



# **SOUTH FOUR CORNERS**

## **Citizens Association**



**May/June 2014 Newsletter**

**Next SFCCA Meeting: Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 p.m.  
at the Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road**



During the May 12 meeting, you will have the chance to vote for SFCCA Officers.

Currently, we are seeking a new president and a new vice president. Richard Messalle (treasurer) and Pat Wills (recording secretary.)

### **Market Update**

*by Betty Batty, Dallas Avenue*

#### **How's the housing market within the South Four Corners borders?**

In 2013, the median sales price of single family homes in South Four Corners was \$449,000 and properties stayed on the market for an average of 24 days. That's an increase from 2012's \$379,000 / 44 days.

#### **How's the housing market in our zip code performing?**

In 2013, the median price was \$435,000 and homes were on the market for an average of 32 days. In 2012, the median price was \$380,000 and homes were on the market for an average of 49 days. That's an increase of \$55,000!



#### **We keep hearing inventory is low. Is that still true?**

Many expect inventory will pick up as we move through 2014 since homeowners are beginning to regain some of the equity in their homes. Our local market still has more demand than homes on the market, however. It is too early to see how the spring market will compare to last year. \*stats were gathered from MRIS

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**May 7, 2014**—7 p.m.—County Council District 5 Candidates Forum, Pinecrest Elementary School, 201 Woodmoor Drive

**May 12, 2014**—7 p.m.—Community Meeting, Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road

**May 17, 2014**—10 a.m.—Clean-up of Forest Glen Rd (meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

**May 18, 2014**—3-7 p.m.—SFCCA Community Day, Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road

**July 14, 2014**—7p.m.—Community Meeting, Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road

This was a fabulous meeting. All our guests gave detailed information to our community about their projects.



The meeting started off with an update from Clay Kaufman of the Siena School. The enrollment has grown to 88 students. Holy Cross Hospital has offered to host students in an emergency situation. A group of students came to the Schwienhaut Center and enjoyed playing bridge with the seniors.

They enjoyed it so much; they would love to make it a recurring event. The school will have a stone sign placed on the property once they get approval from the county.



The next guest was Mark Bittner from Holy Cross. He gave a detailed progress report on the construction at the hospital. It was started in October of 2011 and the projected date of completion is October of 2015. They have been on schedule, so they feel the completion date will be met. The parking garage has finished construction, but they are now refurbishing where needed.

His contact information: [bittnerm@holycrosshealth.org](mailto:bittnerm@holycrosshealth.org)/301-754-8898.



Our next guest was Washington Gas. Mr. Brendan Gamble, Construction Manager, and Mr. Jason Rich, Construction Supervisor, discussed Washington Gas' plans to replace gas mains within a portion of South Four Corners. Mr. Rich will be the on-site supervisor for the SFC project. During the replacement project, over 29,000 feet of existing high pressure steel gas main will be replaced with high pressure plastic gas main, and individual houses will have gas meters

moved outdoors and their service laterals connected to the new gas main. Upon completion of the project Washington Gas will restore streets and yards to their original condition.

Phase I will run from April 2014 to August 2014 and will cover portions of Lanark Way, Dallas Avenue, Brunett Avenue and Grayson Avenue. Phase 2 will run from June 2014 to October 2014 and will cover SFCCA streets west of Dallas Avenue to Reddick Drive and portions of Tenbrook Drive. Phase 3 will run from October 2014 to March 2015 and will cover SFC streets east of Dallas Avenue not included in Phase 1. Individual street maps for each Phase are included in the Washington Gas power-point presentation posted to our website, [SouthFourCorners.com](http://SouthFourCorners.com).

When Washington Gas begins work on your street, you will receive a letter and door hanger. No parking signs will be posted.

Mr. Rich has offered to address questions from neighbors and may be contacted at 703-408-2086. Another item they mentioned that homeowners may consider having a gas line for a power generator installed during the construction.



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# SFCCA CO-SPONSORING COUNTY COUNCIL CANDIDATES FORUM

*Larry Dickter, Gilmoure Drive*

While the general election in Maryland and Montgomery County this year is still the traditional Tuesday in November, the primary elections for all state and county offices have been moved way up from September to June 24. With that date fast approaching, the contest for the Montgomery County Council District 5 seat is already heating up.

Our long time District 5 Council representative, Valerie Ervin resigned her office late last year. Since Cherri Branson, the replacement appointed to serve out the remaining months of Valerie's term is not running to retain the seat for herself, the rare opportunity to contest an open Council seat has produced a crowded field of candidates and a highly spirited campaign to succeed her.

Why is election to and service on the Montgomery County Council so important? Consider some of the Council's principal responsibilities, and therein lies the answer. For starters, these responsibilities include:

- Enacts all County laws and amendments to the County Code.
- Appropriates money to fund the capital budget, as well as an operating budget approaching \$5 billion.
- Sets local tax rates, including the property tax rate, to pay for the budget.
- Approves all land use plans prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Board and acts on zoning changes.
- Determines the pattern and pace of future County growth and development.
- Makes decisions regarding transportation policy, environmental protection, and historic preservation.
- Exercises oversight over County programs to ensure efficiency and effectiveness; directs and reviews the annual independent audit of County government operations.
- Serves as the Board of Health for Montgomery County.

The nine-member County Council is responsible for all of the above and more. It is not hard to see how, through the exercise of its vast authority, the Council affects the daily life of every Montgomery County resident.

Four Council members are elected "at-large" by all County voters, meaning they are directly accountable to all of Montgomery's one million-plus residents. The other five Council members are elected by and accountable to the voters of their respective Council districts, which are proportioned equally by population. For the first time, the entire Four Corners area is contained within the borders of a single district, Council District 5.

Five Democratic candidates (no Republican chose to run) are competing for the District 5 seat, so whoever wins the June 24 primary will practically run unopposed in the general election this fall. The candidates are:

Christopher Barclay, Evan Glass, Tom Hucker, Terrill North, and Jeffrey Thames.

In the belief that the best prepared voters are the most informed voters, the South Four Corners Citizens Association is partnering with Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association and Woodmoor-Pinecrest Citizens Association to sponsor a **County Council District 5 Candidates Forum on Wednesday, May 7, 7:00 to 9:00 PM at Pinecrest Elementary School, 201 Woodmoor Drive, Silver Spring.** All five candidates have confirmed their intent to participate.

The goal of the forum's organizers (including yours truly) is to have a lively and illuminating exchange of views and policy proposals that will flush out where the candidates stand on the issues that most affect the Four Corners area and, at the same time, reveal the unique personal perspective each candidate would bring to the Council.



We also expect to hear from the candidates what their model for constituent service would be, as well as how they intend to keep abreast of and respond to local developments and concerns.

This forum is a rare opportunity for Four Corners residents to hear from the candidates first hand, in the same room, at the same time. It is also our opportunity to educate the candidates about our community and the issues that are important to us.

And since we know that one of these candidates will be our next District 5 Councilmember, it is important to have a good turnout from South Four Corners to show that our community is engaged in the political process and that we intend to communicate our concerns on a continuing basis to whomever is elected. We hope to see many of you at **Pinecrest Elementary** on **May 7!**

## JOIN US FOR ANNUAL SFCCA COMMUNITY DAY

BUILDING A STRONG COMMUNITY. ONE NEIGHBOR AT A TIME.

**Sunday, May 18 from 3-7p.m.**

**Margaret Schweinhart Center**  
1000 Forest Glen Rd.


Bring a Potluck Dish to share with others.  
Drinks and some dishes will be provided.  
Check out "Sign-up Genius" - see Web site  
and listserv for more info.

# Potluck

Music and entertainment throughout the day!


Looking for some great tips from a local golf pro?

Activities include kids  
crafts, face painting,  
balloon animals, a  
magician and more!



Prizes for the annual snowman  
contest will also be awarded.

# cakewalk



Plant swap and a kids  
transplanting of  
vegetable, flowers or  
herb bowl.

**Questions, suggestions or  
interest in volunteering?**  
**Contact Jeanne Berman at**  
**202-359-1739 or**  
**[jzberman8@gmail.com](mailto:jzberman8@gmail.com)**

Check us out on **facebook** under "South Four Corners Silver Spring"  
Join the "SFCCAMember" **YAHOO!** GROUPS and stay connected.  
Contribute financially and pay \$15 in annual dues to SFCCA via paypal or check.

Check out our Web site at [www.southfourcorners.com](http://www.southfourcorners.com)  
for resources, meeting and event information, pay dues and so much more.

## Farewell to a GIANT

by Sharon Cohany, Gilmoure Drive

Neighbors visiting Argyle Park on Forest Glen Road will notice a fallen giant.

The Black Gum tree that was over 240 years old fell in the severe windstorm of March 12.

In 1975, this tree was one of 292 trees designated as Bicentennial Trees by the Maryland Bicentennial Commission. On initial appearance it would be easy to assume the tree was dead but an inspection of the branches showed new growth bursting out.



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Did You Know....SSVFD?

By Jim Janssen, *Dallas Avenue*

Did you know that the house-like building at 108 University Boulevard that currently is occupied by a pizza delivery franchise started out as the local volunteer fire station?

The fire station was built in 1947-8 on what used to be known as Old Bladensburg Road, before being widened. The station went by Silver Spring #2



before being re-designated Station #16 (this

was done after the TV show, "Emergency!" in the 1970's, made that type of designation popular).

It housed one pumper (the old term for engines), a Seagrave, with a second being added shortly after. The station added an ambulance "shack" in the mid-fifties. The Lions Club donated the first ambulance, a Pontiac. Also housed in the station was Fire Board 1, or the south county dispatch, until 1963.

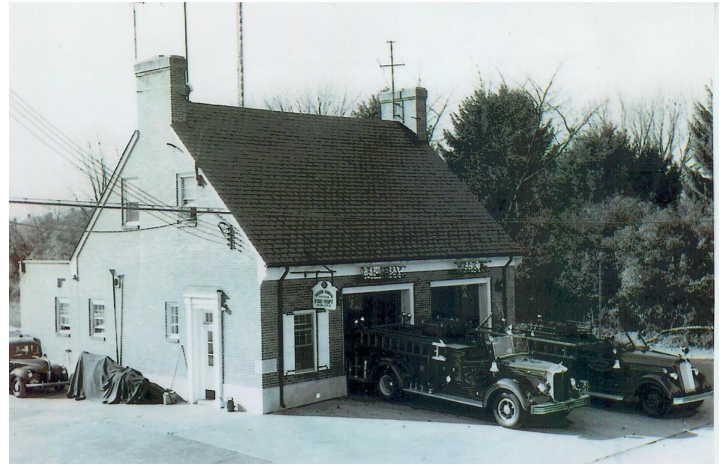
The station consisted of volunteers only until the mid/late-fifties. Gradually, volunteers were supplemented by career personnel (paid). The OIC's or Officers In Charge were career personnel and rotated between the Four Corners station and the other two SS stations, located in downtown Silver Spring and Montgomery Hills.

One of the most progressive fire departments in the nation, the Silver Spring fire department had women volunteers and became one of the first fire departments to use 2-way radios.

Besides handling emergencies, the station hosted the Annual Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department Fire Prevention Week Open House each year in early October, a very popular and well attended affair.

As the area grew in population, the county built a new facility by the beltway and the station's personnel and equipment moved in in 1968. The original building became a transmission repair business until closing around 1997. The building was remodeled and the current tenant moved in.

I want to thank Greg St. James and Kevin Horan of the MCFRS, as well as Wayne Powell of the National Fire Heritage Center for their assistance and knowledge in the preparation of this article





Spring is finally here! (I think)

I try not to repeat myself but after working in a nursery for 10 years, we often told the customer NOT to plant their summer annuals until after May 10<sup>th</sup> in our area. And yes, in my experience Mother Nature always has the last laugh. So remember to use newspaper or old blankets (not tarps or plastic covers) to protect your warm season annuals on cold nights. As I type this we are expecting freezing temperatures and the possibility of snow.

### **Lawn Care**

I am not a “grass” person and my husband usually mows the lawn but it's time for your annual reminder to get your lawnmower blade sharpened before the first cut. Blades that are less than razor-sharp tear the grass apart and make the lawn look awful.

#### Lawn-Mowing Tips:

- Don't cut the lawn if it's wet, wet grass cuts as badly as a dull blade.
- If your regular mower is old, consider purchasing a mulching mower. They cut clean and shred your grass clippings. Returning clippings to the turf not only helps to feed your lawn it also helps eliminate thatch.
- If you have a cool-season grass such as bluegrass or fescue, make sure your turf is three inches high after cutting to prevent weeds.
- Do not cut warm-season grasses until they have completely greened up.

To prevent crabgrass, spread corn gluten meal just as the soil temperature approaches 55 degrees, which is when forsythia and redbuds begin to bloom.

If you prefer, a new lawn with sod – you'll want a fescue grass for shady areas. Just be aware that fescues are clumping grasses that need to be over-seeded in the fall every couple of years because they can't fill in their own bare spots like sun-loving bluegrass. So it's critical that you identify the exact named variety of your sod so that you can buy matching seed in the years to come.

Fescue grass blades come in many shapes, shades and sizes, so only buy sod that you'll be able to match to your lawn. Don't add soil when planting sod, take some away- You often need to remove some old soil, as sod already has a considerable height of its own. till up what you have, and then carefully level the soil to where it's about an inch and a half below nearby paved surfaces. (this is better done by a professional.) You can lay sod anytime in the spring -- just have the surface prepared first, as sod should be laid the same day as purchased.

If you grow your own vegetables please visit GIEI (Grow it Eat it) website from The University of Maryland Extension [\*\*growit.umd.edu\*\*](http://growit.umd.edu)



As spring is one of the best seasons in our area, there are a number of events that I never miss in Washington DC.

### The National Cherry Blossom Festival

I usually go at sunrise because it is quiet, peaceful and I can get there easily and find perfect (free) parking. It was as beautiful as ever this year and we (DC area residents) were very fortunate to have them bloom so late and the blossoms last for almost 10 full days. I advise you to put it on your calendar for next year and get on the “National Cherry Blossom watch” alert by e-mail. (It also gives you neighborhoods that are close by that have cherry blossom views that are just as beautiful, especially if you want to take pictures or take an elderly friend or relative to see the beauty of the trees). The main event is around the Tidal Basin at the Jefferson Memorial and Washington Monument.



### White House Garden Public Tour

Twice a year the White House Garden is open to visitors. (spring and fall) Tours are held from 9am – 3pm as “To Be Announced” events. I had the opportunity to have a special guided tour from a National Park Service Ranger, who explained all the whys and whens of some of the old and new plantings of trees and special gardens of the White House. Yes, they have pictures displayed with information for educational purposes but listening to a Park Ranger who actually has input and sometimes the ear of the president is something special. It still remains as one of my most favorite “garden field trips” of my life. If you do get the chance - go! The date isn't readily available so keep looking for this information.

### Franciscan Monastery Gardens

The grounds are open year round from 9am-4:45pm and guided tours are available from spring to fall. There is always something beautiful to see in the gardens, and when the roses are in bloom the garden is spectacular. If you are a garden enthusiast you will see many different plants and flowers blooming or not every time you visit.

### The National Cathedral Flower Mart

Usually held in May, this is a great outdoor festival for garden enthusiasts and families because they have many activities beyond gardening for the kids.

### DC Passport

Also in May, for two weeks Washington, DC Embassies open their doors to the public, some of these embassies have beautiful gardens to visit as well.

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## Second-annual South Four Corners Build-A-Snowman Contest Results

**Ben Gross**

Thanks to all the South Four Corners families who showed their community spirit by entering the 2nd annual Build-a-Snowman contest!

We had a record number of entries this year—16.

Votes came in fast and furious and the SFCCA Advisory Board noting that the tallies were so close, has decided to award prizes to every family who entered!

Congratulations to the Keenans, Catrons, Koenigs, Laczezs, Marshes, McFaddens, Grosses, Conroys, Flynns, Marches, Taylor-Turners, Bishops and four other families whose information I am unable to locate.

You will receive your special prizes at the May 18 Community Day—please see Glen Richardson. For the four families whose names I have misplaced, my sincere apologies, but please do come and claim your prizes!



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## ***The Crossroads of Council District 5***

Announcing the

# Montgomery County Council District 5 Candidates Forum

**Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2014**

**Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM**

**Location: Pinecrest Elementary School, 201 Woodmoor Drive**

This forum will present an opportunity for Four Corners area residents and business owners to discuss the major topics affecting our communities' future and quality of life including:

- The proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that will cover 81 miles of major County roadways including Colesville Road (Rte. 29) and University Blvd. (Rte. 193)
- The proposed White Oak Master Plan that involves 25 million sq. ft. of new development (approaching the size of Tysons Corner).
- The potential impacts of the County Zoning Code Rewrite on the area's commercial and residential density and traffic conditions

Please bring your neighbors and your questions. Free parking is available and the site is close to several transit lines. Light refreshments will be served.

NOTE: Primary election day is June 24<sup>th</sup>, early voting period is June 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, and voter request deadline for electronic absentee ballots is June 15<sup>th</sup>. Other election information available at: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/elections](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/elections)

Jointly sponsored by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association, South Four Corners Citizens Association, and the Woodmoor-Pinecrest Citizens Association. For more information, contact Jim Zepp, 301-593-7863 or [jzepp@mindspring.com](mailto:jzepp@mindspring.com)



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