



# **SOUTH FOUR CORNERS**

## **C i t i z e n s   A s s o c i a t i o n**



**November/December 2013 Newsletter**

**Next SFCCA Meeting: Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 p.m.  
at the Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road**

### **November Meeting**



Brett Linkletter, Chief of the Tree Maintenance Section for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation will join us at the November 11 meeting for a discussion about his work with the county's Right of Way project.

Linkletter's responsibilities include caring for an estimated 450,000 existing trees in Montgomery County, as well as 1,500 new trees planted in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. Linkletter's staff includes six arborists who inspect trees and 27 crews that handle branch pruning and tree removal.

Linkletter has a degree in Urban Forestry from the University of Minnesota and is a certified arborist and forester. He has worked as a city arborist in Takoma Park, for Bartlett Tree Experts company and The Care of Trees firm.

## **SFCCA SEEKS PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT**

**SFCCA is seeking a President and Vice President to replace our retiring officers. Elections for the one-year terms of office will be held at the May 2014 SFCCA community meeting. Other officers, committee chairs and an advisory committee are in place to help you.**

**Interested parties may contact David Meininger at [JDavidM@juno.com](mailto:JDavidM@juno.com) or Glen Richardson at 301-681-8030 to discuss the positions.**

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**November 11, 2013, 7 p.m.—SFCCA Meeting, Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Rd.  
November 16, 2013, 10 a.m.—Clean-up of Forest Glen Rd (meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)  
December 7, 2013, 5 p.m.—3rd Annual Tree Lighting, Rogart Rd. & Lanark Way  
January 13, 2013, 7 p.m.—SFCCA Meeting, Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Rd.**

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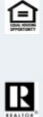
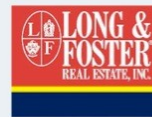
*Thanks again.*

*Dave*

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## Fall Home Maintenance Tips

**Betty Batty, Dallas Avenue**

Have you checked off everything on your Fall home maintenance checklist?

- Replace batteries in your smoke/carbon monoxide detectors and check fire extinguishers
- Replace weather stripping around doors and windows
- Clean out your dryer vent
- Schedule a chimney inspection and sweep
- Trim tree branches that are close to power lines and your house
- Turn off outdoor faucets
- Clean and install storm windows and doors
- Schedule your annual furnace inspection and service appointment



## Volunteers URGENTLY Needed for 2014 Community Day

The South Four Corners Community Day has been rescheduled for the weekend of May 17-18 at the Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road.

Community Day is a great chance to get to know your South Four Corners neighbors, set up play dates, make business and civic contacts, and just have fun!



Ever hear the saying, “many hands make light work”? Well, help make light work out of Community Day by volunteering!

We have many neighbors who have offered to head up some of the bigger tasks but we still need help behind them.

Feel free to post your interest on the South Four Corners Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/pages/South-Four-Corners-Silver-Spring](http://www.facebook.com/pages/South-Four-Corners-Silver-Spring)) or send an email to [SFCCAEditor@gmail.com](mailto:SFCCAEditor@gmail.com)



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**- Benjamin Franklin**

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### **Rainscapes for Healthy Watersheds**

Pam Rowe from the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection was the guest speaker. The topic was "Rainscapes for Healthy Watersheds". "She explained how the use of environmentally friendly landscapes and rain gardens can help filter runoff carrying pollutants, products we use on our lawns, and other toxins into our streams and rivers.

Ms. Rowe also recommended the use of rain barrels as a tool to collect and recycle rainwater that would otherwise enter our waterways.

Ms. Rowe further explained how a tree canopy facilitates movement of water into the ground through the root system of the tree.

It was mentioned that Forest Estates and Sligo Park Hills are two areas nearby that have rain gardens. Keeping them well maintained does require regular weeding and edging.

For specific information about Montgomery County's RainScapes Rewards Rebate Program for homeowners, go to [www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/Rainscape/](http://www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/Rainscape/)."

### **The Siena School**

A representative offered an update on attendance and other projects. They have 84 students and can handle as many as 110. They worked with Michael Lucy on the landscaping outside the school. Also, the students are planting gardens at the Senior Center. They also have a bridge!

### **National Night Out**

Marty, Eileen and Marie made National Night Out a huge success. It was the 13<sup>th</sup> time for it. David and Evelyn were also a huge help that day. It was announced in the Gazette. We don't control the date, but we wish we did at times!

### **VOLUNTEERS! VOLUNTEERS!! VOLUNTEERS!!! VOLUNTEERS!!!!**

As always more neighbors are needed for all events that are put on by our community. Come on out and see how much fun there is and help in any small way you can.

### **Ice Cream Social**

Jeanne Berman talked about how successful the ice cream social on August 24th was. And a first for our community, two very small volunteers were the artists who made our signs. Great job, kids!

### **Halloween Parade and Party on October 27<sup>th</sup>**

The parade goes up Portland and down Dallas. Cupcakes for all—the event is enjoyable whether you have children or not!.

### **Block Parties**

Neighborhood block parties have been a huge success. It's easy to get a permit to throw one. Plan now for next year.



## 2013 South Four Corners Halloween Parade



The Annual South Four Corners Halloween Parade took place on Sunday, October 27 and we had a great turn out. Lots of super heroes, ninjas, princesses and pirates. Thanks to all those who donated sweets and made signs.

We live in a great community and these events allow us to catch up with neighbors and meet new friends. About 175 joined us for the parade. Great to see so many folks.



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## The Gardening Guru

**Jeanne Berman, Horticulturalist**

Another gardening season has ended and we have visited 12 gardens this summer. Thank you to all who have offered your gardens and those of you who have shown interest in this activity.

All are welcome to join us, the visits usually take 45 minutes and we all learn something at each garden.



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I accept Blue Cross Blue Shield  
and Aetna health insurance.  
Services are also available on a  
sliding-scale basis.

When you offer your garden to the community, I come and organize the community to visit and learn from your garden.

We are always looking for a garden to view whether it has been professionally designed, you just moved in and are looking for advice, or you are a do-it-yourselfer.

Let us come meet you and see your individual style of gardening. I am planning to continue this community activity next season so please think about sharing your garden space with us.

You can reach me by e-mail [jzberman8@gmail.com](mailto:jzberman8@gmail.com) and please put 'garden classroom tour' in the subject line. Give me your best date and I usually advertise via list-serv.





## Fall/Winter Gardening Tips

- Plant spring bulbs, new trees and shrubs until the ground freezes.
- Leaf Pick up begins November 4. We are schedule 10 C - so be alert for the notices that are posted. Our neighborhood will have 2 scheduled pick ups (with the first on November 5). Leaves are NOT to be on the street, they would like you to keep them on the grass. See MCDOT for more information.
- The best mulch... rake your leaves, mow over them, rake them again, mow over them again. Then distribute them into your garden beds. This is great source of mulch and you do not have to put them on the curb or purchase any mulch for the season.
- Be aware of perennials or other plants you may want to divide and share next spring. I plan to have another community plant swap most likely on Community Day May 17, 2014.
- December: moderately prune your evergreens and use some of the cuttings for indoor decorating.
- January: prune damaged branches, brush snow off any shrubs or trees. (Heavy snow can kill them.

## PA Pumpkin Growers Weigh Off *(continued from last newsletter)*

On Saturday, October 5, I left at 6:00 AM on my way to Altoona, PA to see the PA Growers Pumpkin Weigh Off.

I arrived at 8:30 AM and watched as they lifted the last of the 800 plus pound pumpkins with a forklift and a series of belts so not to damage the 'kin' on a palette to view and to prepare them for the scales. I was early so that I could mingle with World Class growers and amateurs and learn some techniques that might help me grow a larger pumpkin.

It is all about your soil, organic growing, proper care, constant measuring, time, good weather and LOVE. Needless to say I had a blast!



There were over 40 pumpkins to be weighed, the weather was beautiful and the crowd friendly.

There were many pumpkins, tomatoes, zucchini and squash to be measured and weighed.

Silly and fun all at the same time!

The PA Growers Association also awards prize money to largest tomato, squash and zucchini. I was amazed at looking at a zucchini duct taped to a 2x4, OK 2x8. Just crazy. The tomatoes looked like soccer balls and I learned that if a "pumpkin" does not have any orange color to it, it is considered a squash and those were as large as the pumpkin I had hoped to grow. Yes, hoped to grow.

I lost my pumpkin. My pumpkin took up residence on a bad spot in my perennial bed and was damaged by some of my woody perennials. When I noticed the leaking orange juice pouring off my curb I was devastated but I rushed in to get the scale just to see if I beat my personal best of 39.8 pounds, not by much when I weighed it, it was 40.3 pounds. So I will try again next year but I think I need to find a larger patch to continue my growing efforts. The winning pumpkin for the day In PA weighed 1683 pounds by a new friend Paul Falk.



I did get to meet one of the guys allowed to wear the orange jacket, Larry Checkon who grew the World's Largest pumpkin on October 1, 2005, It weighed 1,469 pounds. Pumpkin growers continue to push the barriers. The World record is currently held by Ron Wallace who grew a pumpkin weighing in at 2009 pounds in 2012.

## **Mark your calendars for Annual Tree Lighting**

***Ben Wilson, Lanark Way***



Join your neighbors and friends on Saturday, December 7 at 5 p.m. for cookies, hot cocoa and lots of holiday cheer.

We will gather around the tree at Rogart Rd. & Lanark Way for the third annual tree lighting. Happy Holidays!



**SFCCA ADVISORY BOARD RESPONDS TO ZONING CODE REWRITE** *Larry Dickter, Lanark Way*

Did you know that the Montgomery County Council is in the midst of completely overhauling the County's current zoning code? The end result (expected in early 2014) of this effort will determine the County's approach to land use planning, as well as its growth and development policies for decades to come.

SFCCA is currently wrestling with the staggering complexities of this incredibly ambitious undertaking, so as to gain a better understanding of its implications for existing residential neighborhoods such as ours.

Fortunately, many other neighborhood associations and dedicated citizen activists are also scrutinizing the zoning rewrite with an eye towards asking questions, identifying potential problems and offering alternatives **before** the new zoning code is adopted and becomes law countywide.

To that end, the SFCCA Advisory Board recently transmitted some of its concerns to the County Council in the letter on page 10:



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## Advisory Board Letter to the County Council on Zoning Rewrite

*Dear Council President Navarro,*

*The Advisory Board of the South Four Corners Citizens Association (SFCCA) is closely monitoring the Zoning Code Rewrite currently under review by the Montgomery County Council, with an eye towards any undesirable changes that may threaten the character of well-established single family neighborhoods such as ours of over 1200 homes and/or reduce the opportunity for public participation in future land use and development decisions.*

*We believe that the Hippocratic dictum “First Do No Harm,” as invoked by Councilmember Ervin last spring even before the draft Rewrite was transmitted to Council, should still be the guiding principle as Council review proceeds.*

*In addition, we would suggest that you and your colleagues frequently stop and ask yourselves along the way the underlying question as follows: Who stands to benefit and/or profit most from these changes? We hope you would agree that the answer in every case should be the residents of Montgomery County.*

*At this point in time, we are dismayed at the direction the Zoning Code Rewrite appears to be taking. Generally speaking, we find the current emphasis on developer “flexibility” over neighborhood compatibility, certainty, and participation to be the most troubling and problematic insofar as neighborhood protections are concerned.*

*Specifically, the reduction in public participation through the introduction of more “by-right” intrusive uses and building types in and adjacent to single family residential zones directly threatens the stability and integrity of neighborhoods within those zones.*

*Before the Council fundamentally alters our planning and zoning processes, we urge you and your colleagues to take several steps back and consider the potential impacts on our existing residential neighborhoods, which, after all is said and done, collectively constitute one of Montgomery County’s greatest strengths and attractions to both current and future residents.*

*It is clear to us that the Zoning Rewrite, as initially proposed, would turn our current master planning process on its head. As Councilmember Elrich has pointed out: “Instead of master plans managing change which is then enacted through the zoning ordinance, the new zoning ordinance dictates change.”*

*If Council adopts the proposed “one size fits all” Countywide District Map Amendment (DMA), would that not automatically replace existing master and sector plan maps, without community review or participation? And once the proposed DMA is applied Countywide, how will the unique and carefully considered needs of each neighborhood then be taken into account?*

*Unfortunately, community representatives generally do not enjoy the same access to (let alone influence with) County policy-makers as development and other special interests do, even though our County’s future rests largely on the continued strength and integrity of our neighborhoods.*

*It is our hope that, as Council’s review of the Zoning Rewrite proceeds, neighborhood voices will not only be heard, but actively sought out and taken seriously by you and your colleagues. Just as new master and sector plans are designed and reviewed, this Rewrite must be inclusive of all stakeholders, not just those who can afford expensive land use attorneys, consultants, and other paid representatives. And with the future of development in the County for decades to come on the line, the stakes could not be higher.*

*We thank you for your consideration and look forward to your thoughtful reply.*



## Maryland's Largest Sassafras Tree is on Forest Glen Road

There is something about a big tree that commands interest, respect and a certain amount of awe. Trees are the oldest and largest living things on the planet, and largest sassafras tree in Maryland is right here in our community at 817 Forest Glen Road!

The Maryland Forestry Board uses three criteria to officially classify a tree as a "Big Tree" - trunk circumference, vertical height and average crown spread.

The sassafras Big Tree in South Four Corners—which is estimated to be 125 years old—measures 71 feet tall, 132 inches around the trunk and has a crown spread of 41 feet.





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