



# Forecast

JANUARY 2021

NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE



**Monday, January 4**  
Long Range Planning\*, 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, January 6**  
Community Relations\*, 7 p.m.

**Thursday, January 7**  
Climate & Environment\*, 7 p.m.

**Monday, January 11**  
Racial Justice\*, 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, January 13**  
Town Council, 7 p.m.

**Friday, January 15**  
Virtual Wine Tasting, 7 p.m.  
*see page 3*

**Monday, January 18**  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Town Office Closed

**Wednesday, January 27**  
Public Services\*, 7 p.m.

**Thursday, January 28**  
Land Use\*, 7 p.m.

\* Town Committee meeting

*Please visit the website calendar  
for more information on, and  
instructions to join, these  
meetings.*



**Virtual Town Events  
Planned for Winter**  
*see page 3 for details*

## Wishing You a Happy (& Quiet) New Year

Happy New Year! With winter finally upon us and the trees bare, landscaping may not be at the top of our minds. But this new year brings important changes to Town regulations governing the use of gas-powered blowers and, we hope, voluntary changes to residential landscaping practices within the Town.

The noise from gas-powered leaf blowers is disturbing to many of us, especially while we are at home during this pandemic. County law, which applies in the Town, limits use of gas-powered blowers to those rated no more than 70 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, and it establishes a general daytime noise limit of 65 dBA, which is often exceeded when multiple blowers are used at the same time. Unfortunately, these County laws are often honored in the breach.

The Town Council has grappled for more than a year with this issue, trying to balance the strong desire by many to completely ban gas-powered blowers with concern for the financial impacts on small businesses and individuals, questions about the efficacy of alternatives to gas-powered blowers for fall leaf collection, and reluctance to coercively over-regulate. We have carefully considered the excellent work on this issue by the Climate and Environment Committee's task force.

At our December Council meeting, we reached a compromise. For calendar year 2021, the Town will expand the quiet hours during which gas-powered leaf blowers may not be used, including banning their use on weekend and holiday mornings. At the same time, we want to encourage residents to stop using gas-powered blowers altogether, so we have created a rebate program to incentivize and facilitate that change. This short-term rebate program also is available through residents to contractors who may wish to purchase new or additional battery-powered equipment. Starting next year, in January 2022, the Town will ban use of gas-powered blowers for most of the year, except during heavy leaf collection season in the fall (October 15-December 31). In addition, we will continue our practice of listing on our website the names of landscape contractors who use battery-powered equipment.

We hope that this combination of incentives and phased regulations (described in more detail on page 2) will move us in the right direction by materially reducing the noise from landscaping equipment. We ask you to join us in this effort – please participate in the rebate program and work with quiet and clean landscape contractors. Together, let us become a quieter, more environmentally-friendly community.

And may 2021 bring us peace, health, calm, and quiet.

– Mayor Cecily Baskir

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# TOWN NEWS

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## Public Hearing on Emergency Plan for the 2021 Election

On January 13, the Town Council will hold a public hearing on an ordinance to adopt an emergency plan for the 2021 Town Council election. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the Town Council has discussed continuing a universal vote-by mail system for the 2021 Town election with some changes to protect voter privacy. The Council discussed and introduced an ordinance to implement these procedures at its December 9 meeting. A complete copy of the ordinance and emergency plan is available for review on the Town website. If you are unable to attend the January Council meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. via Zoom, you may submit comments to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org).

## Council Approves New Regulations & Rebate Program

At its December meeting, the Town Council approved new regulations of accessory dwelling units and of gas-powered blowers. The Council also approved a rebate program for the purchase of battery-powered blowers and related equipment. The new regulations and program are summarized below.

### Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulations

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a second dwelling unit located on a lot with a single-family house. The County adopted new rules for ADUs that went into effect on December 31, 2019. Under the County's new rules, one ADU may be located on every lot, either within the house (attached) or in the rear yard (detached). In December, the Town Council approved stricter setback rules than the County for detached ADUs by requiring that they have the same side setbacks as the main house as well as rear setbacks of at least 15% of the lot depth or 20 feet, whichever is greater. The ordinance also requires exterior lighting to be directed away from neighbors' windows. The Town did not impose stricter requirements than the County for attached ADUs or for parking for ADUs.

### Gas-Powered Blower Regulations

The new regulations are in response to resident concerns about noise and other impacts of this type of landscaping equipment. Specifically, they 1) expand quiet hours during which the use of gas-powered blowers is prohibited and 2) implement a ban on the use of gas-powered blowers from January 1 through October 14, effective in 2022. The regulations exempt gas-powered snow blowers and sprayers and do not include a total ban of gas-powered blowers. Montgomery County noise regulations also remain in effect in the Town.

### Battery-Powered Blower Rebate Program

The Council approved a rebate program for battery-powered blowers and related equipment that is intended to reduce the noise from landscaping activities. Residents may request a rebate for half the cost of the purchase of a battery-powered blower, batteries, and chargers, up to a maximum rebate of \$200 per household. The equipment may be purchased by a resident or by a contractor for use in landscaping activities on the resident's property. The Council approved a supplemental appropriation of \$30,000 to fund the program; these funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis from now until May 31, 2021. More information about the program and an application form can be found on the Town website.

## Traffic Study to be Presented to Council in January

At its January 13 meeting, the Council will be presented with the results of the Town-wide traffic study along with a report from the Town's Public Services Committee with its recommendations regarding the study. Following the presentation, a public meeting will be scheduled to allow residents to review and ask questions about the study, and a work session will be scheduled for the Council to discuss the study's findings and the PSC's recommendations in more detail. Future meetings will be advertised in this newsletter and via the Town Crier, and no mitigation strategies will be adopted before community presentations and a public hearing.

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# TOWN EVENTS

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## Join Your Neighbors for a Virtual Wine Tasting

Friday, January 15, 7 p.m. Via Zoom

What's a pandemic without good wine? Join us for a virtual wine tasting with Amanda Page, a certified wine expert, who will help educate us on wines from Tuscany. Amanda is a former professional chef and a graduate of the CIA (the one for foodies, not spies!).

How will this work? Since we can't gather together, we will host a Zoom meeting for all registrants. The two wines to be discussed, 2018 Donna Laura Ali Rosso and 2017 Donna Laura Alteo Chianti Riserva, will be available from Magruder's at a special discounted price. Both wines can be purchased for \$21.98 plus tax, but you don't have to buy both, and no purchase is necessary to join the Zoom. The session will last under an hour, including questions. We hope you will join us for this opportunity to learn about wine and gather together for a little bit of fun!

RSVP to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org), and you will receive the Zoom invite and promo code for wine purchases. All orders must be purchased online and can be picked up in the store or at curbside.

### SAVE THE DATE -- A Discussion with Murray Horwitz

Save a spot on your calendar on Thursday, February 11 at 7 p.m. for a [moderated Zoom discussion with Town resident Murray Horwitz](#), host of WAMU's *The Big Broadcast*. Don't miss this entertaining evening! Details will be provided in the February Forecast.

## Winter Clothing Drive Continues Thru February 28

As the pandemic surges and the weather gets colder, our neighbors are in particular need of warm winter clothing. Each year our Town donates winter clothing to Interfaith Works, which distributes it to 13,000 income-qualified residents, including nearly 6,000 children. Please donate clean, gently used or never worn clothing, such as coats, gloves, hats, and socks, as well as waterproof winter wear. The 24-hour donation box is on the front porch of Marjorie Shaw and Barney Rush at 6917 Maple Avenue.

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# TOWN UPDATES

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### Preparations for Winter Weather

The Town's Winter Weather Preparedness flyer is available on the homepage of the Town website.

### Please Remember to Shovel Your Sidewalk

Following inclement weather, it is important to ensure that the sidewalk adjacent to your house is cleared of snow and ice. If the accumulated snowfall is less than 6 inches, you are responsible for clearing the sidewalk. The Town will clear the sidewalks when snow accumulates to 6 inches or more.



### Recycle Your Christmas Tree!

The Town offers curbside pickup of Christmas trees. All wire, ornaments and tinsel must be removed. Please place the tree at the curb by 7 a.m. on any Monday in January for regular yard waste collection.

### Connect with the Town

Residents may sign up on the Town website to receive Town Crier emails, Alert TOCC voice messages and an electronic copy of the FORECAST newsletter. Information on how to connect with the Town using Facebook and Twitter also is posted on the Town's website.

## Town of Chevy Chase

4301 Willow Lane  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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### TOWN COUNCIL

*Cecily Baskir, Mayor*

*Joel Rubin, Vice Mayor*

*Ellen Cornelius Ericson, Secretary*

*Barney Rush, Treasurer*

*Irene Lane, Community Liaison*



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper

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# AROUND CHEVY CHASE

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## Welcome the New Year with Chevy Chase at Home

Please register in advance for all of these fascinating online programs on the *Events* page of our website at [www.chevyCHASEathome.org](http://www.chevyCHASEathome.org), and HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

**2021 Resolutions: Let's Get Organized!** (Wed., Jan. 6, 1-2 p.m.): Join CC@H as Judy Tiger, owner of *Just That Simple*, shares tips on the 'why' and 'how' of getting organized!

**Astrobiology & the Search for Life Beyond Earth** (Tues., Jan. 12, 2-3 p.m.): Shauna Edson, Astronomy Educator at the National Air and Space Museum, will give us an overview of how astrobiologists do their work, what we know, and what we hope to find in the ongoing search for extra-terrestrial life.

**Travels with Jan: Rajasthan, India** (Fri., Jan. 22, 1-2 p.m.): Join intrepid traveler and Chevy Chase at Home volunteer Jan Augustine as she relives some of her most memorable trips.

**Spies & Spymasters** (Tues., Jan. 26, 1-2 p.m.): Join CC@H and the International Spy Museum as we explore the stories of spies whose lives are even more thrilling than James Bond's!

Chevy Chase At Home (CC@H) is a non-profit organization that helps local seniors "age in place." Full members have access to many exciting cultural, educational, social and health & wellness events. They also enjoy a broad array of volunteer-provided services, including home safety visits, rides to medical and other appointments, and computer assistance. All adults (60+) may join as Members, and adults of any age may become Associates and Volunteers.

JOIN CC@H NOW by calling 301-657-3115 or visiting [www.chevyCHASEathome.org](http://www.chevyCHASEathome.org).