renters.

In addition, for two years, the News Review included in the email two or three stories translated into Spanish. After multiple appeals for feedback from Spanish readers, no responses were received to indicate that the stories were read and the service was discontinued.)

A second listening session will be held in Greenbelt East at the Greenbriar Community Center, 7600 Hanover Parkway, from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, December 30.

Gaza Ceasefire Rally



PHOTO BY LUCY DUFF

From left, Andrew Brewster-Geisz, Marj Donn, Deborah Potter, Donna Hoffmeister, Bill Orleans and Laurie Jaghlit rally for a Gaza ceasefire in Roosevelt Center on Christmas Eve.

Park Service to Reduce Deer Numbers at Greenbelt Park

To protect and restore native plants and promote healthy and diverse forests, the National Park Service (NPS) will reduce deer populations between January 2 and April 15, 2024, at several area parks, including Greenbelt Park. Nighttime road closures will be in effect during the operations.

Extensive safety measures will be in place to protect park visitors and neighbors during operations. In coordination with U.S. Park Police and local law enforcement, highly trained firearms experts experienced in conducting wildlife reduction operations will work at night when the parks are closed to the public in a manner proven safe and effective.

Park staff will be posted during temporary nighttime road and trail closures for visitor and employee safety during reduction activities. Visitors and area residents are encouraged to check the Greenbelt Park website (nps.gov/gree) for the most up-to-date information and are reminded to respect posted closures. Hunting is illegal in Greenbelt Park.

Over the past 20 years, an overabundant white-tailed deer

population has damaged forest regeneration across Maryland and D.C. NPS initiated a public process to create a plan, finalized in 2022, which calls for reducing the deer populations in select parks to support long-term protection and restoration of native plants and promote a healthy and diverse forest. NPS will monitor how well plants are growing with fewer deer, and the findings will help inform ongoing deer management actions.

Whenever possible, NPS will donate all suitable meat from reduction activities to local food banks, consistent with NPS public health guidelines.

For further information visit go.nps.gov/NACEdeermgmt.

This article is based on a press release from the National Park Service.



PHOTO BY R. CANAVAN

"And Santa Claus you know, of course, is one of the boys from home." On Monday, December 18, Public Works Maintenance Technician Michael Canavan could be found at the equally important job of handing out holiday cheer with Greenbelt CARES. A card-carrying member of the International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas (IBRBS) in his seventh year of assisting the Jolly Old Elf on High, Mike was raised on Ridge Road.

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Greenbelt Man Given Eight Years On Drug and Firearms Charges

U.S. District Judge Theodore D. Chuang sentenced Donald Fortune Jr., age 19, of Greenbelt to eight years in federal prison, followed by three years of supervised release for federal charges of illegal possession of a machine gun, possession with intent to distribute oxycodone and fentanyl and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

The sentence was announced by U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland Erek L. Barron; Acting Special Agent in Charge R. Joseph Rothrock of the FBI, Baltimore Field Office; and Chief Malik Aziz of the Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD).

Law enforcement began investigating Fortune in April 2022 for suspected firearms and drug trafficking offenses, according to his guilty plea. As part of the investigation, PGPD detectives monitored public posts from Fortune's social media account where he displayed firearms and advertised drugs for sale. Based on their investigation, including the social media posts, a search warrant was obtained for Fortune's apartment.

On June 2, 2022, law enforcement was conducting surveillance outside Fortune's apartment building in preparation for executing the warrant. In the late morning, Fortune exited the building and approached a silver Honda Civic. Fortune removed a large bag of blue pills, suspected to be oxycodone, from a Gucci satchel that he was wearing and engaged in a suspected hand-to-hand drug transaction with the driver of the Civic. Fortune then placed the pills back in the Gucci satchel and returned to his apartment.

According to court documents, a short time later, Fortune, still wearing the Gucci satchel, left

the apartment building with a woman. They both got into a rideshare and the vehicle drove away. PGPD police conducted a traffic stop of the rideshare vehicle a short time later and observed Fortune reach down toward his feet. Officers asked Fortune, who was still wearing the Gucci satchel, to step out of the vehicle and officers observed a .40-caliber semi-automatic pistol on the floorboard where Fortune had been seated. The gun, which had an obliterated serial number, was loaded with one round in the chamber and 21 rounds in an extended magazine and was equipped with a full auto-selector switch on the rear of the handgun slide, making it a machine gun under federal law. A search of the Gucci satchel recovered a large bag containing 282 30-mg blue pills, later found to be counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl. Officers also recovered \$790 in cash from Fortune, who was arrested and charged in Prince George's County. He was released on June 14, 2022, pending trial.

Fortune admitted that he continued to sell drugs and possess firearms after his release, including coordinating a drug deal around a court appearance. He switched to using a second social media account in mid-July 2022, believed by investigators to be an effort to evade law enforcement. Investigators began monitoring this account. Fortune continued to advertise pills for sale and display firearms, despite being on pretrial release. For example, on July 26, 2022, investigators observed a public-facing live video that was streaming from Fortune's second social media account, which showed him smoking a suspected marijuana

See **POLICE**, page 11

A Merry Christmas Breakfast For the Greenbelt Police



From left, Officer Charles Wooten, Robert Snyder, Claudia Jones and Officer Yomayra Rodriguez bring breakfast to the Greenbelt Police Department.

All through town as the townspeople were snuggled in their beds, Mrs. Claus was busy in her kitchen whipping up a Christmas breakfast casserole for the police. Scrambled eggs, fried hashbrowns, sausage with sautéed vegetables over cheddar cheese and a yellow cake with chocolate frosting sprinkled with love, thanks and appreciation is

our way to show our support for their dedicated service in keeping our town safe. As you were busy unwrapping your gifts under the tree with loved ones, our dedicated police were out patrolling our streets so that everyone in Greenbelt had a happy and safe holiday. Let's wish them a very merry holiday season.

Police Blotter

Incidents reported here occurred December 18 to 25, 2023. Readers are encouraged to contact the police if they have information that may aid in an enquiry. Call the nonemergency number 301-474-7200 or email pd@greenbeltnmd.gov. Times provided are when the incidents were reported.

Greenbelt Police Department reported one death; a welfare and mental health check; three mental health diversions, one involving a call to Child Protective Services; three domestics, one involving assault and one with an arrest; and two missing juvenile reports that were resolved.

Robberies

On December 20 at 3:22 p.m. near 6100 Breezewood Court, a man was assaulted and his wallet was taken. On December 20 at 4:45 p.m. near 6000 Springhill Drive, two juveniles stated that a suspect, driving a Hyundai with a broken window, had a long gun and demanded their sneakers. On December 20 at 10:26 p.m. near 6000 Springhill Drive, four men exited a gray vehicle and robbed a man at gunpoint. On December 22 at 1:04 p.m. near 6200 Breezewood Drive, a man was cleaning his vehicle when three young men attacked him and stole his wallet.

DUI Arrests

On December 20 at 12:51 a.m. near Greenbelt Road and Kenilworth Avenue, a vehicle crashed into the guardrail. The driver admitted she had been drinking and was arrested for DUI.

On December 21 at 6:54 p.m. near Kenilworth Avenue and Capital Beltway, after a two-vehicle crash, the driver of the striking vehicle was arrested for DUI.

On December 24 at 12:44 a.m. near Edmonston Road and Breezewood Drive, officers assigned to look for drivers under the influence made a DUI arrest.

On December 24 at 11:25 p.m. near 9005 Breezewood Terrace, a motorist who had been drinking crashed into the rear of another vehicle and was arrested for DUI.

Fraud

On December 18 near 31 Lakeside Drive, someone's name was used to file for unemployment. On December 19 near 9200 Springhill Lane, an apartment was rented fraudulently, with an ongoing investigation.

Theft

On December 21 at 10:50 a.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, a woman's wallet was taken from her cart when she was not looking, and, at 4:17 p.m. near 7400 Greenbelt Road, a man's wallet was stolen when he was not looking. On December 24 at 6:06 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, a woman left her purse containing her phone, IDs, credit cards and money in the restroom at a restaurant, and when she went back, it was no longer there.

On December 21 near 6998 Hanover Parkway, a construction company had a generator stolen from their worksite.

On December 18 near 5800 Cherrywood Terrace, a woman did not receive her package, and police recovered it. On December 18 near 5900 Cherrywood Terrace, a package was delivered but could not be located at the residence. On December 19 near 6440 Cherrywood Lane, a package was stolen from the leasing office. On December 20 near 9100 Edmonston Terrace, a package was delivered to the wrong address, and upon checking it was gone.

Commercial Theft

On December 18 at 3:59 p.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, someone who stole several items was arrested and issued a criminal citation. On December 18 at 5:28 p.m. near 5900 Greenbelt Road, a man stole multiple items. On December 22 at 3:16 p.m. near 7400 Greenbelt Road, two men stole several items and, while leaving, one pushed an employee, injuring her hand; they left in a gold Honda Accord with Delaware tags. On December 23 at 3:35 p.m. near 5900 Greenbelt Road, a man stole several items and was later captured stealing at another location; he was issued a criminal citation and banned.

Vandalism

On December 22 near 8100 Mandan Terrace, somebody broke a dining room window.

Stolen Vehicles

Eight vehicles were stolen this week: on December 18 near 9000 Breezewood Terrace, a silver 2004 Lexus ES300 (Md. 1DM9406); December 19 near 6301 Ivy Lane, a black 2020 Hyundai Elantra (Md. 3EC2459); December 20 near 6404 Ivy Lane, a 2019 Hyundai Sonata (Md. 8FJ8524), and near 6500 Capitol Drive, a vehicle has been missing for almost a month from the dealership; on December 21 near 5900 Cherrywood Lane, a gray BMW (Va. TBU5808), and near 6301 Ivy Lane, an employee failed to return the company vehicle and would not respond to calls or text; and December 23 near 8001 Mandan Road, a 2018 Hyundai Elantra (Md. 2ES8168).

Attempted Theft of Vehicle

On December 19 near 6305 Ivy Lane, a 2018 Kia Forte had damage to the door handle, window, and ignition.

Stolen Vehicles Recovered

On December 20 near Edmonston Road and Breezewood Drive, an officer located a Nissan with no tags, identified by VIN as stolen from Bowie in an armed carjacking. On December 20 near 9100 Edmonston Court, officers located a 2017 Hyundai

Sonata with a damaged window and ignition, reported stolen to Prince George's County Police. On December 20 near 150 Westway, a vehicle was reported stolen but later found by the owner, who forgot where it was parked. On December 21 at 9:28 p.m. near 5700 Greenbelt Metro Drive, an officer observed a Hyundai Elantra with damages consistent with theft, driven by a juvenile; when the officer made contact, the young man ran, but was captured and arrested. On December 24 near Hanover Parkway and Megan Lane, officers located a vehicle with collision damage; the vehicle had been reported stolen and the owner was notified.

On December 21 at 3:13 p.m. near Greenbelt Road and Kenilworth Avenue, a stolen vehicle traveling at a high speed caused a four-vehicle accident. Four juveniles bailed out but were apprehended by officers and positively identified by a witness. One witness shared dashcam footage. Two victims were taken to the hospital for treatment. The Department of Juvenile Services was contacted but did not return with disposition during the 6-hour window. The four juveniles were then released to their parents.

Theft from Auto

On December 19 near 10 Laurel Hill Road, tags were stolen from a 2011 Toyota Corolla. On December 19 near 6200 Breezewood Drive, tires were stolen from a 2023 Corolla. On December 19 at 8:43 p.m. near 7300 Hanover Parkway, a suspect was seen inside a vehicle but nothing was taken. On December 22 near 6400 Cherrywood Lane, a catalytic converter was stolen. On December 23 near 7600 Mandan Road and near 7800 Hanover Parkway, several vehicles were broken into.

Vandalism to Auto

On December 19 near 5700 Greenbelt Metro Drive, a Hyundai Elantra window and ignition were damaged but nothing was taken.



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POLICE continued from page 9

cigarette, flashing two prescription bottles and holding an AR-style pistol. Fortune then turned the camera around to show a table display of at least six firearms, including two AR-style pistols, one handgun with an extended magazine and one handgun with a suspected full-automatic switch, with cash fanned out in front of the firearms.

As detailed in the plea agreement, on the evening of July 26, 2022, PGPD officers were on patrol in the 6400 block of Pennsylvania Avenue in District Heights and saw Fortune smoking marijuana on the sidewalk in front of a residence. As the officer was parking his car in the parking lot, he saw Fortune walk behind a pick-up truck, crouch down and throw an item on the ground before walking away. Believing Fortune had discarded a firearm or contraband, the officer got out of his unmarked police cruiser to speak with him as he continued to walk away. When the officer got closer, Fortune began running and was apprehended a short distance away. Another officer arrived and stayed by the location where Fortune had been seen throwing something. A search of the area recovered a privately manufactured 5.56-caliber semi-automatic AR-15 style pistol with no serial number, also known as a "ghost gun." The gun was loaded with 30 rounds of ammunition in the magazine and one in the chamber. Officers searched Fortune and recovered two pill bottles containing 16

real or counterfeit oxycodone pills. The pills were tested and eight were found to contain approximately 5 mg of oxycodone each and the rest were found to be counterfeit oxycodone pills that contained fentanyl.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and gun violence and to make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. On May 26, 2021, PGPD launched a violent crime reduction strategy strengthening PSN based on these core principles: fostering trust and legitimacy in our communities, supporting community-based organizations that help prevent violence from occurring in the first place, setting focused and strategic enforcement priorities and measuring the results.

Barron commended the FBI's Cross Border Task Force and the PGPD for their work in the investigation. Barron thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Patrick D. Kibbe and Joshua A. Rosenthal, who prosecuted the case.

For more information on the Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office, its priorities and resources available to help the community, visit justice.gov/usao-md/project-safe-neighborhoods-psn.

For more information contact Marcia Lubin at 410-209-4854.

This information is drawn from a December 13, 2023, press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Maryland.

BAGS continued from page 1

restaurants for customers to take leftovers; and for food provided at fast-food restaurant takeout windows. The entire bag charge is kept by the retailer, none by the City of Greenbelt.

What Should You Do?

Bring your own bags when shopping or take purchases without a bag. Greenbelt businesses not complying with the ban may be fined. Shoppers, please comply. Don't place Greenbelt businesses in an awkward position by

asking for an exception.

Questions? Email irobles@greenbeltmd.gov.

This article is based on a press release from the City of Greenbelt.



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Carol Slatin shares the News Review with some Sumo wrestlers in Tokyo.

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PARADE continued from page 1

that had so much entertained the crowd at the Krampusfest earlier in the month. As Gillotte noted, the band had worked hard to learn these and it didn't make sense to perform them only once. Non-musician members of the Honk! group contributed to the fun by dancing in elaborate, creative costumes.

The many Honk! bands that have spread far and wide grew from a confluence of sources. The original Honk! festival has been held annually in Somerville, Mass., since 2006. It gathers activist and community street bands of many stripes to march in a parade also featuring artists such as the Bread & Puppet Theater, whose music was one source of inspiration for the founders. The music draws from the Second Line tradition of New Orleans African American music

and dance in Mardi Gras parades. Some Honk! bands draw on styles as diverse as Balkan, Klezmer, Samba and Hip-Hop. They all share an informal, fun-loving style, play outdoors, are community-oriented and encourage public participation. Honk! festivals are now held in cities across the country.

The concert Friday evening included wicked, mischievous parodies of popular Christmas tunes such as Carol of the Bells, Sleigh Ride, Jingle Bells, the Nutcracker Suite and Here Comes Santa Claus. They were playfully twisted to refer, instead of Santa, to the legendary Krampus, who is supposed to come after naughty children at Christmas, with one of the catchiest songs being Here Comes Krampus. Such scary themes seemed to daunt no one, as the festive spirit prevailed.



A dragon joins the Solstice Parade.



Greenbelt Honk! Situation plays at Roosevelt Center after parading from the Firefly Sanctuary.

PHOTO BY ANNA BEDFORD-DILLOW

PHOTO BY BONNIE SCHRACK

Faux Fur and Feathers: Pool Wildlife Protectors in Winter

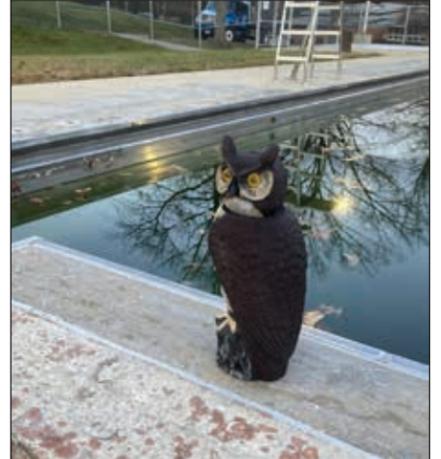
by Susan Taylor

Wile E. Coyote and Owl from the Hundred Acre Wood need look no further than the Greenbelt Athletic & Fitness Center (GAFC) for winter employment. Their inanimate cousins have taken position around the perimeter of the outdoor pool. With heads and bodies that spin in a stiff breeze, these winter life-guards protect small mammals and waterfowl from harm. The presence of the owl and coyote GAFC guards keeps ducks and geese from nesting and squirrels from drowning during the colder months. GAFC animal guards keep the whole community of Greenbelt safe year-round – fur, feathers and goggle-wearers alike. Stop by and introduce yourself.



This coyote and the wise old owl remind squirrels and waterfowl to avoid the pool

- Photos by Susan Taylor



HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR



Folded paper stars brighten windows in the winter.

- Photos by Anne Gardner

State Approves Luminis' Plan For Obstetrics Services in Lanham

The Maryland Health Care Commission voted in December to approve Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center's (LHDCMC) request to add obstetrics services as part of its comprehensive women's health program at their Lanham campus.

"This approval is a momentous occasion for Prince Georgians – and a critical milestone on our journey to create a comprehensive women's health hub in the county," said Tori Bayless, CEO of Luminis Health. "This new program serves as a beacon of hope, aiming to shrink health disparities that have disproportionately impacted Black and Brown women here in Maryland and across our country."

To accommodate the obstetrics services, LHDCMC will build a new patient care pavilion for state-of-the-art women's and surgical services. The four-story pavilion, part of a multiphased capital improvement project starting in 2024, will feature a family birth center that includes private rooms for labor and delivery and post-delivery suites, two dedicated C-section operating rooms, a Level II special care nursery and access to family planning, lactation, mental health and other supports intrinsic to maternal care.

The family birth center is scheduled to open in 2028 and, once fully operational, is expected to be the birthplace for 2,000 babies each year.

By bringing these services under one roof, LHDCMC seeks to provide easier access, improve coordination of care and strengthen the overall patient experience.

"It is unacceptable that eight out of 10 women have to deliver their baby outside of Prince George's County because of a lack of obstetrical and other healthcare services," said Deneen Richmond, president of LHDCMC. "It's particularly alarming because the maternal mortality rate for Black women in Prince

George's County is 50 percent higher than the national average. As part of Vision 2030, Luminis Health's 10-year strategic plan, we are committed to eliminating maternal and infant mortality by creating a healthcare environment that benefits all women."

The five-stage campus expansion and renovation, of which the obstetrics services are a key component, are scheduled to take place over the next six years.

Phase 1 work is scheduled to kick off in early 2024 with site development including updating utility infrastructure for water, electric, wastewater systems and telecommunications, and improving traffic flow and safety throughout the medical center campus.

In Phase 2, scheduled for the second half of 2024, construction will begin on a new parking garage, adding more than 350 parking spaces plus charging stations for electric vehicles.

Phase 3 is the relocation of the loading dock to make way for the patient care pavilion.

In Phase 4, construction is expected to start in late 2024 on the patient care pavilion, which will house the new obstetrics services and state-of-the-art operating rooms.

Phase 5 happens upon completion of the new pavilion, with interior renovations to the medical center's clinical infrastructure and support services. There will be a redesigned front entrance and lobby, new pharmacy, cafeteria and additional visitor-facing services.

The entire project is expected to cost more than \$300 million. Luminis Health plans to make a significant investment to fund the project, and is also seeking county, state, federal and philanthropic support. The expansion will create 100 or more full-time positions, including physicians, nurses, technicians, social workers and support staff.

Adopt Emileo

Does your cat need a cat? Because Emileo would love a playmate. Now that his kitten roommates have all been adopted, Emileo would love a friend to romp around with. He currently shares a room with three other cats that are not so fond of his presence (or each other, really), so one can imagine the shenanigans he gets into.

Emileo also loves to play with toys and loves to cuddle. Sometimes when he's done with cuddles, he'll let you know by giving you soft love bites. He's not a huge fan of being picked up, so he may not be the best cat for small children who can't resist his charm.

To add this orange baby to your life, email your adoption application to animalcontrol@greenbeltnmd.gov or call 301-474-6124 for more information. Find the application here: tinyurl.com/4c2hffx2. All adoptions are by appointments at this time.



Emileo is available for adoption at the Animal Shelter.

PHOTO COURTESY GREENBELT ANIMAL SHELTER