

Potomac ALMANAC

Run Promotes Spirit of Giving

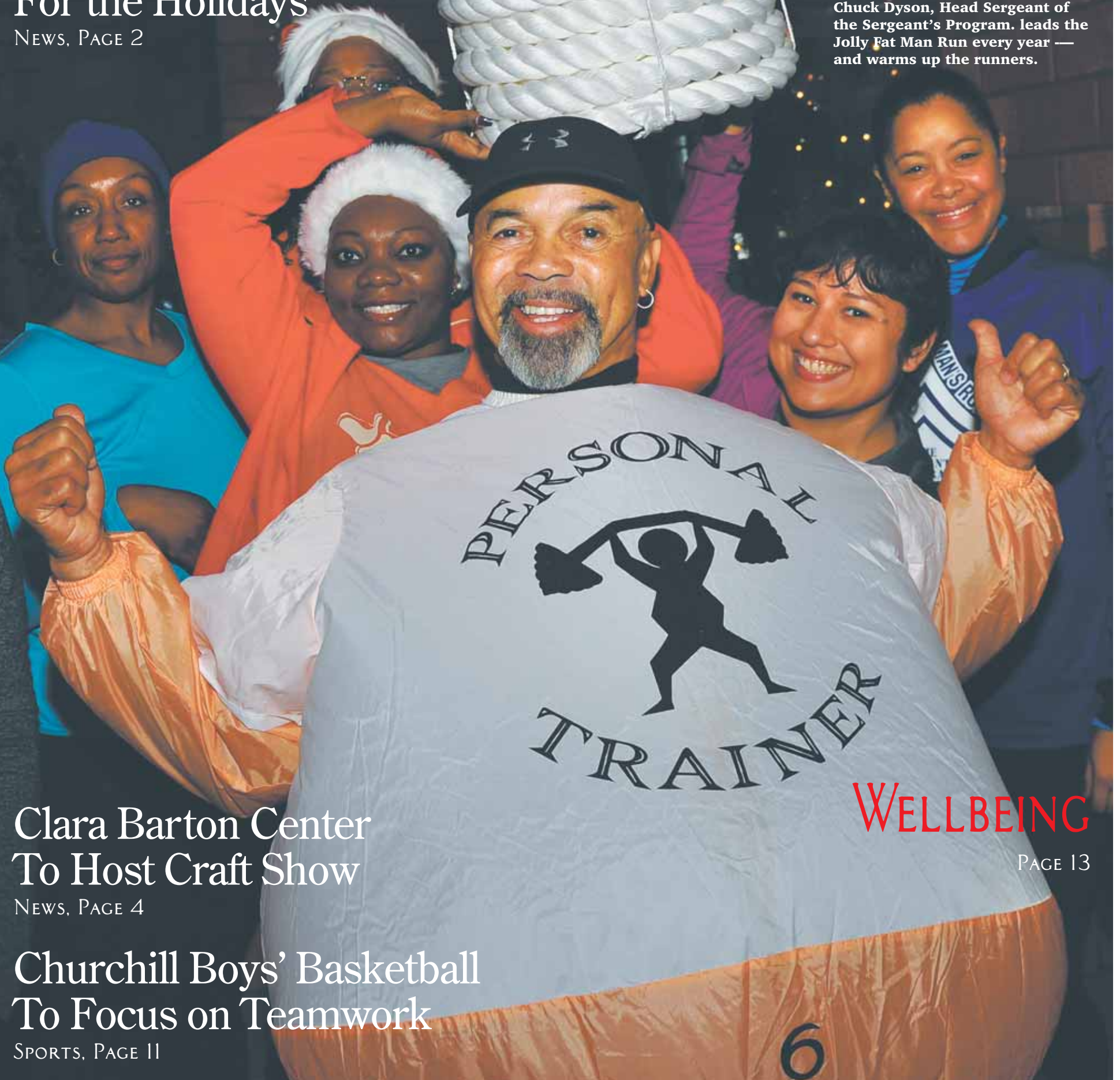
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Chuck Dyson, Head Sergeant of the Sergeant's Program, leads the Jolly Fat Man Run every year — and warms up the runners.

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DECEMBER 3-9, 2014

ONLINE AT POTOMACALMANAC.COM

HOLIDAYS

Shops Prepare for the Holidays

A variety of gift ideas.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

The interior of Cabin John Mall is one of Potomac's best kept secrets for holiday gift shopping. The mall offers a warm, well-lit cozy environment – not nearly as overwhelming as huge malls and packed department stores. Parking is free and you don't have to use up all of your patience jockeying for a space.

Cabin John Mall offers a variety of gift choices. The merchants are willing to give advice and information about the products they are selling. The store owners want to get to know you by name and hope you will return.

Here are some ideas for gifts to be found inside the mall.

Walk through the doors and head straight for Occasions Unique Gifts and Gift Baskets. Owner Stephanie Menick is a wealth of knowledge on how to find that perfect gift and her gift boutique has something for everyone. Frames can feature your photography talent. The Vinnebago is a canteen that keeps a whole bottle of wine chilled for a day at the beach or at a picnic. Her



Occasions has a variety of messages for special holiday gifts.

tables are bursting with Christmas and Hanukah gifts at every price point. "We can help pull themed item together to make a very complete gift that your friends or family will love," she said.

"For the man in your life, a wooden cutting board embossed with his favorite team emblem — or perhaps National's or Oriole's fun signs. The Grilling Collection or Blueberry Breakfast kits from Stonewall Kitchens taste great and men love getting a gift they can really use." Menick also creates custom baskets for corporate gifts, group



At Occasions Gift Store, items for a "Foodie."

gifts or just as a surprise for your hostess or your family. "My baskets are all one-of-a-kind and will definitely be a WOW gift for the lucky special person in your life," she said.

The next stop is the Toy Castle, within just a few steps of Occasions. Toy Castle's owner, Brian Mark said that there has been a toy store in this mall space since 1979. "The grandparents come here now and remember when they brought their kids here to select birthday and holiday gifts. Then they return with their grandchildren. They



Occasions owner Stephanie Menick displays one of their sports signs.

love telling their grandkids that they shopped here and bought toys for their mommies and daddies. We like to think that we haven't changed much from when the mall first opened. We still carry quality toys, explain what the pros and cons of each toy, often let the kids try them out — and we gift wrap."

He said that this year there aren't any really "must have toys," but "kids still love games, science kits and Legos. They are on all their lists." Cecelia Lopez has been seen

SEE SHOPS PREPARE, PAGE 4



Scaling the Mountain

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'Jolly Fat Man's Run' Promotes Spirit of Giving

Fun run benefits Operation Second Chance.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

In 2004, a close friend of Cindy McGrew's was deployed to Iraq. When his fellow soldiers were injured and heading to Walter Reed, she visited them, searching for a way to help the soldiers and their families. Because of the dire need to provide assistance to veterans and their families, she founded Operation Second Chance (OSC) — now celebrating its 10th anniversary.

"Over the past 10 years, OSC has provided more than \$2.5 million in assistance and morale activities to our wounded, injured and ill (WII) veterans. We receive requests for assistance every day from veterans who are struggling to keep up with their bills," said McGrew. "We assist with rent and mortgage payments, utility bills, travel lodging and daily essential items, like food, clothing, etc. We also host monthly caregiver days, which gives the caregivers an opportunity to be pampered for the day. Additionally, we offer hunting and fishing programs and couples' retreats that offer a chance for families to re-connect."

"It is because of the generosity of our nation's communities and programs like The Sergeant's Program, fundraising efforts, grants, CFC and individual donations that bless us with the opportunity to serve those who so bravely served us," McGrew said.



Chuck Dyson, Head Sergeant of the Sergeant's Program, warms up the runners.

Once again, The Sergeant's Program is dragging it recruits, friends — and one Jolly Fat Man out of bed for a fun run/walk down Capital Crescent Trail to support Operation Second Chance — a charity that is close to the military roots and theme of The Sergeant's Program. The Sergeant's Program, headquartered in Potomac, is a civilian Bootcamp program. Staff utilize a conditioning routine designed to whip recruits into decent shape within a few short weeks — and keep them in shape.

Registration for the Dec. 13 run is \$40 and participants receive a shirt, post walk/run breakfast at the American Tap Room and the opportunity to participate in a raffle

with prizes donated by local merchants.

The race was launched 19 years ago when one of the sergeants went running with a group of "less than fit" men, otherwise known as the jolly fat men. The Sergeant's Program held its first run — and each year, have found it the most meaningful fundraiser they sponsor — so they have vowed to keep it going. Head Sergeant Chuck Dyson is excited that they can entitle their run after their group of "Jolly Fat Men" in the spirit of St. Nick and Santa Claus. Dyson leads a warm-up for all Jolly Fat Man participants and gets the group moving to the Capital Crescent Trail for the walk or run of any distance.

"I can't help but think that wounded, injured and ill veterans are all striving to 'Be all they used to be' which is so fitting with The Sergeant's Program motto," said McGrew. "We have a whole generation of veterans that suffer from PTSD and a multitude of injuries. When they are injured, they are injured for life. Sadly, 22 combat vets loss their battles and take their lives every day."



Rob Grimes, CEO and president of The Sergeant's Program said, "We are thrilled to continue working with Operation Second Chance and partner with them on this annual event. The Sergeant's Program community is enthusiastic to support such a wonderful, worthy and important cause."

This is the last running event of the season. Warm-up in front of Mon Ami Gabi, 7239 Woodmont Ave. at 8 a.m. and then choose one's own distance to run or walk — 2 miles, 4 miles — or 14 miles to Georgetown and back. Return to the starting line by 10 a.m. and head to the American Tap Room for a hot breakfast and the raffle. Register online or on-site for \$40. Thursday, Dec. 11 from 6-9 is a happy Hour Packet Pick-up at the American Tap Room in Bethesda or pick up the packets after the race.

For more information or to register, go to www.sarge.com or email info@sargecorp.com.

Craft Show To Fill Clara Barton Recreation Center

From artists to authors to crafters.

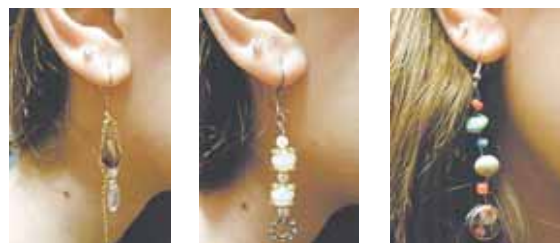
BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

The Clara Barton Craft Show is a "must-do" for one-of-a-kind holiday gifts as well as the perfect present for that "hard-to-buy-for person" — or the "I can't think of anything for him or her — and they won't give me any suggestions" person. The show includes artists, crafters and authors. The craft show will be held this coming Sunday, Dec. 7 from 1-5 p.m. at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center, 7425 MacArthur Blvd, Cabin John.

The show will include new crafters as well as many returning artisans. Some of the articles offered for sale are Susan Baum's reusable clay gingerbread houses which can be redecorated, exotic necklaces created with beads from Africa and India by Ellen Benson, author Barbara Glickman with her book "Capitol Splendor — the Gardens and



Mikaela Fishman, a Walt Whitman High School senior Mikaela Fishman's earrings



Parks of Washington D.C., Dorothy Hall and Russell Wright with Christmas jewelry, knitted hats and scarves and notecards, Karen Hench with her "Timeless Treasures" — hand-embellished housewares and personal gift items and fused glass from Lynda Slayen.

Michael Higgs will be selling his wooden works and carvings, and also demonstrating the skill of wood carving. Bessie Ioakim will bring her homemade Greek sweets and fig jam, Cecelia Kurtz will offer her organic soaps and lotions, Stephanie Lovell will present her quilts, placemats, hot pads and totes and Ann McCallum will be performing demonstrations of her math cookbook

called "Eat Your Math Homework - Recipes for Hungry Minds." The craftspeople are almost all local residents from Cabin John, Rockville, Potomac, Gaithersburg, Silver Spring and Bethesda.

"The Friends of Clara Barton Community sponsor the show. The money we make from table rentals goes to support programs for children, seniors and families at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center," Craft Show Coordinator Leslie Barden said. "We are pleased that this year we have 51 artists. Every year, we choose one crafter who contributes their profits to their own charity — and this year it is 'Crafters for a Cure.'"

Carole Schulman, one of the founders of Crafter for a Cure, said, "All of our profits go to the Hope Connection, a cancer support and educational organization located in Bethesda. For many years, our group designed and sold belt buckles and pendants from jewelry and buttons — and donated the profits for research for Ovarian Cancer, since one of our members passed away from it. Now we give to Hope Connection and we are now focusing on Swarovski crystal embellished earrings, necklaces and hair clips. We also have a selection of freshwater pearl bracelets, beaded necklaces and necklaces with charms and tassels. We are really pleased to be in the Clara Barton show — it is such a wonderful community."

Meredith Worthington will be presenting her ceramic Christmas ornaments and other items for the first time at Clara Barton. "My craft is a result of my love of art and the Christmas season. I paint porcelain, resin or plaster Christmas tree ornaments and standing figurines such as Santa Claus,

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HOLIDAYS

Shops Prepare for the Holidays

FROM PAGE 2

lecting books for the book department for many years; she is an expert in helping young readers or their parents select books that will interest and excite them.

Next door to the Toy Castle is a staple of the mall – the Hall of Fame Card and Collectibles Shop. This store is filled with a sports lovers' memorabilia and all the necessary items to celebrate a favorite sports team. Banners, flags, NFL play sets, pajamas, watches, wallets, autographed balls, pictures – basically everything that a fan needs. “Our most expensive baseball card is a 1954 Ted Williams – it sells for \$900,” Manager Brian Aguiar said. The store carries sports cards — baseball, football, soccer, etc. of all varieties and prices — collectibles from years past. They also feature current sports teams and can outfit the family from shoes to hats, jerseys and shorts, jackets, vests, belts, socks, jewelry and more.

“Our store has been here since 1998,” said owner Peter Averinos. “I have helped fathers and sons, and now those sons come in with their children.

It's a cycle and I love seeing it. Pokemon is a very big seller as are the other games we sell. But kids love having a favorite team and collecting the memorabilia from the team. Sometimes they stay with these teams for life and become more and more committed to them. We sell everything that a sports fan can think of.”

B Scene is a fashion-forward boutique. Sales expert Nicole Tapiero and her sister Dani, both University of Maryland students, will advise shoppers on the latest trends and give them style tips. Hot items for the holidays include candy duffle bags and backpacks and boys lacrosse Flow Society shorts.



Peter Averinos, owner, and Brian Aguiar, manager, of Hall of Fame Card and Collectibles point out a few of their most popular sports items.

“They have been flying off the shelves,” said Tapiero.

Another possibility for a child or preteen gift is to pick up a gift card for Tropicuts – a salon and spa for kids and teens. Their mission is to “deliver superior quality grooming and beauty services for the whole family while exercising the smallest details to please your needs.”

The salon specializes in manicures, pedicures, haircuts, up-dos, and braid for children ages 7 – 13. Tropicuts also offers birthday parties where beauty, fun and music are the highlights.

“I enjoy the kids and helping each one feel beautiful. It is nice to see the happiness when they see themselves looking so pretty – and the birthday parties are so much fun.

They all love them. We also have a full-service salon for the mommies, daddies, brothers and sisters,” owner Lilian Ipina said.



B Scene's Nicole Tapiero and her sister Dani will help select gifts for that special someone.



Tropicuts does creative children's manicures.



Games galore at the Toy Castle.



A variety of frames at Occasions. Girls will love the Sparkle Doll House for their collection of 12" dolls.



Craft Show To Fill Clara Barton Recreation Center

FROM PAGE 3

Angels or snowmen. I also paint houses and villages. I really enjoy painting these pieces and watching them come to life. I use a large variety of finishes, which makes each product truly unique,” Worthington said.

This is the first time that Walt Whitman senior Mikaela Fishman has participated as a vendor in a show.

She is thrilled to finally have an opportunity to present her jewelry to the public. “I'm excited because I've been making jewelry for as long as I can remember, just for myself and friends, and I've always hoped to have a chance to sell what I make and see how I do.

I'm selling earrings. I make a lot normal beaded earrings but I also like to use shrinky-dinks, melt-a-beads, parts of electronics, and things I find lying around. I inherited a lot of my beads from my grandmother because she was an artist,” she said.

Items from Crafters for a Cure.



Crafts by Meredith Worthington



“Crafters for a Cure” will be at the Clara Barton Craft Show on Sunday, Dec. 7.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 3

Special Education Committee. 6:30 p.m. at MCPS Board of Education offices, Carver Cafeteria, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville. Two occupational therapists will present information on Sensory Integration Disorder. All meetings are free and open to the public. Email Parents_Coalition@yahoo.com.

Rapid Transit Meeting. 7-8:30 p.m. Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville. Elected officials from Rockville, Gaithersburg and Montgomery County will meet and discuss the county's bus rapid transit system plans with a focus on the Maryland Route 355/Rockville Pike bus rapid transit routes through Rockville and Gaithersburg. It will be televised on Rockville 11 (cable channel 11) and streamed on www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rts or contact Rom Pogue at 240-777-7155 or rapid.transit@montgomerycountymd.gov.

THURSDAY/DEC. 4

Hospice Workshop. 6:30-8 p.m. at Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville. Learn how to balance sorrow and celebration while grieving. Call 301-921-4400 for more.

FRIDAY/DEC.5

Songwriting Contest. The Bethesda Arts & Entertainment District is holding its first-ever songwriting contest, with a grand prize of \$10,000 going to the winner. Musicians can apply online or download a mail-in application. Entries must be received by Dec. 5, 2014. Visit www.bethesda.org/bethesda/bernard-ebb-songwriting-awards-application for more.

Nominations Sought. Nominations due Dec. 5, for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards;

Humanitarian and Children of the Dream Awards. Winners and honorable mentions will be presented at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration of Monday, Jan. 19, during the ceremony to be held at the The Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. This year's theme is "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: His Words and Ideas in Our Time." Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/humanrights/ or contact OHR Director James Stowe at 240-777-8450.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 10

Winter Speaker Series. 6-7:30 p.m. Planning Department Headquarters, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. "Retrofitting the Suburbs: From Friendship Heights to White Flint" will focus on the influence of residential and commercial interests, the County Planning Board and its staff, County Council and County Executive, and changing approaches to planning. Visit www.montgomeryplanning.org/department/onceandfuture for more.

Hospice Workshop. 6:30-8 p.m. at Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville. Hospice discussion about grief and healing. Call 301-921-4400 for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 11

Hospice Workshop. 1:30-3:00 p.m. at Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road, North Bethesda. Learn how to balance sorrow and celebration while grieving. Call 301-921-4400 for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 13

Raffle Drawing. During Har Shalom's "Magical Night of Community." Win a three-year lease for a BMW. \$100 each, no more than 1000 tickets will be sold, need not be present to win. Full raffle rules at www.harshalom.org/raffle. Purchase tickets online at www.harshalom.org/raffle or in person at Har Shalom Office, 11510 Falls Road, Potomac, or by phone 301-299-7087 x 0.

MONDAY/DEC. 15

Hospice Workshop. 6:30-8 p.m. at Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville. Learn how to balance sorrow and celebration while grieving. Call 301-921-4400 for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 18

Vision Support. 12:30-4:30 p.m. at Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 S Park Ave, Chevy Chase. Participate in free glaucoma screenings and a free lunch. Call 301-656-2797 for more.

TUESDAY/JAN. 6

Hospice Workshop. 6:30-8 p.m. at Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville. Learn how to balance sorrow and celebration while grieving. Call 301-921-4400 for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 12

St. Raphael School and Nursery School Double Open House. Programs for 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds and 4-Plus (Pre-K), as well as extended-day offerings. Before-care and after-care offered. St. Raphael is K-8 and specializes in tailored academics through small-group instruction, integrated technology and differentiated learning. Visit www.srnsm.org or www.straphaelschoolmd.org for more.

TUESDAY/JAN. 13

Support Group. 1:30-3:00 p.m. North Bethesda United Methodist Church
SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 7



PHOTO BY ALAN MAYER-SOMMER

Raffle Drawing On Potomac Day

Tracy Spencer, owner with husband Tom Spencer of the new Potomac Grocer market, draws the winning raffle ticket for a \$50 Potomac Grocer gift card on Potomac Day, Oct. 25. The gift card was donated to Potomac Community Village by Potomac Grocer. From left are Shirley Dominitz, PCV secretary; Sophia Wang, a PCV member; Don Moldover, PCV IT chair; and Nelly Urbach, PCV president.

McLean celebrates differences; they don't walk away from them. These kids are the people who will think differently and solve the world's problems.

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9:00 am Wednesday, January 21

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OPINION

Be Part of Children's Almanac 2014

Annual edition
showcases youth
art and writing.

During the last week of each year, the Potomac Almanac devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome student's original ideas. Here

are some suggestions:

- ❖ Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite activity.

These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger art projects are also welcome.

- ❖ Short answers (50 to 100 words) to some of the following questions: If you could give your parents any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite toy? What makes a good parent? What makes a good friend? What is the best or worst thing that ever happened to you? What is the best gift you've ever given? Ever received?

- ❖ Your opinion (50 to 100 words) about news, traffic, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.

- ❖ Poetry or other creative writing.

- ❖ News stories from school newspapers.

- ❖ Photos and text about activities or events. We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Email submissions for the Children's Almanac to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail to Children's Almanac, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Please send all submissions by Dec. 10. The Children's Almanac will publish the week of Dec. 27, 2014.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

A Brilliant Success with One Exception

BY SUSANNE LEE
WMCCA PRESIDENT

The Potomac Subregion Master Plan has for the most part been a brilliant success story. Much of that success is due to the genius, commitment, and enormous hard work of Callum Murray, our December speaker who is retiring from his position with Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) at the end of December. With its primary focus on preserving the area's extensive environmental resources, the Master Plan is an invaluable document and the key to the future of the entire Potomac Subregion and our individual neighborhoods.

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/plan_areas/potomac/master_plans/potomac/potomactoc.shtm

Everywhere we look we see the impact of its successful implementation: a two, not four, lane highway to Potomac; no outer beltway through Block House Point and the C&O Canal; the preservation of stream valley parks and rustic roads; the establishment of the Serpentine Barrens Conservation and Greenbriar Local Parks; and, protection of the low density "green wedge" characteristics of the Subregion.

That is not to say that we don't mourn the acres of woodland lost to new construction or regret the McMansionization of established low density communities and the "Castle-lization" of others, or long for a more walkable Village and more bike paths. There are massive developments at the site of the Stoneyhurst Quarry site on River Road and at Fortune Parc on Montrose Road just west of I-270, but the Master Plan provides for such concentrated development next to major transportation corridors, while protecting other portions of the Subregion. As a result of the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) program we sacrificed our

last large farms (including the Clagett and Hanson farms) to higher density development as contributions to protect the Agricultural Reserve.

There is, however, one exception — the Glen Hills Sewer Study. Glen Hills is a low density, environmentally sensitive area, partially within the Piney Branch Special Protection Area, that functions as a critical recharge area for the Watts Branch. The Master Plan acknowledges its unique nature and seeks to protect it by limiting sewer extensions and their adverse environmental impacts. It calls for a study "of the septic failures in Glen Hills to develop the measures necessary to ensure the long term sustainability of septic service for new home construction and existing home renovations, and to address the need for limited sewer extensions if needed." The Master Plan requires the study to include six basic elements, including the "delineation and possible reasons for known failures." The study, however, was conducted by the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, without regard to the requirements of the Master Plan, and with what appears to be little or no input from the M-NCPPC staff. Instead of identifying actual failures, studying the causes and proposing limited extensions to address them, the study ignores the plain language of the Master Plan and proposes sewerage the entire area through the construction of 13 new, enormously costly and environmentally damaging, sewer lines. In the history of its implementation, there has been no other such blatant disregard of the Master Plan requirements.

GLEN HILLS SEWER STUDY

SUBMITTED BY SUSANNE LEE

Representatives of WMCCA and the Glen Hills community will meet with Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett and Council Member Roger Berliner on Dec. 3 to voice their

SEE WMCCA, PAGE 7

POTOMAC ALMANAC

www.PotomacAlmanac.com

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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

10100 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda. Support group for anyone grieving the death of a loved one. A six-week group that meets each Tuesday from 1:30-3 p.m. Registration required at 301-921-4400.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 14

Winter Speaker Series. 6-7:30 p.m. Planning Department Headquarters, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. "Trials and Errors of Corridor Cities Planning" focuses on the planning politics and development in the Rockville-Gaithersburg area; the challenges of a new town in Germantown; and the planning and development of Clarksburg. Visit www.montgomeryplanning.org/department/onceandfuture for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 19

Literary Contest Entries. Montgomery County Office of Human Rights, 21 Maryland Ave., Rockville. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Committee will announce Literary Contest and Visual Arts Show for Students. Call 240-777-8491 for more.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 21

Support Group. 6:30-8 p.m. Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville. Workshop for parents grieving the death of a child of any age. A six-week group that meets each Wednesday from 6:30-8 p.m. Registration required at 301-921-4400.

THURSDAY/JAN. 22

Support Group. 6:30-8 p.m. Hughes United Methodist Church, 10700 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring. Support group for anyone grieving the death of a loved one. Call 301-921-4400 for more.

Parent Loss Support Group. 6:30-8:00 p.m. Mt. Calvary Baptist Church 608 N. Horner's Lane Rockville. For adults who have experienced the

death of one or both parents. A six-week group that meets each Thursday from 6:30-8 p.m. Registration required at 301-921-4400.

SUNDAY-TUESDAY/JAN. 25-27

Volunteer Training for Hospice and Transitions Programs. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Jewish Social Service Agency, 6123 Montrose Road, Rockville. 20-hour specialized training for the Hospice and Transitions programs for prospective volunteers to provide support to seriously and terminally ill individuals and their families. Volunteers visit patients in their homes and in residential facilities, provide companionship and emotional support, practice assistance with errands and transportation, and offer respite for caregivers. Volunteers must be older than 18. Applications and interviews will be held. Contact Amy Kaufman Gooft at 301-816-2650 or agooft@jssa.org.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 11

Winter Speaker Series. 6-7:30 p.m. Planning Department Headquarters, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. "Creating and Sustaining the County's Agricultural Reserve" traces the 30-year effort to protect the rural landscape and the working farms of upper Montgomery County. Visit www.montgomeryplanning.org/department/onceandfuture for more.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 11

Winter Speaker Series. 6-7:30 p.m. Planning Department Headquarters, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. "Hunting the Snark: Growth Policy and the Public Interest" evaluates the effects of the 40-year evolution of county growth policy on development patterns. This final session of the Winter Speaker Series will discuss the institutional structure of planning in Montgomery County for effective and democratically accountable land use policy. Visit www.montgomeryplanning.org/department/onceandfuture for more.

GUIDE DOG FOSTERS NEEDED

Guiding Eyes for the Blind - Montgomery Region is looking for volunteers to foster and train future guide dogs. Volunteers will foster a specially bred guide dog for 14 months, attend bi-monthly training classes, and teach the pup house manners, people skills and socialization within the community. Dog crates, training equipment and monthly medications are provided. Contact Margie Coccodrilli at 301-869-2216 or gebraiser@comcast.net or visit www.guidingeyes-md.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Because I Love You is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting parents of troubled children of any age. The group helps parents deal with drugs, runaways, truancy, verbal abuse, physical abuse, curfew violations and other misbehavior, as well as help parents deal with themselves, to manage and live their own lives without obsessing over their child's behavior. The group meets 7:30-9:30 every Thursday at Bethesda United Methodist Church Room 209, 8300 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda. Visit www.becauseiloveyou.org, email hbrite1@netzero.com or call 301-530-3597.

Adult Bereavement Groups. Dates and times vary depending on group members. Hospice Care, 518 S. Fredrick Ave. Gaithersburg. Peer driven support groups in those in need of support. Free. Contact Penny Gladhill at 301-990-8904, or Pennyg@hospicecaring.org.

Suicide Grief Support Group. Meets every first and third Monday at JSSA, 6123 Montrose Road, Rockville. A bereavement support group for those who have lost a loved one to suicide. Call 302-816-2708 to register and for more.

What's Next? Dates and time are not yet announced. JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Road, Rockville. A co-ed support group for young adults, 18+, with learning disabilities. It will address the emotional and social changes and challenges to occur as a natural sequence of growth, as well as increased freedom and responsibilities. Call 301-610-8382 to register.

WMCCA

FROM PAGE 6

concerns regarding the conduct of the Glen Hills Sewer Study.

PESTICIDE USE RESTRICTIONS PROPOSED

SUBMITTED BY BARBARA HOOVER

Montgomery County Council Vice President George Leventhal recently introduced legislation restricting the use of certain chemicals (pesticides and herbicides) that are dangerous to human health and are not necessary for a healthy, lush, green lawn. In addition to a wide range of human diseases and conditions linked to the chemicals, Leventhal cited adverse impacts on pets, wildlife (including pollinators), and our waterways. Bill 52-14 restricts the use of harmful synthetic lawn pesticides, including herbicides, insecticides, and others used for non-essential aesthetic purposes, on manicured grasses and certain county-owned properties.

The proposal would still allow use of these products for agriculture and gardens, invasive species and noxious weeds, and golf courses.

It also expands public notice requirements and requires the county to adopt an Integrated Pest Management Program. If passed, this would be a landmark ordinance as only two other local jurisdictions — Takoma Park, Md. and Ogunquit, Maine — have enacted similar restrictions.

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STRATHMORE The Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, N. Bethesda, MD
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ENTERTAINMENT

Email community entertainment events to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

VisArts Cocktails and Canvas Class. at VisArts in the Painting & Drawing Studio, 155 Gibbs Street, Rockville. Price \$40. Visit www.visartsatrockville.org/cocktails-and-canvas for more.

Weekly Blues Dance. Thursdays 8:15-11:30 p.m. in the Back Room Annex at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Capital Blues presents rotating DJs and instructors with beginner workshop 8:15-9 p.m., no partner necessary. \$8 for all. Visit capitalblues.org for more.

Weekly Swing Dance. Saturdays, 8 p.m.-midnight. The DC Lindy Exchange presents a swing dance with live music in the Spanish Ballroom, Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Enjoy a beginner swing dance lesson at 8 p.m., followed by dancing until midnight. Admission is \$16-\$18; admission for age 17 and under is \$12. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

Argentine Tango with Lessons. Most Sundays, 6:30-11 p.m. in the Back Room Annex at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Tango Brillante DC offers Argentine Tango lessons followed by a Milonga most Sunday evenings. Beginner lesson 6:30-7:30 p.m. and intermediate lesson 7:30-8:30 p.m. Cost is \$15/lesson and includes the Milonga that follows. For dancers who wish to attend just the Milonga, cost is \$10 and the open dance with DJ runs 8:30-11 p.m. No partner required. Visit www.glenechopark.org or call 301-634-2222.

Contra and Square Dance. Fridays and Sundays 7-10:30 p.m. in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. The evening can include square dances, mixers, waltzes and other couple dances. All Contra and Square dances are taught, no partner necessary. There is a lesson at 7 p.m., followed by the called dance with live music at 7:30. \$13 for nonmembers, \$10 for FSGW members, \$5 for ages 17 and under. Visit www.glenechopark.org or call 301-634-2222 for more.

Late Night Comedy. Fridays (open mic night) and Saturdays (established comedians) at Benny's Bar & Grill, 7747 Tuckerman Lane, Potomac. Benny's is open 8 a.m.-1 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Visit www.BennysBarGrill.com.

Drop in Art Activities. Every Saturday 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 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.

Mommy & Me (& Daddy, Too). Third Tuesday each month. 10 a.m. at Rockville Town Square. Meet for a morning out with active learning and creative play with lunch specials, story time, arts and crafts, sing-alongs, prizes and more. Visit rockvilletownsquare.com/events/mommy-and-me.

Live Music & Dancing. Fridays and Saturdays, 7-11 p.m. in Margery's Lounge, Normandie Farm Restaurant 10710 Falls Road. Dance to the music of Barry Gurley. Call 301-983-8838 or visit www.popovers.com for more.

Glen Echo Park Films. Saturdays and Sundays. Arcade Building, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Films about the Park's history are shown on rotation in the lobby. Free. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

SilverWorks Studio & Gallery.



COURTESY OF BETHESDA URBAN PARTNERSHIP

Winter Wonderland

The Bethesda Urban Partnership will kick off the holiday season at Bethesda's Winter Wonderland on Saturday, Dec. 6. The celebration features holiday choral performances from Academy of the Holy Cross, Garrett Park Elementary, Oneness-Family School, Our Lady of Lourdes, Rockville High School and Westbrook Elementary; a live ice sculpting presentation in Bethesda's Veterans Park; and a visit from Santa Claus. Holiday treats and crafts will be provided to children. Free. Call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. SilverWorks Studio & Gallery is a working silversmith studio and includes an ongoing exhibition, as well as sales of the work of artist-in-residence Blair Anderson. Free. Visit www.silverworksglenechopark.com.

Art Glass Center at Glen Echo. All day Wednesdays; Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sundays, noon-4 p.m. Art Glass Center, Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. The Art Glass Center gallery's ongoing exhibitions feature work of Resident Artists Christine Hekimian, Sue Hill, Michele Rubin, Sherry Selevan, Bev and Zayde Slep and Janet Wittenberg. Sculpture, vessels, functional art and jewelry are for sale. Classes are taught year-round for beginner, intermediate and advanced students. Visit www.artglasscenteratglenecho.org.

Glen Echo Pottery. Through December, Saturdays and Sundays, noon-5 p.m. Glen Echo Pottery, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. The Gallery shows the work of 29 individual potters and instructors at Glen Echo Pottery. Wheel-throwing demonstrations are offered most Saturdays and Sundays, noon-2 p.m. Children are welcome. Visit www.glenechopottery.com/gallery.

Yellow Barn Studio & Gallery. Saturdays and Sundays, noon-5 p.m. The Yellow Barn Studio & Gallery presents free exhibitions of emerging artists' work. Each weekend features the work of a different artist. Most artwork is also for sale. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com.

THROUGH DEC. 31

Winter Lights. This recurring event is a 3.5-mile drive through a holiday light show at Seneca Creek Park with more than 360 illuminated displays. It also has additional events including walks and runs under the lights and S'more lights. Proceeds from the Festival benefit local charities. Call 301-258-6350 or visit www.gaithersburgmd.gov for more.

In December

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

www.cjpvfd.org for more.

Santa on Fire Engines. This event is run by the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department. A procession of fire engines carry Santa on a tour of Potomac neighborhoods over the course of several evenings in December, collecting unwrapped new toys for needy children. Call 301-365-2255 or visit www.cjpvfd.org.

Friends of the Yellow Barn. The friends of the Yellow Barn will be putting on annual members show. Dec. 1 through Dec. 23. Visit www.glenechopark.org or www.yellowbarnstudio.com for more. Call 301-634-2222.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 3

Neal Gillen Book Signing. 5:30-8 p.m. University Club's Book Fair, 1135 16th St., Washington. Neal Gillen will be signing his latest book, "Moments of Truth" along with other authors. Visit www.universityclubdc.com for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 4

Artist Talk. 4-6 p.m. at Exhibit9 Gallery, 2807 Byron St., Potomac. Contributing artists of "Once Upon a Moment" will talk about their various photographs. Visit www.exhibit9gallery.com for more.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC.5-6

Greens Sale and Holiday Boutique. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Landon School, 6101 Wilson Lane, Bethesda. Specialty wreaths, topiaries, boxwood roping. 40 vendors. Proceeds benefit student financial assistance and faculty enrichment programs. Visit landon.net/greens for more.

Play Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Thomas Wootton High School, 2100 Wootton Parkway, Rockville. Students will perform "The Drowsy Chaperone," which debuted on Broadway in 2006 and won five Tony awards. Call 301-279-8550 for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Jewish Folk Arts Festival. Noon-6:15 p.m. at Universities at Shady Grove Conference Center, 9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville. Enjoy a celebration of Jewish art, music and culture through 17 various workshops. Call 301-587-1739.

Bethesda's Winter Wonderland. 1-

ENTERTAINMENT

4 p.m. Bethesda Urban Partnership, 7770 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda. The celebration features holiday performances, a live ice sculpting presentation in Bethesda's Veterans Park and a visit from Santa Claus. Free. www.bethesda.org or 301-215-6660

Neal Gillen Book Signing. 3-3:30 p.m. The Writer's Center Holiday Book Fair, 4508 Walsh St., Bethesda. Neal Gillen will read from his latest book "Moments of Truth". Visit www.writer.org for more.

Jewish Folk Arts Festival Chanukah Concert Dedicated to Human Rights. 8 p.m. Temple Beth Ami, 14330 Travilah Road, Rockville. The biennial event celebrates the talent and diversity of Jewish performing and visual arts in the Washington, Baltimore and Virginia region. The Exhibit Hall will feature 30 Judaic artists and their crafts, which will be for sale. Visit www.jewishfolkartsfestival.com.

Holiday Concert. 8 p.m. Christ Episcopal Church, 107 South Washington St., Rockville. The National Philharmonic Singers will be joined by the Takoma Ensemble, conducted by Maestra Gau for this concert. Free, donations accepted. www.nationalphilharmonic.org or 301-493-9283, ext. 116.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Holiday Music at the Great Falls Tavern. 1-4 p.m. The Great Falls, Maryland area of the C & O Canal National Historical Park is located at the intersection of Falls Road and MacArthur Boulevard, in Potomac. The Gilmore's Light Ensemble will play and sing traditional 19th century music using hammered dulcimer, guitar, banjo, mandolin

and accordion; wearing clothing of the mid-1800's. Light refreshments will be served. There is an entrance fee to the park of \$5 per vehicle. Free. 301-767-3714.

Holiday Craft Show. 1-5 p.m. Clara Barton Community Center, 7425 MacArthur Boulevard, Cabin John. Free admission and parking. There will be many hand-made items for sale, including jewelry, pottery, ornaments and books. Contact Leslie Barden, 301-365-1311 or cbcc.craftshow@verizon.net or visit www.friendsofclarabartoncommunitycenter.org.

Jewish Folk Arts Festival. 1-6 p.m. Universities of Shady Grove Conference Center, 9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville. A celebration of Jewish art, music and culture. The Exhibit Hall will feature 30 Judaic artists and their crafts, which will be for sale. Visit www.jewishfolkartsfestival.com for more.

Waltz Dance. 2:45-3:30 p.m. Introductory waltz workshop; 3:30-6 p.m. dance. Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Park Boulevard, Glen Echo. Trio con Brio will play. \$10. No partner required. 301-634-2222 or www.waltztimedances.org or email info@waltztimedances.org

FRIDAY/DEC. 12

Elikeh Performance. 6 p.m. door, 9 p.m. show. Bethesda Blues and Jazz Supper Club, 7719 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda. The local band specializes in the melodies and rhythms of West African popular music. Elikeh uses elements of Togolese rhythms as a foundation for exploration into American-influenced blues, funk and rock. Visit www.elikeh.com for more.



PHOTO BY CHARLES LEE

National Philharmonic Singers Holiday Concert

The National Philharmonic Singers will be joined by the Takoma Ensemble. They will perform a new work, Alleluia, by American composer Eric Whitacre; Christmas classics by John Rutter and Shaw-Parker; Christmas Day by Gustav Holst; and Christmas Concerto for the Takoma Ensemble by Arcangelo Corelli. The concert concludes with favorite carols by the choir, including Stille Nacht and the carol sing with the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The Dec. 6 holiday concert at the Christ Episcopal Church, 107 South Washington St., Rockville, is free but donations in support of the Community Ministries of Rockville will be accepted. Visit christchurchrockville.org or call 301-762-2191, ext. 3 for directions. Visit nationalphilharmonic.org or call 301-493-9283, ext. 116 for concert information.

SATURDAY/DEC. 13

Christmas on the Farm. noon-5 p.m. at Montgomery Farm. Visit www.MontgomeryParks.org.

Gingerbread House Decorating. 12-2:30 p.m. at VisArts Rockville, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville. VisArts provides the juice and cider to keep the holiday mood going. For children

6 and up. Two people can share one house but all children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets \$45. Visit www.visartscenter.org or call 301-315-8200.

Magical Night of Community. 8 p.m. Magic show begins at 9 p.m. Har Shalom, 11510 Falls Road, Potomac. The evening will feature a magic show and a drawing for the

winner of a three-year lease of a new BMW 320i. Includes hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine and desserts. Magical Night tickets are \$50 per adult; \$36 for a child under age 21, and are available online at www.harshalom.org/50th/magic, at the Har Shalom office, or can be ordered by phone 301-299-7087, ext. 0. Raffle rules at harshalom.org.

Washington Conservatory Violin Concert and Master Class. Master class 6 p.m., concert 8 p.m. Westmoreland Church, 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. Free, donations welcome. Kimberly Fisher will present a one-hour concert. Preceding the concert, Fisher will present a public master class. www.washingtonconservatory.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 14

Jingle Bell Jog 8K. 9 a.m. at the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive. The Rockville Senior Center's last run of the year. Participants will run through a residential area. Sign-up is day of. \$10 for adult non-members and \$5 for non-members below the age of 18. Visit www.mcrc.org for more.

Potomac Library Book Sale. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. 10101 Glenolden Dr. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library, Potomac Chapter. Call 240-777-0690 or visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/branches/potomac.html.

Film Screening. 10 a.m., doors open at 9:30 a.m. Landmark Bethesda Row Cinema, 7235 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda. Screening of "Night Boats" (Croatia 2012; in Croatian with English subtitles.) \$15, includes post-screening discussion, coffee and bagels. www.cinemaartbethesda.org or 301-365-3679.



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Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

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September, 2014 Sales, \$975,000~\$1,125,000



1 12514 Pennyfield Lock Road — \$1,125,000



2 10414 Oaklyn Drive — \$1,115,000



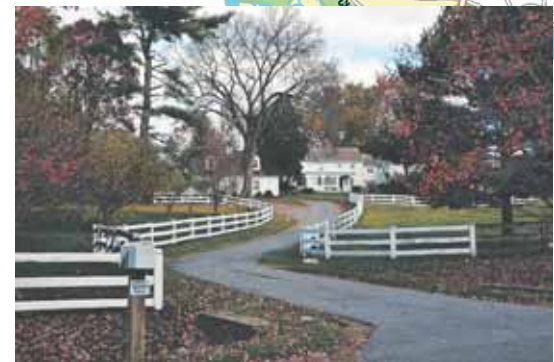
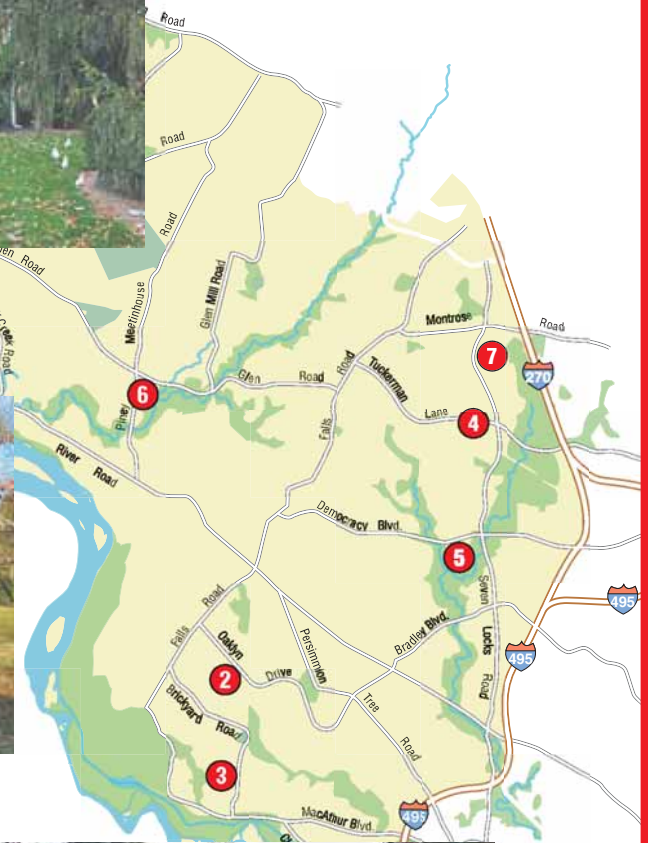
3 10412 Buckboard Place — \$1,100,000



4 8015 Cobble Creek Circle — \$1,035,000



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6 11525 Front Field Lane — \$1,000,000

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2 10414 OAKLYN DR	4	4	1	ROCKVILLE	\$1,115,000	Detached	0.01	20854	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	09/04/14
3 10412 BUCKBOARD PL	5	3	2	ROCKVILLE	\$1,100,000	Detached	0.43	20854	RIVER FALLS	09/06/14
4 8015 COBBLE CREEK CIR	4	4	1	POTOMAC	\$1,035,000	Detached	0.36	20854	POTOMAC CREST	09/05/14
5 10001 GAINSBOROUGH RD	5	3	1	POTOMAC	\$1,030,000	Detached	0.31	20854	RIDGELEIGH	09/08/14
6 11525 FRONT FIELD LN	6	6	1	POTOMAC	\$1,000,000	Detached	3.06	20854	PINEY SPRING	09/30/14
7 11805 GREENLEAF AVE	6	3	1	ROCKVILLE	\$975,000	Detached	0.28	20854	WILLERBURN ACRES	09/19/14

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Churchill Boys' Basketball To Focus on Teamwork

Bulldogs had multiple key players transfer.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE ALMANAC

Robert Bean enters his second season as head coach of the Churchill boys' basketball team without four players who were set to return following the 2013-14 campaign.

Bobby Arthur-Williams, a scoring and rebounding threat, transferred to Covenant

Life School, Bean said. Jesse Locke, another primary scorer, chose to focus on his primary sport, football. Bryan Strittmatter and Sean Strittmatter transferred to different schools, as well.

Without several standouts, Bean will have the Bulldogs focusing on team basketball during the 2014-15 season.

"We're going to focus on less is more," Bean said. "Really try to play team basketball: team offense, team defense and effort. Less about x's and o's and more about the importance of [team]."

Bean's top two returners in his drive-and-kick offense are Calvin Kamara, a 5-foot-11 guard in his third year with the varsity,

and 6-foot-7 junior center Nathan Gertler.

"[Kamara is] going to bring a lot of energy to our defense," Bean said. "... We're looking to him to be our best distributor and penetrator. ... Nathan gives us an inside presence and someone that ... [is] a very good passer."

Tarik Harris, a 6-foot-1 junior, will start at point guard. Harris missed last season while recovering from a knee injury he suffered as a freshman. "He's got a very good feel for the game," Bean said. "He's got leadership potential." Last season, Churchill started 1-6 under Bean, a former Magruder assistant, and was 5-11 entering February before making a run late in the season. However, the Bulldogs lost to Richard Montgomery, 46-45, in the opening round of the region tournament.

Churchill will open the 2014-15 season at home against Paint Branch at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5. "It's my goal to get them playing for each other," Bean said, "and competing at a high level."

Robert Bean, seen last season, enters his second year as head coach of the Churchill boys' basketball team.



PHOTO BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE ALMANAC

Basketball Season Openers

The Whitman boys' basketball team, which reached the 4A state championship game last season, will open the 2014-15 campaign at home against Georgetown Prep at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5.

The Whitman girls' team, which reached the state playoffs in 2013 and finished 21-3 last year, will open the season on the road

against Good Counsel at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 5. The Vikings first home game will be Dec. 17 against Northwest.

The Churchill girls' team will travel to face Paint Branch at 7 p.m. on Friday.

The Wootton boys' team will host Walter Johnson at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 9. The Wootton girls' team will travel to face WJ on Dec. 9.

Schools Seek Construction Budget Increase

The Board of Education unanimously approved amendments to the district's six-year Capital Improvements Program in November, adding \$221 million to help Montgomery County Public Schools manage its current and future enrollment growth.

The additional funds will allow 36 projects to be completed sooner than currently approved, adding thousands of classroom seats throughout the county. The board's request also includes several other projects aimed at alleviating space shortages and making the best use of available space.

Enrollment in MCPS this school year is 153,852 students, an increase of nearly 2,600 from last school year and an increase of 16,107 students since 2007. Much of that growth has been in the early grades, leading to significant space deficits in elementary schools across the district. MCPS is currently using 404 relocatable classrooms, with almost 90 percent located at elementary schools.

The district's growth is expected to continue in the years to come, with enrollment projected to top 165,000 students by 2020-2021, an increase of more than 11,000 students from this year. This

will include growth in secondary schools as the current enrollment bubble in elementary grades moves into middle and high schools.

MCPS sought additional help from the state for school construction during the 2014 legislative session, but the funds were not approved. After the proposal fell through, the County Council approved a \$1.53 billion CIP for fiscal years (FY) 2015-2020, which was \$214 million less than requested by the Board of Education. The board's requested amendments recently approved would increase the six-year CIP to \$1.75 billion.

School Board Sets 2015-2016 Calendar

The Board of Education adopted the calendar for the 2015-2016 school year. The school year will begin on Monday, Aug. 31, 2015, and is scheduled to end on Friday, June 17, 2016.

The board also adopted a contingency plan that would extend the school year until June 24, 2016, depending on how many days would be needed to make up for lost instructional time due to emergency closings.

The calendar was developed in partnership with the Montgomery County Council of PTAs, the school district's three employee associations, and the Montgomery County Region of the Maryland Association of Student Councils, as well as other community members and school system leadership.

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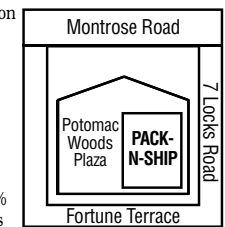
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Handling Family Dynamics During the Holidays

Local experts offer suggestions on how to diffuse family tensions.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Last month, Linda and Tom Bullen traveled from Boston to Arlington, Va., to celebrate Thanksgiving with their son Matt, daughter Rachel and her partner Grace Knight.

But Rachel Bullen, who spent weeks creating a menu and coordinating a table setting that would please even Martha Stewart, was deflated by one question from her mother.

"Do you think you might be eating too many carbs?" Linda Bullen asked as her daughter scooped up a second helping of potatoes.

"What I eat is none of your business," Rachel Bullen responded. She spent the rest of meal fuming in silence and feeling humiliated in front of her partner and brother.

Family dynamics — and the drama that often ensues — are often unwelcome, but frequent guests at family gatherings during the holiday season. While spending time with family can be a source of comfort, it can also be fraught with anxiety. And the more people and dynamics involved, the more effort it takes to create or maintain harmony.

"During the holidays, people who live far apart and are not part of one another's daily lives often come together," said Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D. "As a result ... people cover lot of territory, catching up in a short amount of time, instead of gradually as things naturally happen throughout the year. People give opinions without understanding all of the details."

Being aware of the feelings and emotions

of others can help minimize family conflicts, however. "Sensitivity allows us to tune in to what others might be feeling at a particular moment or in a particular situation," said Katherine Knapp, Ph.D., a marriage and family therapist based in Burke, Va. "It helps us make wise decisions about things that might say or decide not to say."

For example, Linda Bullen was concerned about her daughter's weight.

"Rachel recently lost about 25 pounds," she said. "As a teenager she'd been overweight and had self-esteem issues." She thought she was being a supportive and helpful mother.

Knapp says this is where sensitivity can reduce interpersonal tension, particularly during the holidays.

"When family members are sensitive to each other's feelings, they think before they speak about how what they say might affect another person's feelings," she said. "Even innocent comments or questions can damage a relationship when we speak from our own perspective and don't consider what another person might be feeling."

The pressure to create a perfect holiday can exacerbate pre-existing difficulties as well.

"People are often stressed during the holidays, especially those preparing meals, having out of town guests staying in their homes," said Isenberg. "Guests can be stressed too, as they are staying in someone else's home, don't have their own space, and are operating according to someone else's agenda. So tensions are already higher, and patience is shorter."

The ability to be flexible and recognize that even the most organized plans can fall

"Consider topics to discuss with certain family members and how you will politely steer away from topics you'd rather not discuss."

— Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
Stacie Isenberg

Recognizing that such old patterns and dynamics may be rekindled during big gatherings can help family members navigate difficult relationships.

"Even though there may be months or even years between visits, people's triggers and sensitivities are the same unless they've previously worked through them with their family members and reached an understanding about the

best ways for them to interact," said Isenberg. "The judgmental parent or uncle will still be judgmental and the inquisitive grandmother who pushes boundaries will still do so."

Prior to spending time with family, she suggested, it's a good idea to think about the actions, words or situations that ignite tensions and decide how they can be avoided.

"Consider topics to discuss with certain family members and how you will politely steer away from topics you'd rather not discuss," Isenberg explained. "If you anticipate that there will be a topic or way of interacting that is too difficult to be avoided with subtlety, you may want to consider gently approaching it prior to the holidays. For example, tell your parents you don't feel comfortable discussing your relationship with your significant other in front of the extended family and ask them not to mention it during dinner, and provide them with an answer to give when relatives inquire."

Rachel decided to begin seeing a therapist to help strengthen her relationship with her family. "Hopefully Christmas will be less tense," she said. "If not this Christmas, then next."

apart, will reduce pressure as well, said Pamela Daniels, a licensed clinical social worker and psychotherapist based in Lorton. "Flexibility allows us to roll with the punches," she said. "Rigidity can be a recipe for disaster, especially during the holidays."

FAMILY MEMBERS can help ease tension by expressing their needs up front.

"Some people just have a need to feel appreciated," said Knapp. "Everyone has different needs, but others, including family members won't know those needs unless we tell them."

Rachel Bullen needed her mother to recognize and validate the effort that she'd put into preparing a healthy Thanksgiving dinner and an aesthetically appealing table, and to maintaining a lifestyle that had kept her fit.

"I've always seen my mother as thin, beautiful and the perfect hostess," said Rachel Bullen. "And she can always find something wrong with everything that I do, but she can find no wrong with my brother."

GMU Chosen To Join Healthy Campus Initiative

George Mason was recognized for its commitment to health and wellness.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

George Mason University's well-being and wellness programs recently received national recognition when the Fairfax-based university was chosen as the first higher education institution in Virginia to join the Healthy Campus Initiative, an effort to encourage colleges and universities to make their campuses healthier by adopting guidelines around food and nutrition, physical activity and programming.

Last month, the Partnership for a Healthier America unveiled the pilot program at the American Public Health Association's annual conference in New Orleans. (Leaders from The Healthier Campus Initiative praised Mason for its commit-

ment to a health and for agreeing to adopt more guidelines on food and nutrition, physical activity and programming in the next three years.

"We are proud and challenged to continue this energy toward a Healthier Campus Initiative," said Bill Ehling, executive director of Mason recreation. "I am continually appreciative of the past efforts and results to provide a genuine sense of a healthier community at George Mason University."

Mason officials point to statistics from The American Public Health Association, which show that during the first year in college, students' overweight and obesity rates increase by more than 15 percent. Additionally, most college students do not meet dietary and physical activity guidelines. PHA officials say, at the same time, the college



PHOTO BY ALEXIS GLENN

George Mason University's wellness efforts recently earned national recognition for the school.

years are a time when lifelong habits begin to form because most students are making their own choices about healthy eating and fitness.

"As a Mason alumni," said Kerry Ross, director of benefits and faculty/ staff well-being, "it gives me great pride to see our community coming together in the areas of wellness and well-being. Mason has dem-

onstrated its commitment to these initiatives for years with opportunities like the annual Health and Fitness Expo, Wellness by Mason, the Well-Being Learning Community, and now our strategic goal of becoming a Well-Being University. We are honored ... to take that commitment to a new level as a partner in the Healthier Campus Initiative under the auspices of The Partnership for a Healthier America."

The Partnership for a Healthier America was created in 2010 in conjunction with first lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Campaign with a goal of developing strategies to end childhood obesity.

"We know that going to college is a time of change for many students. We also know that means it's a time when new habits are formed. By creating healthier food and physical activity environments today, campuses and universities are encouraging healthier habits that will carry over into tomorrow," said the partnership's CEO Lawrence A. Soler in a statement.

WELLBEING

Battling Holiday Bulge

Nutritionists offer tips for avoiding weight gain.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

With the merriment of the holidays comes food, friends and fun. But from office parties to family dinners, opportunities for overeating and weight gain abound. In fact, the National Institutes of Health reports that the average American gains an extra pound every year that he never loses. Those pounds add up over a lifetime of holidays, but a few local nutritionists offer the skinny on weight-gain culprits and strategies to keep them at bay.

The ubiquitous holiday office party is one of the top challenges: overflowing with decadent sweets, rich entrées and often alcohol, it's the one time of year where colleagues and friends can bond over food.

Sitting next to someone who has healthy eating habits can make you think twice about the foods you choose to put on your plate, however. That is just one of the techniques that Potomac, Md.-based nutritionist Sharon Goldberg offers clients who want to avoid over-indulgence.

"You should always stand far enough away from the table so that food is not at arm's reach," she said. "Wait until all of the food is on the table and try to eat the healthy options first. If you eat more of a broth-based soup, for example, there will be less room for fat-laden dishes and you'll be less likely to eat them."

Keeping track of what you've consumed by leaving a small amount on your plate will also lead to eating less, said Goldberg. "If you can see the fatty foods that you've already eaten you'll be less likely to eat more."

Someone in the office will inevitably display homemade chocolate truffles in a communal area for all to eat, or keep her candy dish overflowing with red and green confections. Keeping a private stockpile



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Decadent holiday desserts can lead to weight gain. The National Institutes of Health reports that the average American gains an extra pound every year that he or she never loses.

of healthy foods that you enjoy will help combat the temptation to splurge, said Andrea Newman, a nutritionist based in Mount Vernon.

"Another thing you'll want to do is avoid lunch rooms and other places as much as possible when they are filled with fatty food," she said. "If you don't see it, you'll be less likely to crave it."

If you do decide to splurge, she continued, you can make up for it by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, going for a walk during work or adding time to your workout.

Shopping is a major part of the holiday season, but it is an activity that can leave you tired and hungry, said Mary Jane Glaser, an Alexandria-based nutritionist. "After a few hours of shopping, a lot of people are starving so they decide to hit the food court," she cautioned. "First, eat a healthy and filling snack before you go shopping and pack some healthy snacks to eat while you're shopping."

Keeping a food journal, weighing yourself frequently and trying on a slim-fitting outfit at least once a week to ensure you can still wear it comfortably are other tools Glaser recommends in the battle against holiday bulge.

"Avoid lunch rooms and other places as much as possible when they are filled with fatty food. If you don't see it, you'll be less likely to crave it."

— Andrea Newman

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Since It Ain't Broken...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Apparently, at least in the near term, we're (meaning my oncologist) not going to fix it. And by fix it, I am referring to my chemotherapy infusion, which will continue to be every three weeks, as it has been for almost six years; save for a year or so when I was able to take pills at home, and on-site infusions were not necessary. Last week, at my most recent face-to-face appointment with my oncologist, given my higher-than-hoped-for creatinine levels, (which led to a one week's delay in my regularly scheduled infusion), I had inquired about extending my infusion interval to four weeks to give my kidneys a break. Considering the ongoing damage these vital organs have suffered after six years of non-stop chemotherapy, I thought - to quote my deceased father, "that the idea had merit." And it does have merit and my oncologist has always been concerned about the effect. In fact, per his orders, I had seen a nephrologist (a kidney specialist) a few years back. After examining me on multiple appointments, the doctor suggested there was no real need for a return appointment. Though my creatinine levels were abnormally high, her assessment was, considering my pre-cancer/pre-chemotherapy lab work history had been normal, it would likely go back down if we stopped chemotherapy; but since it's highly unlikely that we'll be stopping chemotherapy, given my diagnosis, there was nothing to be done other than watching and managing the levels as my oncologist has been doing. And that's what we've done and I've not been back to see her since.

Nevertheless, it is cause for concern. The kidney is a major organ. As it goes, so might yours truly go, and consequently its affect has been an ongoing theme/point of awareness during my six years of treatment. Fortunately, miraculously maybe (for all I know), a week later the second/rescheduled lab work showed that my creatinine levels had returned to its previous high normal and thus chemotherapy went on/in as semi usual. And thus begins, according to my oncologist, my new normal: I will continue to be scheduled for infusion every three weeks with my pre-chemotherapy lab work completed the Wednesday before the Friday. If my creatinine levels are high, we'll delay, and reschedule the infusion for a week later as happened during this past interval. Now, we didn't discuss what schedule we'd follow if abnormal creatinine levels persist. As has been established during previous conversations between Team Lourie and my oncologist, scenario questions are not helpful and we rarely venture into any what-ifs/what-abouts until absolutely necessary.

But what we did discuss at this last appointment was my future, a little bit. Considering the "shrinkage" written about in last week's column, my oncologist was very encouraged and characterized my treatment going forward as something we're going to be doing for awhile. But he said it so matter-of-factly, that we sort of took it for granted. He didn't really fuss about it and we didn't either. He said it. He didn't really emphasize it. But he meant it. It was all good, that's for sure.

On the way home, my wife, Dina and I reviewed what my oncologist had said and we became even more giddy at what had transpired/been said. It was certainly news with which we could live and that's what we intend to do. I'm not about to look a gift oncologist in the mouth. Since nothing seems broken, I'm not looking to fix anything.

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

THROUGH THE SEASONS



PHOTO BY DEBORAH STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

Mule Power

In August, Brock Dinch leads Eva, 10 years old, and Rebecca Jamison leads Dolly, 11 years old, to pull a canal boat along the C&O.



Past and Present

Then & Now, Glen Echo Park's annual celebration of the park's past and present, was held in September offering magicians, carousel rides, arcade games, face painting, mini golf and more.



Cars were lined up on display.

Gabriel Lucas-Krieger and Josh Gaba enjoy the "Balloon Pop."



PHOTOS BY DEBORAH STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



PHOTO BY MARY KIMM/THE ALMANAC

Ablaze

One of a few brightly colored holdouts from autumn in Potomac.



PHOTO BY MARY KIMM/THE ALMANAC

Last Winter

A pileated woodpecker from Horseshoe Lane in February.



PHOTO BY MARY KIMM/THE ALMANAC

Aglow

This house at Glen and Persimmon Tree roads was decked out for Christmas before Thanksgiving.

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