



# THE LITTLE ACORN

THE DARNESTOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
darnestowncivic.org

Volume 57 Number 1  
March 2020

## President's Corner

### Notes from the President

*By Scott Mostrom*

One of the first things I typically ask someone is “Where are you originally from?” or “Where’d you grow up?”. I instinctively ask that not just because it’s interesting or a conversation starter, but because where someone has grown up or lived can really frame their perspective ... and that’s what I find the most interesting. So, at the pool this past summer I started chatting with a couple whose child is on my son’s 2nd grade soccer team. I coach, so this was one of the first times I’d had to really hang out and talk. They’d moved here a few years ago and were raving about what an incredible community Darnestown is. Originally from California, they had never experienced the type of community we have. And they didn’t mean the houses or streets or open space, they meant “community”—the people and the bonds we share. Even something as simple as the majority of Darnestown kids going to the same elementary school. Where they’d come from, kids weren’t even guaranteed to go to their local public school—you literally had to get in line in time to get the school you wanted or your kids would be assigned to some other random school. It made me realize that Darnestown Elementary is a real bedrock of our community and how lucky we are to have it.

And while I was completely blown away by the whole school thing in California—that’s just crazy, I was also blown away by just how much these folks cherished this community. I honestly had to think

about that—why was I so blown away? I’d grown up in Darnestown and love Darnestown, but perhaps I was taking it for granted. Naively, I don’t think I’d realized things could be so different or, for that matter, just *how* special we are.

*Continued on Page 2*

## What's Happening in Darnestown

**March 4 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**Parenting Series: “Parenting in the Digital Age”**  
Seneca Academy

**March 19 | 7:30 p.m.**

**DCA Town Meeting** St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

**March 23, April 2, 16, 23, 30 | 10-11 a.m.**

**Farm & Forest Explorers** Butler School

**April 11 | 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

**Egg Roll** Darnestown Presbyterian Church

**April 29 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**Parenting Series: “Secrets to Raising Confident, Resilient Children”**  
Seneca Academy

**DCA Town Meeting**  
**March 19, 2020 | 7:30 p.m.**  
**St. Nicholas Episcopal Church**

**Remember: you can view *The Little Acorn* online with pictures in full color and with clickable links at [darnestowncivic.org](http://darnestowncivic.org).**

These conversations stuck with me, and as I spoke with other neighbors I began to realize, much more than I had before, just how much passion there is for our community and the strong desire for more of that “community” in their lives. That was never more evident than at our December Holiday Tree Lighting, where more than 250 neighbors came out to the Darnestown Heritage Park next to the Harris Teeter to celebrate the holidays together under the lights. Kids made ornaments and ate s’mores and 30 students from the Darnestown Elementary School chorus led everyone in singing before the tree was lit with a cheer. It felt like a Hallmark movie in our village. So much so, I’m still convinced that among the revelers there must have been some city slicker, begrudgingly stuck in Darnestown for the holidays, who met a local and they’re now planning to spend the rest of their lives here together.

I’ve said before, the DCA is taking a fresh look at what we do. What I really should say is that we’re taking a fresh perspective, and we want that perspective to come from you. One important way we’re doing this is by re-evaluating our social calendar and gearing our community events to what you want. We received an incredible response to our social events survey in January, led by our new Social Chair Stephanie Kunkle. Stephanie is taking that feedback and developing a social calendar for this year that will keep the best of the old, while adding in many new events.

At our last town meeting, an open session for dialogue and feedback yielded some very thought-provoking suggestions. To see those, please visit [darnestowncivic.org](http://darnestowncivic.org). We are going to do the same thing in our March Town Meeting, so if there are issues you care about or things you think can make us a better community, please come out so we can all talk about it.

Community also struck a chord as the DCA got engaged in the new Thrive Montgomery 2050 initiative. Initiated by the County Council and driven by the MC Planning Department, this initiative will result a general plan update—the only other update to the 1964 general plan occurred in 1969, with a refinement in 1993. Is that a big deal? Yes, because the General Plan outlines the high-level strategic approach for land use (zoning), transportation, community design, housing, environment and a socio-economic framework that is the basis for all

county master plans. The general plan informs the 20-year ‘Potomac Subregion Master Plan,’ which is the master blueprint for zoning and transportation in and around Darnestown. That 2002 Master Plan is due for a revision and we expect that will follow shortly on the heels of the new General Plan.

So how did this Thrive effort strike a chord when it comes to community? Well, in the most simple terms, the Thrive Issues Report—the first step leading up to the formal plan and our first opportunity for official input—laid out a vision for a “complete” community and development based on things such as proximity to mass transportation, mixed use development, and high density population. To learn more, in November, the DCA Board received an outline of the goals of the plan from the Thrive Project Manager. While we understand that much of this plan targets more urban parts of the county, we feel strongly that the unique values of Darnestown as a rural residential community and its importance as a transition area adjoining the Agricultural Reserve should be recognized and embraced.

The DCA’s response (see [darnestowncivic.org](http://darnestowncivic.org)) stresses the uniqueness of Darnestown, while acknowledging the necessary work being done to prepare for Montgomery County’s growth. As the DCA stays actively engaged in the planning process, we will communicate updates and actively solicit your feedback for our future responses.

---

## The DCA needs your Support!

**Become a member!**—the more members we have, the more impact we will have as an organization with the county and state governments. The funds support the publication of *The Little Acorn* and community-wide events. It’s a bargain at \$35/year!

The best way to become a member is to register and pay online at [darnestowncivic.org](http://darnestowncivic.org); the second best way is to register online and mail a check in, using the form at the back of the issue.

*Thank you for your support!*



---

## Community Interest

---

The DCA received this lovely note from Ms. Larue about attending the Darnestown Tree lighting. She sums up the fun activities better than we could, so here is her letter, reprinted with permission:

Scott,

*I moved to Darnestown in 1980. Because I don't have young children I have never attended the annual tree lighting ceremony. This year I had friends visiting from England with a three year old and I decided that we should try it.*

*It was so much fun. The Darnestown Elementary School singing was great. The three year old just sat on the ground mesmerized by them and clapping. The person who was responsible for the craft table was brilliant. The ornament was such that every age could decorate an ornament and hang it on their tree. The table was well organized and had as much or as little for each child's taste. We had it hanging on the refrigerator until it made the trip back to England to be hung on her tree. She was so pleased with her results and had to show everyone. The Smores Table was also very well set up. My friends had never heard of Smores so they enjoyed roasting the marshmallow together and sharing the end results. The hot chocolate and cookies provided by the local dentist were a treat. The three year old was so excited with Santa's arrival and the lighting of the tree produced a squeal of delight. She got to talk with Santa and it made a big impression. Later in the week she met another Santa and asked him where his glasses were. He said that he had forgotten them at home that morning.*

*I also noticed the extra fencing that was erected for safety. Your team thought of everything.*

*Everyone was having a great time visiting. Children running around playing. It was so joyful. I could not believe how special the evening was. Thank you and everyone responsible for making it such a memorable event.*

Nancy Larue





# *1<sup>st</sup> Annual Darnestown Easter Egg Roll*

Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> 2020 10am-12pm  
Front Lawn Of the Darnestown Presbyterian Church

- Easter Bunny Photo Op
- Face Painting
- Easter Theme Games
- Egg Roll
- Cake Walk
- Goodies and more

Co-Sponsored by:  
Darnestown Presbyterian Church  
Darnestown Civic Association

Rain Date: Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup> 10am-12pm  
This is a community-wide event.

## **Vision Zero**

*by DCA Roads Task Force*

As highlighted in the Notes from the President in the December *Little Acorn*, the DCA Roads Task Force has been formed. We plan to address a wide range of road-related issues. Part of our work is to ensure Darnestown is a recognized stakeholder and to raise community awareness of important safety initiatives like the relatively new county policy called Vision Zero [montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero).

In 2017 Montgomery County adopted Vision Zero as policy. After an intensive two-year ramp up phase, the program is now in full motion. According to the Vision Zero Network, Vision Zero is “a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.” Vision Zero acknowledges that traffic deaths and severe injuries are preventable and sets the goal of eliminating both in a set period with clear, measurable strategies. This is a major shift for

most North American communities by establishing clear accountability to ensure safe mobility. History has shown, as with campaigns to reduce drunk driving and initiatives to increase recycling, that changing cultural attitudes and ensuring political accountability can make a dramatic difference and increase the success of the program.

Vision Zero is a multidisciplinary approach, bringing together diverse and necessary stakeholders to address this complex problem. In the past, meaningful, cross-disciplinary collaboration among local traffic planners and engineers, law enforcement officials, policymakers, and public health professionals has not been the norm. Vision Zero acknowledges that there are many factors that contribute to safe mobility—including roadway design, speeds, enforcement, behaviors, technology, and policies—and sets clear goals to achieve the shared goal of zero fatalities and severe injuries. The DCA Roads Task Force endeavors to be a part of the this initiative, focusing on the Darnestown area.



# The Use of ‘Darnestown’ as Your City Name

*By Dick Jurgena*

We have been hearing from a number of Darnestown residents, primarily newcomers, who have been told the use of Darnestown for their postal address is not correct. This is not so.

For 30 years, our family owned and operated a mailing service. It was part of our job to know and recognize cities and locations to be known by both their Postal name and other “vanity” names officially accepted by the Postal Service. The most notable use of those vanity names associated with a particular Zip Code, 20854, is “Potomac.” The official city name for Zip Code 20854 is Rockville. Good luck telling a resident whose Zip Code is 20854 they must start using Rockville as their city address.

So, what do we need to do, if we want the Postal Service to continue recognizing Darnestown as an acceptable city name? Keep using it. Not using Darnestown in your return address or when you give out your address can lead the Postal Service to thinking it is no longer necessary. Use Darnestown in all forms and questionnaires you complete. Some will only accept Germantown (20874) or Gaithersburg (20878), if you put the Zip Code in first.

Remember, Darnestown is a historical name and it is where you and your family live. Like so many things, if you don’t use it and defend it, you can lose it.

---

## 5G and Antenna Locations

*By Art Slesinger*

The County Council is once again considering the alteration of the zoning codes to allow the cell phone suppliers to add or modify utility poles on your street. The two issues one needs to understand are the health impact (if any) and the ability of the cell phone companies to install or modify the towers with little or no notice to the homeowner.

The issue around the health impact is that no recent studies exist on microwave energy impact on children or adults. Earlier studies focused on heat impacts on tissue, not other pathologies. The

one concerning fact is that Lloyds of London will not provide adverse health impact insurance to the phone companies. One wonders what if they know something.

The other impact could be to those who now live on streets with buried utility services. If you live on such a street you have, at most, small graceful streetlights. The new code would permit the installer to modify those street lights by extending their height and adding an antenna to the top and a large connection box on the bottom. The small current light poles are probably too weak to be modified and a whole new pole with an additional 10-15 feet would be installed. Also the poles are not like current cell phone towers; the new towers are numerous and about 500 feet apart. The new rules would permit such towers to be within 60 feet of a residential structure. The objective is to eventually have 5,000 such towers around the county. How these towers are permitted, what notice needs to be provided and the permitting of a series of towers as a unit are all issues to be addressed.

Some history might explain the conundrum. The FCC has mandated that the entire country have a 5G system because it carries much more data and faster than the current 4G system. In so mandating, the FCC has tried to usurp local controls. FCC mandates that health issues can NOT be used to oppose siting approval. This is being litigated as no real health impact data was provided. The need for 5G in residential areas is the core issue. Do you really need a 5G system in a low population density area like Darnestown? The towers already have been installed in commercial areas and along major (nonresidential) highways. The State was considering its own implementation rules that could override County rules. Some areas outside Maryland have placed restrictions siting esthetic consideration and some places are keeping the towers away from schools and day care centers.

By the time you read this, the County could have adopted a zoning text amendment to grant the cell phone companies the authority they want to install the towers. The Council could have chosen to await the results of the litigation or see what State action may be forthcoming.

## Will this be you in 2020?



Games begin April 26<sup>th</sup>!  
Contact Dave Bivans for more info  
(softball@darnestowncivic.org)

it to a school resource officer, teacher, principal, or police officer. If you are not comfortable discussing possible leads with any of the aforementioned, call me (301) 674-3451 and I will pass it along, again without attribution to you.

Remember, one piece of information means very little; but, the same piece of information from several different sources may prevent a tragedy.

## Looking for a Summer Job? Smokey Glen is Hiring

Smokey Glen is looking to hire about 160 seasonal employees for their barbecue catering business. Most of their seasonal employees are high school and college students, with a minimum age of 15. Many of the seasonal employees stay each ensuing summer until they have completed high school or even college. Throughout their years at Smokey Glen Farm, the employees are given the opportunity to advance into leadership positions. For employees who loyally demonstrate the knowledge and procedures they have acquired, there are also seasonal positions available in supervisory and management capacities. Smokey Glen is holding their Application Day on Saturday, March 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.; on Monday, March 16th from 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Thursday, March 19th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Applicants that are hired are required to attend one of two orientations on either Saturday, March 28th or Saturday, April 4th both starting at 9:00 a.m. They are looking for people who are willing to work hard, are dedicated to their job, and are available in the fall when school starts again. If you have any questions about the positions please call 301-948-1518.

## School Safety

*By Dick Jurgena*

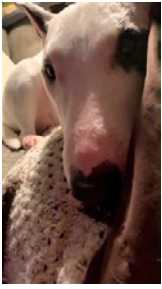
We are blessed to live in a relatively safe community. To continue that safety, we must be prepared and observant of what is happening in other areas that affect our residents. We need to consider the safety of our students in not only our two elementary schools, but also the middle and high schools where our students continue their education.

I am concerned by some fights that have occurred in the county. These fights appear to be by groups of young men meeting at a specific location to fight each other. In one such fight in Kensington, a young man was stabbed with a pocket knife. MCPS sent out a letter indicating there had been a fight and that they were taking unspecified actions to protect the students.

What can we do? Listen to your kids or grandkids. Mention your concern to your spouse or someone else, when the children are around. Have a little discussion about what you think may be happening and, if the kids chime in, listen. What do you do with the information? Discuss it with other adults and compare notes without attribution to your source. If you hear something you think may help figure out who or why these fights are starting or anything else that may indicate the possibility of a problem, report

## Ask Diana

### *Diana Foley answers questions about pet behavior and training*



**Q:** *Our dog is extremely dog reactive. We have taken classes but struggle with how to communicate to OTHER dog owners (especially with dogs off leash) that we need them to change directions, turn around, or generally avoid us so our dog doesn't go crazy. Hard to believe this sweetie is aggressive, but she's been attacked in the past.*

**A:** Thank you for your question and for including a photo of your beautiful dog! I, too, live with a “dog-reactive” dog. For those unfamiliar with the term “dog-reactive,” this refers to a dog who barks, growls, lunges or reacts aggressively towards other dogs. While the behavior can look very assertive and threatening, it is often caused by fear and insecurity. It's a surprisingly common behavior problem, and it can be frustrating, embarrassing, and frightening to deal with when your dog is acting out.

You are on exactly the right track—your dog's reactive behavior is her way of telling you she feels threatened and needs space from the approaching dog, and the way to accomplish this is by changing directions, turning around, or otherwise *creating distance* between yourself and the other dog. Unfortunately, we can't control the behavior of the other human holding the leash, so the responsibility to create that space falls on you. This is easier said than done because many owners of friendly dogs may assume that all dogs are friendly, or that all dogs will be “fine” with their dog, and will ignore your signals. If you think your dog may pose a danger to another dog, I encourage you to continue working with a professional trainer who can help you put a long-term training plan in place to help you calm and manage your dog, and to practice for emergencies like an off-leash dog. In some cases, this behavior can be resolved and in other cases it requires lifelong management, but there's always room for improvement. Local resources for positive trainers who have experience with dog reactivity include Your Dog's Friend in Rockville and Peaceable Paws in Fairplay. The latter is a bit of a hike, but top-notch training that is well worth the drive. They offer a weekend training workshop on this particular topic.

## Featured Foster Pets

*By Diana Foley*

Dixie and Gypsy were part of a large-scale rescue operation at an abandoned farm in Boyds, Maryland. These two survivors were among two dozen cats—some roaming the property and some confined to filthy crates and cages in a dilapidated shed—who were rescued by Friends of Montgomery County Animals (FMCA) in mid-January 2019.

DIXIE is beautiful, sweet, and loves to cuddle and play with toys. She will be happiest as an only cat in an adults-only home, but she could share her home with a calm, friendly dog. GYPSY's foster family describes her as a super-sweet purr machine who loves to cuddle for long naps. She would like to be in a home without young children, and she gets along well with other cats. Both cats are litter box trained, vaccinated, spayed, and happy living the indoor-cat life.



*Dixie (left) and Gypsy (right)*

Dixie and Gypsy are the last two adoptable cats who are still awaiting permanent homes from this amazing local rescue operation. By adopting one of these girls, you'll be contributing to the happily-ever-after of an already successful story! If you're interested in giving one of these country cats a life in the 'burbs, please contact [info@fmca.org](mailto:info@fmca.org).

### **We Welcome Your Submissions to *The Little Acorn***

Deadline for the next issue:

**May 1, 2020**

Email ideas, questions or articles to:  
[acorn@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:acorn@darnestowncivic.org)



## Seneca Academy Parenting Series:

Seneca Academy continues with its parenting series that is free-of-charge and open to the whole community! Workshops are presented by Dr. Michelle Parker, Head of School at Seneca Academy and a child psychologist. Come join us for the upcoming workshop— **Parenting in the Digital Age, March 4, 2020 (6:30-8:00 p.m.)**

*There is so much information about all the technology out there. How do you make sense of it and decide what is right for your child? How do we help kids develop a healthy relationship with technology? How do we decide how much is too much? Find out:*

- What level of exposure is healthy at each age.
- How to set limits around technology.
- Impact of technology on brain and social development.

Save the date for the future workshop, **Secrets to Raising Confident, Resilient Children**, which will take place on **April 29, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**

For more information or to RSVP visit: [senecaacademy.org/parenting-series](http://senecaacademy.org/parenting-series).

## Farm & Forest Explorers— FREE Nature Class!

Calling all young explorers! Join Butler Montessori's Farm & Forest Explorers Program and experience farm life and nature through fun, hands-on activities. From harvesting carrots to collecting chicken eggs, each class introduces children to key environmental concepts. Learn and grow while you explore our organic, student-run farm and 22-acre nature-filled campus!



Thursdays, 10:00–11:00 a.m.

**March 26; April 2, 16, 23, 30; May 7**

Children ages 2-5 and accompanying adults.  
Siblings welcome. Rain or shine. Free!

For more information, visit [butlerschool.org/forest](http://butlerschool.org/forest).

---

## Organizations

---

### DarneBloomers Garden Club

*By Lisa Ruf*

The DarneBloomers Garden Club has been keeping a busy schedule this winter. One of the major highlights of our program schedule is a trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show this March. The theme for this year's show is "Riviera Holiday." This Mediterranean themed flower show will be so inspirational for the floral designer, gardener, and travel lover.

An excerpt from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's press release reads as follows: "The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's (PHS) Philadelphia Flower Show is the nation's largest and longest-running horticultural event and features stunning displays by the world's premier floral and landscape designers. Started in 1829, the

Philadelphia Flower Show introduces the newest plant varieties, garden and design concepts, and organic and sustainable practices. In addition to the major garden displays, the Flower Show hosts world-renowned competitions in horticulture and artistic floral arranging, gardening presentations and demonstrations, special events, a mammoth indoor Marketplace, and the Bloom Philly Festival in the weeks leading up to the Show."

Needless to say, we are all very excited to attend as a group this year. Of the many talents and exhibits that will be featured, one of the highlights will be the Princess Grace Rose Garden. This exhibit pays homage to Princess Grace (a native of Philadelphia) and was created including Grimaldi family rose plants and fresh-cut garden rose arrangements, and will feature a replica of Princess Grace Kelly's wedding dress. According to the exhibit designer,



Renee Tucci, “The exhibit was predominantly designed in roses, both potted/garden varieties and fresh-cut roses in a multitude of varieties and in all shades of pink. The actual Princess Grace Rose Garden is located on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, near the heart of the French Riviera—the perfect spot to take a Riviera Holiday!”

We invite all who are interested in gardens, flowers and nature to join us at one of our monthly meetings. We will have a “hands-on” program in April at The Good Earth nursery, and we will host our annual May luncheon at The American University Arboretum. Please refer to our website [darnebloomers.com](http://darnebloomers.com) for contact information.

---



## Looking Forward to Summer 2020!

*By Aleks Schiff*

### Preparations for Summer 2020 are in full swing!

We have been busy planning out our camp, tennis, pickleball, swim, and social programs and calendars at the Club.

**Current NEW Member Offer:** Mention this *Little Acorn* article and get **\$200 off the initiation fee!** Contact Dave Hardy at [gm@dsrclub.com](mailto:gm@dsrclub.com). We are a year-round community and offer tennis, pickleball, and social events throughout the year.

**Camp Green Zone** has a new Camp Director, Ari Hirschhorn! We are very excited to have Ari bring a new energy to the camp, while continuing our most popular events. **Online registration is now open at [dsrclub.com/summer-camp](http://dsrclub.com/summer-camp) so make sure you grab a spot—they go fast!** Our Counselor in Training (CIT) program has grown as well, so please check out all of our programs for kids 4-13 years of age.

Our **Social Directors** have put together a fabulous 2020 calendar of events, including our very popular 4th of July Celebration, our Adult Crab Feast Social,

and many opportunities to hear Live Music on the pool deck! Look for some off-season events as well, like the recent adult social at Vasili's where a percent of all purchases benefited the Club. Join us at **Rocklands on March 15th from 3-5 p.m.** for the next event. Take a look at the full calendar on our website at [dsrclub.com/social-program](http://dsrclub.com/social-program).

Our **Tennis and Pickleball Programs** will continue under Teri Boragno's leadership, who is now certified in pickleball. Teri is looking forward to growing our adult and junior programs and clinics, social events and all other aspects of racquet sports. DSRC is planning to organize both Tennis and Pickleball Tournaments for players of all ages and abilities. Feel free to reach out to Teri at [tennis@dsrclub.com](mailto:tennis@dsrclub.com) with questions.

Look for **Demon Swim Team** registration to open April 1st, and be ready for a strong 2020 swim season with Coach Pat!

Come join the fun—our member community is like no other! Continue to check our website for 2020 information!



*Recent Adult Social at Vasili's, where a percentage of sales benefited the Club!*

---

# Meet Our New Business Members

---

## Fox Realtors, LLC

*Michael D. Fox*



Tired of the southern California lifestyle and in search of the perfect place to live, the Fox family relocated to Montgomery County in 1994. Schools, a family lifestyle and wholesome values attracted them straight to Darnestown. They never looked back.

They settled in the Highlands of Darnestown and sent three kids off to Darnestown Elementary. Mike established his real estate sales business that same year. After 25 years, Mike has enthusiastically sold one out of every eight homes in Darnestown and is still going strong! The kids are grown now and there are five grandchildren, so Mike is not yet done with kids soccer or little league!

He and his wife Patricia now live on a horse farm in Dickerson. Patricia is the founder of Fox Lea Farm Mini Horse Rescue which currently has 13 rescued Minis in the barn who love visitors. Call Mike at 301-938-4138 to arrange a visit.

## Smokey Glen Farm

*Jim Sweet*



Smokey Glen Farm was established here in Darnestown in 1958 by Dr. George & Mrs. Betty Sweet, primarily as a poultry operation with 19,000 laying hens, selling eggs retail & wholesale throughout the region. There were several secondary businesses, including hosting group and corporate events, which is now our primary business. Smokey Glen Farm is a 91-acre facility located in Darnestown catering to groups from 50 to 4,000 people.

We are so blessed and appreciative to be located in such a wonderful, supportive community. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Annual DCA Hoedown here at Smokey Glen Farm. We look forward to seeing all of you there in the fall. Please join us this summer for “Fridays at the Farm.” Find more information at [smokeyglenfarm.com](http://smokeyglenfarm.com).

---

## Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc.

*Valerie Fuster*



Darnestown has been home to Valerie, her husband and three children for more than 23 years. Its vibrancy, strong sense of community, beautiful geography and high level of civic engagement, distinguish Darnestown as a special place to live, work and volunteer. For nearly 18 years, Valerie has helped Darnestown residents get maximum value for their home and helped them find the home of their dreams. With patient care, unflagging energy and exceptional attention to detail, Valerie skillfully guides each client through the home selling and buying process.

## Swim Labs

*Denise Dombay*



All summer long, our local pools becomes a home away from home for Darnestown families. As we head into spring, it is the ideal time to start preparing for another summer at the pool. Whether your child is new to swimming or an experienced competitor, swimming is a joyous activity that can and should be practiced year-round. Find an indoor, warm-water pool to maintain and grow your swimming skills all year long!

As a Darnestown mom, Treasurer of the Darnestown Swim & Racquet Club, and owner of SwimLabs, I encourage you to stop by and visit our unique swim school at 353 Muddy Branch Road. We offer group and private lessons for kids and adults, and I would be glad to give you a personal tour!

## Whitman Summer Camp

*Doug and Jenn Whitman*



Whitman Summer Camp is a family-owned summer camp, located at the Mary of Nazareth School on Seneca Road right in the heart of Darnestown. Jenn and Doug Whitman live in

Darnestown and have a super short commute each day to camp!

Doug is a PE Teacher at Rachel Carson ES, with over 25 years of experience and Jenn was an

MCPS teacher for 20 years, 5 years working right at Darnestown ES! As educators, they know what kids love and what makes kids tick. The Whitmans believe in creating a camp atmosphere that feels like one big camp family, where everyone knows your camper's name. There is a camp program for every camper in your family: Day Camp, Sports Camp, LEGO Camp and Field Trip Camp, all in one easy Darnestown drop off location. Find out more at [whitmansummercamp.com](http://whitmansummercamp.com).

---

## School News

---

### Darnestown Elementary School

*By Ashley Mostrom*

The holiday season is long over but the staff and students at Darnestown continue to think of and work on behalf of others. In December, the DES staff donated supplies and time to assemble and deliver 200 lunches for a local homeless shelter. In January, students collected funds for Dine with Dignity, which helps pay down MCPS student debt for school lunches. Throughout the month of February,



*Students raise money and awareness for Dine with Dignity*

students will be participating in Pennies for Patients. Students will bring in their spare change to benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Foundation. Bingo night was a big success, with many winners pleased with the loot they took home.

Looking ahead, students will be displaying their scientific knowledge in the annual Science Expo. In March, students will have the opportunity to participate in Ice Skating Night. DES is also pleased to bring back International Night where students can learn about cultures from around the world. We look forward to learning about the heritage of our amazing students and their families.

### Butler Montessori School

*By Miki Boulin*

***Math on the floor?*** Studies show that children (and many adults too!) learn better when they can move.

That's why at Butler you'll see children working on mats or small kneeling desks. Find out more about why "school doesn't feel like school" at [butlerschool.org](http://butlerschool.org).



***Why is building community important to Middle School students?*** Adolescents need community to develop confidence, responsibility, and independence. In January, middle school students enjoyed ropes course activities, group games, dinner, and s'mores before spending the night on campus. The next day they made a community breakfast and headed off to bowling. That's community-building in action!

***What's your plan for summer?*** Imagine your child enjoying a summer of swimming, hiking, creeking, horseback riding, archery, fishing, and canoeing all in a safe, caring community. Serving children ages 3 ½–16. **Darnestown promo: \$75 off one session with code DARNESTOWN.** Valid March 1-31. Register today: [butlercampa.org](http://butlercampa.org).



## Seneca Academy

*By Dr. Michelle Parker*

At Seneca Academy, we really believe in hands-on, experiential learning. What better way to achieve this than field trips? Thus far, our students have used orienteering skills to navigate their way out of a corn maze, traveled around Darnestown to see how a community works together, sailed an 18th-century schooner while learning about Maryland history, and so much more! Of course, big adventures have happened on our campus as well! Whether exploring our green space through walks led by our Naturalist or gazing at the moon in the night sky through a telescope, Seneca Academy is a truly magical place for students to play, learn, and be immersed in a sense of wonder!

We are continuing to accept applications for our Preschool 3's, 4's, and Elementary programs and will begin to accept applications for our very popular Parent's Day Out (2's) on March 23rd. Please visit [senecaacademy.org](http://senecaacademy.org) for more information or call us to schedule a tour.

## Happy 40th Birthday to Georgetown Hill!

*By Nicole Reap*

Our two classes will be learning all about transportation this month. The three-year-old classes will be learning all about community helpers, with visits from our local Fire Department, MCPD, a local doctor and a pilot! Our Pre-K class is learning about different countries. They made sushi and visited a local Japanese restaurant. They designed castles, learning about Slovakia. Next, the Pre-K class will be learning about simple machines, gravity and engineering. Our Transitional Kindergarten (TK) class just finished learning about different authors and put on a play retelling the story, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. This month, TK will study making healthy choices and how the human body works.



We have a few spaces left for the 2020-2021 school year. We also have a great summer camp and offer before and after care for your school aged children. If you are interested in seeing us in action, please join us for our Open Houses on March 6 and April 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. If that doesn't work for you, call us at 301-284-8144 or contact us at [darnestown@georgetownhill.com](mailto:darnestown@georgetownhill.com) to set up a tour.

---

## Church News

---

### Darnestown Presbyterian Church

*By Larry Ciorlito*

#### NEARLY FINISHED!

After some delays, our campus renovation will (finally) be complete by the latter part of March, and we can't wait to welcome Darnestown back to our historic campus! We'll worship in our renovated church on **Palm Sunday** (Apr 5th), then have two **Easter** services, (check our website for times). Sunday worship will be at 10:30 a.m. thereafter (9:30 a.m. in the summer). And remember, our renovated campus will be more interconnected, with expanded worship space, full



ADA compliance, and an expansive welcoming/gathering space. Our time in the wilderness is nearly at an end!

**EASTER EGG ROLL!** We welcome the entire Darnestown community to our renovated campus on **Saturday, 11 April** for a fun family gathering. In conjunction with DCA, we're planning an Easter Egg Roll and other activities. We will also offer **tours** of the newly renovated campus.

**MEETING FACILITIES.** Post-renovation we can once again offer spaces for community meetings (now with new options available). We'll reach out to community groups in short order.

Please continue to check our webpage for updates: [darnestownpc.org](http://darnestownpc.org).

## St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

### Worship Service – Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School (PreK–5th Grade)

Sunday 10:15–11:20 a.m.

### Holy Week & Easter

Wednesday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m. –

Tenebrae Service

Maundy Thursday, April 9 at 6:30 p.m. –

Agape Dinner and Maundy Thursday Eucharist

Good Friday, April 10 at 7:30 p.m. –

Good Friday Liturgy

Easter Sunday – Festive Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

### Yoga – Mondays at 7:00 p.m. – donations requested

St. Nicholas has space available to rent.

Please email [info@saintnicks.com](mailto:info@saintnicks.com)

or call 240-631-2800.

*Experience God's Love and a Loving Community*

*A Place to Belong ~ A Place to Become*

## Our Lady of the Visitation Parish

### Passion / Palm Sunday – April 5, 2020

Solemn Entrance / Long Form of Passion 5 p.m.

Family Liturgy / Short Form of Passion /  
Procession 9 a.m.

Simple Entrance / Long Form of Passion 11 a.m.

### Holy Thursday – April, 9 2020

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7 p.m.

### Good Friday – April 10, 2020

Celebration of the Lord's Passion 7 p.m.

### Holy Saturday – April 11, 2020

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night 8 p.m.

### Easter Sunday – April 12, 2020

Sacred Liturgy 9 a.m., 11 a.m.

The full schedule of Lenten services  
can be found at [olvp.org](http://olvp.org).

---

## Business Directory

---

Looking for a local business? The generosity of these local businesses helps to pay for the printing and distribution of *The Little Acorn*. Please consider patronizing them.

#### Allstate | Insurance & Financial Services

14100 Darnestown Road, Suite D, Darnestown

301-670-4150, [larryakinde@allstate.com](mailto:larryakinde@allstate.com)

#### Bretton Woods | Recreation Center

15700 River Rd, Darnestown

(301) 948-3357, [bwrc.org](http://bwrc.org)

#### Brezovec and Associates

15120 Water Oak Dr, Darnestown

301-300-6279, [michael.brezovec@gmail.com](mailto:michael.brezovec@gmail.com)

#### Michael D. Fox | Real Estate

Compass Real Estate

14100 Darnestown Rd, Darnestown

301-938-3148, [mikefoxrealtor@gmail.com](mailto:mikefoxrealtor@gmail.com)

#### Darnestown Smiles | Family Dentistry

14128 Darnestown Rd, Darnestown

240-477-8251, [mail@darnestownsmiles.com](mailto:mail@darnestownsmiles.com)

#### Guardians Complete Land Care | Landscaping

14119 Seneca Road, Darnestown

240-328-5805, [steve@guardianslandcare.com](mailto:steve@guardianslandcare.com)

#### Lowe-Tillson Insurance & Associates, Inc. Insurance

2403 Research Blvd, Ste. 350, Rockville

301-258-7773, [wlowe@lowetillson.com](mailto:wlowe@lowetillson.com)

#### McConnell Heating & A/C, Inc.

*HVAC Installation and Service*

14701 Poplar Hill Rd, Darnestown

301-537-8524, [office@mcconnellhvac.com](mailto:office@mcconnellhvac.com)

#### Melissa Bernstein Homes | REALTOR®

9711 Washingtonian Blvd, North Potomac

301-908-4007, [melissagbernstein@gmail.com](mailto:melissagbernstein@gmail.com)

*Continued on Page 14*

## ***Business Directory continued...***

**Noahs' Preferred Properties | *Real Estate***  
313 Main St, Kentlands  
301-674-0990, jnoah@noahsproperties.com

**Preferred Insurance Solutions**  
***Auto, Home and Business Insurance***  
20030 Century Blvd, Ste. 201, Germantown  
301-428-3344  
ins@preferredinsurancesolutions.com

**Secco Plus Cleaners, Inc | *Dry Cleaning***  
14100 Darnestown Rd, Ste. A, Darnestown  
301-869-5400

**Smokey Glen Farm | *Event Facilities and BBQs***  
16407 Riffleford Rd, Darnestown  
301-948-1518  
jsweet@smokeyglenfarm.com

**Stiles Dentistry | *Dentist***  
333 Main St, Gaithersburg  
301-947-6900, smile@stilesdentistry.com

**SwimLabs Swim School**  
353 Muddy Branch Rd, Gaithersburg  
240-801-4518, ddombay@swimlabs.com

**Valerie Fuster | *REALTOR®***  
Long and Foster, Inc.  
10200 River Rd, Potomac  
301-299-6000 office  
301-980-3083 direct, valerie@lnf.com

**Valley Mill Camp**  
15101 Seneca Rd, Darnestown  
301-948-0220, evelyn@valleymill.com

**Whitman Summer Camp**  
14131 Seneca Rd, Darnestown  
301-820-8008  
whitmansummercamp@gmail.com

**Windridge Vineyards Farm | *Farm, Winery***  
PO Box 149, Adamstown  
301-607-4399, robert@windridgefarm.com

---

## **Darnestown Schools, Organizations & Churches**

---

### **Schools**

**Butler Montessori School**  
15951 Germantown Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
301-977-6600

**Circle School/Seneca Academy**  
15601 Germantown Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
301-869-3728

**Darnestown Elementary School**  
15030 Turkeyfoot Road  
Darnestown, MD 20878  
301-548-4260

**Jones Lane Elementary School**  
15110 Jones Lane  
Darnestown, MD 20878  
301-840-8160

**Lakelands Park Middle School**  
1200 Main Street  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
301-670-1400

**Mary of Nazareth School**  
14131 Seneca Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
301-869-0940  
maryofnazareth.org

**Northwest High School**  
12501 Richter Farm Road  
Germantown, MD 20874  
301-601-4660

**Quince Orchard High School**  
15800 Quince Orchard Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
301-840-4686

### **Organizations**

**Boy Scout Troop 1094**  
sm@troop1094.org

**Darne Bloomers Garden Club**  
darnebloomers.com

**Darnestown Civic Association**  
14132B Darnestown Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
darnestowncivic.org

**Darnestown Swim  
and Racquet Club**  
15004 Spring Meadows Drive  
Darnestown, MD 20885  
301-330-1340  
dsrclub.com  
gm@dsrclub.com



## Churches

### Darnestown

#### Presbyterian Church

15120 Turkey Foot Road  
Darnestown, MD 20878  
301-948-9127  
darnestownpc.org  
dpchurch@comcast.net

#### Fairhaven United Methodist Church

Rev. Kenneth Hawes  
12801 Darnestown Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
301-330-5433

#### Our Lady of the Visitation Parish

Rev. Dr. Raymond L. Fecteau  
14139 Seneca Road  
Darnestown MD 20874  
301-948-5536  
olvp.org, parishoffice@olvp.org

#### Seneca Community Church

Rev. Kenneth N. Nelson  
13900 Berryville Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
301-869-9326

#### St. Nicholas Episcopal Church

Rev. Beth O'Callaghan  
15575 Germantown Road  
Darnestown, MD 20874  
240-631-2800, saintnicks.com

## Service Providers

To be included on this list in the next issue of *The Little Acorn*, please email your contact information including your year of birth to the editor at [Acorn@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:Acorn@darnestowncivic.org) before May 1, 2020. Please let us know if you no longer want to be listed. Of course, for those over 21, you may be listed as an adult. ***We reserve this listing for those who are members of the DCA. A great reason to join!*** Please note that babysitters and mother's helpers must be under 21 to be listed.

### Babysitters & Mother's Helpers

<b>Melissa Szwed</b> (2004) 301-519-0645	<b>Ashley Mostrom</b> (2003) 240-277-8526
--	---

### House/Pet Sitters

<b>Jonas Skucas</b> (2005) 301-525-2501	<b>Darius Skucas</b> (2002) 301-525-2728
---	--

### Notary Services

<b>Laura Bivans</b> 301-977-4734	<b>Tina Kalil</b> 301-943-9840	<b>Elisa Lane</b> 301-990-2993
-------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

## DCA Membership Renewal / Application Form

Make check payable to **Darnestown Civic Association (DCA)**, and mail to  
**Darnestown Civic Association, 14132 Darnestown Road, Suite B, Darnestown, MD 20874**

Please check one: ☐ Dues \$35 ☐ Friend \$50 ☐ Sponsor \$100 ☐ Acorn \$150 ☐ Business \$250

Name as you would like it to appear in *The Little Acorn*: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* Email addresses are only used for DCA notifications and not shared with anyone \*\***



## **Darnestown Civic Association, Inc.**

14132B Darnestown Road

Darnestown, MD 20874

Email: [dca@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:dca@darnestowncivic.org)

Website: [darnestowncivic.org](http://darnestowncivic.org)

PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Suburban MD  
Permit No. 4889

### **The Little Acorn**

Editor: [acorn@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:acorn@darnestowncivic.org)

Publisher: Darnestown Civic Association

Proofreader: Sarah Scherer

### **Darnestown Civic Association**

President: Scott Mostrom | [president@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:president@darnestowncivic.org)

Vice President: Tim Mueller | [vicepresident@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:vicepresident@darnestowncivic.org)

Treasurer: Guy Armantrout | [treasurer@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:treasurer@darnestowncivic.org)

Secretary: Susan Allaway | [secretary@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:secretary@darnestowncivic.org)

Trustees: Scott Damiecki | [trustee@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:trustee@darnestowncivic.org)

Paul Klee | [trustee@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:trustee@darnestowncivic.org)

Tim Sanders | [trustee@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:trustee@darnestowncivic.org)

### **Committee Chairs**

Compliance: Michael Gottlieb | [compliance@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:compliance@darnestowncivic.org)

Darnestown Village: Chris Collins | [village@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:village@darnestowncivic.org)

Database: Jean Jurgena | [database@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:database@darnestowncivic.org)

Flag Program: Tim Sanders | [flag@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:flag@darnestowncivic.org)

History: Allan Luke | [history@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:history@darnestowncivic.org)

Membership: Elizabeth Weaver | [membership@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:membership@darnestowncivic.org)

Safety Committee: Dick Jurgena | [safety@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:safety@darnestowncivic.org)

Seneca Forest Project: James Wheeler | [deer@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:deer@darnestowncivic.org)

Social Events: Stephanie Kunkle | [social@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:social@darnestowncivic.org)

Softball: Dave Bivans | [softball@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:softball@darnestowncivic.org)

Strategic Planning: Tim Sanders | [strategicplanning@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:strategicplanning@darnestowncivic.org)

Website: Ben Jamieson | [website@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:website@darnestowncivic.org)

Neil Agate | [website@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:website@darnestowncivic.org)

Welcome: Kendra Damiecki | [welcome@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:welcome@darnestowncivic.org)

Maya Miloski | [welcome@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:welcome@darnestowncivic.org)

Zoning: Tim Mueller | [zoning@darnestowncivic.org](mailto:zoning@darnestowncivic.org)