



# GLEN ECHO PARK

Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **\*\* Media Advisory \*\***

### **GLEN ECHO PARK PARTNERSHIP FOR ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF DENTZEL CAROUSEL WITH RIBBON CUTTING ON OPENING DAY**

GLEN ECHO, MD – The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture (the Partnership) will hold a **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony** on **May 1, 2021, at 10:30 a.m.** to mark the opening of the Park's historic Dentzel carousel for its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season. The carousel has not operated since June 30, 2019, when it closed for major repairs. Due to Covid-19, the carousel did not open for the 2020 season.

The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held on site at the Park and attended by local, state, and federal officials, including **Congressman Jamie Raskin, National Park Service Superintendent Charles Cuvelier, Maryland State Senator Susan Lee, Maryland State Delegates Mark Korman and Sara Love, Maryland State Arts Council Director Ken Skrzysz, Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Councilmembers Andrew Friedson, Gabe Albornoz, and Evan Glass, and Mayor of the Town of Glen Echo and Partnership Board Member Willem Polak.** Major sponsor and former Partnership Board President **Carol Trawick** will also attend.

In following Montgomery County Covid-19 safety guidelines for public gatherings, the public is invited to view the event virtually, via livestream on the Partnership's website, as well as YouTube and Facebook. **A small number of media will be allowed at the event in compliance with to Covid-19 guidelines. Please contact Jenni Cloud to confirm attendance.**

The 45-minute program, which will be held outdoors and will follow Covid-19 protocols, will include speakers who will discuss the history of the carousel; its cultural significance, including its pivotal role in the civil rights history of the Washington, DC region; the saving of the carousel by local residents and an anonymous donor in the early 1970s; and more. This iconic "heart of the Park" has hosted visitors from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and through World War II, to the civil rights protests and the turbulent 1960s, and through the 50 years since the Park became a National Park Service property and an arts and cultural center. It is truly a local treasure.

The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will also include a ceremonial "first ride" with officials and Carousel 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary sponsors. An announcement of the winner of the Partnership's "Favorite Carousel Animal Contest" will be part of the event as well, so viewers of the virtual event can tune in to find out if the animal they voted for is the winner.

With great anticipation, the carousel will open to the public at 12:30 p.m. following the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. The ride will operate this year with limited capacity due to Covid-19 safety protocols. Tickets sales will be primarily online in advance. The public can find more information about ticket sales and days and hours of operation at [glenechopark.org/carousel](http://glenechopark.org/carousel).

This event is part of the Carousel 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration that kicked off on February 18. Together with Montgomery County and the National Park Service, the Partnership is commemorating this milestone anniversary with a months-long celebration that includes virtual lectures on the history and restoration of the carousel, Carousel Family Days throughout the summer, social media contests, carousel anniversary merchandise, monthly Carousel Story Time, a fundraising campaign, and the premieres of three short videos that will feature personal stories reflecting the unique and enduring role the carousel has played in the community for a century.

The Glen Echo Park website has a special section devoted to Carousel 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities and events: [glenechopark.org/carousel100](https://glenechopark.org/carousel100). There the public can find detailed information, RSVP for events, purchase Carousel 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo merchandise, donate to the Carousel 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary fund, watch events that have already taken place, and more.

Carousel 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration activities are paid for with grants provided by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, the Maryland State Arts Council, and Heritage Montgomery, as well as funds from private donors, including: Long & Foster Real Estate; Corcoran Women’s Committee; GEICO; Loring Consulting Engineers, Inc.; OPaL Renovations; Carol Trawick; Phil Fabrizio; Quinn Evans; Chris and Carol Sue Fromboluti; John and Heather Hanson; Les Mardiks; Ed and Susan O’Connell; Martha Morris and Joe Shannon; Karen Wilson; the A.R. Landsman Foundation; Margo Reid, Capacity Partners; Lois Ireland and Pierre Huggins; Adrienne Dominguez; Christine Mayo; Ann Schnare; and The David M. Schwarz Charitable Giving Foundation.

Additionally, the Dentzel carousel at Glen Echo Park was awarded the 2021 Heritage Award in the “Place” category from the State of Maryland through the Maryland State Arts Council, which comes with \$5,000 in funding for the celebratory events.

**WHO:** Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

**WHAT:** Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to Open the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season of the Dentzel carousel

**WHEN:** May 1, 2021 at 10:30am

**WHERE:** The event will stream live on the Glen Echo Park Partnership website (<https://glenechopark.org/carousel100>), as well as YouTube and Facebook. **A small number of media will be allowed at the event due to Covid-19 guidelines. Please contact Jenni Cloud to confirm attendance.**

**WHY:** To open the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season of the Park’s Dentzel carousel and commemorate its storied history.

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*Note to editors: High-resolution images of the carousel, including historic images are available.*

## CAROUSEL INFORMATION



Installed in Glen Echo Park in 1921 and now the property of the National Park Service, the carousel has been described as “one of the Washington area’s true treasures.” The ride was built by the premiere carousel company of its day: the Dentzel Carousel Company of Germantown, Pennsylvania. Dentzel carousels of the 1920s represented the height of carousel design, known for their elegantly carved and painted animals and their precision-crafted mechanisms. The carousel is one of only 135 functioning antique carousels in the country and one of the few still in its original location. With its playful animals and striking ornamentation, the carousel has been an iconic symbol of the Park throughout the site's amusement park years and into its current phase as an arts and cultural center.

The carousel was saved through actions of the local community when threatened with a sale to another park in the early 1970s and is a local treasure loved by many in the Washington, DC area. The carousel is also the site of civil rights protests that took place in the 1960s during the era of the privately-owned amusement park.

A full restoration of the decorative elements of the carousel was conducted from 1983 through 2003, paid for with funds from Montgomery County, the State of Maryland, and the federal government through the National Park Service; in addition, a \$23 million renovation of other Glen Echo Park facilities was completed in the mid 2000s. Recent major repairs, paid for by the National Park Service, the State of Maryland through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, and Montgomery County, include replacing the roof of the carousel building, replacing the outdated fire suppression system, and rebuilding the band organ room, which houses the Wurlitzer band organ. These much-needed repairs will now keep the carousel safely protected for many years to come.

Today, Glen Echo Park is one of the premiere arts and cultural centers in the Washington, DC area, and the carousel is the only ride that remains in the park from the amusement park era, which ended in 1968. It has a ridership of close to 55,000 each year and normally operates from May through September each year. Due to Covid-19, the carousel did not operate in 2020.

### **ABOUT GLEN ECHO PARK AND THE GLEN ECHO PARK PARTNERSHIP**

Glen Echo Park is a vibrant arts and cultural center presenting festivals, exhibitions, and dances, as well as children’s theater, music programs, nature programs, and art classes to more than 375,000 visitors each year. The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, a nonprofit organization, oversees these and other activities, including preserving the historic structures in the Park. Glen Echo Park, part of the National Park Service’s George Washington Memorial Parkway, is located in Glen Echo, Maryland, six miles northwest of Georgetown along the scenic Potomac River palisades.

The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council ([msac.org](http://msac.org)) and also by funding from the Montgomery County government and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County ([creativemoco.com](http://creativemoco.com)). All programs are produced in cooperation with the National Park Service and Montgomery County, Maryland.

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