



# SOUTH FOUR CORNERS

## Citizens Association



*Building a stronger community, one neighbor at a time*

May/June 2019

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### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**May 18, 2019 – 10 am**

Adopt a Road, Forest Glen Rd  
(meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

**May 20, 2019 – 7 pm**

SFCCA Community Meeting  
Schweinhaut Senior Center

**July 13, 2019 – 10 am**

Adopt a Road, Forest Glen Rd  
(meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

**July 15, 2019 – 7 pm**

SFCCA Community Meeting  
Schweinhaut Senior Center

**Aug 6, 2019**

National Night Out

**Sept 14, 2019 – 10 am**

Adopt a Road, Forest Glen Rd  
(meet at Argyle Park tennis courts)

**Sept 16, 2019 – 7 pm**

SFCCA Community Meeting  
Schweinhaut Senior Center

## Next SFCCA Meeting

**Monday, May 20 at 7pm**

Schweinhaut Senior Center 1000 Forest Glen Road

Featured Guest Speaker:

**Jamie Kuhns**

**Montgomery County Parks**

We are all fortunate to live in Montgomery County where we never have to travel far from our own backyard to a local park. Our featured speaker, **Jamie Kuhns**, represents Montgomery Parks, where she holds the position of **Senior Historian in the Cultural Resources Stewardship Section**. It is her job to produce the research necessary to design the Parks' museums and to develop interpretive tours.

Most recently, Ms. Kuhns worked on developing the Woodlawn Museum in Sandy Spring, which highlights the area's agricultural landscape, the Underground Rail Road, local free black communities and the Quaker experience in Montgomery County. She is currently the cultural resources project manager for the new Josiah Henson Museum scheduled to open next year. She is also the author of the just published, deeply researched biography of Reverend Henson, whose 1849 autobiography inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's landmark novel Uncle Tom's Cabin.



Ms. Kuhns has worked in various capacities at several museums and archives in Delaware and Virginia before coming to Montgomery Parks. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in history, from Radford and James Madison Universities, respectively, and is currently completing a doctoral degree in the history of American civilization.

**Please join us!**

SFCCA meetings are held bi-monthly on the third Monday of January, March, May, July, September, and November at Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Rd. When the third Monday of the month falls on a federal holiday, the meeting is postponed, space permitting, to the following day.



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## President's Corner

# A TIME FOR CHANGE

Dear Neighbors,

**H**ow lucky we are! Spring is a magnificent time of year—a true feast for the senses. Everywhere I look I see bright green colors, new leaves, and budding flowers. I can't get enough of the fresh air and the sweet smells. The sun feels warm on my skin and I've even ventured out barefoot in my yard, where the grass beneath my feet is beginning to feel soft instead of prickly. I'm reveling in the returning bird calls and playful sounds of kids bursting outdoors after a long, silent winter. This morning's eggs even included fresh, new spinach from my mother-in-law's garden! It doesn't get much better than this.

This time of year shines with opportunities for renewal, birth, and growth. We're lucky to have the chance each year to choose new leadership for SFCCA, refreshing our commitment to our neighbors and co-creating the spirit of South Four Corners.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve SFCCA for the last three years. I've witnessed firsthand the strength and commitment of our community to make South Four Corners a great place to live, work, play, raise families, and retire. Over the years, I've seen how service and civic pride is embedded in our community through regular park clean-ups, Halloween parades, tree lightings, bi-monthly meetings, book clubs, Community Days, newsletter distributions, Welcome Bags, and yard sales. I commend you, neighbors, for your participation in and dedication to our current, shared "hometown!"

As I step down from SFCCA leadership this month, I urge each of you to heed the call of civic participation by running as an officer of our citizens association, leading a committee, or volunteering in some way. Specifically, we are looking to fill the following roles:

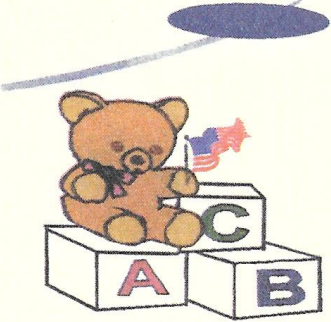
- **President** – Represents SFCCA to local government, co-leads advocacy efforts, leads SFCCA meetings, selects speakers, contributes to the newsletter, and coordinates committees.
- **Vice President** – Supports SFCCA President, co-leads advocacy efforts, selects speakers when needed, contributes to the newsletter.
- **Secretary** – Takes notes during SFCCA meetings and shares them with the larger community.
- **Social Events Chair** – Plans and oversees the community's annual social events.

I promise you, you will get more out of this experience than you give, and be inspired by the dedication of those working on behalf of our community. It's been a great three years for me. Together we are truly living into our motto, *"Building a stronger community, one neighbor at a time."*

**Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!** Let's remain in touch.

*Carolyn Stanek Lucy*

Proud Outgoing President of SFCCA



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## Election of Officers



**The annual election of SFCCA officers is held at the upcoming May meeting.** Members will nominate and elect the next President, Vice President, Treasurer and

Secretary to serve the community until May 2020. Any member in good standing is eligible to vote and to serve. Nomination of officers may be made from the floor while the May meeting is in progress.

**Run for an elected position, volunteer as Social Events Chair, join us and vote!**



# SHA OFFICIALS CONFRONTED BY AREA RESIDENTS

By Laurence Dickter

**O**n April 18, officials from the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) came to Four Corners to meet with area residents who have questions and concerns about Governor Larry Hogan's proposal to widen the Capital Beltway in order to add two privately built and managed toll lanes in each direction.

This was a unique opportunity to directly question SHA Administrator Greg Slater and members of the project team that is in charge of what would be the largest "public-private partnership" (P3) ever undertaken in the United States.

Whatever project design that the state eventually chooses would, by necessity, involve cutting a wide swath through parkland, stream valleys, forested areas and adjacent neighborhoods around the Beltway. South Four Corners, in particular, stands to be among the most adversely impacted communities once (or if) the project moves forward.

Given the intense interest this has aroused in the Silver Spring area and elsewhere, many residents of nearby neighborhoods, particularly Indian Springs, showed up for this meeting in force.

The standing room only crowd packed the large meeting room at Christ Congregational Church on Colesville Road. One impassioned speaker after another took the microphone to condemn the lack of any meaningful public engagement throughout the process and/or to denounce the seemingly offhanded dismissal of any alternative to relieving traffic congestion on the Beltway other than adding lanes.

Moreover, some of the basic assumptions being used to justify the project, as well as the modeling being used to support it, were frequently challenged. But even though much of the criticism was often quite pointed, the exchange was conducted in a consistently civil and respectful manner.

The vague, boilerplate answers to many questions, together with occasionally tepid responses to personal testimonials, may have been intended to mollify the crowd, but often just the opposite effect was achieved. For instance, the statement that the private, profit-driven companies that are



to be chosen by the state to design, build, operate, and maintain the toll lanes (in exchange for keeping toll revenue) will be "incentivized" to "mitigate" private and public property losses resulting from the project did not go over very well.

Mr. Slater is a personable and, no doubt, an honorable man and consummate professional. However, he is in the unenviable position of working under a Governor and a Transportation Secretary (Pete Rahn) who have made contradictory, even fanciful, claims about the project, especially about the potential for "collateral damage" to properties in its path.

While he deserves a lot of credit for meeting with a roomful of skeptics who clearly had done their homework, Mr. Slater found it difficult at times to provide satisfactory answers to questions about such things as the spotty record of P3s (which often experience financial distress, leaving taxpayers on the hook) and the relationship between added road capacity and "induced demand".

Many speakers whose homes could be demolished, or who could lose part of their backyards, delivered some of the most powerful testimony. Residents who bought homes in close-in suburbs such as ours are finding out now that their lives may be upended and their investments in their homes may be in serious jeopardy through no fault of their own.

(For the record: Of all the audience participants who spoke out during the meeting, not a single one spoke in favor of the proposal to widen the Beltway.)

At the moment, the state estimates that approximately 1500 residential properties may be directly impacted in some



way if the Beltway is expanded. Many more of us will be adversely impacted in other, more indirect, ways that nonetheless may affect our quality of life.

Although **nothing is final yet**, it appears at the moment that portions of the Silver Spring YMCA are at risk, along with South Four Corners Park, Argyle Recreation Center, Sligo Golf Course, Schweinhaut Senior Center, and other community assets.

It also appears likely that the small businesses at the end of Forest Glen Road -- the barber shop, dry cleaner, deli/grocery -- will be demolished to make way for the apparent reconfiguration of the Beltway ramp on the South Four Corners side of Colesville Road.

To view an interactive online map of the project's preliminary design, go to:

<https://495-270-p3.com/your-participation/meeting-materials>

This mapping tool is designed to provide a snapshot of the current alternatives that the state is looking at, with the caveat that the study is **in the draft stage and is subject to change**. If you wish to find a specific property, you can type the address into the search box in the left hand corner of the map.

Although the state has not yet completed any formal environmental impact study, a preliminary estimate from SHA reveals that nearly 1200 acres of forest canopy would have to be denuded in order to widen the Beltway from the George Washington Parkway to west of MD 5 in Prince George's County. Untold thousands of mature trees that provide a natural buffer for adjacent communities, help to reduce air pollution by filtering particulate matter, reduce noise pollution and heat, and provide shade and wildlife habitat would have to be cleared before **any** of the project alternatives could be fully implemented.

In the final analysis, whatever project design is chosen will probably be dictated as much by politics as anything else. In the recently adjourned session of the Maryland state legislature, the best chance to build critically needed accountability and transparency into the solicitation process through legislation died on the final day.

Due to the way the Maryland State Senate operates, a single senator was able to block a bill that would have required the state to do a complete analysis of the added lanes' potential environmental and community impacts before soliciting companies to build them.

Although the bill passed the House of Delegates by a large,

veto-proof margin, Senator Nancy King, who represents an up-county Montgomery County district and who chairs the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, refused to allow "her" committee to even vote on it, thus killing the bill before it could reach the Senate floor.

The action now moves to the Maryland Board of Public Works, which is composed of the governor, comptroller, and state treasurer. It is the Board's responsibility to scrutinize most state contracts and, therefore, it must give the go-ahead before SHA can begin the solicitation process to select its "private partners" in the state's Beltway expansion plan.

While it is a given that Hogan will vote to proceed with the solicitation process, and while Comptroller Peter Franchot generally votes with the Governor, Treasurer Nancy Kopp's vote **may** go the other way in light of her testimony during the session in favor of the legislation cited above. The questions for both Franchot and Kopp is whether it is fiscally prudent, as well as environmentally sound, to start signing contracts worth between \$9 and \$11 billion before any financial, community and environmental impact analyses are completed.

As the chief financial officer for the state, Franchot writes on his website that part of his job is to "shine a light on how your tax dollars are spent and what you get for your money". Given that the Comptroller's vote on the Board **may** be the "swing" vote on whether or not to immediately begin soliciting contracts, the best strategy at the moment might be to call (410-260-7801) or email ([pfranchot@comp.state.md.us](mailto:pfranchot@comp.state.md.us)) his office to remind him of his obligations and how important fiscal responsibility, accountability, and transparency are, particularly when billions of dollars are in play as they are in this case.

Given some of the intense feelings and commentary about Beltway widening recently posted on the SFCCA listserv, and in view of the severity of the threat to our neighborhood, a strong turnout at related meetings and events in the future is also encouraged. ■

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## Just Listed



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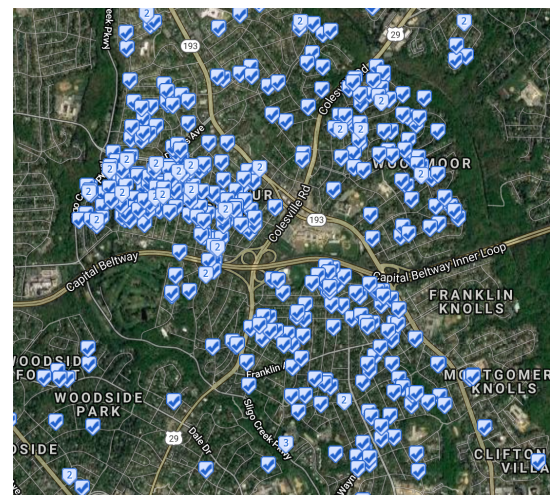
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## Seasonal

### **NEW!** GARDENING CLUB

**O**ur first meeting was April 7—short and sweet, with six folks (three female, three male) attending.

Discussion ranged from tree removal to compost, irises to pachysandra... and places to shop, after Behnke Nurseries is no more. Seeds were shared and equipment sharing was suggested.

A group email serves as our main communication, and we can entertain suggestions about speakers and demonstrations, field trips, etc. If you are planning a project, and could use some help with advice and/or muscle, put out the call to the group, and you just might get what you need.

If you want to be included in the group email, drop a line to **Earl Shoop** at [eshoop@verizon.net](mailto:eshoop@verizon.net).



## Kudos!

### THANK YOU, JENNY CANNON!

**W**e are deeply grateful to Jenny for leading our community's social events over the past three years. Jenny has created wonderful events for children, families, and all neighbors to come together and have fun! Thank you, Jenny, for organizing and promoting ice cream socials, movie nights, community yard sales, Halloween

parades, and holiday tree lightings. Our community is more connected than ever because of your dedication! Thank you for promoting fun, frivolity, and joy!



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TTY (for hearing impaired): 240-773-3556    Police & fire emergency: 911  
Police non-emergency: 301-279-8000    Fire non-emergency: 240-776-4700  
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## SFCCA Officers & Chairpersons


### Officers:

Carolyn Stanek Lucy, President • Laurence Dickter, Vice President  
Secretary **VACANT** • Richard Messalle, Treasurer

### Chairpersons:

Eileen Broderick, Membership • Nghi Nguyen, Neighborhood Safety  
Jane Jannotta, Newsletter Editor • Dave Nettleton, Newsletter Distribution  
Dave West, Listserv Manager • Emma Bennett, Website/Social Media  
John Holden, Welcome Bags • Jenny Cannon, Social Events Chair  
Michael Lucy, Public Works • John & Peri Evanoff, Diversity & Inclusion

**SFCCA May/June 2019**



It's that time of year.

## FIGHT THE BITE

**Block**

- Use insect repellent.
- Check window and door screens for rips.
- Wear long-sleeves and pants.

**Inspect for Areas of Standing Water**


Check outdoor areas around your home, apartment or balcony for standing water.

**Take Action**

Follow the checklist on the back for actions you can take to prevent mosquito breeding.

**Educate Yourself and Your Family**

Learn more about mosquitoes at: [montgomerycountymd.gov/mosquito](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/mosquito), or call 311.



## SFCCA Addresses & Social Media

**Mailing Address:** SFCCA PO Box 792  
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