

World-wide Distribution

Wootton Grad
To Perform
At National Theatre

NEWS, PAGE 3

Civil Rights Icon
Addresses Students

NEWS, PAGE 3

Tablescapes:
Bringing the Outdoors In

HOLIDAYS, PAGE 5

For the sixth consecutive year, Fourth School students participated in Samaritan's Purse's Operation Christmas Child. They filled shoeboxes with toys, school supplies, candy, and hygiene items and then brought them to school. The boxes are sent to Samaritan's Purse who will deliver them to underprivileged children around the world. Above, National Junior Honor Society members (from left) Laura Wormald, Ainsley Benton and Mia Blossom Baker help load shoeboxes into a teacher's truck to be delivered to Samaritan's Purse.

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Wootton Grad To Perform at National Theatre

Cicily Daniels returns to area for "Porgy and Bess."

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

Christmas at home is especially meaningful this year to 1994 Thomas Wootton High School grad Cicily Daniels. After many years of performing on Broadway and around the country, she is thrilled to be spending Christmas morning with her family in Potomac, Christmas afternoon enjoying a family dinner at her aunt's home and Christmas evening in the national tour production of "Porgy and Bess" at Washington D.C.'s National Theatre.

"The last time I performed in Washington D.C. was when I was in the national tour of 'Rent,'" Daniels said. "There is nothing like performing in your hometown before the people who knew me growing up. It's both exciting and rewarding!" She will be part of the ensemble as well as the understudy for Mariah. "I sing some of the featured solos in the 'Oh Dr. Jesus' reprise, so my friends and family will be able to recognize my voice."

Daniels became interested in singing and acting as a child in elementary school and at Brookland Union Baptist Church. In high

school, she performed with the Traveling Young Players in two productions at the Kennedy Center and acted in many plays at Thomas Wootton High School.

After graduation, she was one of 28 students accepted into the Yale Performing Arts program. "After Yale, I did summer theater in Lincoln, N.H., while I worked my day-job at Goldman Sachs," she said. "I kept auditioning and was chosen for the national tour of 'Rent.' That was a wonderful moment in my professional career."

She returned to Potomac in 2011 to be honored with the Thomas Wootton High School Patron's Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award and also to recognize Stanley Brodsky, the school's renowned theater director and 20-year veteran teacher for the lasting legacy of excellence in the performing arts that he instilled in the students during his years as a teaching director. She also returned last October to be married to music copyist Brett Macias at the Bolger Center in Potomac.

Some of her Broadway credits include "Disney's The Little Mermaid" (original cast), "All Shook Up," "Rent" (national tour), "Caroline or Change," "Little Shop of Horrors," and "Into the Woods." She has also appeared in numerous television shows: "Ugly Betty," "One Life to Live," "Boardwalk Empire," "American Gangster," and "Saturday Night Live." When she is not on stage or TV, Daniels makes commercials and records voice-overs

for companies such as Cinnamon Toast Crunch, Cover Girl, Time Warner Cable, EA Sports Active and Softsheen. She serves as a celebrity spokesperson for Nielson TV and most recently performed the role of Martha Ledoux in the first developmental reading of "Gumbo the Musical."

However, her first love is acting in live theater. "I love the interaction with the live audience," she said. "I gain so much energy from them. When you are on stage, you connect with them and feel their responses and emotions which bring out the best in your performance."

"Porgy and Bess" premiered on Broadway in 1935 with a full cast of African-American singers, a courageous artistic decision at the time. George Gershwin, who conceived the play as an "American Folk Opera" wrote the music and his brother Ira, along with DuBose Heyward wrote the lyrics. The play is based on the Heyward's novel, "Porgy" which tells the story of Porgy, a disabled black beggar living in "Catfish Row" — the slums of Charleston, S.C. in the early 1920s. It deals with his attempts to rescue Bess from the clutches of Crown, her violent and possessive lover, and from Sportin' Life, the drug dealer. "Summertime," "It Ain't Necessarily So," "Bess, You Is My Woman Now," "I Loves You, Porgy" and "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'" are just a few of the songs that have



Cicily Daniels

endeared "Porgy and Bess" to audiences.

Washington D.C.'s National Theatre shares a significant milestone with "Porgy and Bess" and in theater history. The first tour ended here in March 1936 with the production performed before the first integrated audience. Todd Duncan, the original Porgy and a Howard University music professor, along with the original Bess, Baltimore native Anne Brown, led the cast in a strike until theater management agreed to fully integrate the audience.

Management had offered to "integrate" by permitting an African-American audience every other night, or by seating the white audience and the black audience on separate floors of the theater. The performers would not agree, and finally, in an historic decision, the management set aside its segregation policy.

"Porgy and Bess" is the winner of the 2012 Tony Award for Best Musical Revival. The play features new staging and a 23-piece orchestra. This production will hold its Washington premiere from Dec. 25 – 29 and then continue on its national tour through July 2014. Tickets are available at the National Theatre Box Office, online at www.thenationaldc.com or by calling 800-514-3489. Group orders of 10 or more may be placed by calling 855-386-2516. For more, call 202-628-6161.

Civil Rights Icon Addresses Students at Washington Episcopal

Lewis shares his eyewitness account of Civil Rights Movement.

The Civil Rights Movement came alive as U.S. Rep. John R. Lewis (D-Ga.) addressed students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 at Washington Episcopal School on Dec. 13.

He discussed his life experiences as a Civil Rights leader, referencing his book "March: Book One" which he co-wrote with Andrew Aydin. Each student at the presentation read the book and discussed it in small groups prior to his visit, and prepared questions that they asked the congressman after he and Aydin spoke to the group.

"Our students were able to experience first-hand from Congressman Lewis what

it was like to be a freedom fighter," said Grade 6 teacher Deighton Allyene. "He is the sole surviving speaker from the March on Washington and he shared his experiences with us — we are so fortunate to host him at our school."

Lewis told the audience of 135 about his childhood in rural Alabama, raising chickens as a sharecropper's son; about writing a letter to Martin Luther King, Jr., and subsequently meeting and working alongside him; about life in the segregated south; about his leadership in the Civil Rights Movement; and his involvement on the March on Washington 50 years ago in August 1963. "His contribution to Civil Rights is remarkable," said Grade 8 student Samantha Liggins. "We all were thrilled to meet him and hear him speak after reading his book. He was so nice to answer our questions and sign our books."

Aydin also spoke to the group, sharing the story of how his suggestion to Lewis to write a comic book about his experiences

U.S. Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), an icon in the Civil Rights Movement, with Washington Episcopal School students in Grade 8 after addressing them and answering their questions.

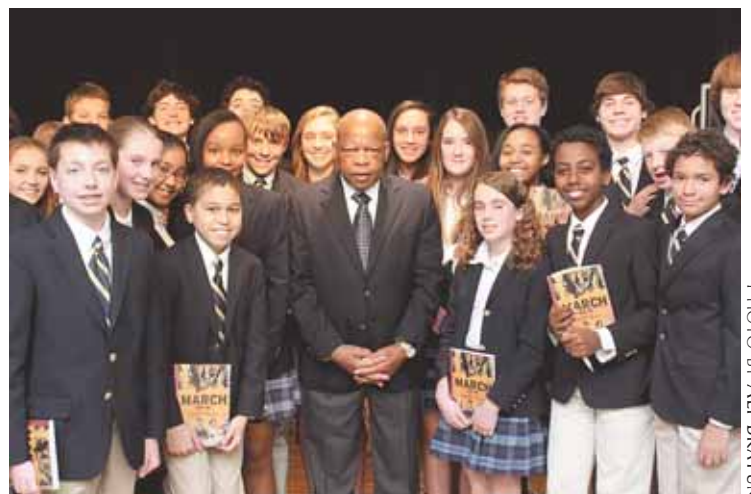


PHOTO BY ALI BRATUN

in the Civil Rights Movement became a reality and their graphic novel was born. This event is part of the school's author series during its annual Book Fair.

Lewis was elected to serve the Fifth Congressional District of Georgia in 1986. For

more information, visit <http://johnlewis.house.gov/>.

Washington Episcopal School is an independent, coeducational day school in Bethesda. For more information, visit www.w-e-s.org.

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OPINION



PHOTOS BY EMMA KIMM DIXON

Snapshots

**Snow from last week's storm
clung to trees and covered
the ground in Potomac.**

An Open Letter from the Superintendent

Let's talk about "cybercivility."

To the Editor:

The following letter was addressed to Montgomery County parents.

Since becoming superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, I have spoken at length about the importance of social emotional learning — essentially, giving our students the skills they need to navigate their lives in a healthy, positive way. And that is why I am writing to you today.

This week, the wintry weather required us to go through our normal processes to determine whether we should delay or cancel school. It's not an easy decision and involves staff working at all hours to monitor road conditions and weather forecasts. As we were in the process of evaluating the situation, students started contacting me on Twitter. Some of these "tweets" were clever, funny, and respectful, pleading for me to cancel school so they could sleep in or have more time to do their homework. Many of these tweets, however, were offensive and disturbing. Some were threatening to me and others. A few referenced my family. There was rampant use of racial epithets and curse words.

This activity on social media caused me to reflect on my responsibilities as a parent of three children and the superintendent for 151,000 children, and what our role is in ensuring that our children are using technology appropriately. This is especially important as we increase the use of technology in our schools, including full wireless access and bring-your-own-device possibilities for our students.

As superintendent, I have the legal responsibility of in loco parentis, meaning that I and

other educators are supposed to serve as "parents" in the school building. Some of the tweets I received were so disturbing that my staff reported them to the school principal and our security team. This may seem like an overreaction to some, but it is our legal responsibility to do so, and we take it very seriously.

But this is more than just a challenge at the office. My wife and I find ourselves in a daily conversation with our children about the appropriate use of technology. How long can they use a device? How often during a day? What are they allowed, and not allowed, to take pictures of? They don't have internet access yet, but I am already imagining what it will be like when they do. How will my wife and I ensure that they are being safe online, while allowing them to access the many positive aspects of the online world and social media? How will we ensure we have the right controls and oversight so they are doing so in an appropriate way?

I don't have all the answers in my home or in our schools. But I know it takes deliberate and tough conversations within families and communities to help kids understand how to use technology and social media appropriately.

I'm sure that most of the students who posted inappropriate comments to me on Twitter were doing so without thinking. In fact, we know that the adolescent brain isn't equipped to think long term and doesn't calculate risk/reward ratios in the same way that adults do. I'd like to think that they wouldn't post such things if they understood the consequences of their actions or if they knew that I'm legally responsible for reporting threats to the police and to their parents. I'd like to think they wouldn't post such things, especially if they understood that these posts are permanent and can follow them and impact college acceptances, job opportunities, and future relationships.

I'm writing this letter to start a conversation about how we can support our children in using technology in a way that is healthy, productive, and positive. Cyberbullying is a real issue among children and adults. We not only have to teach our kids how to handle new technologies appropriately, but we also have to model that behavior in our own communications on social media and email. We need to talk about "cybercivility:" how we can help our children grow into responsible and caring adults who interact with one another in a civil, respectful way. I have asked my staff to develop some materials and methods to help schools and families navigate these conversations, so look for more information about this in the near future.

In the meantime, I urge you to talk to your children on an ongoing basis about what's appropriate and not appropriate to do online. Also, remember, if your child is under 13, do not allow them to use social media — they aren't ready for it and it is a violation of the user agreements or guidelines for nearly all major social media sites.

If your child is 13 or older, please consider whether they are ready to use social media. Set limits and talk to them about the appropriate use of social media and mobile technology. And make sure you are monitoring what they post online.

Our website has some resources that you can use to talk to your children now and we will be adding more resources in the near future. If you have any thoughts or ideas to help further this cybercivility dialogue, please do not hesitate to email me at Joshua_Starr@mcpsmd.org or contact me on Twitter at @mcpssuper.

Joshua Starr

Superintendent
Montgomery County Public Schools

HOLIDAYS

Table Scapes: Bringing the Outdoors In

BY CAROLE FUNGER
THE ALMANAC

There is nothing more central to holiday celebrations than joining together around the dinner table. This year, when deciding how to decorate that table, consider thinking outside the proverbial box and creating a table scape that takes its inspiration from the outdoors.

Innovative, organic décor, gathered from your neighborhood nursery and your own backyard, can significantly enhance your holiday table while providing your home with live plants for weeks to come. One glance out the window affirms that the seemingly barren winter landscape is actually rife with colorful berries, artistic bare branches and frothy evergreens. Pair these elements with live plants of the season and you have the perfect mix of simplicity and elegance, stirring the awareness that even in the dead of winter nature offers us sources of beauty.

An excellent example of this is the holiday table created last year for the Longwood Gardens Indoor Christmas display. The spectacular holiday table, set for 64, is resplendent with fresh-potted plants, painted white willow branches and unbelievably, a table runner made out of lush green moss. Oversized white fluted vases, fringed with dark green foliage and the stark white blooms of live orchids house towering white willow branches. On the table, potted white orchids and brilliant red cyclamen stand out in stark relief from the brilliant red cloth. Cool and lush, the pungent moss garland extends the entire length of the table and cascades off the edges. Mirrored glass, white plates and brilliant silver accessories complete the picture.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon.

HOLIDAY NEEDS

Now through the end of the year, The Jewish Social Service Agency and community partners are collecting monetary donations and gift cards for its nonsectarian "Give-a-Gift" program. This program enables recipients in need to select unique gifts for loved ones, holiday foods, warm winter clothing, prescriptions, toys for the children, or special items that will make their holiday brighter and lives more

What makes this table so special? First, the unusual focus on live greenery, in pots. While it is not uncommon for holiday tables to be embellished with seasonal cut flowers, or the ubiquitous evergreen, Longwood's table astonishes by bringing the vigor of the summer growing season to the sparse winter table. The casual observer need only experience the smell of the earth rising up from the pots while appreciating the vibrant hues of the living blooms to recognize the perfect metaphor for the celebration of all that is life during the holiday season.

Stylistically, Longwood's table also demonstrates a simple control of color, the bright red cloth offsetting the white petals of the plants, while the green moss garland completes the Christmas picture. The dramatic verticals of the willow branches are softened at the base of the vases by the 'wreathes' of orchid pots, while the drooping edges of the moss garland and the napkins fall like ribbons from the cloth.

How can this be duplicated? While few of us have tables large enough to seat 64, the display provides ample food for thought. The most significant change you could make to your own décor this year would be to adopt Longwood's use of potted plants in lieu of cut flowers. This makes sense from a design standpoint as well as the notion that the entire décor can be reused and enjoyed for weeks following the holidays. Other than poinsettias and orchids, local nurseries are chock full of jewel-toned cyclamen, begonias, paper whites and amaryllis plants this time of year. Group plants that you like around vases filled with bare branches, keeping the color palette simple, focusing more on bloom quality than quantity. Picture a garden and install it on your table.

comfortable throughout the year. The program supports newborns to 103-year-old adults including frail Holocaust survivors. Call 301-610-8342 or visit www.jssa.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 18

Documentary Screening. 7 p.m. in the Fenton Room of the Silver Spring Civic Center, 1 Veterans Plaza, Silver Spring. Free screening of "Driven to Defraud," a new documentary by the Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection on auto sales fraud in the county.



A table scape from Longwood Gardens.

Shop your backyard. Many native hollies, such as the brilliant red American winterberry make great filler for vases, while white and silver birch trees, bamboo and curly willow are great sources of decorative branches. Ask yourself what memories you carry from your childhood, what colors and shapes are important to you, and incorporate them in your table décor. For the truly adventurous, consider using a narrow band of live sod for your table runner, making sure to provide a plastic undercoating to protect your table.

For more information on this table, as well as the Longwood Gardens Christmas Display, go to <http://longwoodgardens.org>.

THURSDAY/DEC. 19

Potluck Dinner. 6:30-8:45 p.m. Potomac Community Village, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Potomac Seniors age in place, is hosting a Potluck Dinner and Program at Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road. Patricia Collins will present tips on diet, nutrition and well-being. Register at www.potomaccommunityvillage.org or 240-22-1370. Guests are asked to bring 8-10 servings of an item according to the first letter of their last name. A-E: appetizers; F-K: salads/side dishes; L-R: main dishes; S-Z: desserts.

LET'S TALK Real Estate



by Michael Matese

How Wired Are You?

It wasn't that long ago that regardless of a home's size, there were only two standard wiring systems required to run a household: telephone and electricity. The modern age has ushered in the concept of a technology-based home, one where multiple home computers, surround sound televisions, stereo equipment, home security systems and automated conveniences have relegated two-wiring systems to relics of the past. The 21st century lifestyle dictates a multitude of wiring, wiring types and multi-purpose technological home functionality. Modern homes, in order to stay market competitive, need to offer a wide range of efficiency and maximize all livable spaces for technological usage through their wiring. Advanced wiring schematics allow homeowners to customize their use of technology while meeting individual needs. Options in advanced wiring range from Category 5 wiring and coaxial cable to fiber-optic cable. However, if choosing fiber-optic for your home, it is best to leave the installation in the hands of a licensed contractor or other certified professional, as this option is expensive and complex and leaves little room for error. If you choose to build your own home, there is an equally diverse range of options open in home automation systems and home security systems available to meet the simplest of needs or the most complex. With today's innovations, you can wire your entire house to run everything from one simple location. Building convenience and efficiency into your home at the ground level adds a degree of comfort and luxury to your home while you're living in it, and dollars onto your asking price when it comes to future resale value.

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BIRTH

Gavin Elliott Bruce

Jason and Amy Bruce announce the birth of their son Gavin Elliott Bruce. He was born on Oct. 29, 2013 in Atlanta, Ga. He was 7 pounds, 11 ounces. He has an older sister Alexis. He is the grandson of Sherry Sundick, and Gary and Marsha Sundick of Potomac.



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Alexandria resident and runway model, Tameka Young

ENTERTAINMENT

Email community entertainment events to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursdays at noon. Photos and artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Art Exhibition. Classes are taught year-round for beginner, intermediate and advanced students. Fridays 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sundays noon-4 p.m. At Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Call 301-634-2273 or visit www.artglasscenteratglenecho.org.

Glassworks. Saturdays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Glassworks is the area's first glass school. Classes are taught year-round for both new and advanced students. At Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Call 301-634-2280 or visit www.innervisionglassworks.com.

Photoworks. A resource for both student and professional photographers to develop their talents through classes, workshops, and exhibitions. Open Saturdays 1-4 p.m., Sundays 1-8 p.m., and during all scheduled classes and workshops. At Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Call 301-634-2274 or visit www.glenechophotoworks.org.

Christmas Tree Sale. Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department, Station 10, 8001 River Road. Call 301-365-2255 or visit www.cjpvfd.org.

Art Exhibit. See paintings depicting the C&O Canal and other Maryland scenes by Nancy Heindl at 8512 Victory Lane. Runs from Dec. 8-22. Free. Visit www.nancyheindl.com or 301-299-6176 for an appointment.

Friends of the Yellow Barn, 18th annual members show. Dec. 1 through Dec. 23. Visit www.glenechopark.org or www.yellowbarnstudio.com. Call 301-634-2222.

Theater Performance. See "The Nutcracker" in the Puppet Co. Playhouse at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Performances are Thursdays and Fridays at 10 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Runs Nov. 29 through Dec. 29. \$10. There will be special ticket pricing on Dec. 7, 8. For those two nights, tickets will be \$3. Visit www.thepuppetco.org or 301-634-5380.

Theater Performance. See "The Twelve Days of

Christmas" at Adventure Theatre at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Shirley the Partridge has got some problems to solve. The French Hens are arguing, the six geese have flown to Florida for the winter and worst of all, someone has stolen the five golden rings. The performance runs Nov. 15-Dec. 30. Tickets can be purchased at www.adventuretheatre-mtc.org or 301-634-2270.

18th Annual Winter Lights Festival, a 3.5-mile drive through a holiday light show at Seneca Creek Park with more than 360 illuminated displays. Runs nightly Nov. 29 through Dec. 31 with additional events including walks and runs under the lights. Proceeds benefit local charities. Call 301-258-6350 or visit www.gaithersburgmd.gov.

Holiday Art Show and Sale. The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture is hosting exhibitors that will sell glass, ceramics, photography, crafts and more. The sale runs Nov. 29-Jan. 5. Hours are Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursdays and Fridays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. through Dec. 20. Located in the Popcorn Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Visit www.glenechopark.org or 301-634-2222.

Theater Performance. Through Friday, Jan. 10, see "Lyle the Crocodile" at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Showtimes Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. and are appropriate for children age 4-12. ASL interpreted performance on Dec. 8 at 4 p.m., and a sensory-friendly performance on Dec. 15 at 11 a.m. Tickets start at \$12, visit www.imaginationstage.org or 301-280-1660.

Theater Performance. See "Aquarium" at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Runs Dec. 17-Jan. 26. Performances are Tuesdays-Fridays at 10:30 a.m. and 11:45 a.m., and Saturdays-Sundays at 10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Children can watch the story of Jack and Calypso unfold through puppets, music and props. Appropriate for children ages 1-5. Tickets are \$10-12 with a \$5 lap seat for children under 12 months. Tickets can be purchased at www.imaginationstage.org, at the box office or 301-280-1660.

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Theater Performance. Watch “The Nutcracker” at Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center, 51 Mannakee St., Rockville. The Maryland Youth Ballet will perform on Dec. 21, 22, 26, 28 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.; and Dec. 23, 27 at 1 p.m. Tickets are \$28/adult in advance; \$23/child, student or senior in advance; \$33/door, \$28/door. Visit www.montgomerycollege.edu/PAC or 240-567-5301 for tickets.

Art Exhibit. See a solo exhibit by Grace Taylor titled “Retrospective” through Jan. 6 at Photoworks Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. The solo exhibition is a comprehensive look at more than 30 years of Taylor’s photography. Hours are Saturdays from 1-4 p.m., Sundays from 1-8 p.m. or by appointment or during class time. Free. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Drop in Art Activities. Every Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-noon in the Candy Corner Studio at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., parents and children can explore a new art form or theme. \$10/child, parent combo. Drop-in only. Visit www.pgip.org for more.

CLASSES

Winter Craft Days. On Dec. 23, 27, 30, 31 from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., children in grades 1-6 can enjoy a day of art activities at VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., ice skating, private dining and more. Visit www.visartscenter.org or call 301-315-8200 to register for one a day.

THURSDAY/DEC. 19

Potomac Cuddles. 10:30 a.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. For children up to 11 months with caregiver. Free. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries or 240-777-0690.

Blues Dance. 8:15 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-11:30 p.m. in the Ballroom Annex, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. \$8. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit www.capitalblues.org for more.

FRIDAY/DEC. 20

Contra Dance. 7:30 p.m. lessons start; 8:30 -11:30 p.m. dancing at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Morrison Brothers provide music. \$10/adult; \$5/17 and under. Visit www.fridaynightdance.org for more.

Balboa DJ Dance. 8:30-11:30 p.m. in the Ballroom Annex at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Lessons from 8:30-9 p.m., dancing starts at 9 p.m. \$10. Visit glenechopark.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 21

Medieval Music. 5 p.m. at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Dr., Bethesda. Women’s vocal ensemble Eya: Ensemble for Medieval Music presents holiday concert “Natus est Rex” by candlelight. \$20 general admission and \$10 students/seniors, at www.eyaensemble.com or at the door.

Swing Dance. 8 p.m.-midnight in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Live music by the Craig Gildner Big Band. Enjoy the “Red and White Ball,” by wearing fancy clothes, red and white recommended. Lessons from 8-9 p.m., included in admission. \$20. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 22

Sugar Plum Party. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Maryland Youth Ballet Studios, 926 Ellsworth Drive Silver Spring. This Nutcracker celebration will include dancing, games, crafts, snacks, and a visit from a few Nutcracker

2013 Cabin John Park VFD – Santa’s Neighborhood Schedule

Santa and his firefighter elves will make their way through the streets of the community collecting toys for the National Center for Children and Families in Bethesda and the USMC Toys for Tots Program. Children who donate a toy will get a candy cane from Santa. The decked out and lit fire truck will be on the roads nightly from Dec. 7-20, 6-9 p.m. On Christmas Eve, Santa will deliver the collected toys to the National Center for Children and Families on Greentree Road, Bethesda. Presents may be brought out to Santa on the Fire Truck or to either Cabin John Fire Station. Visit www.cjpvfd.org.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 18

Potomac Village, Camotop, Falconhurst, Bradley Farms, McAuley Park, Kentdale Estates, Bradley Blvd. Estates, Congressional Forest Estates

THURSDAY/DEC. 19

No runs. County Fire Association Meeting Night

FRIDAY/DEC. 20

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FRIDAY/DEC. 24

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characters. For boys and girls, ages 5-8 years, no dance experience required. Parents do not need to stay. \$25/guest; sibling discount of \$20/child. To register, all the MYB office by December 11, 301-608-2232.

Holiday Open House. 1-4 p.m. at Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville. Enjoy free entertainment and activities at the mansion. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/glenview or 240-314-8660.

Contra Dance. 7 p.m. lessons start; 7:30 -10:30 p.m. dancing at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Morrison Brothers Band provides music. \$13/nonmember; \$10/member; \$5/age 17 and under. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Swing Dance. 8 p.m.-midnight in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Live music by the Craig Gildner Big Band. Lessons from 8-9 p.m., included in admission. \$16. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

TUESDAY/DEC. 24

Festal Eucharist of the Nativity. 10 p.m. at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Drive, Bethesda. An extended, candle-lit prelude of organ voluntaries, choral anthems and carols. Free. Visit www.redeemberbethesda.org or 301-229-3770.

THURSDAY/DEC. 26

Blues Dance. 8:15 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-11:30 p.m. in the Ballroom Annex, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. \$8. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit www.capitalblues.org for more.

FRIDAY/DEC. 27

Contra Dance. 7:30 p.m. lessons start; 8:30 -11:30 p.m. dancing at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Perpetual e-Motion provides music. \$10/adult; \$5/17 and under. Visit www.fridaynightdance.org for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 28

Swing Dance. 8 p.m.-midnight in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Live music by the Tom Cunningham

Orchestra. Lessons from 8-9 p.m., included in admission. \$18. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

SUNDAY/DEC. 29

Waltz Dance. 2:45-6 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Dance to live music by Terpsichore. \$10. Visit www.waltztimedances.org for more.

Argentine Tango. 6:30-11 p.m. at Ballroom Annex, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. DJ Rene Davila will mix the music. \$15/with lesson; \$10/dance only. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

Contra Dance. 7 p.m. lessons start; 7:30 -10:30 p.m. dancing at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Perpetual e-Motion provides music. \$13/nonmember; \$10/member; \$5/age 17 and under. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Holiday Open House. 1-4 p.m. at Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville. Enjoy free entertainment and activities at the mansion. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/glenview or 240-314-8660.

TUESDAY/DEC. 31

New Year’s Eve Swing Dance. 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m. in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Lady Luck and the Suicide Kings will perform. All ages welcome, light refreshments and party favors. \$25. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 4

Music Performance. 8 p.m. at Westmoreland Congregational UCC Church, 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. Alexander Paley and Peiwen Chen will perform Stravinsky’s “Rite of Spring” and Rachmaninoff Preludes. Free. Donations accepted. Visit www.washingtonconservatory.org/.

SUNDAY/JAN. 5

Music Performance. 5 p.m. at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Drive, Bethesda. The Yale Spizzwinks(?), an underclassman a cappella group will perform. Suggested donation of \$15. Visit www.redeemberbethesda.org or 301-229-3770.



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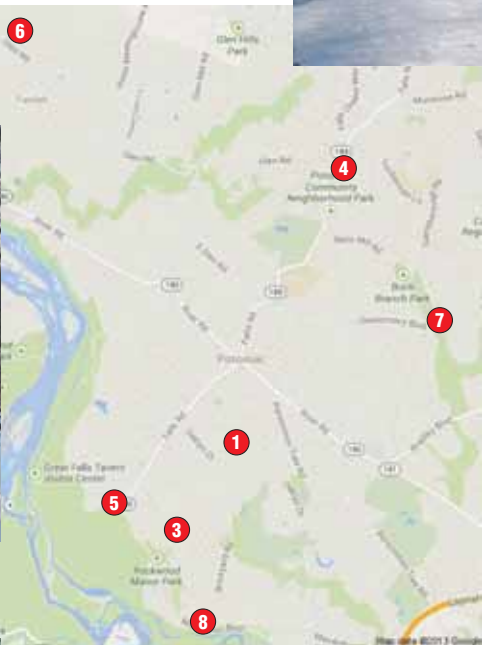
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SPORTS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pee Wee Steelers Win Championship

The Rockville Football League Pee Wee Steelers team, based out of Potomac, won its league Championship at Bullis High School. The team, coached by Dave Humiston, Jim Murphy, Bill Rejevich and Tim Wharton won the 11-12 year old division RFL Championship by defeating the Dawgs 6-0 in the Super Bowl. Half-back Andrew Rauber scored the winning touchdown with :47 seconds to play in the game on an 80-yard run.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Wootton Beats Churchill in OT

The Wootton boys' basketball team defeated Churchill 83-81 in overtime on Dec. 13.

Wootton improved to 2-0, including a 69-51 victory over Walter Johnson on Dec. 12. The Patriots will host Wheaton at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 18 and Magruder at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

Churchill dropped to 1-1. The Bulldogs will host Gaithersburg at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 18 and Whitman at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

Churchill Girls' Basketball Wins Two

The Churchill girls' basketball team responded to its season-opening loss to Paint Branch with wins over St. Andrew's and Wootton.

The Bulldogs beat the rival Patriots 62-57 on Dec. 13.

Churchill will travel to face Gaithersburg at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 18 and will host Whitman at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

Whitman Boys Get First Win

The Whitman boys' basketball team improved to 1-2 with a 65-46 win over Landon on Dec. 13.

The Vikings opened the season with a 62-42 loss to Georgetown Prep on Dec. 6, followed by a 52-47 loss to Rockville on Dec. 11.

Whitman will host Northwest at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 18 and travel to face Churchill at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

Bullis Boys Win Consolation Title

The Bullis boys' basketball team won the consolation title at its holiday tournament, beating Westtown 48-46 in the consolation final on Dec. 15.

The day before, Bullis lost to Genesis 73-71 to put the Bulldogs in the consolation bracket.

Bullis, which improved to 6-1 with the win over Westtown, will face North Point in the Under Armor Invitational on Dec. 21.

Bullis Girls' Basketball Improves to 2-3

The Bullis girls' basketball team defeated Bull Multicultural 46-30 on Dec. 15 in the consolation game of the Bullis holiday tournament.

Bullis, which improved to 2-3, will complete in the Title IX tournament on Dec. 27, 28 and 30.

Whitman Girls Beat Rockville

The Whitman girls' basketball team improved to 1-1 with a 55-33 win over Rockville on Dec. 11.

The Vikings will travel to face Northwest on Wednesday, Dec. 18 and Churchill at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

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8:00 pm Choir/Strings/Trumpet
10:00 pm Schola/Strings/Trumpet

Christmas Day Tuesday, December 25

Prelude music begins fifteen minutes before Mass

8:30 am Choir
10:45 am Schola
12:30 pm Schola
3:00 pm Korean Mass

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Backwards Thinking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Considering that I've been cancer-centric now for nearly five years, one would have thought I might have learned and totally embraced an alternative concept: forward living – and less thinking about past causes and their possible current effects. Certainly cancer causes physical manifestations and symptoms that are diagnosable and indicative of trouble. But it's the unseen effects that in some cases cause as many difficulties. What I am referring to is the mental and emotional toll a terminal diagnosis and short term prognosis can have on the patient's perspective on life and living, and what's presumptively thought to be left of it.

And in my experience now as a comparatively long-term survivor – five years come February 27, of stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), backwards thinking, as in why me, as in woe is me, has generally not been characteristic of my daily grind. Sure, I've made changes to my pre-cancer Kenny regimen of poor diet and above-average stress, and have regularly compared and contrasted my past with my present/future. However, much of this has been ongoing. I've never felt as if I've dwelled on any of it. Focused maybe, but not so much as a negative, more as a positive, as in changes which needed to be made – or else. Moreover, to learn the error of my ways and try to parlay any new found knowledge into a future that initially, according to my oncologist's original prognosis: "13 months to two years", was hardly guaranteed.

In spite of it all, I have lived – and learned and accepted that my new reality is somewhat different than it once was: somewhere between tenuous and temporary. Still, thinking about the past can only do so much good when contemplating a future that has been snatched away somewhat (somewhat? quite, actually) unexpectedly at 54 and one half. If I want to have a future, thinking and living as if I have one is more agreeable and more rewarding – and much less stressful than thinking I don't. And constantly reviewing, assessing, and connecting with the horse on which I rode in, as informative as it may be in helping to understand and appreciate the medical predicament in which I find myself so immersed, might actually be causing more harm – emotionally, than I'm willing to admit. I can't change the past, so living with it on a daily basis when I have a present and a future to consider might be shackling me in some emotional way that is preventing me from maintaining the positive and optimistic attitude so crucial in defending myself against the insidious disease inside my lungs.

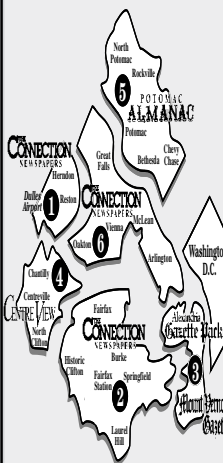
Not that I'm suggesting that I can talk/think these malignant tumors ("metastatic to the lung") to cease and desist, but spending mental time on what has already occurred, instead of what possibly could be, seems counterproductive, maybe even harmful. Trouble has already found me; I don't need to encourage it. And after all these years, I should know better. I do know better. Nevertheless, as the content of this column clearly indicates, I am still under siege. I am still trying to balance the challenges of living with a future while being mindful of a past and understanding that some emotions I can't control. Cancer is funny like that, but it's no laughing matter. Even so, I did think the subject was fodder for a column – or maybe I'm just indulging myself at your expense. If it's the latter more so than the former, I appreciate your patience. I probably need it.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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Home for the Holidays: Surviving a Long Trip

Keeping children entertained on lengthy airplane rides.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Liz Henry is nervous about her upcoming flight to San Francisco. It's not TSA regulations or long lines that are causing her anxiety, however. It is traveling alone with her three children — all of whom are under the age of 6.

"My kids are 5, 3 and 1," said Henry, who lives in Vienna, Va. "I'm taking them to visit my family for Christmas, but they've never flown before. I have a lot of DVDs packed, but I don't know how far those will get me. I don't like pacifying my kids with videos, but I don't think I have a choice."

Going home for the holidays often means boarding an airplane with high-energy children and settling in for a long ride. Parents such as Henry scramble to find ways to fill the time in a way that keeps their child entertained without disturbing other passengers. Local education experts say there are options that don't involve the last resort of videos and electronic games, however.

"Reading is always a good choice, but for

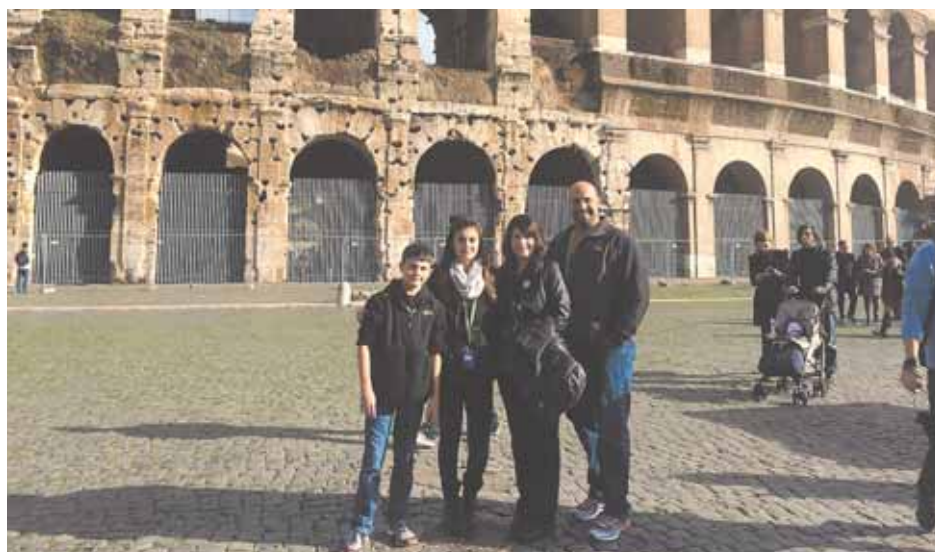


PHOTO COURTESY OF LEN ANNETTA

Len Annetta, Ph.D., of George Mason University, traveled to Italy recently with his wife, Jennifer, and his children Samantha and Joey. Annetta kept his children occupied during the long flight with cloud games and by helping them practice Italian.

many children, it cannot hold their attention for long plane rides," said Len Annetta, Ph.D., a professor in the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University. "Games like Scrabble challenge players' literacy skills in a fun way. Crossword puzzles are also fun and engaging."

Annetta, who recently returned from a family trip to Italy, has first-hand experi-

ence with surviving lengthy plane rides with children in tow. "I took the whole family, including my 13- and 11-year-old children," he said. "My children are older, but we played a name the cloud game. Of course, we were above the clouds, so it made it a bit more difficult."

When traveling abroad, a long flight is an ideal time to learn more about the culture or language of your final destination.

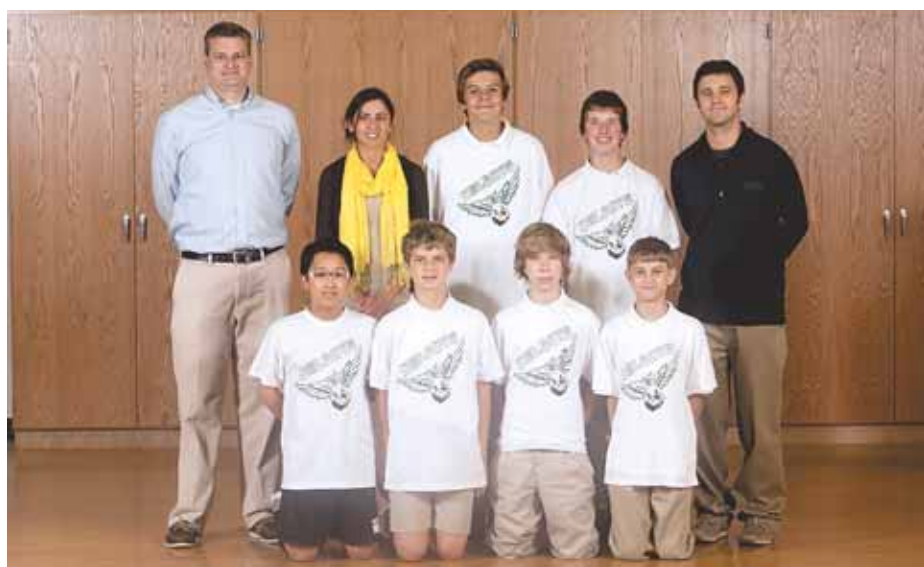
"My children tried a crash course on Italian," said Annetta. "They learned a few words they used during the week we were there."

Bethesda-based psychotherapist Katie Cogan, Ph.D., recommends activities that engage a child's imagination, particularly for younger children. "You always have your imagination with you no matter what," she said. "You can say to a child, 'Tell me a story,' or you can take turns telling stories with your child. When you're on the plane, you can help your child imagine what it will look like when we get there."

For young children, Cogan said, "Using what's inside you to create a world that already exists. It is called active imagination. Use your creativity to do anything. If you're with a young child, you can ask 'How many things can you think of that are red?'"

Cogan also advises helping children make up a story, particularly about their final destination. "If it is a small kid, give them the first part of the story or the first word and let them take it from there," she said. "Have paper with you, and you can have your child tell you the story and either write it down or have your child write the story down and color it."

Annetta said, "Journaling your experience is a fun way to practice writing while telling the story of where you are going or where you've been."



OwlBots: Front (from) are Nicholas Mori, Alex Toner, Darius Kuddo, Antos Wellisz; back are Coach Eric Smith, Coach Katya Pilon, Gabe Schneider, JD McLean, and Coach Paul Paoletti. Not pictured is Cecilia Bowe.



Green Machine: Front (from left) are Victor Aldridge, Oliver Wolcott, Tom Agnew, John Cavanaugh; back are Coach Eric Smith, Coach Katya Pilon, Alex Bender, Will Hohman, Genevieve Grenier and Coach Paul Paoletti.

Victory for The Woods Academy Robotics Teams

The Woods Academy Robotics teams, the OwlBots and the Green Machine, participated on Sunday, Dec. 15, at the FIRST Lego League (FLL) Qualifier held at the Glen Elg Country School. Twenty-seven teams competed. The OwlBots and the Green Machine were two of only six teams to survive that qualifier and advance to the FLL Maryland State Championship,

which will be held on Saturday, March 1 at UMBC in Catonsville.

The OwlBots won the Champions Award, which is first place in all judging categories: Robot design, research project, core values, and robot games.

The Green Machine won the Judge's Award, which is given to a team that scores consistently high across all judging categories. This is the first time that both teams

have received an award at the same qualifier. In addition, since the 2009-2010 school year, The Woods inaugural Robotics season, at least one Woods robotics team has competed at the FLL Maryland State Championship.

Each year the teams are presented a challenge facing today's scientists. The 2013 Nature's Fury Challenge compelled teams to explore the storms, quakes, waves and

other natural disasters. They researched and presented their own solutions for what can be done when intense natural events meet the places people live, work, and play.

The OwlBots developed a notification App designed to alert users when a natural disaster is eminent and provide relief options to survivors. The Green Machine conceived of a storm proof house.

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