



Glen Echo Park Wins Icon Award from The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce

The Park's 2026 event season celebrates "The Power of Place."

For more information, email jcloud@glenechopark.org.

GLEN ECHO, MD (June 4, 2026) – Glen Echo Park was presented with the *Icon Award: People's Choice for Architectural Excellence in Bethesda* by The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) at its Annual Real Estate Update on June 3, 2026. On behalf of the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture (the Partnership), the nonprofit organization that manages the Park's arts programs and historic buildings, CEO Katey Boerner accepted the award, which was presented by Carol Trawick.

"A huge thank you to everyone who voted for the Park, spotlighting this beloved community treasure as an architectural ICON! We're grateful to know that so many people in our community think of Glen Echo Park's buildings as iconic and inspiring," said Boerner. "And thank you to the GBCC for fostering collaboration, partnerships, and a sense of place for the Greater Bethesda Area throughout their 100 year history, and for honoring the buildings that make our community special." Glen Echo Park's iconic Dentzel carousel and Spanish Ballroom, as well as the Bumper Car Pavilion, Stone Tower, and Arcade Building, welcome tens of thousands of visitors to the Park every year for arts classes, social dances, concerts, festivals, and more.

Installed in 1921 by the Dentzel Carousel Company of Germantown, Pennsylvania, the Glen Echo Park carousel is one of only 135 functioning antique carousels in the country and one of the few still in its original location. Listed on the **National Register of Historic Places**, the carousel is truly a Washington area treasure. Known as a "menagerie carousel" because of the variety of its animals, with its 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 for the past half-century.

In the summer of 1960, Howard University students led protests at the Glen Echo Amusement Park (the privately-owned business on the site during most of the 20th century) along with local residents. The students rode the carousel and were arrested for doing so in violation of the amusement park's segregation policies. The case went all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Their continued protests under the heat of the summer sun—and the active engagement of community members in the fight—led to the amusement park's desegregation, opening the venue to everyone for its 1961 season and every year thereafter until the amusement park closed at the end of the 1968 season.

Today, the carousel is the only remaining historic ride from the amusement park era at Glen Echo Park site. It is ridden by more than 50,000 people each year – including multi-generations of families visiting the Park. In 2021, the carousel celebrated its 100th Anniversary in the Park. Find information on the Carousel 100th Anniversary Celebration at glenechopark.org/carousel100.

To learn more about Glen Echo Park history and other iconic buildings in the Park, visit the Park's website at <https://glenechopark.org/history>.

Another special milestone is being celebrated at the Park in 2026. For a century, music from the carousel's historic Wurlitzer band organ has echoed through the Park and across Montgomery County—a soundtrack to generations and a witness to ten decades of local and American history. Now the Park is marking the instrument's 100th anniversary, alongside America's 250th.

The Partnership's 2026 season embraces this moment with the theme *The Power of Place*, weaving the "A250" celebration throughout a vibrant lineup of events that began with Carousel Day on May 2 when the ride opened



for the season. Coming up on Saturday, June 27, children are invited to the Park to participate in Montgomery County Heritage Days and again celebrate the power of place as the Partnership offers a **History Scavenger Hunt** that includes clues to help visitors find the most iconic places in the Park and learn about their history. Visitors who complete their scavenger hunt card may receive a special prize. (Visit the Park's website to learn more at <https://glenechopark.org/events>)

Also at the GBCC Real Estate Update, in honor of The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce's 100th Anniversary, the Real Estate Committee presented the Oliver Owen Kuhn Architectural Excellence Award. This award, juried by The American Institute of Architects–Maryland, recognizes outstanding architectural projects that demonstrate excellence in design, purpose, and contribution to the community.

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High resolution images and carousel b-roll available by emailing jcloud@glenechopark.org.

About Glen Echo Park and the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

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 close to 300,000 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, is located in Glen Echo, Maryland, six miles northwest of Georgetown along the scenic Potomac River palisades. For more information on Glen Echo Park, visit glenechopark.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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