



# The REGENCY RECORD

Newsletter of the  
Regency Estates  
Citizens Association

Winter/Spring 2021

## President's Message

So here we are - one year since the unimaginable pandemic came into our lives.

During the past year we have literally seen mundane, day-to-day activities like work, school, social gatherings and grocery shopping become elevated to life-risking endeavors. Many, including members of our community, have lost loved ones and friends to the virus. Numerous people have lost their jobs and a significant number of shops and chain stores are suffering hardship or have gone out of business. Technology has changed how we interact with the outside world; video conferencing and online shopping may be permanent holdovers for better or worse.

On the positive side, we have to be profoundly thankful that we live in a time where technology and human ingenuity have been able to create vaccines that are scientifically proven to help quell the pandemic. In due course, vaccines will enable us to resume some semblance of normality. Unfortunately, the logistical

challenge of vaccinating the entire population means that getting to "herd immunity" is going to take several months yet. The good news is that we're on our way.

While making a vaccination appointment is frustrating at the moment and vaccine shortages are rife, we must have faith that things will get better soon. So hang in there! Keep practicing the prevention measures - social distancing, mask wearing and hand washing. Be persistent and patient navigating the appointment process when you're in the phase in which you are eligible.

Hopefully, by the time the next issue of Regency Record is published, our world will look very different and so much better.

Regards,

David Freeman, President

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## AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD



### Triennial Tax Assessment Virtual Meeting

The triennial tax assessment meeting was held virtually via the Zoom online platform on December 16, 2020. The meeting featured speaker Bryan Levenson, Assessor with the Department of Assessments and Taxation of the State of Maryland (SDAT). Mr. Levenson discussed the in and outs of property assessments and explained the revised process for appeals in light of COVID-19. RECA residents subsequently received their property assessments in late December or early January and there was a 45-day window in which to file an appeal.

The majority of the meeting was spent taking questions from Regency Estates residents who were in attendance. Mr. Levenson thoughtfully addressed each concern, which included a number of queries about the assessment process, properties used as a basis for individual assessments, the anticipated increase in assessed values that were expected, as well as providing advice on appealing a case. Key takeaways included:

- All appeals are held via videoconference.
- Best appeal evidence to use is sales (including those into the early part of 2021).
- SDAT does not compare assessments between properties.
- SDAT does not consider how many bedrooms are in the home – only square footage.
- SDAT does use bathrooms because of plumbing costs. Finished basements may also be considered a factor.
- No foreclosures, no short sales, no estate sales can be used as comps for appeal evidence.

### Watch That Speed (Camera)

Trying to make that late-night grocery run? Saving your sanity by taking a much-needed day trip? Not so fast – literally.

A speed camera is on the prowl and it wants your money. The camera is on the side of the Regency Estates Swim Club parking lot entrance, but has been on the other side of the road too. Be mindful of it as you head eastbound (for now) on Gainsborough Road towards the traffic lights at the intersection of Seven Locks Road. Stay alert, drive safe!



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**Falling behind? Get ahead!**

# AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## Let's Take a Walk... and Not Just Around the Block

Written by Bill Wydro, RECA Board Member



As I'm sure you've noticed, there are far more walkers strolling around Regency Estates than ever before, since the pandemic peak last March. With so many activities curtailed, one way to deal with cabin fever and stay fit is to get out and walk! My wife and I have different routes we take around the neighborhood. While this provides some variety, we have also looked into alternatives. Some obvious ones: drive to another neighborhood, park and explore. We use the maps on our smartphones to navigate.

### Near our neighborhood

Just outside our neighborhood is **Cabin John Regional Park (CJRP)**, offering several paved paths in a woodland environment. Similarly, along Tuckerman are trails in the McConnell Campground (east of Cabin John Village, before the entrance to CJRP). Don't be put off by the "permit required" notice — that's only if you're going to camp there. If you consult a map, there are also very long hiking trails associated with the CJ park.

### Just a short drive away

One of our favorite places to drive to is **Brookside Gardens** (<https://tinyurl.com/y46mljtz>) in Wheaton, not far from the intersection of



Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road. The gardens are

open sunrise to sunset, but the Visitor Center is only open 10 am to 2 pm (which includes the restrooms). Along the paved paths, you'll be pleasantly surprised by the amount of color and variety of plants there is even off-season.

And, just to the east of the gardens, and less frequented, is another large area around the Brookside Nature Center. The Center is closed (no restrooms available), but it is surrounded by several looping trails that are open during daylight hours.

Another new favorite we discovered this year are the trails around the **Croyden Creek Nature Center**. It's near the Rockville Civic Center, between Baltimore and Norbeck Roads. There are 2 to 3 miles of marked, unpaved trails through the woods (<https://tinyurl.com/y7gq8z67>).



The Nature Center is closed, but it's a good place to park. No restrooms are available, so plan ahead. The trails are not always smooth; some places having jutting rocks or roots, and can be awfully close to the creek bank edges. But don't let that deter your visit — for us, that makes the walk even more of an adventure.

A major attraction, of course, is **Great Falls**. It's a good choice, but also a popular one with the crowds. We've even seen long lines of cars waiting to get into the parking area. However, right across from the intersection of Falls and McArthur are the "Gold



Mine" trails. At that intersection on McArthur is a pull-off place with room for about a dozen cars. There is a "No Parking" sign there, but we have parked there a several times without a problem. Two other suggestions are to drive along McArthur and stop at

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**ATTENTION NEW NEIGHBORS!**



**Have you recently moved into  
Regency Estates?**

If so, please contact us by completing the 'Contact Us' form on our web site, [www.regencyestates.org](http://www.regencyestates.org)

We'd be pleased to drop by, welcome you to our community with a gift bag and add you to our directory so that we can keep you informed about local news, events and emergency situations.

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## Let's Take a Walk...and Not Just Around the Block *(continued)*

one of the parking areas - usually at a lock - to walk along the canal. There are fewer people, though, if you drive north on River Road and walk the canal around one of those locks - Swains, Pennyfield, or Violet's.

A little farther away is the **Patuxent State Park**, out Georgia Ave., a little way beyond Brookville. (It's about 40 min. from here, and about 10 min. farther north than the Brookville Beer Farm, which has excellent craft beer and pizza and outdoor seating - and several tables have heaters.) The trails go through a hardwood forest, tall pine forest, and some pasture areas. The paths are unpaved, but mostly smooth. The elevation varies. The Nature Center there is also closed, but there is a decent outdoor restroom. There is also a pleasant grassy area near a bamboo forest with picnic tables placed far apart.



### Finding trails with technology

For finding local parkland and trails, we mostly use the **AllTrails app** on our iPhones. It identifies a large number of trails in the area, and can also record your walk, if you wish. Even without recording, it will show you the trails, and your location on them.

(Other similar apps are Map My Walk, Hiking Project, Topo Maps, Gaia GPS, ViewRanger)

There are other excellent resources for identifying parks and trails, a major one being [www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-trails/trails/](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-trails/trails/). Our county boasts 250 miles of trails! At the following site you can download a PDF of MoCo trails and trailheads: <https://tinyurl.com/y7wjxq9r>.

If you are a "map person" I highly recommend <https://mcatlas.org/pe/>. It displays the trails usually as purple lines, and helps identify trail access points. The zoom

feature (double click or use the + and - in the upper left of the map) magnifies to an impressive detail. The features were not totally intuitive to me, but after experimenting I got better at it. Let me offer one example. On the upper right of the window you will see a set of icons. Choose the magnifying glass (search) icon. A list appears under "Tasks"

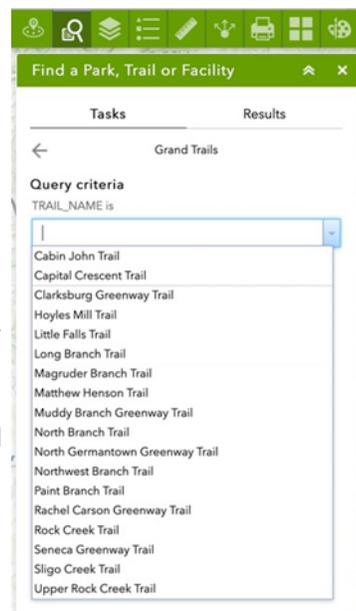
- 1) Choose "Grand Trails"
- 2) A search box appears. Instead of typing anything in it, choose the triangle to the far right of the box. A list of trails will appear. Select one.
- 3) Look down at the bottom of the list window and choose "Apply" in the green rectangle.
- 4) Poof! The map shifts and resizes to where that trail is. Orange "teardrops" identify features, like neighborhood access points. Zoom in anywhere to see more detail.
- 5) You can then close the search window with the tiny "x" near the top.

(Tip: with some tools the "poof" resizing is overly zoomed in - thus, you must zoom out....)

There is a link to a PDF map user manual on the left of the window if you really want to learn other tools.

If you have a favorite trail or place to walk, please send the location to me and why you recommend it by email at

[bill.wydro@regencystates.org](mailto:bill.wydro@regencystates.org).



## AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

### Hand Rail on Hoover Path



While we await brighter days ahead and hunker down to keep healthy, it's great to see our neighbors continue to stay active outdoors through weekly walks, runs and bike rides. With the arrival of inclement weather, however, sidewalks and neighboring paths we enjoy can become slippery.

Over the summer, we noticed that one popular path, located at the connection point between Harker Drive

and Buckhannon Drive, could benefit from a stairway railing. Many families and children have used this stairway as a main access point to the nearby schools, fields and as part of their regular walk route. With a quick 311 call from RECA Vice President Rick Chen, a robust railing was ready in time for the winter.

We hope you will continue to stay safe and enjoy exercise on the many walkways around the neighborhood. If you see a safety improvement that can be made around our community, don't hesitate to call 311 to place a request.





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# AROUND THE COUNTY AND STATE

## COVID-19 in Maryland: An At-a-Glance Guide

compiled by Jerry Garson, RECA Treasurer  
All data and information are as of Feb 13, 2021

### COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility

Maryland is in Phase 1C, which means **if you are included in one of the groups listed below, you are currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.**



Adults 65 and Older and:

- All licensed, registered and certified health care providers
- Front line hospital staff
- Nursing home residents and staff
- Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Assisted living, independent living, behavioral health and developmentally disabled group homes, and other congregate facilities
- Law enforcement and firefighters, EMS
- Education staff, including K-12 teachers, support staff and daycare providers
- Correctional health care staff and officers
- Public safety workers not covered in Phase 1A
- Health care workers not covered in Phase 1A, including but not limited to lab services, public health, vaccine manufacturing and other health care professions
- Front line judiciary staff
- Continuity of government
- Food/agriculture production, critical manufacturing, U.S.
- Postal Service, public mass transit, grocery store employees
- Veterinarians and support staff
- Clergy and other essential support for houses of worship
- Individuals who are currently receiving hospital-based treatment, including in hospital outpatient centers, AND diagnosed with at least one of the following conditions:
  - Cancer patients who are currently in active treatment
  - End stage renal disease patients requiring hemodialysis
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
  - Solid organ transplant recipients
  - Sickle cell disease patients
  - Diabetic patients (Type 1 and Type 2)

- Individuals who are diagnosed with these medical conditions but are not currently receiving hospital-based treatment, including in hospital outpatient centers, will be eligible to receive the vaccine in Maryland's Phase 2 COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

### Maryland vaccine sites and appointment registration:

You can go to <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/vaccine> to get started. Scroll towards the bottom of the page until you reach the "Find a Vaccination Clinic Near You" section. Enter 20854 for Regency Estates' ZIP code for the list of places within 15 miles offering the vaccine and the requirements. By moving the dot on the top you can change it to 50 miles.

For additional resources, you can visit <https://www.marylandvax.org/>. The website includes vaccination sites.

### Maryland COVID-19 cases

For the most current number of COVID-19 cases in Maryland, including Potomac 20854, visit: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>

### Montgomery County appointment pre-registration and vaccine sites

The Montgomery County health departments also set up their own websites, but you can't book an appointment there. Instead you must pre-register to be notified when appointments become available: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/vaccine/](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/vaccine/)

The following locations are currently offering vaccines in Montgomery County. Registration in advance is required:

- Holy Cross Hospital
- MedStar Montgomery Medical Center
- Montgomery County Health Department
- Johns Hopkins Medicine – Germantown
- Adventist HealthCare Takoma Park Campus COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic
- Adventist HealthCare Shady Grove COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic
- Giant Food Bethesda
- Giant Food Gaithersburg
- Giant Food Silver Spring
- Giant Food Burtonsville

### COVID-19 testing remains free in Montgomery County

Visit here to schedule: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/testing.html>

# AROUND THE COUNTY AND STATE

## New Laws in the New Year



By now, you've made your New Year's resolutions, and maybe even managed to keep most of them. While not following through on your yearly promises have personal consequences, breaking new laws added in 2021 can have serious legal ramifications.

Which of these new laws have you successfully followed, benefited from, or managed to evade?

### Federal

[The new federal mandate for mask requirements on public transportation](#) was issued on January 29, 2021.

This is aligned with existing local requirements in place in Montgomery County. Therefore, the executive order does not change any processes or approach on Ride On buses. However, in response to the executive order, MCDOT is actively reminding bus operators of our mask-wearing policies and reminding them that they are empowered and expected to observe mask wearing and take action to promote compliance, including providing masks to passengers and suspending service if passengers refuse to comply. Bus operators will be reminded this week that they may use the public announcement system to remind riders of face covering policies.

### Maryland

[Minimum wage increase](#): Minimum wage in Maryland is rising from \$11 an hour to \$11.75 an hour, effective Jan. 1, for businesses with 15 or more employees. For businesses with 14 or fewer, it's rising from \$11 an hour to \$11.60 an hour. Maryland state wage minimums will be applied to Montgomery and Prince George's counties, where it previously didn't.

[Plastic bag fee in Baltimore](#): If you're shopping without bringing your own bag in Baltimore, expect to be charged five cents each time you use one starting Jan. 13. One cent will be claimed by the city for efforts to mitigate plastic bags.

[Prostate cancer screening](#): Health care providers can't charge patients copays or deductibles for prostate cancer screenings.

[Scooter contact information](#): Low-speed motor and electric scooters must have a tactile display on each unit so a person who is blind or has low vision may contact the company.

### DC

[Estate tax increase](#): Mayor Muriel Bowser signed the Estate Tax Adjustment Amendment Act of 2020 in August. It lowers the exemption amount from roughly \$5.7 million to \$4 million. In other areas close to D.C., the first \$5 million is often exempt from taxes.

[Extended foam ban](#): The District's Styrofoam ban first went into effect Jan. 1, 2016; now, it's being amended. The new requirements ban retailers from selling foam food service ware; foam storage containers, such as coolers and ice chests, and foam loose-fill packaging material, commonly known as packing peanuts.

[New energy efficiency standards](#): D.C.'s Department of Energy and the Environment is setting new environmental standards for large buildings (both private and D.C.-owned, 10,000 square feet and over) in the city in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption by 50% by 2032.

The first set of new standards goes into effect Jan. 1; additional standards will be added every six years.

[Telemedicine record rules](#): Medicaid health care providers in the District will now be required to "maintain complete and accurate beneficiary records of services provided (not to include videos) for each beneficiary that document the specific health care services provided to each beneficiary for a period of ten (10) years or until all audits are completed, whichever is longer," the Department of Health Care Finance said in a memo.

## AROUND THE COUNTY AND STATE

### New Laws in the New Year

(continued)

#### Virginia

**Holding a cellphone while driving:** It's illegal to hold a cellphone while driving in Virginia starting Jan. 1. The previous law only prohibited holding a phone while driving in a work zone and reading or typing an email or text while driving.

The first offense will get you a \$125 fine. Additional offenses will cost you \$250. You'll also pay the higher fine if you're caught breaking the law in a highway work zone.

One thing to note: If you use headphones to talk hands-free on your cellphone, Virginia law **only allows drivers to have an earbud in one ear.**

Exceptions to the new law include using your phone to report an emergency, and using your phone while legally parked or stopped. There are also exemptions for emergency crews who are on the job. Similar bans are already in place in D.C. and Maryland.

**Minimum wage increase:** The minimum wage increase to \$9.50 per hour will go into effect on May 1. The next bump, to \$11 per hour, comes Jan. 1, 2022. A year later, it will rise to \$12. Eventually, it will go to \$15 per hour by 2026 as long as the legislature approves it.

**Concealed carry permit adjustment:** Gun owners applying for a concealed carry permit can no longer take a firearms safety course online or by video. The applicant still has to complete a course conducted by a state-certified or National Rifle Association-certified instructor.

**Cap on insulin costs:** Health Insurance companies can't charge Virginians more than \$50 for a 30-day supply of insulin.

#### **Surprise out-of-network health care costs:**

Starting Jan. 1, when someone needs emergency services, their insurance cannot be billed more than a "commercially reasonable amount" for a non-network provider. This prevents patients from having to deal with high out-of-network costs applied to a service provided within their insurance network.



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## AROUND THE COUNTY AND STATE

### A Fuzzy Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed

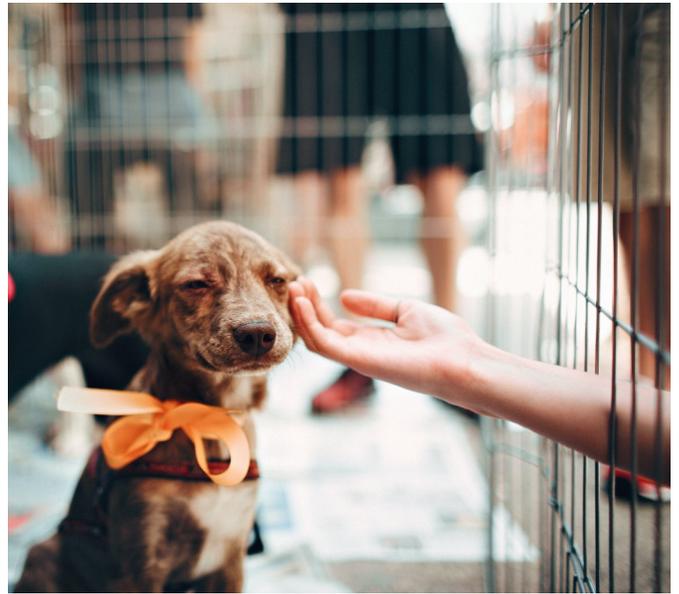
Those of us with pets know of the immense joy they bring to our lives. With the onset of the pandemic, thousands of stories have popped up, expressing appreciation for their pet's companionship and the amazing healing effect they've on their owners.

Is the time right for you to add a furry, feathery or scaly friend to your family? Adopt a pet from a local shelter or organization! Amid the ongoing pandemic, many animal shelters in the Montgomery County area are still working to fulfill adoptions and place pets in forever homes:

**Montgomery County Animal Shelter:**

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/animalservices/adoption/index.html>

**Petfinder** is an online search that connects you to pets in local shelters: [www.Petfinder.com](http://www.Petfinder.com)



## OUR HERO

BY MARJORIE BENDER, RECA BOARD MEMBER



*Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's...*

*...the tool our frontline heroes need to keep us healthy.*

## Physical Education at Geneva Day School: Mr. Anson's Green Invitation

*This article was provided by one of our advertisers,  
Geneva Day School.*

Hoops. . . Balls. . .  
Parachute. . . Go!  
Geneva Day School's  
Physical Education  
Instructor, Mr. Gordy  
Anson, is ready at the  
helm with props, know-  
how, and a heap of  
imagination. "My goal  
is for students to have fun and find confidence in  
themselves as they exercise. . . They might think they can't  
do something, yet this program reminds them they can do  
it, and they'd be surprised at what they can do!"



Physical Education with Mr. Anson comes as a breath of  
fresh air. Not only does he make fitness accessible and fun,  
but he also takes it to the outdoors. As a designated  
Maryland Green School, Geneva's sprawling lawns,  
bamboo forest, and nearby creek offer endless  
opportunity for exercise.

"At the beginning of class, I'll introduce the theme of a  
lesson," explained Mr. Anson. "Children use their  
imagination in different ways. . . I might say 'walk like a  
giraffe' and they come up with different solutions,  
including by tip-toeing. I like to engage them (the  
students) in all sorts of ways to challenge their creativity."

With a background in theatre and music, Mr. Anson's  
sense of setting is superb. He creates atmosphere by  
favoring the outdoors. Should weather prove inclement,  
he assembles indoor gross motor activities, which may  
include elaborate obstacle courses. Ready at his side are a  
colorful parachute, balance beams, trampolines, ladders,  
balls of brilliant hue, and other equipment that he  
harnesses for adapted lessons.

"This winter I laid out frisbees and hoops on the floor.  
Then I provided bean bags and rhythm sticks," said Mr.  
Anson of a snowy afternoon. "Can you make a snowman  
with the supplies I've given you, I asked? In teams, the  
children come up with their own versions."

Encouraging a lifelong love of learning for the last 56  
years, Geneva Day School is thrilled to have Mr. Anson  
inspire the next generation. His unforgettable  
programming is green, both for the fabulous, freeing  
settings in which it takes place, as well as its invitation to  
tap the always verdant imagination.

 **Geneva Day School** 

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# ALL THINGS INTERNET

Compiled by Mitangi Mehta, RECA Board member

## Data Doctors: Beware of Facebook Business Manager Scams



**Q: I've been contacted by someone claiming that they want to advertise on my Facebook business page and they sent me a business manager invite to get started. Is this legit or is this some type of scam?**

Scammers have long coveted Facebook business or fan pages and they have a variety of ways to trick users into unwittingly giving up control of them.

What you are describing is the most recent iteration of a scam that uses the promise of making money to trick users of Facebook business pages into giving up administrative control.

<https://wtop.com/social-media/2020/10/data-doctors-beware-of-facebook-business-manager-scams/>

## What is Fake News and How to Spot it?

Generally speaking, fake news is a false narrative that is published and promoted as if it were true. Historically, fake news was usually propaganda put out by those in power to create a certain belief or support a certain position, even if it was completely false. Social media has now created an environment where anyone with an agenda can publish falsehoods as if they were truths. People can be paid to post fake news on behalf of someone else or automated programs, often called bots, can publish auto-generated fake news. The motivations as to why people create and distribute fake news are as numerous as there are individual opinions.



<https://www.sans.org/security-awareness-training/resources/fake-news>

## Online Security for Kids



Kids' lives are online more than ever, from socializing with friends and interacting with family to online learning and education. As parents we want to make sure they do so in a safe and secure manner. However, this is hard as many of us never grew up in such an online environment like this. Below we cover key steps on how you can help kids make the most of online technology safely and securely.

<https://www.sans.org/security-awareness-training/resources/online-security-kids>

## Securing the Generation Gap



Trying to securely make the most of today's technology can be overwhelming for almost all of us, but it can be especially challenging for family members not as used to or as familiar with technology. Therefore, we wanted to share some key steps to help secure family members who may be struggling with technology and might misunderstand the risks that come with using it.

[Securing The Generation Gap | SANS Security Awareness](#)

Need an additional resource? Check out: [SeniorPlanet.org](http://SeniorPlanet.org)

They offer technology and other resources to seniors 60 and older.



*Stay warm and healthy -  
Spring is on its way!*

