

"Federation Corner' column
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Honoring Ike Leggett

On Saturday morning, April 17, the Greater Bethesda Chevy Chase Coalition (GBCCC) joined with the Town of Chevy Chase to hold an event in honor of "Ike" Leggett, longtime former member of the Montgomery County Council and now Chair of Maryland's Democratic Party. Both the GBCCC and the Town credit Ike with preserving the Georgetown Branch of the Capital Crescent Trail. He persuaded his former colleagues on the council to open the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue and restore the trestle over Rock Creek, thus linking Silver Spring with Bethesda and beyond for hikers and bikers.

The high point of the event, which was held on the trail near the portion where it reaches Connecticut Avenue, was the unveiling of a plaque honoring Leggett, and the dedication of three trees planted in his honor and two benches for weary hikers and bikers. The well-attended ceremony also featured remarks by Tony Czajkowski, Ira Shesser, and Chevy Chase Town mayor Mier Wolf, all past-presidents of the GBCCC as well as the current president, John Warnock. In addition, County Executive Duncan, State Senator Sharon Grosfeld, and County Council Members Howard Denis and Nancy Floreen also paid tribute to Ike. Other participants included State Delegate Rich Madaleno; Greg James, a personal representative of the Governor; Michael Jackson, head of the Hikers and Bikers Advisory Council who was representing Maryland Secretary of Transportation Flanagan; and Congressman Chris Van Hollen.

In his remarks, Ike recalled the contributions of others to preserve the Trail, such as the late Council Member Betty Anne Krahnke, and former Council Members Nancy Dacek and Neil Potter (who later became county executive); Dacek and Potter were also present.

Leggett also confidently predicted that the future for the trail was bright.

Adding to the festivity were balloons for the kids; "Save the Trail" and "We Like Ike" signs; and refreshments that included donations of coffee from Starbucks, bagels from the Einstein Brothers, and gourmet cookies from The Classic Residence by Hyatt, a senior citizen housing complex.