

The Bugle

Published by the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association

March 2022

Volume 54 #1



Candidates Forums

2022 is a local election year. We will elect state and county officials in November with a June primary.

Plan now to attend 1 or more candidates forums!

March 10 – County Council (At Large) Forum, on Zoom
– [Continued on page 19](#) –

Spring Thing coming May 14

(rain date May 15)

(Open House and Community Social)

COVID Rules and Regulations Permitting!

You Are Invited

On Saturday afternoon, **May 14**, from 2 to 4 pm, come to the pool parking lot (13920 Bethpage Lane) for our Strathmore Bel Pre Spring Thing,

Open House: We've invited groups from our community to come and show us what they do. We will have booths from the Scouts, the Dolphins, our Rec and Civic Associations, the newly formed 60s Plus group, Quilting for Veterans and more. Find out what's going on in the community, and get ready for Summer!

Represent Your Group: Interested in presenting what your group does to the community? Contact MARIA STAGNITTO. Find her contact information on [page 3](#).

Fun: TRACY KEATING has planned face painting and kids activities. We will have bubbles, assorted games and cornhole!. DAVE PULLEN is heading up pickleball and tennis clinics. Basketball tournaments with BILLY RUPPERT!

Refreshments: Please bring some afternoon snacks to share. Individually portioned and bagged or packaged snacks are best. We will have gourmet fresh pizza and s'mores!. We'll provide the tables, chairs, tableware, and the drinks. Nosh a bit, be entertained, meet your neighbors and make some friends.

Everyone's Welcome: The Spring Thing is being sponsored by the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association and the Bel Pre Recreational Association. Everyone in the entire Strathmore Bel Pre community is welcome to come!



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THE BUGLE

PUBLISHED BY THE STRATHMORE BEL PRE CIVIC ASSOCIATION SINCE 1969

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Civic Association

P.O. Box 6836, Aspen Hill, MD 20916-6836

Annual SBPCA membership: \$20.00

Web site: www.strathmorebelpre.org

The SBPCA is a voluntary association, funded by membership dues, that sponsors and participates in many community and local programs; and also represents our community to County Government and various groups such as the Montgomery County Civic Federation and the Glenmont Exchange. The SBPCA also sponsors Boy Scout Troop/Cub Scout Pack 763.

Additionally, the SBPCA – established in 1969 – publishes *The Bugle* and the community directory; maintains the community listserv; organizes the annual Summer Market & Yard Sale, the 4th of July festivities; and (in conjunction with the Recreational Association) the Summer Entertainment Series, the Public Affairs Forum series (generally held during the summer), and the yearly community-wide Town Hall meeting, held in December.

The SBPCA Board of Directors normally meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Mid-County Community Recreation Center on Queensguard Road (during the pandemic, meetings are on Zoom). The Civic Association's annual meeting is in November just before the BPRA annual meeting.

Civic Association Officers

President: NANCY BECHTOL 301 871-3679

Secretary: LINDA BEA 301 460-0497

Vice President: BILL HAMMOND 301 871-5074

Treasurer: JOHN BOGASKY 301 460-1604

Civic Association Directors

ELLIOT CHABOT 301 871-1113

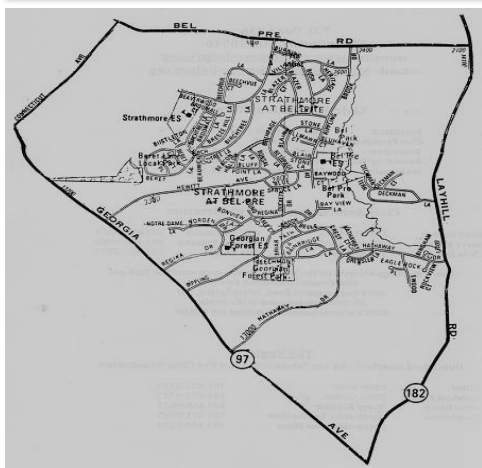
CHRIS SWAN 301 871-1113

LILLA HAMMOND 301 518-7818

RITA VAUGHT 206 406-2871

Vacant

Your name could be here!



Strathmore Bel Pre Street map

Strathmore Bel Pre Community listserv: To join the listserv, contact JOHN BOGASKY.

Website: The Civic and Rec Associations have a joint website, maintained by the Civic Association. For more information, contact BILLY RUPPERT at billyruppert@gmail.com

Public Affairs Forums: Contact NANCY BECHTOL.

Community Directory and Summer Market & Yard Sale:
Contact LINDA BEA.

July 4th Activities: Contact LILLA HAMMOND.

Bel Pre Recreational Association

Established in 1966, the Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) is the homeowners' association for most of the Strathmore at Bel Pre properties. The BPRA runs our community's pool, tennis and pickleball courts, volleyball court, playgrounds, picnic areas, bath house, snack bar, and pavilion, which normally are open Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. The tennis and pickleball courts are open year round.

BPRA Board and committee meetings are announced at <http://strathmorebelpre.org/meetings>. Board meetings are normally the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, at the Bel Pre Elementary School, room 161 or 138, from October to May, or at the Pool pavilion, from June to September. During the pandemic, we're on Zoom.

The annual General Membership meeting is normally held on the Thursday before Thanksgiving Day at 7:30 pm, at Strathmore Elementary School (on Zoom in 2022). The annual Town Hall meeting, co-sponsored with the Civic Association, is normally held on the 1st Tuesday of December, at 8 pm, at Strathmore Elementary School. Correspondence can be sent to the BPRA at P.O. Box 6370, Aspen Hill, MD 20916-6370.

Bel Pre Recreational Association Board of Trustees

KAREN PURDY (President)	301 603-9604	klpurdy@hotmail.com
MARK FORAKER (Vice President)	301 460-0632	mark4aker@hotmail.com
DAVE PULLEN (Treasurer)	301 598-2521	treasurer4bpbra@gmail.com
CHRIS SWAN (Secretary)	301 871-1113	cswan@usa.net
TED BECHTOL	301 871-3679	tedbechtol@yahoo.com
STEVE JENNISON	301 919-9278	hsjennison@gmail.com
RODNEY OO		rodzoo88@gmail.com
CLAIRE PAK	301 602-7573	claire0618@gmail.com
MARIA (COOKIE) STAGNITTO	301 807-8983	mrstags1@verizon.net



Bel Pre Recreational Association Officials

Administrative Assistant	vacant	
Assessment Assistance Committee Chair	DAVE PULLEN	treasurer4bpbra@gmail.com
Audit Coordinator	MARK FORAKER	mark4aker@hotmail.com
Block Party & Spring Thing Coordinators	CLAIRE PAK and MARIA (COOKIE) STAGNITTO (contact info is above)	
Entertainment & Recreation Committee Chair	CHRIS SWAN	301 871-1113
eSoft Planner Coordinator	KAREN PURDY	301 603-9604
Finance Committee Chair	DAVE PULLEN	treasurer4bpbra@gmail.com
Governing Documents Committee Chair	ELLIOT CHABOT	301 871-1113
Grounds and Landscaping Coordinator	TED BECHTOL	301 871-3679
Long Term Planning Committee Chair	KAREN PURDY	301 603-9604
Mapmaster	PAUL SPELMAN	240 447-7758
Neighborhood Dispute Resolution Committee Chair	Vacant	
New Member Recruitment Coordinator	Vacant	
Nominating Committee Chair	MARK FORAKER	mark4aker@hotmail.com
Pavilion Scheduler	vacant	
Pet Waste Station Coordinator	JACKIE FARY-MOELLER	jfarymoeller@aspengroves.com
Pool and Recreational Facilities Committee Chair	MARIA (COOKIE) STAGNITTO	301 807-8983
Pool Property Helpers Coordinator	JOE MOELLER	moellerhj@aspengroves.com
Tennis and Pickleball Courts Committee Chair	DAVE PULLEN	treasurer4bpbra@gmail.com
Tennis Court Keys Distributor	JIM EATON	240 743-8480
Trunk or Treat Coordinator	CHRIS SWAN	301 871-1113
Webmaster	BILLY RUPPERT	301 332-4901



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The President's Corner

by Nancy Bechtol

President, Strathmore Bel Pre
Civic Association



Hopefully by the time this *Bugle* edition makes it to your home, we will be welcoming springtime and the return of warm sunny days and green leaves on all plants. I have never been a huge fan of winter, and this has really been a cold winter season this year. Springtime also brings the start of our community events and our pool opening.

Fall Yard Sale and Shred-It



We closed the 2021 calendar of activity with our first-in-a-long-time fall season Yard Sale in September. PAULETTE LADAS sponsored a Shred-It event the same day and many of our neighbors enjoyed being able to shred some of their sensitive documents in the safety of our neighborhood. Thank you, PAULETTE, for your continued donations to our events and community programs. You are the best neighbor ever! I also wanted to thank LINDA BEA for organizing the Yard Sale again this year. I believe she has done this for decades now, and I won't say how many exactly... but it has been plenty to say THANK YOU in capital letters! ELLIOT CHABOT contributed by making sure the yard sale was well advertised in all our local papers and STEVE DEMING produced a beautiful advertisement of our homeowners who chose to stay in their own driveway for the yard sale; we thank you both!

Save the Date!! 2022 Fall Yard Sale in September

We have decided to host our yard sale again in September, so keep this in mind when planning your basement and garage clean-ups.

Movie Nights

We were able to host 6 movie nights last year, and the last was a drive-in movie in October. These movies take a host of volunteers to pull off, and JOHN BOGASKY leads the effort, but the PAK, MOELLER, and DEMING families are right there with him helping as necessary to set everything up. Please check out a movie night if you haven't had the chance yet. They are a blast, and there is plenty room for everyone interested.



Neighborhood Directory

Did you request a receive your neighborhood Directory this fall? We have LINDA BEA to thank for this effort, and it was most difficult this year since we are in the process of improving a new database with all of our names and addresses. LINDA spent hours producing this new directory, having it printed, and volunteered to hand deliver each and every copy to our front door. This was way beyond dedication to our community. Thank you again LINDA!

Join Us

We have many more events and activities planned for 2022. If you have any ideas, or want to help us organize or run any events, please contact anyone on the board. We welcome new ideas and any assistance. Please be well and stay safe through the rest of this winter, and I am already looking forward to seeing everyone come spring.

Boy Scout Troop/Cub Scout Pack 763

by Jackie Fary-Moeller

Mulch Sale

Boy Scout Troop 763 will be having our mulch sale with deliveries on the afternoon of Friday, **March 25** and the morning of Saturday, **March 26**, as well as **April 22-23**. It will be very similar to past years – we will be selling natural shredded mulch for \$6 a bag, no minimum number required. Bags of mulch will be placed alongside your driveway or front walk. Place an order by emailing moeller@aspengroves.com or by calling (301) 603-7387. We accept cash, checks made out to Troop 763, or ask about PayPal or credit card options. Checks can be dropped off at 2812 Blue Spruce Lane – we have a locking mailbox so your check will be safe. This fundraiser covers the cost of camping, equipment and keeps dues low for our Scout families. Thanks for your business!



MLK Day of Service

Despite sickness and weather, Cub Scout Pack 763 (sponsored by the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association) managed some great events in January and February. Our MLK Day of Service activity was making snack bags for Martha's Table, a nonprofit organization in DC that addresses food security in the community. We made over 200 bags of healthy trail mix!

Here, FELIX works with ASHAY and AUSTIN to fill the bags.



Park Police Horse Barn

Having lived in MoCo nearly my entire life, I often feel like I have seen and done it all. However, touring the Park Police (M-NCPPC) horse barn at the nearby Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park was a new one for me. We learned a lot about what the Park Police does at our local parks and got to pet the horses and see the motorcycles.

Join the Scouts!

Want to come to fun, engaging and educational tours? Join Cub Scout Pack 763! Contact BILL TOTTEN at billatotten@aspengroves.com or JACKIE FARY-MOELLER at jfarymoeller@aspengroves.com for more information.

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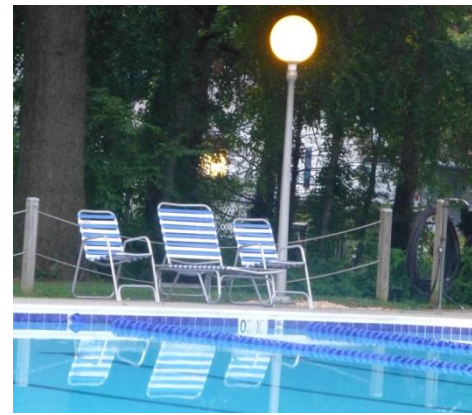
Aspen Hill - Leisure World Plaza
3816 International Dr.
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Bel Pre Recreational News

by Karen Purdy, President
Bel Pre Recreational Association

November General Membership Meeting

On November 18, 2021, the BPRA held its Annual General Membership Meeting, which included the election of 4 trustees, the approval of a by-law amendment to shift the start of the BPRA's fiscal year from March 1 to January 1, a BPRA year in review and look to the future, and a question-and-answer session. The meeting was held via Zoom, with votes cast by drop-off/mail-in ballots. Thank you to Election Committee Chair DAVID PULLEN and Committee Members MARK FORAKER and MARIA "COOKIE" STAGNITTO for certifying and tallying quorum proxies and election ballots.



Typically, 3 Board members are elected every year. This year, due to a vacancy on the Board, we elected 4 Board members: 3 candidates were elected to 3-year terms and 1 candidate was elected to complete the 2 years remaining in the term of vacant Board seat. Congratulations to TED BECHTOL, STEVE JENNISON, RODNEY OO and KAREN PURDY for their election to the BPRA Board. TED, ROD, and KAREN will serve 3-year terms. STEVE will complete the remaining 2 years in the seat vacated by former board member PHIL KOMINSKI.



December 7, 2021 Officer Elections and Town Hall Meeting

On December 7, 2021, the BPRA elected officers. President KAREN PURDY, Vice President MARK FORAKER, Treasurer DAVID PULLEN and Secretary CHRIS SWAN were elected by the Board.

Following the BPRA Board Meeting, the BPRA and SBP Civic Association held a joint Town Hall meeting via Zoom. Numerous community members participated by welcoming new homeowners and discussing a number of topics including upcoming projects at the pool, the state of the community and possible activities.

Annual BPRA Assessment Mailing

BPRA Assessment

By now, you should have received your annual BPRA Assessment notice. The annual assessment of \$350 is due **March 1, 2022**. Please pay your assessment on time. Most of you do, and we thank you. If we do not receive your payment by **March 31**, your account will be subject to a \$35.00 late fee, interest of 6% per annum (\$1.75/month) and all collection costs. In addition, access to the pool and related facilities is not permitted for households with accounts in arrears. Please see [page 12](#) for more information from BPRA Treasurer DAVID PULLEN.

Online Payment and Household Information Submittal Options

Again, this year, you can pay your assessment and/or submit all the information requested on the annual assessment form online in our eSoft Planner Member Portal.

To best serve our members, it is important that we have up-to-date household information including owners' names, phone number, mailing address (if different from your BPRA Property address) and email address.

See StrathmoreBelPre.org/annual-assessment for more information and instructions on how to submit your information and/or pay your assessment online. Online options will be available until at least **April 30**.

– [Continued on page 14](#) –

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Your Dolphins

by Claire Pak

Secretary, Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins

It's a Saturday in February, bright and sunny with a forecasted high temperature of 27 degrees; so naturally, the SPB Dolphins are thinking about summer. Our swim season will begin just after Memorial Day, which is really right around the corner, even if weather conditions suggest otherwise.



New to the Community?

If you are new to the Strathmore Bel Pre community, then we are pleased to introduce you to our neighborhood swim team, the SBP Dolphins. The team was founded in 1969, and has been home to over 1,000 swimmers. Many of these summer swimmers competed for the first time as Dolphins, and then went on to swim for their high schools, colleges, U.S. Swimming club teams, and even at the U.S. Olympic Trials. The SBP Dolphins compete in the Prince-Mont Swim League. Our competitive season runs from early June through the end of July.

But we're not always in the water. Dolphins swimming has inspired many long-lasting family friendships in the SBP community; and some of our swimmers are second-generation Dolphins whose parents swam for the team and then returned to SBP to give their children the same wonderful summer experience that they enjoyed growing up. Thanks to our neighbor and beloved team patriarch, PAPA JOHN KOMINSKI, a detailed history of the team is available online, at <https://sbpdolphins.swimtopia.com/history>. The 18-chapter history covers the story of the Dolphins from 1969 through 2018.

Summer Plans – New Head Coach and the Memorial Day Dolphin Dash

And now, 2022 is a new chapter in Dolphins history! We will be welcoming a new head coach, and establishing new traditions, while maintaining old ones. This year's Memorial Day Dolphin Dash will be a fun run, complete with bubbles! Our practice schedule might change a little bit, but we'll still be on the deck first thing on Saturday mornings, wearing silly costumes, cheering as loudly as we can, scarfing donuts, and (of course) crushing it in the water!

– [Continued on page 11](#) –

60s Plus Club

by Maria (Cookie) Stagnitto

Newly formed, you can find out more about the group at the Spring Thing ([see page 1](#)), where they will have a table. Upcoming activities for the group include creating quilts for Veterans (Quilts of Valor), a Gardening group (perhaps helping to maintain plants at the pool), an Over 60 mile event with any

combination of swimming, biking, walking and running.

Monthly get together are planned for the summer.

Contact Cookie Stagnitto for more information, mrstags1@verizon.net.



An advertisement for Gill's Precision Automotive. The background is black with a red and white logo at the top that says "GILL'S PRECISION AUTOMOTIVE". Below the logo, in red text, it says "FOREIGN/DOMESTIC/CLASSIC". Underneath that is the website "www.gillsprecisionautomotive.com". At the bottom, there is contact information for the owner, Robert Gill, including his email "gillsprecisionauto@gmail.com", Instagram handle "@gillsprecisionauto", and phone numbers "240-464-6011" and "301-353-4963". The address "7605 Airpark Road Unit C Gaithersburg, MD 20879" is also listed.

Yard and Street Trees

by Jackie Fary-Moeller and Chris Swan

JACKIE: Lately, I have been hearing the sound of chainsaws throughout the neighborhood. There are several culprits, but this time I will focus on the Norway maples, as I have watched every one on my street slowly die and get cut down. Norway maple has big dark leaves with the classic maple leaf shape, however, the leaves tend to be much larger than the native red maple. Norway maple seeds (helicopters) also arrive in the fall while the native maples will spread seeds in late spring or early summer. I have always been surprised at its popularity as a yard tree, wondering why a tree from northern Europe would be deliberately planted in humid subtropical Maryland. Its dense shade and shallow roots tend to prevent anything from growing under it, even grass. Even its Wikipedia entry mentions that it is a poor street tree. It is also susceptible to a couple of diseases, which you have probably noticed. In the photo, you can see the end of a diseased Norway maple, as only a few branches have managed to leaf out.



I often get asked what is a good tree to plant and I nearly always say the same thing: American Holly. Why? Because deer don't eat it. It doesn't mind the wet heavy clay soil found in this area. Deer don't eat it. It is beautiful all year round and provides excellent food and shelter for birds and pollinators love the flowers. Deer don't eat it. It is slow growing and doesn't take up much room, with some dwarf varieties that would be considered shrubs (check out Inkberry if you want something small). Deer don't eat it. It likes partial sun, doesn't mind pruning, and is resistant to both flooding and drought.

CHRIS: In Montgomery County, street trees are defined as those planted in the public right of way. In our neighborhood, where we do not have sidewalks (which tend to point out the County's right of way), our properties still have the right of way, although we tend to treat all of the grass/land as our own.

The County government replaces around 1800 trees each year to replace trees removed from the right of way. You can request a street tree online at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-highway/tree/TreePlant.html>. Calling 311 also works. The County will send out an arborist to inspect the property and recommend a tree and the location on the right of way.



Trees planted by the County are available in two sizes, major/taller trees and minor/shorter trees. Neither of the two lists include the Norway Maple. Maples on the list include two shorter species, the Trident or Amur maple. The American Holly is not on the list. Larger species on the list include assorted oaks, lindens and elms. Dogwoods, magnolias, and other flowering trees are on the shorter species list.

The County also has standards regarding the spacing of trees, height, etc for street trees in the public right of way. In Strathmore Bel

Pre, with our underground wiring, trees that shade our streets have grown well. On my street, we have at least 5 large maples, and (crossing my fingers and feeding them vitamins), they all are doing well, and often are the last to lose their leaves. American hollies also grow in my yard, do attract the birds, and have red berries!

Your Dolphins (continued from page 9)

Join the Dolphins?

If this sounds like fun, then why not join us? SBP team membership is open to all Strathmore Bel Pre community children ages 4 to 18, and we would love to see more of our neighborhood kids in the water making Dolphins history.

If you'd like more information, please contact any member of the Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins Swim Team Association Board of Directors. Our contact email addresses appear below, and any of us will be happy to hear from you and to answer any questions you might have about swim team participation. If you'd like to talk in person or on the phone, just email any of us, and we'll arrange for a time to talk or meet. We'll also have a table at the BPRA's Spring Thing event, so stop and say hello.



Contact Us

SBP Dolphins Swim Team Association Board of Directors

ELIZABETH KOMINSKI

Co-President

elizabethinfo@gmail.com

PHIL KOMINSKI

Co-President

phil@freestylebooking.com

CHRIS HUFFINE

Vice-President

huffine@gmail.com

CLAIRE PAK

Secretary

cdaltonpak@yahoo.com

DENISE REYES

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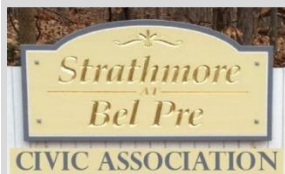
casareyes1@gmail.com

KAREN PURDY

"A" Meet Manager

klpurdy@hotmail.com

Watch future issues of the Bugle for more Dolphins news, and visit the Dolphins website (<https://sbpdolphins.swimtopia.com/>) for news about registration and other events. We can't wait to see you at the pool!



1ST SATURDAYS AT THE MOVIES!

May 7

June 4

July 2

August 6

Sept 3

We have set the dates for this summer's movies. Mark your calendars!

May 7th will be a Drive-In Movie, at the Pool Parking Lot. The rest will be on the Pool Grounds. Watch the SBPcivic listserv for a Movie Title poll. We will announce the poll results and movie selections in the May Bugle. Dates still need BPRA approval so they could change. See you at the Pool this Summer!

Do Current Circumstances Affect Your Ability to Pay BPRA's Annual Assessment On Time? Consider these options....

by Dave Pullen, Treasurer
Bel Pre Recreational Association

BPRA governing documents fix the due date for payment of the Annual Assessment at **March 1**, and if payment has not been received by **March 31** the account becomes delinquent. *What happens then?*

- Monthly interest charges retroactive to March 1 are assessed on the first day of each month that the Assessment remains unpaid.
- We will send a delinquent homeowner *up to* three letters over the course of the next few months seeking payment. The member's right to access the common property (i.e., the pool and related amenities) remains suspended until the full balance owed is collected.
- **And finally, if still unpaid by August**, we will send a **Final Letter** detailing all charges and accrued expenses associated with your account, including a \$10 collection fee for use of certified mail (return receipt requested), advising you that *if your full payment is not received by **September 30**, your account will be referred to our law firm for collection.*

Once referred to the law firm, a delinquent homeowner also becomes liable for all attorney fees and expenses associated with the collection, up to and through filing a lien on your home and/or going to court to secure a judicial order compelling you to pay by a date it sets. The account remains suspended until the law firm advises us that the homeowner has paid the full amount owed *or* entered into a negotiated agreement for completing payment

The overwhelming majority of BPRA homeowners pays their Assessments by March 31; and for that we thank you! It allows the Association to enter its "busy season" armed with the resources to pay its anticipated bills, while taking appropriate steps to prepare for the day when our 50+ year old pool, bathhouse, and related structures and amenities will require major repair if not replacement.

Notwithstanding BPRA's need for timely receipt of your Assessment payment, the Board of Trustees is not insensitive to the impacts upon members associated with economic dislocation or significant, unexpected expenses (e.g., major medical issues and related treatment costs). **If you have suffered an unexpected, temporary, but significant loss of income that impacts your ability to pay the full BPRA Annual Assessment on time, we recommend:**

- **First**, that you pay your Assessment online via credit card, as that gives *you* maximum control over management of your financial affairs. OR,
- **Second**, that you apply to BPRA's Assessment Assistance Committee, which is authorized to negotiate a limited payment plan with you, not to exceed 5 months in duration. *For full rules and procedures regarding Assessment Assistance Committee action, and to review/download the Assessment Assistance Committee's application form, read the formal **BPRA Collections Policy** available on the community website. Any/all claims should be filed no later than **March 31**.*

Does BPRA have your **CORRECT** information??

Finally, on a related matter, one of the ongoing challenges that BPRA faces is keeping its homeowner database current: accounting for home sales; household member changes; accurate name spellings or changes; updated email addresses; and owners' preferred (declared) billing address. **Updating this information when paying your Assessment online or completing and returning an updated Census Form that accompanies your Annual Assessment Notice, is critical to our efforts to serve you.**

Please make all corrections/updates necessary to assure we have the correct name(s), spellings, and email and mailing addresses for effective homeowner communications. Please make your updates *either* by updating your profile online or by submitting a paper form, but not both.

Conservation Philosophy

by Cecily Nabors

Twenty years ago, I took a course called “Conservation Philosophy,” offered by the Audubon Naturalist Society as part of the Natural History Field Studies program. Intensive and compelling, the course readings made me try to define my own conservation philosophy. I’m still doing it. Here’s some of what I’ve been thinking.

As winter slowly warms into spring with a flourish of flowers and a bounty of birdsong, it’s easy to feel optimistic about the unflappable continuity of Nature. But we know that climate change is real. Many species are threatened with extinction.



Humans evolved with bluebirds and daffodils—we’re part of the natural world. However, humans have changed many rules and conditions, and put nature out of balance. We often do not act in our own long-term interest.

Biodiversity is suffering as the earth is changing. Global warming and habitat destruction are taking a toll on so many species. Local changes in conditions become a global problem.

I’d like our species not to be a natural disaster.

I don’t have answers. But I do think education and understanding must be encouraged. Many more economic incentives are needed to persuade people to change harmful behaviors.

A good friend, a wonderful naturalist, told me, “Experiences with nature affect humans spiritually.” He’s right. How many of us received some solace during the last two isolating years by spending more time outdoors? Watching nature, learning more about our place in it, feeling joy in life’s beauty and interconnectedness.

Beech leaves will soon unfurl in soft green glory along the Henson Trail. I hope everyone in SBP can experience that spiritual component, an awareness of the rich entangled life that even our small local creek and woodland hold safe.

My personal list of statements, my own Conservation Philosophy, ends with a goal: Awaken the joy in others. That’s what I’ve tried to do in these columns—from bluebirds to beech trees and beyond.



My own footprint on the Earth is too large, I know. Hurray for those who fight to protect habitats, preserve biodiversity, reduce emissions, and improve sustainability—and have the optimism to persevere against the apparent odds. Let’s all tell our stories and awaken the joy.

Bel Pre Recreational News

([continued from page 7](#))

Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association (SBPCA) Membership Dues

Again, this year, you can pay your SBPCA membership dues when you pay your BPRA Annual Assessment. While the BPRA and SBPCA are separate entities, both associations work for the good of the community and collaborate on many community events and efforts. Combining the BPRA and SBPCA dues mailings reduces mailing costs for both the BPRA and SBPCA. Please consider supporting a great organization by joining the SBPCA. See [page 5](#) for more information from SBPCA President NANCY BECHTOL. If you are interested in more information about what the SBPCA or BPRA do, please see [pages 2 and 3](#) of each edition of *The Bugle*.



Pet Waste Station Donation

Please consider making a small donation towards the Pet Waste Station located near the tennis courts when you pay your assessment. The Pet Waste Station, which is funded entirely by donations, gets a lot of use and having it helps keep our common areas clean.

SBP Dolphins Swim Team

This year, the BPRA/SBPCA annual dues mailing included information about the Strathmore Bel Pre Dolphins Swim Team. The SBP Dolphins is open to all Strathmore Bel Pre community children ages 4 to 18. The swim team is an anchor for the Strathmore Bel Pre community and is an inclusive, welcoming, supportive, and fun experience. As a convenience to community members, you are now able to donate to the Dolphins Swim Team when you pay your annual BPRA assessment online or by check. Look for more information about the swim team on [page 9](#) and at sbpdolphins.swimtopia.com.

Pool Opening - Summer 2022

At this time, we anticipate the pool will open at noon on Saturday, **May 28, 2022**, with the same COVID rules and procedures that were in place for Summer 2021. We will update our opening date and rules and procedures as we get closer to summer. Updates will be posted on StrathmoreBelPre.org and shared via the SBPCA Community listserv, SBP Dolphins listserv and in the May *Bugle*.

BPRA Recreational Facilities Policy Updates

On November 10, 2020, the Board adopted a new Recreational Facilities Policy. The Board adopted several additional changes to that policy in 2021: June 8, 2021, August 3, 2021, and December 7, 2021.

Items of note:

§ 210. Guests – Children, Grandchildren, Parents, and Grandparents. Grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren of members are now considered free guests.

§ 207. Guest Fees. Guest fees are now \$4 per guest. For tax reasons, guest fees must be paid by the member. You may pay for guests at the pool check-in desk, or ahead of time online in your eSoft Planner account. Per § 214, Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day remain free guest days, subject to any COVID specific guest policies.

§ 202. Member Admissions to the Pool Grounds. Elimination of Season Passes: After seeking community input, surveying members to see how they used Season Passes, and determining how we could accommodate those uses with the electronic check in system, the Board voted to eliminate the Season Pass check-in option and transition to a Household-based pool entry system with accommodations for long-time Season Pass holders. **This means no one will receive paper pool passes this summer.** The current policy allows for admission for all individuals residing in your home and as allowed by the BPRA Recreational Facilities Policy. **Names and photos of each household member must be on file in eSoft Planner to gain access.** Assistance setting up your eSoft Planner account and taking and uploading photos will be available in the spring. More information and FAQs about this policy change are coming soon and will be posted at StrathmoreBelPre.org.

– [Continued on page 16](#) –

Notes from the Glenmont Exchange

by John Bogasky

Glenmont Forest Neighborhood Park

Glenmont Neighborhood Park is just south of Randolph Road, next to the new fire station. The park's development has been guided by the Glenmont Forest Neighbors' Civic Association (GFNCA.org) which supports the neighborhoods south of Randolph and west of Georgia. They have plans for future park improvements.

In December, the Maryland State Arts Council awarded a project implementation grant to the GFNCA to install a new sculpture and seating area near the park entrance next to Fire Station 18. The sculpture, named *The Gathering Tree*, was designed by local artists SANDRA PEREZ-RAMOS and STUART DIEKMEYER. The GFNCA community overwhelmingly chose this artwork over several other entries and will help paint the sidewalk mural of "welcome" in languages that represent GFCNA's diverse neighborhood. After many years as an empty lot, the new Glenmont Forest Neighborhood Park is becoming a welcome addition to our community.



The *Gathering Tree* at Glenmont Forest Neighborhood Park

Strathmore Local Park

Strathmore Local Park is located at the terminus of Beaverwood Lane, adjacent to Strathmore Elementary School and the Gate of Heaven Cemetery. The existing park amenities include a playground, two tennis courts, a picnic shelter, and a rectangular field for soccer/football. The park does not have on-site parking.

Montgomery Parks is now working to make improvements at Strathmore Local Park that may include:

- The replacement of the aging playground
- Adding on-site parking and a loop path
- Adding new gathering spaces/picnic areas
- Renovations to the field area, and
- Renovations or conversions of the existing tennis courts.



– [Continued on page 17](#) –

Bel Pre Recreational News

([continued from page 14](#))

Access to the pool and related facilities is not permitted for households with accounts in arrears.

The Recreational Facilities Policy and updates can be found on StrathmoreBelPre.org/government-documents under the heading Rules for Pool and Facilities Use and will be posted at the pool. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the rules before the start of the 2022 swim season.



Volunteers

The BPRA is always looking for members interested in volunteering. Currently, we are looking to fill several positions including eSoft Planner Coordinator, Pavilion Use Scheduler, Dispute Resolution Committee Chair, and Webmaster.

eSoft Planner coordinator(s) – We are looking for one or more people with strong computer and organizational skills to assist with the administration of eSoft Planner, our pool check-in and online assessment collection system. The coordinator(s) will interact with the BPRA Board, pool staff and BPRA members. The bulk of work will be performed between February and September, with significant interaction with BPRA membership in March, May, and June.

Pavilion Scheduler – Schedules pavilion use. This person interacts with the BPRA Board, pool staff and members. The bulk of the work will be performed between April and August – [Continued on page 18](#) –

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(continued from page 15)

Concerned about Strathmore Local Park?

Late last year, Montgomery Parks requested online feedback about potential improvements and amenities for Strathmore Local Park. The survey request included two possible designs for consideration. The survey received only seven responses before it closed. We can expect future community input opportunities since the design process is ongoing. **If you wish to provide input**, contact BOB GREEN, Senior ADA Compliance Project Manager (Bob.Green@montgomeryparks.org, (301) 495-2571) or KATHLEEN DEARSTINE, Playground Renovation Project Manager (Kathy.Dearstine@montgomeryparks.org, (301) 650-2883).



Primrose School Opening This Spring!

If you regularly drive along Layhill Road, you have seen this project, first reported in the May 2017 *Bugle*, rising on the northbound side, adjacent to the Mid-County Recreation Center. You can see pictures of all classrooms on their website at <https://www.primroseschools.com/schools/silver-spring/>.

As it prepares to open, the School is scheduling tours. You can request a tour on their website or by calling (301) 278-2002.

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Bel Pre Recreational News

([continued from page 16](#))

Webmaster – This person maintains the StrathoreBelPre.org website. Knowledge of Squarespace, or similar platform, is desired but not required.

Long Term Planning Committee Members – We need BPRA members to help with the planning of the recreational facilities. IF you have any architecture or engineering background, that would be very helpful.

If you are interested in any of these positions, serving on our committees or volunteering in some other way, please contact the appropriate committee chair listed on [page 3](#) or contact me at klpurdy@hotmail.com.

BPRA Board of Trustees

If you are interested in serving on the BRPA's Board of Trustees, please contact Nominating Committee Chair MARK FORAKER at mark4aker@hotmail.com. He can answer any questions you may have about serving on the Board.

– [Continued on page 20](#)–



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Candidates Forums!

by Elliot Chabot

(continued from [page 1](#))

2022 is a big year in local and state politics. It is the first election since the decennial census redistricting and the year for local and state elections. We will elect state government officials, including Governor and the entire State Legislature. We will also elect the county government officials, including the County Executive and the entire County Council. We'll also elect Judges, the County Sheriff, the State's Attorney, Register of Wills, Clerk of the Court, and half of the County School Board.



Additional County Council Members – New Districts

Also, as a result of the County Charter amendment approved by the voters in 2020, the County Council now has 2 additional districts, resulting in an 11 member Council with 7 district members and 4 at-large members. Strathmore Bel Pre will be in District 6, a new district.

Forums are currently scheduled for:

- ✓ **March 10** – County Council (At Large) (on zoom)
- ✓ **April 7** – County Executive
- ✓ **May 5** – State Legislature (District 19)
- ✓ **May 12** – County Council (new District 6)
- ✓ **May 25** – School Board



Candidates Forums start at 7:30 pm and end at 9:30 pm.

RSVP Required!

Send an email to aspenhill@folmc.org, with "Candidate Forum" in the subject line. In reply, you will learn whether the forums will be on Zoom or whether they will be live, in the Aspen Hill Library Community room. You also will receive the Zoom sign on information, if needed.

Due to the pandemic, the forums may be virtual on Zoom. If possible, we will hold the forums in the Aspen Hill Library Community Room. Most of the in-person forums have been standing room only, so plan to come early and get a good seat!

All candidates on the General Election ballot have been invited! These forums provide great opportunities for your questions to be asked and answered by the candidates. Find out for yourself each candidate's understanding and vision for Aspen Hill and our community.

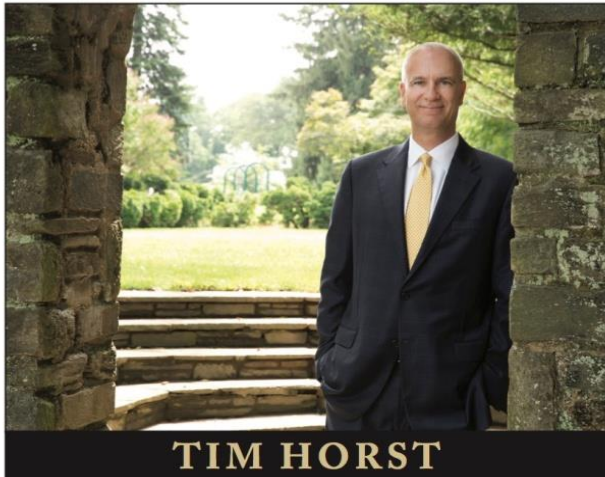
The Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association, the Aspen Hill Civic Association, the Glenmont Exchange, the Friends of the Aspen Hill Library, and the Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee are co-sponsoring the candidates' forums between now and the November 2022 elections

The Primary election is Tuesday, June 28, 2022. The General Election Day is Tuesday, November 8, 2022

Early voting is Thursday, **June 16** to Thursday, **June 23** for the primary election, and Thursday, **October 27** to Thursday, **November 3** for the general election.

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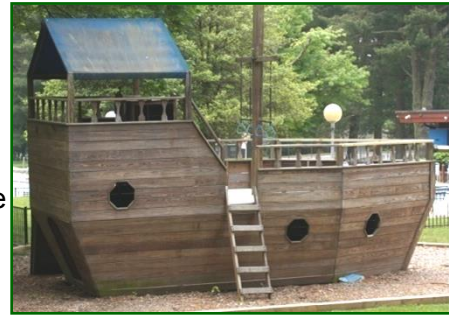
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Bel Pre Recreational News

(continued from page 18)

Upcoming Events

Stay tuned for more information about movies and other possible outdoor events this spring and summer.



BPRA Board Meeting Schedule

The BPRA Board of Trustees normally meets on the first Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 pm. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all BPRA meetings, except for facility walk-throughs, will be held via Zoom for the foreseeable future. Please see StrathmoreBelPre.org/meetings-meeting-minutes for updates.

BPRA Members are Welcome!

All members of the BPRA are welcome and encouraged to attend the meetings of the Board. A 15-minute period at the beginning of each meeting is normally reserved for members of the Association to speak on any issue you feel is important. If you would like to attend a Board meeting, please contact me at klpurdy@hotmail.com or (301) 603-9604 no later than 4pm on the day of the meeting to be added to the participants list and get Zoom log in information.

The BPRA Board will meet on the following dates in 2022:

March 1, April 2 (9 am, property walk-through*),
April 5, May 3, May 14 (9 am, property walk-through*), **June 7, June 21** (if needed), **July 12, July 26** (if needed), **August 2, August 16** (if needed), **September 13, October 6** (Thursday), **November 1, December 6, January 3, 2023**

*(*if allowable per COVID-19 guidelines. Face coverings and social distancing required. To be confirmed at a later date.)*

2022 Annual Meeting Date

The Annual Meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, **November 17, 2022** at 7:30pm.

Aspen Hill Library News

by Chris Swan

Open Sundays!

With the exception of the Noyes Children's Library, all Montgomery County Public Libraries now are open on Sundays, from 10 am to 6 pm.

New Integrated Library System

During the pandemic, the Montgomery County Public Libraries purchased and installed new computer programs (an integrated library system, or ILS) which run the Circulation and Catalog functions from ByWater Solutions. The programs are open source, which allows the Library to customize their functions. The Circulation system, Koha, is used to check materials in and out of the Library, and to send out renewal and overdue notices. The Library Catalog system, Aspen Discovery, works on mobile devices, and can be used to search the catalog. It can present all formats of a title at once, from paper to electronic. Check-out the new catalog at [MCPL.AspenDiscovery.org](https://mcpl.aspen-discovery.org).

Join the Friends of the Aspen Hill Library!

We raise funds to support the Aspen Hill Library, from summer reading to craft supplies to adult programming and more, and we advocate for our community library. You can join the Aspen Hill Friends through the County Friends website, www.folmc.org/join/. Please be sure to select **Aspen Hill** as your "Membership Dues Designation". You also can pay by cash or check to join. Contact aspenhill@folmc.org for more information.

Spring Book Sale – April 30, 2022 → 10 am to 4pm! COVID-19 permitting!!



Come to our sale! Shop early and often!

Our last book sale was in the fall of 2019! We have thousands of books for your shopping pleasure! Come and select high-quality used books at bargain prices, **usually \$1 for hardbacks and 50¢ for paperbacks**. Kid's Books generally are half priced. Get your gifts for Mom, Dad, grads, and your Summer reading books!

By supporting the book sale, you support your library!

Proceeds from the book sales are used to support and purchase summer reading, supplies, and equipment for the Aspen Hill Library.

Your help is needed with set-up and take-down of the book sale, from **April 22 to May 2**. Help is needed to sort books, put books on the carts and tables, to write and place signs, to box up books, and to move furniture. Yes, even 1 hour of your help can make a difference! SSL credit is available for students helping with the book sale. To volunteer, please send an email to aspenhill@folmc.org

Join the Aspen Hill Library Advisory Committee

Join our Community Voices. Speak about your Library experiences and concerns, and learn more about Library operations. Meetings generally are held the third Monday evening of every month, from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Meeting currently are on Zoom, but may be In-person later. You also can join the Committee and become a regular member. Contact the Aspen Hill Library for more information. Applications for the Committee are at www.MontgomeryCountyMd.gov/Library/resources/files/boaard/lac-application.pdf. Everyone is welcome!



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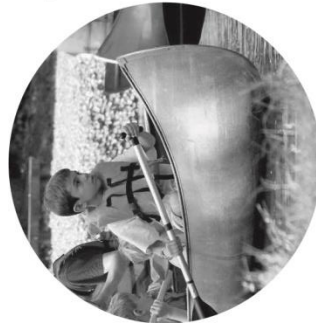
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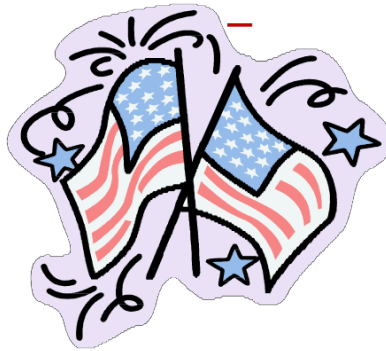
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STRATHMORE BEL PRE JULY 4th 2022 CELEBRATION!!

Every year, our Strathmore-Bel Pre Community comes together to celebrate our country's birthday!

Please see the box below for several ways you can help!



Last year's Patriotic Car Parade was amazing! A large number of our neighbors turned out to support our Strathmore Bel Pre 2022 Patriotic Car Parade.

Help us make this year's celebration special by selecting one or more activities below.

***Help make our July 4th
Celebration the best yet!***

Thanks!

Help Our Community Celebrate on Thursday, July 4th, 2022!



**YES! Please count on me ...
...to help with Strathmore Bel Pre's July 4th Celebration!**

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

___ Setting up ___ Registration ___ Safety ___ Flag Ceremony ___ Wrap up

___ We plan to be in the July 4th Patriotic Car Parade.

___ I want to help plan the events.

___ I would like to be on the 2022 July 4th SBPCA Committee.

Call Bill Hammond at (301) 509-4621 or Lilla Hammond at (301) 518-7818

Or, email: w.m.hammond@verizon.net / Lilla.hammond@verizon.net

Strathmore Bel Pre July 4th Celebration Committee

THANKS!! We look forward to hearing from you!!