



OBserver

Official newsletter of the Owen Brown Community Association



6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

Owen Brown Community Association

SWEET TOOTH

Family Bingo

MARCH 21ST 6:30PM

Grab the family and pack your Sweet Tooth as we play 10 rounds of Sweet Tooth Bingo. Prizes include Gift Cards to local Sweet Confections. Light Snacks will be provided.

\$5 per person
10 Bingo Cards included

6800 CRADLEROCK WAY
21045

BECOME A CANDIDATE FOR THE OB VILLAGE BOARD!

On April 26, village residents will have the opportunity to elect **three** Village Board members for a two-year term, beginning in May 2025. These elected volunteers represent the interests and concerns of the Owen Brown community to both the Columbia Association (CA) and the County.

Candidate Packets will be available at the Owen Brown Community Center or electronically beginning March 1, 2025. To request an electronic packet, please email manager@owenbrownvillage.org. The deadline for candidate submission is Friday, March 21 at noon.

Tickets Available March 1st

Cosmic Adventures

Traveling Planetarium presents

THE SKY TONIGHT

MONDAY MARCH 31ST

LEARN ABOUT OUR EVENING SKY, INCLUDING CONSTELLATIONS, MOON PHASES, VISIBLE PLANETS

FOR AGES 6 AND UP
MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN
ALL PARTICIPANTS NEED A TICKET.

Limited to Owen Brown Residents

11 A.M. FLOOR SEATING ONLY LIMITED TO 25 GUESTS

12 P.M. CHAIR SEATING AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST LIMITED TO 25 GUESTS

OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

PICK UP SATURDAY APRIL 26TH 9AM-NOON

TREE & SHRUB GIVEAWAY

Registration Opens March 1st

SPRING INTO THE SEASON WITH A TREE OR SHRUB! TREES SHOULD BE PICKED UP SATURDAY APRIL 26TH. DEADLINE FOR REGISTERING IS MARCH 17, 2025.

SWEET AZALEA EASTERN REDBUD ROSEBAY RHODODENDRON

TO QUALIFY FOR A TREE/SHRUB, YOU MUST BE THE OWNER OF A PROPERTY WITHIN THE OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AND AGREE TO PLANTING AT THE REGISTERED ADDRESS. EACH ADDRESS IS ELIGIBLE FOR 1 GIVEAWAY PER YEAR.

Questions? events@owenbrownvillage.org or 410.381.0202

OB DATES TO REMEMBER

OB Board Meeting	March 4, 7pm
OB RAC Meeting	March 12, 7:30pm
OB Board Work Session	March 18, 7pm
Candidate Election	
Packets Due	March 21, noon
Family Bingo	March 21, 6:30pm
OB RAC Meeting	March 26, 7:30pm
Cosmic Adventures	March 31, 11am, 12pm
OB Election	April 26, 9am-12pm
Columbia Cleans Day	April 26, 10am-12pm
Columbia Cares	
Tree & Shrub Giveaway	April 26, 9am-12pm

OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

Office Hours

Monday-Friday	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Village Office Staff

	410-381-0202
Ilana Sambuco-Paul	Village Manager
Susan Sloan	Covenant Advisor
Kelly Kalal	Facility Coordinator/ Event Planner
Nick Bechetti	Asst. Covenant Advisor
Kelly Carney	<i>OBserver</i> Editor
Joann Allen	Facility Assistant

Village Board Members

Brad Butler	Board Chair
Linda Ortiz-Byrd	Board Vice-chair
Robert Golibersuch	Board Member
Mae Beale	Board Member
Adil Ahmed	Board Member
Michael Golibersuch	CA Board Rep.

Check us out on the web and Facebook at:
www.owenbrownvillage.org
www.facebook.com/owenbrownvillage

OBCA BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

from the desk of Board Chair, Brad Butler

It is hard to believe that at the time of writing, Lake Elkhorn has been covered with ice since I wrote last month's update! Our family has enjoyed the snow, but we're ready for warmer weather.

At our February board meeting, we hosted representatives from the CA capital projects team to discuss play area (tot lot) updates. Several residents attended to provide feedback to CA on their plans to replace the play area at Windbell and convert the play area at Brush Run to a sway bench, and the Board approved a letter to CA endorsing those plans taking resident feedback into account. Construction should start on these play areas in the spring.

The CA team also previewed a concept plan for the eventual replacement of the bridge at the North end of Lake Elkhorn. The new bridge will be larger and accommodate more standing and seating area. The memorial dedications on both existing benches will be kept for the new benches. This project does not yet have a start date. We will certainly share more info when we have it. Additionally, our county council representative's office shared that the project to renovate the playing fields and park behind the library, the planned safety upgrades to Cradlerock Way, and the multi-use path parallel to Dobbin Road are all scheduled to start construction soon after the weather warms up.

The Board discussed and set organizational goals to help focus our activity headed into the next fiscal year. This is a topic I'd love to discuss with any interested resident, but it would take too much space in an *OBserver* article! Please reach out if you are interested. We also closed two architectural violation cases, and appointed an election committee to oversee the upcoming village elections.

On tap for March, we will vote to formally adopt the architectural guideline updates discussed at earlier meetings, and begin planning and budgeting for the next fiscal year. This time of year, we have a lot of administrative activity that's maybe less interesting in the monthly update, but important to keeping the organization running effectively. Please reach out anytime if you'd like to share your concerns or perspective, or just have questions. I look forward to sharing another update next month!

Stay in the Know
Sign up for the OB E-Newsletter



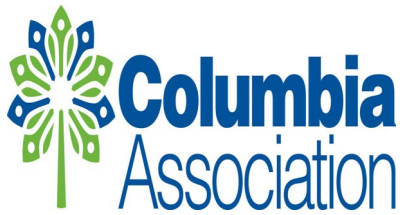
Community Contest Coming Soon



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CA'S NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUSES ON WELLNESS, RESOURCE RESILIENCE & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

From the desk of Michael Golibersuch, OBCA Columbia Council Representative

Since the last edition of the *OBserver*, the Columbia Association (CA) Board of Directors has held meetings on January 23rd and February 13th. Due to space limitations I can't cover all the highlights in print but, if you are interested, more comprehensive descriptions are available on Owen Brown's Facebook page.

CA's Fiscal Year 2026 begins in May and the budget has been an area of focus over the last several board meetings. We are scheduled to take a final vote on the budget for FY26 at our February 27th meeting so by the time this *OBserver* hits your mailbox, it's likely to have been approved. This endeavor has been a months-long process including multiple opportunities for community input throughout the process (thank you to everyone who provided input). Key takeaways from the draft budget include:

No change in the Annual Charge rate or cap (how your property is assessed)

- Increase in salaries and associated costs in response to Howard County's minimum wage increasing of 7% on January 1st (personnel-related costs account for around 47% of total CA expenses)
- Includes funding for a membership structure and pricing study which may lead to changes in membership options in the future
- Capital budget of \$14.5M, which is allocated to maintaining and refreshing current amenities, open space, and sustainability initiatives.
- Replacement of the Lake Elkhorn Boardwalk (which many of us refer to as "the boat dock"),

- Continued renovations at Supreme Sports Club, including remodeling the downstairs locker rooms.

Overall CA is in a solid financial position and has become financially more nimble and resilient following the pandemic. Looking into the future, the state of Maryland's projected budget deficit and the new presidential administration's goal of reducing the size of the federal government could have impacts on our local economy and CA's budget in the future.

The CA Board approved a new strategic plan. The plan does not provide a prescriptive set of goals but is instead intended as high level guidance for staff and creates a framework that allows the Board to augment the plan with more specific goals and objectives over the next few years. The plan outlines four strategic focus areas for CA: Community Connection, Wellness, Environmental Sustainability, and Resource Resilience. The plan is the culmination of several months of hard work by CA's staff to incorporate input from the community and all board members.

As of February 1st, CA is over 90% toward their goal to hire and train approximately 650 lifeguards for the summer. This is a 15% increase over where CA was in 2024 which is an encouraging sign. However, it is important to remember that much of the lifeguard workforce has a limited geographic range in where they work. Recruiting for Owen Brown pools is not as far along as Columbia overall so if you know anyone who may be interested in working as a lifeguard this summer, please point them towards CA. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at michael.golibersuch@ca-board.org or stop me to say hello as I walk my brown-and-white dog (who looks like a border collie but isn't) around Lake Elkhorn.



Your place to find friendly reminders regarding property maintenance

1. All leaves should be cleaned off ground -unless being used for mulch in garden beds only.
2. All winter holiday decorations should be removed from your house exterior. The deadline to remove decorations was 1/31/2025.

OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Are you looking to give back and volunteer for your community? Owen Brown Residential Architectural Committee (RAC) is seeking volunteer members. The committee meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday evening each month to discuss architectural applications from the neighborhood. Volunteers attend meetings and take turns doing inspections and reporting back to the committee. This committee is great for anyone interested in ensuring properties are maintained appropriately or seeking a role in the community that isn't too difficult. Any resident in the Village of Owen Brown over age 18 is eligible. If you, or someone you know is interested, please email covenants@owenbrownvillage.org.

Owen Brown Community Association

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

Office: 410-381-0202 Fax: 410-381-0235



COLUMBIA CLEANS DAY

Let's Make Owen Brown Sparkle



JOIN FELLOW RESIDENTS TO PICK UP TRASH IN AND AROUND OUR TRAILS, TOT LOTS & PATHWAYS. THIS IS A WONDERFUL WAY FOR YOUR FAMILY, SCOUT TROOP OR CIVIC ORGANIZATION TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT IN THEIR OWN BACK YARD.



Saturday
April 26th

10am-Noon

Owen Brown
Community
Center

Registration Encouraged

Scan the QR code or contact events@owenbrownvillage.org

CA IS HIRING NEW LIFEGUARDS; APPLY NOW!

Columbia Association (CA) is looking for new lifeguards and pool managers in your community. CA team members enjoy flexible hours, a fun work environment, competi-



tive pay (starting at \$16 an hour), and a free CA Fit&Play membership — including pools, gyms, and much more! The first step in the process is to visit Columbia Aquatics at <https://columbiaassociation.org/about-us/careers/aquatics> for more information.