

ECA Newsletter

August 2019

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ECA Fall Clean Up Day – September 15

You probably saw my email about this last week, but the Annual ECA Fall Home Cleanup Day is Sunday, September 15, from 9AM until 11AM in the parking lot of the Connie Morella Library, 7400 Arlington Road. We have again partnered with BOWA Design/Build and 123Junk to hold this event. Bring your broken or oversized items and junk for disposal; gently used home furnishings, toys, clothing and appliances for donation; and electronics for recycling. Please, do not bring paint or hazardous materials like household chemicals or batteries.

Montgomery County Online Parking Permit Portal

Montgomery County launched its new online parking permit portal a couple of weeks ago (at <https://montgomery.thepermitportal.com/>). There were several problems with the roll-out, including confusing emails to user, and conflicting instructions. I've been in contact with the chief of the Division of Parking Management in Montgomery County Department of Transportation and his staff, reporting issues that ECA members have had with the new portal. They have acknowledged problems with the system, which they are working to fix. They say that they have implemented a "grace period during this transition, and have modified the enforcement within the Permit Areas to accommodate expired visitor and residential permits as well as other considerations relating to the permit portal." I'm trying to get clarification of exactly what that means and how long the grace period will last.

The new system, as it currently exists, is clearly not ready to be used by the majority of residents. However, while we wait for fixes and better instructions, here are a few tips and suggestion for anyone who is interested in trying to use the system now:

1. If you have an expiring permit that you want to keep in effect, don't look for a way to "renew" that permit. Each year, residents must purchase new permits and provide proof of residence in the area covered by the permit as well as

vehicle registration. This has always been the case, and it's not something that's new in this system. But, it can be confusing, especially if you look for a "Renew" button or renewal instruction. To replace an expiring permit, you have to purchase a new one using the "Buy Permit" function. When you do, make sure you change the "Start Date" for the new permit to the day after the expiration of your current permit.

2. There are almost no instructions in the portal for how to use it. The one instructional document available at last check is almost useless. This is one of the things they say they are working on.
3. There is a phone number to call under "Contact Us" but it goes to an enforcement group that knows nothing about the website or how to use it. They will only arrange to have someone call you back (at their convenience). There is also an online Chat function, which I've tried three times, without success. I'm not saying it won't work for you, but don't get your hopes up.

As soon as there is more information to pass on, I'll send a follow-up email.

ECA Fall Membership Meeting and Board Election

The Fall ECA Membership Meeting will be on Tuesday October 15 in the evening at the Edgemoor Club. As we did with the spring meeting, we will have refreshments (including wine) and hors d'oeuvres available starting at 6:30 and the meeting itself will start at 7:15. So, come early and join us for the social hour (well, $\frac{3}{4}$ hour).

I'll send more information about the Agenda for the meeting soon, but one of the items will be the election of ECA Board Members for the next two years. All current board members are running for reelection and there are no other candidates that I am aware of at this time.

Caroline Freeland Park Renovation Update

While working on an unrelated matter with Councilmember Andrew Friedson's staff, I recently learned of a couple of developments in the project to renovate Caroline Freeland Park. As you might recall, the park renovation was approved by the Planning Board back in July 2015. However, funding was not immediately available for the project and work was not expected to begin for a few years. The good news is that the project is now funded, and they are expecting to begin what they call the "Detailed Design and Construction Documentation" phase this fall. The bad news is that the funding is \$800,000.00 less than the estimated cost of the project (which was around \$4 million). So, as they begin making the detailed design plans, they will be looking for ways to stay within budget. Parks has assured me that they will be looking for community input throughout the design phase. I'll keep you posted on further developments. In the meantime, you can monitor the project [HERE](#).

Edgemoor Tip of the Month – Send Me Your Tips!

Each month, in the ECA Newsletter, I include at "Tip of the Month" passing on some bit of knowledge or information that might be of help and interest to area residents. I've done items about Recycling, various County Services like the Office of Consumer Protection, suggestions for reducing junk mail, how to join Edgemoor Nextdoor, and many others. But, I'm running low on new ideas.

Can you help? Do you have any bits of wisdom that your neighbors might find helpful? A secret way to get faster or better service from some organization or government agency? An unknown program to help homeowners?

Please email me your suggestions (president@edgemoorcitizens.org).

The ECA Newsletter is a compilation of information relevant to Edgemoor area residents. It is distributed on an occasional basis on the EC-Net email list.