



# Forecast

DECEMBER 2013

NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE

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## Council To Consider Changes to Front Yard Hedge Regulations

On **Wednesday, December 11**, the Town Council will hold a public hearing on an ordinance to amend the Town Code to eliminate the permitting requirements and height restrictions for front yard hedges.

Since 1986, the Town Code has required a permit for the installation of a front yard hedge, which is defined as "a row of closely-planted shrubs, bushes, trees, or other plant material that has leaves at or below six feet from the adjacent ground." Additionally, the Code has required that front yard hedges on interior streets be maintained at a height not to exceed three feet, while those on border streets be maintained at a height not to exceed six feet.

The enforcement of these regulations has proven difficult in several respects. Plants continuously grow and change, making the height standard difficult to comply with and enforce. In addition, there is often disagreement as to whether certain landscaping meets the Town's definition of a hedge. (*continued on page 5*)

## Public Meeting on Undergrounding Utility Lines Scheduled for December 5

On **Thursday, December 5** at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall, the Town Council will hold a Public Meeting on Undergrounding Utility Lines. The purpose of this meeting is to allow the Council to obtain more information about the feasibility and desirability of burying the Town's overhead wires.

Last June, the Council formed a sub-committee of Councilmembers Bickerman and Lang to study this issue and prepare a report, which was submitted in September. After discussing the report in October, the Council decided to hold a public meeting with several topical experts to obtain more professional advice. Among the issues to be discussed at the meeting are power reliability, cost, impacts to Town infrastructure, and public safety.

Town residents are invited to attend this meeting to learn more about these issues. More information is available on the Town website, including an outline of the discussion items as well as the biographies of the invited panelists. For more information, please call the Town Office at 301-654-7144.

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The FORECAST is published monthly by the Town of Chevy Chase, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; 301-654-7144; [townoffice@townofchevyCHASE.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevyCHASE.org); Kathy Strom, Editor. Copies are mailed to each address in the Town and posted on the Town website, [www.townofchevyCHASE.org](http://www.townofchevyCHASE.org).

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## A Message from Mayor Pat Burda

I hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. While I know the holidays can be busy, I want to invite you to attend a number of important meetings in the coming months.

On **Thursday, December 5**, the Town will host a Public Meeting on Undergrounding Utility Lines. For more information, see the article on page 1. The Council's next regular monthly meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 11**, when a public hearing will be held on eliminating the Town's front yard hedge regulations (see page 1). Following the Council's regular meeting on **Wednesday, January 8**, the Council will host a public forum on **Sunday, January 26** to discuss possible uses of the Town's reserve funds. More information about this meeting will be included in the January Forecast.

I encourage you to come to these meetings to learn more about these important issues and share your ideas with us.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

## Council Seeks Volunteers To Serve on Ethics Commission

The Town Council is seeking residents to serve on the Town's newly-formed Ethics Commission, established by the new public ethics ordinance that was adopted by the Town Council in November. This law, mandated by the state, requires Council members, candidates for office, and certain Town employees to file financial disclosure statements on an annual basis.

The Town Ethics Commission will consist of three members, appointed by the Mayor, to serve staggered terms of three years. The commission's primary responsibilities include managing and maintaining disclosure statements; developing procedures and policies for handling complaints and advisory opinion requests; conducting a public information program about the new law; and certifying to the State Ethics Commission each year that the Town is in compliance with the requirements of state law. A full list of responsibilities of the Ethics Commission is available for review on the Town's website.

If you are interested in serving on the Commission, please submit a brief note detailing your interest and qualifications to the Town Office by **Tuesday, December 31**. Your correspondence may be submitted by mail or e-mail to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org) and should include your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address. The Mayor will appoint the commission members in January.

## Town To Offer Organic Waste Collection Service

Beginning **Tuesday, January 7**, the Town will provide household organic waste collection service to Town residents. This optional service, to be provided curbside on Tuesdays, will allow residents to recycle organic material to be composted and reused.

At program startup, participants will receive one lined 5-gallon bin (with lid). On collection day, the contractor will empty the bin, wipe it down, replace the liner and return it to the curb. A compostable materials list will be made available in the January edition of the *Forecast Newsletter* and on the Town's website at [www.townofchevy Chase.org](http://www.townofchevy Chase.org).

To opt into this service, residents must contact the Town Office at 301-654-7144 or [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org) by **Friday, December 20**.



# December



Monday, December 2 - Community Relations Committee, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, December 3 - Mitigation Advisory Group, 7 p.m.

Thursday, December 5 - Public Meeting on Undergrounding Utility Lines, 7 p.m.

Friday, December 6 - Movie Night for Families, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, December 10 - Climate and Environment Committee, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 11 - Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Thursday, December 12 - Public Services Committee, 7 p.m.

Monday, December 16 - Long Range Planning Committee, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, December 17 - Land Use Committee, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 18 - Seniors and Retirees Holiday Lunch, 12 noon

## Annual Holiday Gift Drive for Domestic Violence Victims



The Town's Community Relations Committee is sponsoring its annual gift drive for domestic violence victims and their children. The Town will partner with the Montgomery County Abused Persons Program and Chesapeake Counseling in this effort. The generosity of Town residents in the past has been remarkable and heartwarming, and we hope residents will again help brighten the holidays for needy families. Donations are tax deductible.

How can you help? There are two options:

You can purchase gift cards to a store such as Target, Marshall's, Kohl's, Ross, Giant or Sears and take them to the Town Office. Gift cards in \$10 or \$25 denominations would be appreciated. Please put the cards in an envelope with your name and your e-mail address.

If you prefer, you can "adopt" a family and purchase specific items. Please contact Cathy Wolf at [wolfcs@starpower.net](mailto:wolfcs@starpower.net) to be matched with a family.

The deadline for gift card and gift collection is **Monday, December 16**. Thanks in advance for caring and sharing.

## Annual Holiday Buffet for Seniors and Retirees



Join friends and neighbors at the eighteenth annual Holiday Buffet for Town Seniors and Retirees on **Wednesday, December 18** at noon in the Town Hall. While you feast on a delicious meal, you will have a chance to visit with old friends and meet some new ones. If transportation is a problem for you, we will be happy to pick you up and take you back home. Just let us know when you RSVP. Please give us a call at 301-654-7144 by **Friday, December 6** to RSVP.

We look forward to seeing you!

## Movie Night at the Town Hall



Join us on **Friday, December 6** at 6 p.m. in the Town Hall to watch the movie *Monsters' University* while feasting on pizza and popcorn. Space is limited, so please RSVP to the Town Office at [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org) or 301-654-7144. Parents must accompany their children.

# Town Updates

## Crimewatch

Please report all suspicious activity and crimes to the Montgomery County police at the non-emergency number 301-279-8000. For emergencies or crimes in process, call 911. Any information you can give to the police about criminal or suspicious activity in Town will help to make us safer. In addition, please report incidents to the Town Office at 301-654-7144 so that we can notify our off-duty Montgomery County police officers. Also, when you report crimes to the Town Office, you help us provide accurate crime information.

The following crimes were reported to the Town Office in November.

11/13/2013

Police reported that two purses were stolen from an unlocked car in the 3900 block of Rosemary Street.

11/6/2013

A resident in the 4100 block of Stanford Street reported that three bikes were stolen from his front porch. He has reported the incident to the MC police. The bikes have been recovered.

11/1/2013

A resident in the 7400 block of Oak Lane reported that his car windshield was shattered on October 18. The car was locked. Nothing was stolen.

## Fire Safety and Prevention Tips

In response to several recent house fires, the Town has posted helpful fire safety resources on the Town website ([www.townofchevy Chase.org](http://www.townofchevy Chase.org)), including a list of fire safety and prevention tips provided by the Montgomery County Fire Department and a publication on electrical fire prevention for older homes, published by the Electrical Safety Foundation International. Feel free to print these documents and keep them in an area where they are easily accessible.

## Leaf Vacuuming To End on December 16



Vacuum trucks collect leaves continuously, street by street, until **Monday, December 16**. A map detailing the schedule of the pickup is provided on the Town's website. All leaves should be raked to the curb, not into the street. Please make sure that your leaves are not contaminated by cans, sticks, bottles or rocks. After collection has ended, please place leaves in reusable containers or paper yard waste bags and place them at the curb by 7 a.m. for Monday pickup.



## Holiday Recycling Collection

Recycling will not be collected on Christmas Day, December 25, or New Years Day, January 1, but will be collected on the following days (Thursday, December 26 and Thursday, January 2).

## Recycle Your Christmas Tree!

The Town offers curbside pickup of Christmas trees. All wire, ornaments and tinsel must be removed. The deadline for pickup is **January 14**.



## Town Teens List

The Town continues to maintain a list of Town Teens who baby-sit, pet-sit and do other jobs. Please contact the Town Office at 301-654-7144 if you would like to receive the list.

# County Updates

## County Zoning Code Rewrite To Be Completed Soon

The Montgomery County Planning Department is in the process of updating the County zoning code, which controls most aspects of property development throughout the County. This is the first such rewrite in over thirty years. On November 12, Mayor Pat Burda testified on behalf of the Town regarding the draft rewrite.

The rewrite may have several implications for the Town. While the proposed code maintains the existing residential zone (R-60) throughout the Town, it allows for certain new type of buildings and new uses not currently permitted within single-family neighborhoods. The proposed rewrite also limits opportunities for public input in key land-use decisions.

For more information on the zoning code rewrite, including a copy of the Town's testimony, please visit the Town's website at [www.townofchevy Chase.org](http://www.townofchevy Chase.org). The draft rewrite is expected to be finalized in December and considered by the County Council next year.

## Bethesda CBD Update Underway

The Montgomery County Planning Department recently began updating the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD) Sector Plan, which details land use in downtown Bethesda.

On November 4, Mayor Pat Burda and members of the Town's Land Use and Long-Range Planning committees attended a meeting hosted by the County Planning Department to learn more about the update. Over the next year, the Planning Department will review the vision for downtown Bethesda, including issues such as density, urban design and character, mobility (walking, driving, transit, etc.), and environmental quality. The Planning Department also will assess what is good about the current plan and what could be improved.

Links to the audio from the November 4 meeting, the current plan, and ways to participate in the review process are available on the Town website.

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## Council To Consider Changes to Front Yard Hedge Regulations

*(continued from page 1)*

Lastly, many residents are not aware of the current regulations, especially those residents who have purchased a property with front yard hedges that were installed by a previous owner. In many cases, trimming the hedges to the proper heights would result in the destruction of the plants.

Given the number of front yard hedges in Town and difficulties with enforcing the current regulations, the Town Council introduced the proposed ordinance at its November meeting and scheduled a public hearing at the [Wednesday, December 11](#) Council meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall. A copy of the proposed ordinance is available on the Town's website.

The ordinance does not propose changes to Town regulations related to overgrown vegetation in the rights-of-way. These regulations, which the Town will continue to enforce, ensure that all plantings on private property are maintained in such a manner as not to interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

If you are unable to attend the December 11 public hearing, you may submit comments to the Town Office, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815 or to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org) prior to the hearing.

# Preparations for Winter Weather

The Town has taken a number of steps to prepare for the upcoming winter season. An overview of our winter preparedness plans follows.

## **Street Snow/Ice Removal:**



The Town's maintenance crew and contractor will remove snow from Town streets and will treat icy road conditions. The Town begins plowing when 2 inches of snow has accumulated on the streets. Plow crews operate continuously until the streets are clear. The Town has a snow removal operations plan in place that specifies the number of trucks to be used and the routes of those trucks during storm events of varying magnitudes.

## **Parking in Snow or Icy Conditions**

In the event or threat of a snowstorm or icy road conditions, either day or night, residents must park cars either in driveways or on the even-numbered side of the street to ensure safe passage for the crews. Please do not park cars on the odd-numbered side of the street, unless otherwise posted.

## **Sidewalk Snow Removal:**

The Town's contractor will remove snow from Town sidewalks and crosswalks if snow accumulations total 3 inches or more. This program includes snow removal from public sidewalks only, so clearing your driveways and walkways is still your responsibility. In icy conditions, the Town will determine whether to salt and sand public sidewalks.

## **Trees and Power Lines:**

The Town arborist will continue to survey the Town following significant winter storms. The arborist will identify any damage to Town trees and notify the Town's tree maintenance contractor for immediate remediation. The Town will report all downed power lines to PEPCO.

## **Power Outages:**

Please report power outages directly to PEPCO at 1-877-PEPCO-62 to ensure that PEPCO knows you are without service and can schedule repairs.

## **Fire Hydrants:**

The Town will install fire hydrant flags, which help identify hydrant locations in emergency situations during significant winter storms.

## **Communications:**

The Town will use voicemail, the Town website, the Town Crier and Alert TOCC to communicate with residents during winter storms. Town staff will communicate early following the onset of the storm as well as often during the storm. We will attempt to relay Town service interruptions (e.g. cancelled trash collection, etc.) in a timely way, preferably on the day prior to any anticipated interruptions.

## **Office Coverage:**

During significant winter storms, Town staff may not be able to maintain a presence in the Town Office. However, staff has the capability to monitor voicemail and e-mail remotely as well as to update the Town's voicemail and website and to send Town Crier and Alert TOCC messages to residents.

## **Neighbor-to-Neighbor**

We encourage all residents to reach out to their neighbors, especially elderly neighbors, during weather emergencies.

# Around Chevy Chase

## Chevy Chase At Home for The Holidays

On **Tuesday, December 3**, CC@ H will sponsor an important evening program, "WHEN IT TAKES MORE THAN A VILLAGE: Professional Care Management for Older Adults." The time may come when neighborhood volunteer assistance is no longer enough to help you stay safely in your home. Then where to turn? Come to the Chevy Chase Village Hall at 7:30 pm on December 3, to learn what help you will find just beyond our borders. A panel of senior experts from non-profit partners Jewish Social Service Agency (JSSA), Iona Senior Services, and Montgomery County's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) will discuss real life situations and answer your questions. The panelists are Odile Brunnell, PhD, Director of the Montgomery County Area Agency on Aging, Carol Kaplun, RN, LGC, Clinical Director of Iona Senior Services, and Irene Mednick, LCSW-C, Geriatric Care Manager of JSSA.

**Brunch Bunch** will have its get-together on **Thursday, December 12**, at the Olympia Cafe on Brookville Road. Everyone is welcome to drop by and join the conversation between 10 and 11:30 am -- just buy a cup of coffee and pull up a chair.

**Gentle Pilates** continues at the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church, 7001 Connecticut Avenue, on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am and Friday afternoons at 2:30 pm. CC@ H and church members pay \$40 per four-week session; the fee for non-members is \$48.

In the holiday spirit the **Tuesday, December 17** Meet & Miingle will celebrate with a wonderful movie, the recently restored 1939 film of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company production of "The Mikado," presented by Jerry Bernstein. And, of course, there will be festive holiday refreshments! 2 to 4 pm at the Chevy Chase Village Hall.

For more information, please check our website at [www.chevychaseathome.org](http://www.chevychaseathome.org).

## December Events at the Chevy Chase Library 8005 Connecticut Avenue

\*Sponsored by the Friends of the Library, Chevy Chase Chapter

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Pre-School Storytime        | Tuesday, December 3, 10 and 17.<br>Stories, songs, dancing and fingerplays   |
| Foreign Film                | Saturday, December 7, 1 p.m.*<br>Millions--An enormous bag of soon-to-be currency falls into the hands of two boys.          |
| Non-Fiction Book Discussion | Wednesday, Wednesday, December 11, 2 p.m.*<br><u>What Einstein Told His Cook: Kitchen Science Explained</u> by Robert Wolke. |
| Jefferson Café              | Friday, December 20, 10:30 a.m. *<br>Three short articles on retirement  |
| Fiction Book Discussion     | Wednesday, December 18 at 2 p.m.*<br><u>My Antonia</u> by Willa Cather   |

.For a complete listing, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/libraries](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/libraries)

## Bethesda Urban Partnership Presents

Bethesda's Winter Wonderland

Friday and Saturday, December 6 - 7, 2013

For more information, call 301-215-6660 or visit [www.bethesda.org](http://www.bethesda.org).

## Town of Chevy Chase

4301 Willow Lane  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Bethesda, MD  
Permit No. 418

### TOWN COUNCIL

*Patricia Burda, Mayor*

*Kathy Strom, Vice Mayor*

*Al Lang, Secretary*

*David Lublin, Treasurer*

*John Bickerman, Community Liaison*

## Climate and Environment Committee To Host "Green Socials"

### Green Socials Coming in 2014

The Climate and Environment Committee will be hosting a series of "Green Socials" over the next year. These events will provide an opportunity to learn more about issues with environmental implications from experts, as well as to meet neighbors and participate in related discussions. Potential topics include energy purchasing choices, energy conservation options for our homes, solar and other renewable energy systems, advice for keeping pesticides out of our yards, native species gardening tips, and more. If you have suggestions for subjects that you would like to hear about, please email committee co-chair Julia Craighill at [juliacraighill@gmail.com](mailto:juliacraighill@gmail.com).

### Get Help with Your Energy Supply Choices -- Saturday, January 4, 10 a.m.

We have all been deluged with mailings urging us to sign up with new energy suppliers. Is that a good idea? Which is the best deal for your wallet and for the environment? The Town Climate and Environment Committee will try to help you find answers to those questions at a "Power Breakfast" green social on **Saturday, January 4, 2014** at the Town Hall. We will have energy experts from the Town and from the State of Maryland explain competitive energy source options and help with questions about your energy bills, energy choices, and the process of choosing your suppliers. This will be an informal, interactive session that will last about one hour. We will supply coffee, juice, bagels and donuts to give you your "energy" for the morning.

Please RSVP to committee co-chair John Kolakowski at [jk036@yahoo.com](mailto:jk036@yahoo.com) to reserve your spot. If you previously expressed an interest in attending this event, please notify us again so we can get an official count for planning purposes. If you have specific questions you would like posed to our experts, please forward them to John in advance or raise them at the social.

