



# Civic Federation News

December 2013

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Official Publication of the  
Montgomery County Civic  
Federation

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**Recipients of the e-newsletter are encouraged to forward it widely**

## December Program: Expanding Late Night Entertainment Businesses by Jim Zepp, Public Safety Chair

Our program on Monday, December 2 will be a presentation by the leadership of the Night Time Economy Task Force, which developed a set of recommendations over the summer for promoting late night entertainment businesses in Montgomery County. It is believed that the County would be more attractive for existing and potential residents if there were more entertainment-related, late night businesses and that current limits on serving alcoholic beverages and noise restrictions in large commercial areas are putting Montgomery County's at a competitive disadvantage (see related article on local migration trends). Furthermore, this would result in tax revenues greater than the increased costs for related public services. Consequently, the County Executive appointed this group to study the issue for six months and formulate recommendations for encouraging an expansion of late night business activities primarily in the major commercial areas in Bethesda, Germantown, Rockville, Silver Spring, and Wheaton.

While the Task Force made a series of recommendations across a range of topics and agencies, the ones with the greatest potential impacts for public safety and community concerns involve:

1. Extending the hours that venues with beer/wine/liquor licenses can serve alcoholic beverages to 2:00 a.m., Sundays through Thursdays and 3:00 a.m. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays before holidays.
2. Modifying the required food to alcohol sales ratio for

3. Creating a "social venue" license that would cost more to obtain, but would not be subject to food to alcohol sales ratio requirement.
4. Amending the County's Noise Ordinance by establishing Urban Noise Areas for major public gathering places such as Veterans Plaza in Silver Spring and Rockville's Town Square where arts and entertainment activities would be permitted to be up to 85 decibels (comparable

**December Meeting**  
**Monday, December 2**  
(see back page for details)

to standing 3" from a running garbage disposal) measured at 100" from stage or speakers until midnight. Individuals considering residing in these Urban Noise Areas in the future would receive warnings from realtors about the noisy nights they should expect but no tax

subsidies for ear plugs. No compensation is proposed for property owners/renters currently residing in these areas.

5. Expanding police, alcohol beverage licensing/enforcement, and public transportation services in response to the proposed policy changes. No estimates of needed resources or costs are provided.
6. Amending zoning standards to provide flexibility in complying with public use space and open space requirements and to allow more density in the County's urban areas in order to promote night-time businesses.

More information about the Task Force, its activities, and its recommendations are available on its Website at: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/nighttimeeconomy](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/nighttimeeconomy)

## Shop Small, Shop Local

### President's Message, by Carole Ann Barth

By the time you read this, Small Business Saturday (November 30) may have come and gone. Still, with the advent of the holiday shopping season, this seems like a good time to talk about the joys and value of patronizing our local small businesses.

It's well-known that small businesses are important job engines, and that local businesses return more to the local economy than large, multinational corporations do. Also, when local businesses grow, they are more likely to stay local. A large company may get localities to compete for the location of its facilities, but as soon as the grass looks greener elsewhere, it is gone.

This is the concept behind "economic gardening", where local government looks for non-monetary ways to help local

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businesses grow and build capacity. It is similar to the Peace Corps' philosophy of providing a "hand-up" versus a "handout".

Instead of giving a business tax relief or site improvements, economic gardening focuses on information and skills, such as developing new markets, refining business models and gaining access to competitive intelligence. As the Edward Lowe Foundation puts it, "Economic gardening specialists help CEOs identify which issues are hindering their growth and then leverage sophisticated tools to deliver insights and information that CEOs can apply immediately." To my mind, this is a much more sensible approach than traditional economic development programs.

Economic policies aside, I simply enjoy shopping with local merchants who supply products and experiences you can't get elsewhere. (No matter how many designers and consultants they hire, no large chain can replace the sheer quirkiness of a genuine, local, small business.)

Below are some of my favorites, and why I like them. I encourage Civic Federation members to write in and share your own favorite local spots.

**Woodmoor Pastry Shop** - This bakery is an old-fashioned delight I've been coming to since childhood. The staff rises in the middle of the night to make yummy treats from real ingredients. Standouts include the Danish, raspberry tortes, and eclairs. Come holidays, there are boxed orders rising up to the ceiling. Every year, the bakery closes for two weeks in July. This annoys the shopping center management, but long-time customers understand that the staff deserves a break, and if you can't go without they will sell you frozen dough to tide you over.

**Santucci's Italian Deli** - Even devotees of New York delis and Philadelphia cheese steaks love the Italian cold cut sub, meatball sub, and cheese steak subs Carlo Santucci and his crew make. I generally get two meals out of an affordably-priced 10 inch sub. You can also get entrees, salads, sauces and pasta to take home for dinner. If you order a salad, heed the sign which says "All salads are served with bacon unless you order otherwise." Carlo served on the Citizens Advisory Committee that helped craft the Four Corners Master Plan, which sought to preserve the thriving and diverse Four Corners communities and their walkability.

**Heyser Farms** - Another place that's been on my go-to list since childhood is Heyser Farms. Heyser's has produce, eggs, milk, and meat from nearby farms in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Every year we wait for the donut peaches and Spencerville red apples to come in. To my mind, this is also the spot for the best cinnamon donuts, apple pies, cider, and applesauce. This time of year, you can watch the apples heading to the cider press. Mike Heyser is always happy to show folks around his collection of antique farm equipment, much of which he still uses!

So even though the official Small Business Saturday has passed, I encourage you to get out and visit these establishments and other home-grown gems throughout the year. Remember, it is all too easy to lose these unique amenities that help give our communities their character.

There are always schemes to redevelop, revitalize or "improve" our neighborhood shopping areas. Too often, these result in lengthy disruptions and/or higher rents than small businesses can afford. The result is an endless repetition of the same national chains, in cookie-cutter developments where shopping is nothing more than a chore.

## Civic Federation Leadership, 2013-2014

### Nominations Committee

We need volunteers including a chairman to serve on the MCCF Nominating Committee. There is no better way to help highlight shared County concerns and provide a bigger voice for citizens and their civic associations. The Committee is looking to fill the elective positions on the Executive Committee: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. No travel! No meetings! Most of the work will be done by telephone. Please contact President Carole Ann Barth at 301593-7863 or by email: cbarth@mindspring.com to volunteer to help with this important task.

### 2013 Awards Committee

The Civic Federation's Annual Awards Banquet on Friday, May 2, is just around the corner. The work of this committee – accepting nominations for award recipients, evaluating those nominations and making final recommendations on the awardees -- should be of short duration and may be done largely by phone. The committee will be confirmed at the January Executive Committee meeting. Please also start thinking now about individuals and/or groups you would like to nominate. Here are the descriptions of the awards and the rationale for each award:

**The Wayne Goldstein Award:** awarded to an individual or group for outstanding service to the people of Montgomery County.

**The Sentinel Award** - sponsored by the Montgomery Sentinel newspaper and awarded to an individual or group for a significant contribution to good government at the local level.

**The Star Cup** - sponsored by the Federation and to be awarded to a Delegate or Committee of the Federation for outstanding public service on behalf of Montgomery County.

Please contact Carole Ann Barth at 301593-7863 or by email: cbarth@mindspring.com if you have a nomination or if you are willing to serve on the Awards Committee. We cannot do this without your help!

## Mark Your Calendar

Dates of 2014 MCCF Meetings

January 13	February 10
March 10	April 14
May 12	June 9
Awards Banquet, Friday May 2	

## Don't Miss Out on Homestead Tax Credit

By Louis Wilen, Public Utilities Chair

Thousands of Maryland homeowners stand to lose out on valuable property tax credits next year because they have not completed the "Homestead Credit Eligibility Application" that has a final deadline of December 30, 2013.

The credits, officially called the "homestead credit" and "offset credit", are available to every homeowner who uses his or her home as their principal residence. After discovering that these credits were being erroneously applied to thousands of properties, the Maryland legislature passed a law in 2007 requiring property owners who use their home as their principal residence to submit a one-time application certifying that their home is really their principal residence. Every homeowner received at least two notices about the application requirement (along with copies of application forms) from the State Department of Assessments and Taxation over the past six years, but some homeowners still have not submitted the forms.

There are no income requirements or age requirements to qualify for the homestead credit or the offset credit. If you own your home and it is your principal residence (not a rental property or a vacation home), then you are eligible for the credits, but you MUST complete the one-time application to continue receiving the credits. If you own multiple homes in Maryland, you can claim only one of them as your principal residence.

The amount of the homestead credit varies each year, and depends mainly on how much your property has appreciated in the most recent assessment. With property values increasing again, the homestead credit could be anywhere from \$0 to thousands of dollars.

The amount of the offset credit is the same for all principal residences, and has been set to \$692 by the County Council for the past several years. By completing the "Homestead Credit Eligibility Application" (and satisfying the principal

residence requirements), you will also qualify for the offset credit.

If you filled it out the application already (perhaps several years ago), there is no need to fill it out again. To check the status of your Homestead Credit Verification Application, go to [http://sdatcert3.resiusa.org/rp\\_rewrite](http://sdatcert3.resiusa.org/rp_rewrite). Select your county, then select "Street Address". Enter your address (without any suffix, such as DR, RD, CT, etc.). Then scroll to the bottom of the screen to see the status.

If the status is "Approved", then you completed the form already and no further action is needed.

If the status is "Application Received", then your application has been received but there might be problem with it, so you should call the homestead hotline at 1-866-650-8783 to sort out any problems.

If the status is "No Application", then you should complete the application and submit it immediately. It takes less than five minutes to complete. See the left column of the following web page for information about how to obtain and complete the application: <http://www.dat.state.md.us>

Don't confuse the HOMESTEAD credit with the HOMEOWNERS credit. The HOMEOWNERS credit does have income limits and requires submission of an application each year.

One other point: Making a false claim of principal residence status will subject the property owner to a 25% property tax penalty and other possible penalties.

If you have friends or relatives who tend to overlook these types of things, you might share this information with them. They'll be grateful that you saved them hundreds or even thousands of dollars on their property tax bill next year and in future years.

## State Legislation

By Dan Wilhelm, Legislative Chair

The Maryland General Assembly convenes on January 8 and runs until April 7 for the 90 day 2014 legislative session. The Montgomery County Delegation has already started considering legislation. They held a "Priorities" hearing on November 20 and will hold a hearing on December 2 for local bills (bills affecting only Montgomery County) and December 4 for bi-county bills. The bi-county bills affect WSSC and M-NCPPC and affect both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. For information on local and bi-county bills, see [www.montgomerycountydelegation.com](http://www.montgomerycountydelegation.com). Those bills that are approved locally will be introduced to the entire General Assembly for action. For information about all formally introduced bills, see <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov>. There will be some 2500 bills introduced before the session is complete.

The MCCF Executive Committee (ExComm) considers many bills and decides which ones to take positions on - those on subjects of interest to MCCF. Any controversial topic would be brought before the membership before taking a position. If anyone knows of a bill that MCCF should support or oppose, please contact Dan Wilhelm. The ExComm considered local and bi-county bills at its November 21 meeting and took the following positions on bills:

**MC 1-14: Barbershops – Restriction on Operation.**

ExComm supported this bill. It will repeal current law that limits the number of days per week that a barbershop can be open. Passage of this bill would mean they can be open 7 days a week, rather than 6 days. No such limitation exists in State law for barbershops located in any other county, nor does it exist for beauty salons located in Montgomery County or any other county.

**MC 5-14: Montgomery County - Archery Hunting - Safety Zone.**

It would allow bow hunting within 50 yards of any building occupied by humans. This is already the law in Carroll County and Frederick Counties. The distance is either 100 or 150 yards in other counties. MCCF supported this bill last year as a safe and effective means of reducing the excessive number of deer at no cost to the taxpayers.

**MC 6-14: Montgomery County – Alcoholic Beverages Sales – Prohibition on Use of Self-Scanning Cash Registers.**

ExComm supported this bill since there needs to be a way to verify the person purchasing the alcoholic beverage is of the legal age.

**MC 9-14: Montgomery County – Alcoholic Beverages – Beauty Salon License.**

A beer and wine license can be obtained by a person with a beauty salon license. The holder would be able to provide beer and wine by the glass for on-premise consumption when a cosmetology service is being provided or a fundraising event is being held. This is already the law in D.C. ExComm supported this bill.

**MC 12-14 Montgomery County - Alcoholic Beverages - Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor Licenses.** This bill removes the limit on the number of such licenses for restaurants that can be issued in the county. This was approved by the membership at the November 11 meeting.

**MC 14-14: Montgomery County – Proportion of Food and Alcoholic Beverages Sales – Class B Licenses and Class B–BWL (H–M) Licenses.** ExComm opposed this bill since it would allow too much alcohol to be served in restaurants. It would lower from 50% to 40% the total dollar amount that must come from food sales (not by meal but total sales). The effect would be to make restaurants more like bars.

**PG/MC 104-14: WSSC - Forest Conservation Act - Application to Infrastructure Maintenance Activities.** This bill would exempt WSSC from obtaining a permit for any cutting or clearing of forest necessary for access to

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission infrastructure or otherwise associated with the rehabilitation or maintenance of Commission infrastructure. The ExComm opposed this bill since it would exempt WSSC from compliance with forest conservation legislation for the stated situations.

## Master Plan of Highways and Transitways

### By Dan Wilhelm, Transportation Chair

The Council is set to approve the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways on November 19, 2013. This was previously known as the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. On November 12 the Council took a straw vote, and at that time the tally was 9-0 in favor of approving the plan.

The Council added an Executive Summary which is printed below, since it provides a good overview of the master plan and the intended way ahead. The Council also provided language dealing with public participation which is also provided below.

#### *Executive Summary:*

The Washington, D.C. region is consistently rated among the most congested in the nation, with average commuting times exceeding 35 minutes. Additionally, travel forecasts show that roadway congestion in the County is predicted to increase by 70% by 2040. While population and employment opportunities are forecasted to grow significantly over time, options for building new roads or expanding existing ones are limited given their impact on existing neighborhoods and businesses.

Expanding transit infrastructure through more efficient use of public rights-of-way is essential if current and future congestion is to be mitigated. In addition to reducing Countywide travel time for drivers, an expanded transit network is necessary to support the County's land use, environmental, and economic development goals and make public transit a reliable alternative to driving in the County's developed core.

This Plan recommends implementing a 102-mile bus rapid transit network comprising 10 corridors and the Corridor Cities Transitway, and expanding right-of-way for the CSX Metropolitan Branch to allow for enhanced MARC commuter rail service. It also designates 24 additional Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Areas.

Public rights-of-way are a critically important and scarce resource. Like any scarce resource, they need to be used in the most efficient manner possible. Therefore, an important goal of this Plan is to increase person-throughput, the number of people that can be accommodated within these rights-of-way, as well as increasing the modes of transportation that can be accommodated safely.

This principle was used in determining rights-of-way while making every effort to limit impacts to existing communities. For the most part, the property required to accommodate this Plan fits within previously approved master-planned rights-of-way. In the few instances where the Plan recommends reserving more right-of-way than is currently master-planned, it is largely to accommodate future enhancements or new construction of master-planned bikeways and sidewalks. An overriding County objective is to provide enhanced mobility for all users of the transportation system.

Transit maximizes person-throughput. For transit to truly succeed, and to achieve the desired ridership, it must have (1) an extensive network and (2) dedicated lanes. The bottom line must be that the system will produce a significant improvement in travel time for many that already use transit and that it will attract new riders that would otherwise drive. Indeed, over half of the projected riders of this bus rapid transit network are anticipated to be new transit users. However, it is not only transit riders who will benefit from this Plan. Drivers should experience better conditions than they will otherwise face with a well-functioning, high-performing transit network.

At the heart of this Plan is the recommendation to create dedicated lanes for bus transit. Only a system that is primarily characterized by dedicated lanes can deliver on the promise of "rapid" in bus rapid transit. Of the approximately 102 corridor-miles recommended in this plan, about 79% of this network is comprised of dedicated lanes. In most instances, where the Plan calls for dedicated lanes, it is the result of adding transit lanes within previously approved master-planned right-of-way. In some instances, dedicated lanes may be created from existing or planned general purpose lanes. Lane repurposing may be implemented where the number of forecasted transit riders exceeds the general purpose lane capacity and/or general traffic demand would not exceed capacity. There are only about 21 miles in this network that anticipate buses running in mixed traffic. It is understood that where a route is dominated by mixed traffic, it will not be rapid. However, it will have enhanced station facilities and service, and it will be part of a larger network that is rapid.

This Plan does not endorse specific "treatments" since considerably more study will be conducted by the State Highway Administration and/or the County's Department of Transportation to determine whether, for example: a dedicated lane should be in the median or on the curb; whether the right-of-way could accommodate bi-directional bus rapid transit; or if a single reversible lane could achieve the same objective; or whether dedicated lanes achieved by repurposing are warranted and achievable given further detailed traffic analysis and ridership forecasts.

These studies will be done using the State's or County's standard facility planning process, which includes significant community outreach, opportunities for public input including but not limited to public hearings, and will ultimately come back before the County Council for review.

In this respect, this Plan is not different from other road projects recommended in master plans for which alternatives are reviewed and subject to considerable community feedback. While this Plan recommends a robust transit network to maximize the potential of transit to serve a more significant part of the County's future transportation needs, it will be achieved in a way that responds to the needs of the communities it passes through, and addresses traffic impacts.

Insofar as the goal of this transit network is to increase the efficiency of predominately State roads, the County expects the State will be a full partner in this enterprise. Moreover, this Plan anticipates additional cooperation and collaboration with our regional partners -the residents of Howard, Prince George's and Fairfax Counties, and the District of Columbia all have a stake in an interconnected, efficient transit system. Finally, it is understood that this 102-mile network will be constructed in stages over a number of years based on available resources, priorities, and need.

**Public Participation Requirement:** A vital facet of facility planning is to receive input and feedback from affected property owners, civic and business groups, and transit riders and road users, including public forums and workshops, electronic newsletters, and other forms of outreach. No County funding for transit corridor implementation nor acquisition of additional rights-of-way, as proposed in this Plan or in subsequent studies, will be considered until the Council is satisfied that this fundamental public engagement requirement has been fulfilled and public hearings are held. Accordingly, a citizens advisory group comprised of residents, business owners and other relevant stakeholders must be created for each corridor which enters into facility planning to make recommendations to the County on the design, construction and proposed station locations for the transit corridor.

## **Bill 2-13 Passed to Save Taxpayers Money and Improve Roads**

Last month, the Council unanimously passed legislation co-sponsored by Councilmembers Leventhal, Riemer and Elrich, and supported by the Civic Federation, to compel improved coordination between the County's Department of Transportation (DOT) and area utilities such as WSSC, Pepco and Washington Gas in order to minimize disruption to county roads and residents, save ratepayers and taxpayers money, improve the appearance and mobility in our communities and to promote the undergrounding of utilities, where feasible.

The bill arose from complaints that councilmembers received from multiple communities where utilities were coming in to dig up roads soon after the County had repaved the roads. Not only do poorly coordinated road cuts needlessly inconvenience our residents, they also reduce the service life of pavement by 30% to 50%. During the Council's deliberations on the bill, the utility companies

agreed that preventing even one unnecessary road cut could produce cost savings significant enough to warrant the county developing a more systemized approach to infrastructure coordination.

The County was already coordinating with the utility companies, but it was done through a hodge-podge system involving spreadsheets, face-to-face meetings and phone calls between staff. The utility companies concurred that the current methods for information sharing among agencies was anything but ideal and outmoded in this day and age. Bill 2-13 requires the county, in conjunction with utilities, to develop a consolidated central information repository and GIS (Geographic Information System) based mapping system which will allow information to be shared much more easily between all the utilities that do work in the county's right-of-ways, and in the process cut down on errors which lead to wasteful spending by utilities and government. The potential cost savings derived from the resulting reduction in staff time and duplicative road cuts makes the transition to a GIS based system a no-brainer.

DOT must also collaborate with the applicable utilities to promote locating distribution facilities underground, where feasible, before resurfacing projects begin and which will now be aided by the central repository where the county and other utilities can better coordinate amongst themselves to identify areas of opportunity.

In time, the county hopes to leverage the internal GIS based system that is being developed to allow for a public facing online interactive map which will allow residents to see all the planned right-of-way work by utilities and the county in their neighborhood. We, in government, have a responsibility to evolve to the needs of taxpayers and ensure that our communication efforts are in keeping with all that the latest technology offers us. To that end, Bill 2-13 will better serve the residents of Montgomery County.

## Education Committee Update

By Paula Bienenfeld, Education Committee Chair

### Second Annual Budgetpalooza!

The Montgomery County Civic Federation, the Montgomery County Taxpayers League and the Parents' Coalition of Montgomery County, Maryland have teamed up for the Second Annual Budgetpalooza!

DATE: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014

TIME: 7-9 PM

LOCATION: Rockville Memorial Library, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville

We will analyze the proposed Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) FY15 Operating Budget chapter by chapter.

The MCPS budget is approximately 2.1 Billion. This is almost half of the entire county's budget. We are looking for people to analyze the chapters. Please volunteer for a chapter by signing up at

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094CADAC28A3FB6-budgetpalooza>.

### Rock Terrace School Update

A grand jury is being convened to investigate the alleged embezzlement of payments that were made to students at Rock Terrace School, an MCPS special education school for students with disabilities. Financial documents are being subpoenaed from what was originally the Montgomery County Teachers Federal Credit Union. According to Lyda Astrove, "Students who performed tasks in a sheltered-workshop type class at the school earned money, which was deposited into credit union accounts opened in their names, without their parents' permission or knowledge. Other students who worked in the cafeteria or other jobsites within the school also earned wages, but never saw copies of W-2 statements or credit union account statements. Account statements obtained by parents reveal that large sums of cash were routinely withdrawn from these students' accounts, with no explanation where the cash went."

"Parents have complained that:

1. Accounts were opened for their minor children without their knowledge or permission
2. Staff members from Rock Terrace School, including the principal, were signed in as joint account holders on the children's accounts
3. Account statements were mailed to Rock Terrace School, instead of to the student's homes

Parents have hard questions for credit union personnel:

1. When cash withdrawals were made, did tellers request to see I.D. of the account holder?
2. What picture identification, if any, was used to open these accounts? (Rock Terrace Students are unlikely to hold drivers' licenses.)
3. Where was oversight by credit union auditors that over a hundred accounts were listed at the same address?

### Financial Transparency and the Montgomery County Public Schools System

Our colleagues at the Montgomery County Taxpayers League have invited Larry Bowers, the Chief Operating Officer, Montgomery County Public Schools to speak on "Financial Transparency and the Montgomery County Public Schools System" at their December meeting.

DATE: Thursday, December 12, 2013

TIME: 7:00 - 9:00 pm (note early time)

LOCATION: 5th Floor Conference Room, Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20854

Should you have any questions on the topic, please send them to [President@MCTaxpayersLeague.org](mailto:President@MCTaxpayersLeague.org) by Wednesday, December 4th so that they can be forwarded to the speaker in advance of the meeting.

**ACLU seeking MCPS Students**

The American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland is hoping to talk to students who were suspended or expelled from Montgomery County schools for non-violent, non-threatening behavior. If you or somebody you know has a kid(s) who was suspended or expelled for things like not doing classwork, wandering the halls, etc., please call Alisa Roth at 718-510-6289 or e-mail [aclustoryfinder@gmail.com](mailto:aclustoryfinder@gmail.com)

**Changing School Start Times**

The MCPS Bell Times Work Group completed its review of the suggestion to start high school day later. Superintendent Starr is recommending:

- Move high school start times 50 minutes later from 7:25 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. (school ending at 3 p.m.)
- Move middle school start times 10 minutes earlier, from 7:55 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. (school ending at 2:30 p.m.)
- Keep elementary school start times as they currently are (8:50 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.), but extend the school day by 30 minutes (school ending at 3:35 p.m. and 4 p.m.)

The response has been mixed, particularly the suggestion to extend the elementary school day by ½-hour. MCPS is sponsoring four community meetings on the bell time changes.

- Monday, December 16: Richard Montgomery High School, 250 Richard Montgomery Drive in Rockville
- Monday, January 6: Seneca Valley High School, 19401 Crystal Rock Drive in Germantown
- Monday, February 10: Montgomery Blair High School, 51 University Blvd., East, in Silver Spring

All forums will be held from 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Free child care (ages 4 and older) and interpretation services will be provided.

**New App for MCPS**

The Parents’ Coalition has a new app for all things MCPS. The app provides instant access to school system news, student grades, lunch accounts, school and staff directories, school calendars, and high school athletic game scores from your Android phone or tablet. To access the app, go to <http://parentscoalitionmc.blogspot.com/> and click on the app on the right-hand side of the blog page.

**News You Can Use**

Taken from a variety of sources

**Recycling:** HopeLine, a program of Verizon Wireless, accepts old cell phones and wireless equipment in any condition and from any manufacturer to be recycled, reused or resold. The proceeds benefit domestic violence prevention organizations. All local Verizon stores have HopeLine recycling bins for drop-off. Or, you can get a free, downloadable postage-paid label to mail your old equipment directly to the company's recycler.

**Dead Deer**

In the September News we gave the following number to call to report dead deer or other roadkill on or along the road: 240-777-0311 or 311. These numbers are only staffed Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. At this time of year, the deer are particularly active and seem hell bent on suicide, and not necessarily during working hours. If a carcass is in the moving vehicle lane and creating a danger to drivers who must swerve to avoid hitting it, call 301-279-8000 during evenings and weekends to report the hazard.

**Sign Up For Affordable Care Act Health Coverage**

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires legal residents ages 18 to 64 to have health insurance coverage beginning in 2014 or pay a fine.

For residents of Montgomery and PG Counties, there are 3 ways you can sign up:

1. Go to [www.marylandhealthconnection.gov](http://www.marylandhealthconnection.gov) and complete the online enrollment process. This process has not always worked as well as it should, but there are other ways to enroll.
2. Call the Maryland Health Connection and sign up over the phone  
1-855-642-8572 (toll free)  
1-855-642-8573 (TTY)
3. Meet with a trained “navigator” to enroll in person. To find out where and when you can enroll in person, go to <http://capitalhealthconnection.org/> and click on the “sign-up locations” tab. In addition, a weekend enrollment event will be held on Saturday, December 7, 10:00am-4:00pm, Montgomery County Dept. of Health & Human Services, 12900 Middlebrook Road, Germantown

Additional information about the Affordable Care Act is available in several languages at <http://capitalhealthconnection.org/>.

**Play On-line Games and Learn about Civics!**

**By Jim Humphrey, Planning & Land Use Chair**

A variety of on-line games related to civics is available on the website of a group called iCivics. This non-profit,

founded and led by former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, has a mission to prepare all young Americans for active and intelligent citizenship. The group's website - [www.iCivics.org](http://www.iCivics.org) - contains a host of readings, activities, discussions and games that can be enjoyed by individuals, or employed in a classroom setting through use of the curricular materials provided for educators.

A growing base of more than 40,000 teachers, in a wide variety of classrooms, has successfully implemented iCivics. And iCivics games have been played more than 10 million times by students across the country. Students using the programs are more knowledgeable, engaged, and eager to participate in civic action and discussion than their counterparts.

MCCF members and their families might particularly enjoy the game "Counties Work," in which players are challenged to make their on-line community a better place to live by providing programs and services (at [www.iCivics.org/games/counties-work](http://www.iCivics.org/games/counties-work)). The variety of choices in the game includes building a stadium, handling constituent requests, and constructing at least ten new buildings. Your citizens' satisfaction with your choices determines whether you get re-elected for a second term.

## A Moving Experience

by Jim Zepp

Since so much concern has been recently expressed about Montgomery County's need to be competitive with the surrounding jurisdictions in order to retain and attract residents and businesses, I decided to look at the population migration trends for the area, using the U.S. Census Bureau's annual data sample of the population -the American Community Survey (ACS)

The survey reveals that in 2012 twice as many DC residents moved to Maryland as moved to Virginia, and both of those outward flows substantially exceed the inward flows from MD and VA to DC. Migration between Virginia and Maryland is approximately balanced.

For Montgomery County, between 2006 and 2010 the top source of in-migrants (on a county basis) was DC, which supplied in excess of four times more in-migrants than the next highest source. Trailing far behind, the next three were King's County, NY, Virginia Beach, VA, and Philadelphia County, PA. Destinations for out-migration were even more concentrated in the local area—the top three migrant destination counties were Frederick County, MD, Fairfax County, VA, and Howard County, MD.

County-level migration data for young adults (20-24) are less reliable because of the smaller sample. However, those data also suggest that DC is one of the top sources of in-migrants to Montgomery County, and that Fairfax County, VA is one of the top destinations for out-migrants in that age group.

Contrary to popular belief, it is evident that DC remains one of the major sources of in-migration for Montgomery County, even among young adults. Surrounding jurisdictions such as Frederick, Howard, and Fairfax Counties attract the largest numbers of residents moving from Montgomery County, even among young adults.

For a visualization of state-state migration flows in 2012, see <http://vizynary.com/2013/11/18/restless-america-state-to-state-migration-in-2012/>. For a visualization of county-level flows, see <http://flowsmapper.geo.census.gov/flowsmapper/flowsmapper.html>. (note: this visualization is best viewed with Internet Explorer).

Additional details on these calculations, and links to data sources and analyses, will be placed on the MCCF Web site.

## Minutes of the November 11, Meeting By Sue Schumacher, Co-Recording Secretary

**Call to Order:** President Carole Ann Barth called the meeting to order at 7:50. Introductions followed.

**Agenda:** The agenda was amended with the appropriate motion and seconds to allow time for the Community Hero presentation.

**Announcements:** Carole Ann Barth reminded all that although MCCF normally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, December is the exception and the meeting will be on December 2, the first Monday of the month. Paula Bienenfeld announced that the next MCPS Budget Palooza will be February 5 at the Rockville Library from 7 to 9pm. Dan Wilhelm reminded all that the Committee for Montgomery's Breakfast is Monday, December 16. It was announced that on January 8 the Zoning MoCo Group will be hosting a panel to review the zoning rewrite plans.

**Minutes:** It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 14 meeting as they appeared in the Newsletter. The minutes were approved.

Local migration flows in 2012. Source: ACS

		Migration to		
		DC	MD	VA
Migration from	DC		21,213	10,964
	MD	14,120		23,925
	VA	9,537	20,579	

**Treasurers Report:** Jerry Garson reported that the Civic Fed's finances were in good shape.

**Community Hero:** Paula Bienenfeld, First Vice-President and Education Committee Chair, introduced Lyda Astrove. Lyda is a special education attorney who has worked tirelessly for the learning challenged community. Her latest work has been the uncovering of funds earned by learning challenged students at Rock Terrace School. Allegedly, it appears that neither the students nor their parents or guardians were aware of and never saw the earnings.

**Program:** Jim Humphrey, Chair of Planning, Land use and Housing, introduced Marc Elrich, County Council member-at-large. Councilman Elrich reviewed what the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED) was doing in its review of the proposed zoning changes for the county. He gave a brief history of the reason for starting the process, which was to simplify the zoning codes for commercial zones. It developed into creating proposed new zoning codes throughout the county. Marc expressed concern for the master plan process in that it may no longer include citizens' input. He urged all to email council members directly and to make appointments to sit down in front of the council members with the concerns with the proposed zoning changes.

**Resolutions:** Resolution concerning Wine and Beer Licenses for Restaurants as it appears on pages 2 and 3 of the November newsletter. It was moved and seconded. During discussion, a friendly amendment was offered and accepted by Dan Wilhelm, author of the resolution. The vote on the resolution to eliminate the limits in state law that restricts Wine and Beer Licenses was 12 yes, 1 no, 3 abstentions. The motion passed.

#### Committee Reports

**Public Safety:** Jim Zepp reported on the plans to restore school resource officers.

**Parks and Recreation:** Carole Ann Barth discussed the Athletic Field Study that was due last spring. She reported that the 2005 Recreation plan was predicated on everyone in the county from age 5 to 85 would be planning soccer. She reported that now there is pressure for Cricket fields.

**Planning and Land Use:** Jim Humphrey urged all to request the County Council to slow down the District Map Amendment in the Zoning Code rewrite, and ask to eliminate the Residential Floating Zones that is currently in the draft.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.

## Minutes of the November 21 Executive Committee Meeting By Co-Recording Secretary, Sandy Vogelgesang

The Executive Committee (ExComm) met at the Bethesda Chevy-Chase Regional Services Center in Bethesda.

**Call to Order.** President Carole Ann Barth called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM. with Paula Bienenfeld, Alan Bowser, Peggy Dennis, Jim Humphrey, Harriet Quinn, Sue Schumacher, Virginia Sheard, Sandy Vogelgesang, Dan Wilhelm, Louis Wilen, and Jim Zepp in attendance.

**Adoption of Meeting Agenda.** Carole Ann called for and received unanimous approval of the amended ExComm agenda.

**Approval of Minutes for October 17, ExComm Meeting.** Carole Ann called for and received unanimous approval of the minutes as published in the November 2013 newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report.** Carole Ann circulated a written copy of the update provided by Jerry Garson, Treasurer, who was not able to attend the meeting. The current bank balance for the Federation is \$15,095.27.

**Announcements.** President Carole Ann Barth called for announcements.

- Jim Humphrey reminded everyone that November 30 is "Small Business Saturday" across the U.S., an opportunity to patronize local small retailers!
- Paula Bienenfeld reported that the Second Annual "Budgetpalooza," a chapter-by-chapter review of the proposed MCPS FY '15 Operating Budget, will be held at the Rockville Library on February 5, 7-9 PM. She is looking for volunteers to address each chapter of the budget and to help with set-up and clean-up for the event. The Federation is teaming with the Taxpayers' League and the Parents' Coalition for this event. Virginia and Carole Ann suggested using signupgenius.com to mobilize volunteers (done after meeting).
- Paula Bienenfeld reported on the price for a projector which the Federation might purchase. It was decided that Paula should proceed with purchase of projector and Jim Zepp with purchase of a sound system.
- Carole Ann reported on recent publication of "Conservation Landscaping Guidelines," published by the Chesapeake Landscaping Council.

**Programs.** Carole Ann introduced discussion of future programs.

- **December:** Jim Zepp has arranged December program on the recommendations of the Night-

time Economy Task Force. See separate story and website for details.

- **January:** County's solid waste system with recycling, mulching & composting including new initiative on composting food waste. Peggy & Carole Ann to arrange.
- **February:** County and state Emergency Preparedness Programs. Jerry, Jim Zepp, and Paula to arrange.
- **March:** County CIP budget
- **April:** County Operating Budget

**Community Hero.** No nominations made.

**Issues for Discussion.** Carole Ann led discussion of the following:

- **Night-time Economy Task Force.** Jim Zepp, Public Safety Chair, had addressed most issues related to this topic (such as security and transit needs) during discussion of proposed Federation programs. The Task Force has issued its recommendations and sent them to the County Executive.
- **Legislative Goals.** Dan Wilhelm, Legislation and Committee for Montgomery Chair, presented ten Montgomery County bills for ExComm consideration. See separate story for summary of ExComm positions taken. During the discussion of legislation, Carole Ann raised issue of WSSC seeking exemption from compliance with forest conservation legislation. ExComm voted unanimously to oppose PG-MC 104-11 and Carole Ann agreed to send letter reflecting Federation opposition. Peggy Dennis urged continuing support for the bottle deposit bill. ExComm agreed to more study of proposals for new County and State minimum wage levels. Carole Ann agreed to draft position on behalf of the Federation on the requirement for penalties in case of perjury by officials signing off on building plans.
- **Need for Bylaws Committee Action** - to consider the Regional/County-wide Organization Membership category and how MCCF can "partner" with or join coalitions that are not members of the MCCF but whose objectives we support. ExComm agreed that the Bylaws Committee should convene to address this matter. Peggy and Dan agreed to be on this committee, which will meet in early 2014.
- **Office of Ethics and Accountability/call to amend the Ethics Law.** ExComm discussed what could be done to amend the Ethics Law, new provisions in Prince George's County, and the need to find Council sponsorship for measures providing more transparency and accountability. Jim Zepp noted the concept of a civil grand jury used in California.

ExComm agreed that these issues might be addressed at a Federation monthly meeting.

#### Committee Reports.

- **Utilities.** Louis Wilen, Chair. Nothing to report. Peggy noted ongoing effort to convince PEPCO to allow Park and Planning to provide for shared-use trail under high-tension wires extending from Westfield Montgomery Mall area to Piney Branch Road.
- **Planning and Land Use.** Jim Humphrey, Chair, summarized gist of current County hearings on the Zoning Code Rewrite and District Mapping Amendment. Virginia Sheard updated ExComm on WSSC Ad Hoc Working Group on large diameter pipes (interim report expected mid-December) and the efforts of the Streamlining Development Approval Working Group to help shorten the development process through such means as more use of electronic tracking. Paula asked Virginia to advise the WSSC *ad hoc* working group on behalf of MCCF that neighborhoods want the PCCP water mains replaced, not just repaired, and that WSSC provide a triage schedule showing when water mains replacements will take place.
- **Legislation and Transportation.** Dan Wilhelm, Chair, noted dates for upcoming hearings on proposed legislation (December 2 for Montgomery County bills and December 4 for bi-County bills). Regarding transportation, he reported that a straw vote (9-0 in favor) had been taken on the Transit Master Plan and that the final vote is coming up. Public participation will be required for each of the ten corridors. Dan also noted that the Committee for Montgomery annual breakfast will be held on December 16.
- **Education.** Paula Bienenfeld, Chair, reported that the financial issue at Rock Terrace Elementary School will go to grand jury and that, according to press and media accounts, MCPS Superintendent Starr is being considered for the position of Chancellor of New York City schools.
- **Parks and Recreation.** Carole Ann, Chair. Nothing new to report beyond items already noted.

#### New Business

**Newsletter.** Peggy reviewed articles to be submitted for December newsletter.

- **Next ExComm Meetings.** December 18 and January 16. Location to be determined.

**Adjournment.** Carole Ann called for and received unanimous approval for adjournment at 9:55 PM.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIVIC FEDERATION

*Serving the County since 1925*

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014

Mail To: Dan Wilhelm (Database)  
904 Cannon Road, Colesville, MD 20904  
301-384-2698 djwilhelm@verizon.net

Inquiries to Treasurer: Jerry Garson  
8308 Raymond Lane, Potomac, MD 20854  
301-704-0757; garson@comcast.net

Name of Organization/Individual \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Households (Approx) \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Dues (see below) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Make checks payable to **Montgomery County Civic Federation**)

Membership Type	Number of Households	PLEASE CHECK	DUES	Max Number of Delegates	Voting Privileges
<b>Local Association</b> (civic, community, homeowner or municipality. Can not be a single local issue group.)	10 to 50		\$25*	1	Yes
	51 to 300		\$45*	2	
	301 to 600		\$65*	3	
	601+		\$85*	4	
<b>Umbrella Association</b> (Two or more local associations. Cannot be single local issue group.)	60 to 500		\$45*	2	Yes
	501 to 1000		\$65*	3	
	1001+		\$85*	4	
<b>Regional or County-Wide Organization</b> (environmental, transportation, or other civic/community).	50+ memberships, not households		\$45*	2	Yes
<b>Individual Associate</b>	(not applicable)		\$20*	1	No
<b>Associate Group</b> (Gov't agency, business, or other organization)	(not applicable)		\$85*	2	No

**\*A \$5 discount may be taken for each delegate who elects to receive the newsletter via email.** Organizations can also select less than the allowed number of delegates and pay according to that number. Please provide all the information below no matter the newsletter delivery method.

1.	<b>Name</b> (President)		Phone (H)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Newsletter: US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> ; Email <input type="checkbox"/>	
			Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	<b>Name</b>		Phone (H)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Newsletter: US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> ; Email <input type="checkbox"/>	
			Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	<b>Name</b>		Phone (H)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Newsletter: US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> ; Email <input type="checkbox"/>	
			Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	<b>Name</b>		Phone (H)	
	Street		E-mail	
	City, State, Zip		Newsletter: US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> ; Email <input type="checkbox"/>	
			Put email address in directory: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Federation Meeting**

**Session 851**

Monday, December 2, 2013  
7:45 1st Floor Auditorium  
County Council Office Building.  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD

Agenda:

7:45 Call to Order & Introductions  
7:50 Approval of Agenda  
7:51 Announcements  
7:54 Approval of Minutes of November 11 meeting  
7:55 Treasurer's Report  
8:00 Program: Nighttime Economy Task Force  
Recommendations  
9:15 Committee Reports  
9:45 Adjournment

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation** is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization. It was founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Monthly Federation meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Monday of each month September through June at 7:45 p.m. in the First Floor Auditorium, County Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD. Free parking in garage accessed from Monroe St. or from Jefferson St. heading east from I-270.

The **Civic Federation News** is published monthly, except in July and August. It is mailed or emailed to delegates, associate members, news media, and local, state, and federal officials. Permission is granted to reprint any article provided proper credit is given to the "**Civic Federation News of the Montgomery County Civic Federation.**"

Submit contributions for the next issue by: **Sunday, December 22**. Prepare submission as an MS Word, Word Perfect or text document, **attach** it to an e-mail, and send to **hotyakker@gmail.com**

Please send all **address corrections** to Dan Wilhelm, 904 Cannon Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-384-2698, or [djwilhelm@verizon.net](mailto:djwilhelm@verizon.net).

**NEXT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18**

**7:45 P.M.**

**VENUE T.B.A.**



**Official Publication of the  
Montgomery County Civic Federation**

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