

Potomac ALMANAC

PET ALMANAC

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Sarah's surgery was
funded by MCPAW.

MCPAW at Work

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Churchill: Fresh Start With a New Principal

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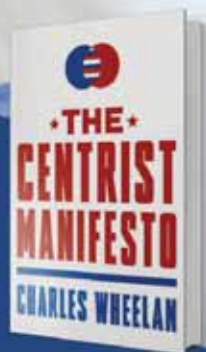
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Fresh Start with a New Principal

Brandice Heckert meets with Winston Churchill High School community.

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
THE ALMANAC

After only two weeks at the school, Winston Churchill High School's new principal Brandice Heckert greeted members of the community at a Meet and Greet in the school cafeteria Wednesday, July 18.

Close to 100 people attended the open house, most said they just wanted to see and hear from Heckert and get an idea of the changes that will be made at the school with a new principal.

Heckert stood in the school lobby greeting people as they arrived until it was time to get the meeting officially started.

She introduced herself to the gathering, giving a rundown of the positions she has held during her 18 years with Montgomery County Public Schools. Starting with her days as a math teacher at Watkins Mill High School, she moved to an administrative position at Damascus High School, then became an assistant principal at Whitman, Quince Orchard, a principal intern at Clarksburg, and, most recently an assistant principal at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School.

Heckert also spoke about her commitment to the Churchill school community.

"I see myself here for a long time," she said.

Creating a theme using the letter C, Heckert followed Commitment by expressing the importance of Communication and Collaboration within the school community, she discussed the balance of Consistency versus Change and how she hoped to enlarge the feeling of Community at the school.

It is important, she said, to enhance [everyone's] sense of involvement at the school.

Also attending the meeting were the members of the school's administrative team including four assistant principals, the administrative secretary and the school business administrator.

One of the assistant principals, Marie Gassaway, said she has worked with Heckert for two years already.

"We are in great hands," she said.

It was a reassuring introduction to the new administration.

"She seems really confident and energetic," said Amy Kaplow, who has a son starting his senior year at Churchill, said. "She seems like a principal who would be out and active with the kids."

That was a positive for Kaplow.

PTSA President Bruce Adelson said some of the upcoming events Heckert announced were reassuring changes in his opinion.

"One of the things I think is a positive for the school is the Columbus Day Open House, we haven't had that," he said.

Adelson also thought Heckert's plan to hold parent coffees was a good one and was impressed with the plan to hold Pizza Night for new students as part of their orientation day.

It is a much better way of saying you're really welcome here, he said.

"Openness in a public school is paramount," he said. "This [attitude] is well received by parents."

The Meet and Greet was not only attended by parents, several students were there also, along with younger siblings.

Ayana Major brought along her three children although son, Langston, will be the only one at Churchill this year. He is starting ninth grade. The family recently moved to the area from Los Angeles.

Ayana Major grew up in Northern Virginia and said she had friends who went to Churchill.

"I always knew Churchill was a great school," she said.

Nicolas Nasvaderani will be in 11th grade, a transfer student from private school. He was at the meeting with his parents and siblings.

"I'm actually very excited," he said. "I'm looking forward to new



PHOTO BY PEGGY MCEWAN/THE ALMANAC

Brandice Heckert, Winston Churchill High School's new principal, speaks with community members at a Meet and Greet July 18.

friends."

Next up are student meetings with Heckert on Aug. 6 from 2-4 p.m. and a Parent Coffee Aug. 30 from 9-10:30 a.m. during New Student Orientation.

Heckert encouraged parents to stay in touch and suggested following her on Twitter @ChurchillPrin or by visiting the school website: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/churchillhs/

Bijan Bagheri Victorious in Special Olympics USA Games

Gold medal in singles tennis and doubles tennis.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

Potomac's Bijan Bagheri captured two gold medals at the Special Olympics USA Games held July 1 - 6 in Seattle, Wash. Bagheri won the gold in singles tennis and then proceeded to dominate with his partner Brian Salewski to bring home the first-place gold medal in doubles tennis as well. The Special Olympics USA Games included 3,000 athletes, 1,000 coaches, 51 delegations and more than 10,000 volunteers who cheered on the athletes for six days.

This year celebrated the 50th Special

Olympics USA Games with a theme of "Rise With Us."

"Our Summer Games celebrated our athletes, who through their actions and accomplishments at the Games and every day remind us that they are champions who triumph over wide ranging challenges to achieve personal greatness," said James C. Schmutz, president and CEO of Special Olympics, Maryland.

The athletes competed in the sports of softball, bowling, powerlifting, soccer, tennis, basketball, swimming, golf, track and field, athletics, bocce, stand-up paddleboarding, gymnastics and flag football.

Twenty-nine-year-old Bijan is the son of Fahimeh and Shahram Bagheri - and the much doted-on grandson of 102-year-old Ana. He loves all sports including swimming, biking and basketball but particularly



Bijan Bagheri

excels on the tennis court.

His initial experiences of playing tennis at River Falls Tennis Club and participating in Bullis tennis camps cemented his interest and love of the game and he continued to play, practice and train. He currently holds the singles title for the Special Olympics Maryland as well as the doubles title.

Pamela Yerg, area director of Special Olympics, Maryland said, "Bijan has been competing since 2012 and is a very talented tennis player and a joy to know. He works hard, is extremely coachable and determined to master the game. He and his partner Brian are an amazing team; their competition won very few games from them."

Bijan was first diagnosed with autism when he was two and a half years old. His mother noticed a regression in his skills

along with constant movement of his hands, an obsession with lining up his toys and a delay in his verbal and social development. His mom's observations were confirmed by his pre-school teachers, who recommended educational and psychological evaluations. He graduated from Ivy Mount School in Potomac and is now employed in a job he loves at the National Library of Medicine.

He also sings and loves to cook.

Special Olympics was founded by Eunice Shriver in 1968. The mission was to showcase the abilities of athletes with intellectual disabilities and the impact of Special Olympics through world-class competition, inspirational experiences, and modeling inclusion for all. Because of these events, athletes are empowered and confident, make new friends and see themselves for their abilities, not their disabilities. As Bijan says, "Special Olympics has improved my life in every way."

OPINION

MCPAW Supports Homeless Animals

Fundraising partner for the animal shelter contributes programs to the homeless animal community.

BY ALYSSA GABIDOULLINE
THE ALMANAC

In March of 2014, a non-profit called MCPAW helped countless members of the community move into a brand-new home — the rebuilt Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center. Ever since, the Montgomery County Partners for Animal Well-Being, or MCPAW, has been the fundraising partner for the shelter.

The funds raised support a multitude of programs that help keep the animals healthy and happy. Five such programs are highlighted by Executive Director Chris Shaughness: “One of the biggest programs that has an impact for the animal shelter” is the Veterinary Medical Fund. This program is crucial to the well-being of the animals, as “the shelter only has a limited budget that they can treat the animals with, so anything over and above that budget — we fund.” In the recent past, this has included funding the amputation of a stray cat’s leg and fixing a stray dog’s torn ligament in her knee.

Other programs include the enrichment program that provides cat scratch boxes and toys for dogs, the pet food pantry, and the Spay It Forward program that funds spay and neuters of community cats. MCPAW also provides grants to doctors of special needs animals to incentivize their sometimes-costly adoption.

Kalman Stein, chairman of MCPAW, hopes to bring awareness to animal-related issues in the county. He sees MCPAW in “a more expanded role in terms of helping [to] educate people in general” and “getting out more into the community to talk about animal issues.” He is talking about issues such as the trap-neuter-release program that protects feral cats from being euthanized.

Board member Donald Hoffman adds that MCPAW “need[s] the community to be involved in one: looking out for the animals to see where there’s action that needs to be taken”



Callie’s surgery was funded by MCPAW.

and two: “in the perspective of the animals that they [own and] love.” He hopes that people realize “how fortunate” their pets are and speaks to how “all [animals] deserve it [such care], but they rarely get it.”

There are many other ways to follow in MCPAW’s footsteps and help the animal community. Being a responsible pet parent is one of them. The goal is to “keep your pets forever because a pet is a commitment for life,” said Shaughness. To prevent animal homelessness, Shaughness encourages pet owners to spay and neuter their pets to limit breeding. Additionally, she says that all pets should wear identification or be microchipped so that they can always find their way back home.

To ensure that stray animals continue to get the care they need, Shaughness encourages residents to attend the second annual MCPAW Party on Oct. 13. It will be held at the Bolger

Center and the theme is the Great Gatsby.

Hoffman is also enthusiastic and busy working on the party. He says that “the reason we’re organizing the MCPAW party is several-fold.” The party allows the organization to “raise funding,” “to get our name out there,” “to bring together the community of Montgomery County that really believes in supporting animals,” and to “ensure that there are methods by which [MCPAW can continue to] look out for animal welfare.” The event will include special guests, silent auctions, and even available animals ready to be adopted.

Through volunteering, members of the community who are animal lovers, but perhaps not pet owners, can be involved. Additionally, if considering a new pet, Stein “encourage[s] adoption, [as] at any given day, there [are] too many animals in the shelter” that are looking for a loving home. MCPAW is working to encourage adoption and to “make sure that there’s not a reason [that] people don’t come find a friend at the shelter.”

“... find a friend
at the shelter.”

— Kalman Stein,
Chairman, MCPAW

Fozzie

This is our dog Fozzie. He was abandoned as a puppy and would have been euthanized if it wasn’t for a wonderful foster mom who organized his adoption. Forty-two dog lovers put in applications for Fozzie and a few weeks before Thanksgiving in 2011, we received a call that we were chosen to be his forever family. Our youngest daughter left for college and our home was very empty. Fozzie will be 8 years old in November 2018 but he still looks and acts like a puppy. Fozzie is a mutt of unknown origin. He loves to play ball, receive belly rubs and chase creatures in our garden. Every Thanksgiving we feel that Fozzie is one of our blessings.



— SANDRA LANDSMAN

Hi Cappy

Dima Jonathan Phillips, 6 months old, and piggy Cappy. Dima Jonathan is grandson of Jill and John Phillips, longtime Potomac residents and owners of Squeals on Wheels mobile petting zoo. Dima Jonathan is named after both grandfathers.



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PET ALMANAC



Volunteers and staff work with animals at the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center.

Exploring County's Only Open Admissions Shelter

Local animal shelter seeks those interested in adopting.

BY ALYSSA GABIDOULLINE
THE ALMANAC

Even after eight years with the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center (MCASAC), this moment still brings tears to Maria Meyer's eyes. She and other volunteers and staff stand in the lobby and applaud. A dog walks out of the door with its new collar, matching leash, and proud new owners. They are celebrating a new adoption. Meyer has seen this happen time and time again, but it is still "the best thing" in her experience at the shelter, she says.

The MCASAC is the county's only open admissions animal shelter. Program Administrator Hannah Carl explains that this means "[the shelter's] doors are open to any animal that comes." This includes strays, owner surrenders, and animals that are part of legal cases.

A report from 2016 shows that the shelter took in about 6,000 animals and had a total of 2,000 adoptions that year. Carl says these numbers are an average and "don't vary much from year to year."

Meyer adds that this amounts to around



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Members of the animal shelter community participate in adopting out the animals during the annual national Clear the Shelters event in 2017.

SEE LOCAL SHELTER, PAGE 10

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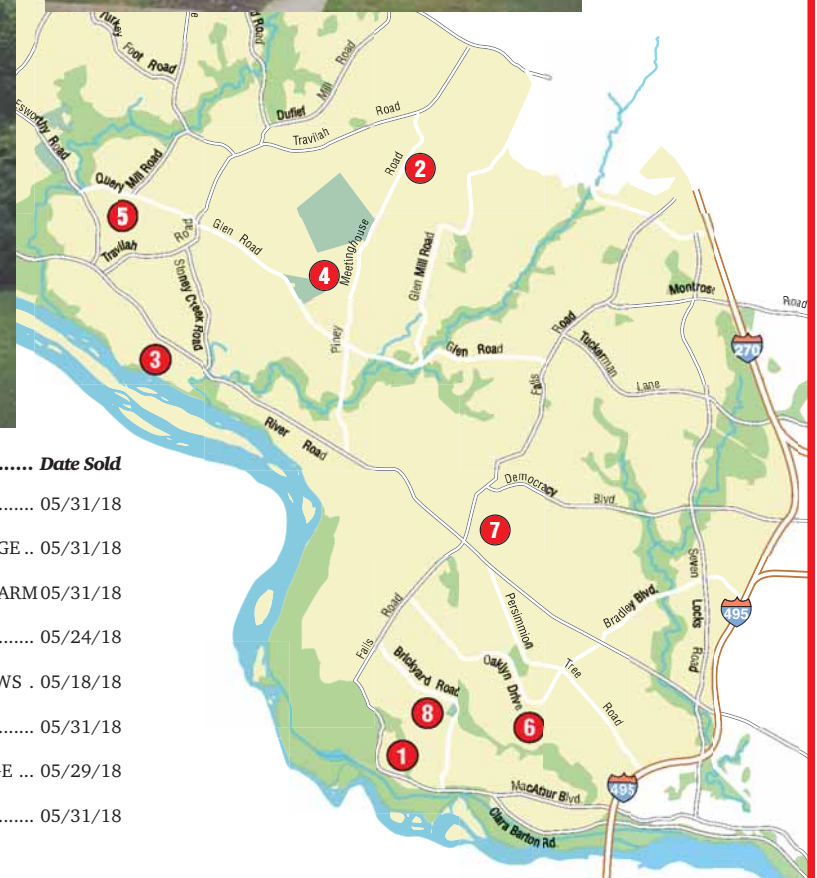
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3 11505 LUVIE CT	5	..	4	. 2 ...	POTOMAC	\$1,225,000	... Detached	0.92	20854	MERRY GO ROUND FARM	05/31/18
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5 13145 BRUSHWOOD WAY ..	5	..	4	. 1 ...	POTOMAC	\$1,210,000	... Detached	2.10	20854	TRAVILAH MEADOWS	05/18/18
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7 9925 HALL RD	4	..	3	. 1 ..	ROCKVILLE	\$1,180,000	... Detached	0.41	20854	POTOMAC VILLAGE	05/29/18
8 8100 RIVER FALLS DR	4	..	4	. 1 ...	POTOMAC	\$1,175,000	... Detached	0.35	20854	RIVER FALLS	05/31/18

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PET ALMANAC

Barney, New Clinic, and More

Montgomery County Humane Society celebrates its 60-year anniversary.

BY ALYSSA GABIDOULLINE
THE ALMANAC

“We started out, actually, as a hotline service,” said Cris Bombaugh, current president and CEO of the Montgomery County Humane Society. This was in May of 1958. Since then, the organization has made much progress and gone through many changes. This year, they celebrate their 60th anniversary.

The Humane Society’s mission is twofold: “to end animal homelessness [and] to educate the community,” said chairwoman Lisa Kingsley.

Bombaugh explains that “animal homelessness can be reduced, we believe, in two ways: one, through education, and another, through spay and neuter.”

This is a relatively new mission of the organization, as, before 2014, the Humane Society managed the county’s shelter. This meant that they followed the county’s mission. After the county decided not to renew their contract with the Humane Society, the organization became 100 percent privately funded. Kingsley says that this “gave [the organization] a chance to redefine” and “expand more into the outreach and education” front.

Now, a large part of what the organization does lies in their “robust education program” where staff and animal ambassadors educate children, teens, and adults, said Bombaugh. This is done “primarily with the goal of promoting compassion, respect for animals, [and] responsible pet care,” she continued. Their animal ambassadors are two guinea pigs named Lenny and Squiggy, and a dog named Barney. These animals are “part of the team,” according to Bombaugh.

Additionally, the organization continues to rescue animals. Most animals are pulled from overcrowded shelters. Bombaugh says that they work to pull animals “that need treatment that the shelter where they’re living can’t necessarily provide.”

To celebrate 60 “successful years and to recognize donors and supporters who are our lifeblood,” according to Kingsley, the society will be hosting a



Animal ambassadors Lenny (right) and Squiggy (left) visit local schools and scouting groups.

celebratory gala. It will include a reception, dinner, dancing to a live band, and “just enjoying sharing [60 years] with the community,” said Bombaugh.

Although this event is a fundraiser, Bombaugh adds that this is “just as much a celebration and thank you.” That is not to say that the organization does not need any more donations, whether it is of products, volunteer time, or financial donations.

Kingsley emphasizes that the organization does not put their “donations back into fundraising, [rather,] it goes to the animals.”

Another fun way for the community to get involved is through an event in the spring called “Paws in the Park” where people can donate for each kilometer walked. It helps to raise money and spreads the word about why owning pets is “healthy and rewarding and fulfilling,” said Bombaugh.

The progress of the Humane Society is not at its end, as there continue to be plans underway. Both Kingsley and Bombaugh talk about expanding the education program to reach more people in the community. Bombaugh is also “looking forward very much to a new spay and neuter clinic” that will be introduced sometime later this year.

Kingsley adds that the clinic will be “low cost” and “available to people who can’t afford” to spay and neuter their pets.

BULLETIN BOARD

ONGOING

Cancer Support Groups. Held at Hope Connections for Cancer Support, Beaumont House at FASEB, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda. Free. Weekly support groups for people with all types of cancer, caregivers, people with advanced cancer and a bereavement group. An ovarian/gyn support group and group for young adults with cancer are offered twice a month, as are monthly groups for people with breast cancer, bladder cancer, blood cancers, and gastrointestinal cancers. Orientation sessions are held every Monday at 11 a.m. and the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. in Bethesda. RSVP at 301-634-7500 or info@hopeconnectionsforcancer.org.

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community can also look to EveryMind for mental health professionals who are prepared to talk about warning signs and ways anyone can help to prevent suicide from ending lives far too soon. EveryMind is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Visit Every-Mind.org. More resources include:

- ❖ Call or Text Montgomery County Hotline: 301-738-2255
- ❖ Chat: Crisis Prevention Chat: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>
- ❖ Call: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- ❖ www.every-mind.org/services/crisis/
- ❖ www.every-mind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Talking-to-Kids-about-Suicide.pdf
- ❖ suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- ❖ www.suicidology.org

SATURDAY/JULY 28

Toy Drive. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at River Falls

Clubhouse, 7915 Horseshoe Lane, Potomac. As part of a Master’s program in Occupational Therapy, Kelly Williams is hosting a toy drive for children at Stepping Stones shelter in Montgomery County. Playing helps children learn how to grasp patterns for tools, share, and develop skills. Bring new toys either to 8213 Coach St. until July 28, or bring the toys to the River Falls Clubhouse on July 28.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 8

Skin Care for Women. 6:30-8 p.m.

Held at Hope Connections for Cancer Support, Beaumont House at FASEB, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda. Free. A breast cancer survivor, Carol Ranney will share with other women that what we put on our body is just as important as what we put in our body. RSVP at 301-634-7500 or info@hopeconnectionsforcancer.org.

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PET ALMANAC



Declan Dixon, almost 4 years old, on Halley, his grandma's horse.



Rose, a Potomac resident, was rescued at about 2 weeks old by Lost Dog and Cat Rescue, bottle fed along with four other kittens by foster mom Jean Card, and then adopted by Mary Kimm. Rose is a beloved and cartoonish member of the household. She is very fond of her yoga mat.



Trilke is turning 18 years old, but still lively and affectionate.



Cumin was rescued by PetConnect Rescue in Potomac and adopted by the Kimm family.

Declan Dixon and Speedy, a lurcher who lives at Windchase, a horse farm in Hillsboro, Va. Declan calls Speedy his best friend, and they have regular visits.



Twin fawns of Horseshoe Lane.

Local Animal Shelter Seeks Those Interested in Adopting

FROM PAGE 6

300 animals on any given day. The animals include many dogs and cats, but also small mammals such as rabbits and guinea pigs, reptiles, and the shelter even has a barn.

The recently rebuilt shelter boasts "state of the art facilities," says adoption counselor Melissa Gallagher.

Splitting her years of volunteering between the two shelters, Meyer speaks to the impact of these upgrades. She contrasts the change in the dog kennel as "night and day." The previously "high stress" environment in the kennels was reduced by switching from a chain link to cinder block and glass

structure. This gives the dogs more privacy from each other, she explains. Additionally, implementing a fresh air exchange and heated floors ended the previously prevalent issue of "kennel cough."

Meyer adds that at the shelter, the animals are provided with "top notch vet care" in a vet suite. Animals are kept in healthy condition as volunteer dog-walkers and staff take them out on the facility's large exercise walking path.

Adoption is a "fairly painless process," says Carl. Anyone who is interested is required to visit the shelter in person to fill out an application and speak to an adoption counselor.

Adoption counselor Gallagher explains that she helps clients make a good match with an animal. She says, "My advice [for people looking to adopt] would be to take a serious look at their lifestyle," their expenses and vet care. Gallagher admits that adopters must be "up to the challenge" of adding a member to their families. To help with this, she says that both counselors and behaviorists are on-call "to answer questions if there are any problems transitioning" post-adoption.

For one day only the shelter offers free adoptions. This is because the shelter participates in an annual national event called Clear the Shelters. This year, it will be held

on Aug. 18 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Carl says that in the past this has been "a really great event [where] we send a lot of animals home."

Meyer encourages others to take part in the "very rewarding" experience of volunteering. She says that "anyone who comes in to help is truly making a difference." Applications can be found online, and positions vary from dog walker and cat handler to tour guide and behaviorist assistant.

Gallagher adds that the shelter is always looking for people to foster animals and for donations. She says that this type of community support is "really [what] helps keep the shelter going."

ENTERTAINMENT



Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday.

ONGOING

In July: Four Exhibits at Two Locations.

Through Wednesday, July 25, gallery hours at Artists & Makers Studios 1, 11810 Parklawn Drive, Suite 210 and Artists & Makers Studios 2, 12276/12280 Wilkins Ave., Rockville. Artists & Makers Studios are celebrating summer at two locations with four exhibits, featuring Black Artists of D.C., Schroeder Cherry, AnaMarie Paredes, and Christopher John Hoppe in the galleries of both studio centers. Visit artistsandmakersstudios.com.

Art Exhibit: Four Seasons. Through July 28, Wednesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m. at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. The exhibit will feature artwork by Aanen Nilsen, Tea Okropiridze, Antonio Scott and Joan Sarah Wexler. Visit www.bethesda.org.

“Be a Good Little Widow.” Through Aug. 5 at River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation Building, Fireside Room, 6301 River Road, Bethesda. The Unexpected Stage Company presents a comedy about life, grief, and longing by Bekah Brunstetter (“This Is Us,” “The Cake,” “The Oregon Trail”). Tickets, priced \$10 to \$29.50, are on sale via phone at 800-838-3006, online at www.unexpectedstage.org, and at the door. Call 301-337-8290 or visit www.unexpectedstage.org.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 25

Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Casablanca. 9 p.m. at the corner of Norfolk and Auburn avenues in Bethesda’s Woodmont Triangle. The Bethesda Urban Partnership will present the 14th annual Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Stars on the Avenue, July 24-28 with five evenings of major motion pictures. Arrive early and bring lawn chairs. Admission is free. Call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

THURSDAY/JULY 26

Bethesda Outdoor Movies: The Big Sick. 9 p.m. at the corner of Norfolk and Auburn avenues in Bethesda’s Woodmont Triangle. The Bethesda Urban Partnership will present the 14th annual Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Stars on the Avenue, July 24-28 with five evenings of major motion pictures. Arrive early and bring lawn chairs. Admission is free. Call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

FRIDAY/JULY 27

Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Mean Girls. 9 p.m. at the corner of Norfolk and Auburn avenues in Bethesda’s Woodmont Triangle. The Bethesda Urban Partnership will present the 14th annual Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Stars on the Avenue, July 24-28 with five evenings of major motion pictures. Arrive early and bring lawn chairs. Admission is free. Call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

Application Deadline. The Bethesda Urban Partnership and Bethesda Arts & Entertainment District announce new artist studios in downtown Bethesda. The Bethesda Arts & Entertainment District is currently seeking artist applications for the brand-new Triangle Art Studios, located at 7711 Old Georgetown Road in the recently constructed Cheval Bethesda condominium building. Visit www.bethesda.org.

SATURDAY/JULY 28

Bethesda Outdoor Movies: The Post. 9 p.m. at the corner of Norfolk and Auburn avenues in Bethesda’s Woodmont Triangle. The Bethesda

Outdoor Movies

The Bethesda Urban Partnership is presenting the 14th annual Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Stars on the Avenue through July 28. Five evenings of major motion pictures in a variety of genres will be showcased, including new releases, classics, drama and comedy films. Admission is free and show times will begin at 9 p.m. at the corner of Norfolk and Auburn Avenues in Bethesda’s Woodmont Triangle. See www.bethesda.org.

Urban Partnership will present the 14th annual Bethesda Outdoor Movies: Stars on the Avenue, July 24-28 with five evenings of major motion pictures. Arrive early and bring lawn chairs. Admission is free. Call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/JULY 28-29

Farm Tour & Harvest Sale. Various times at various locations in Montgomery County. Montgomery County celebrates its agricultural heritage by promoting local farms, and inviting patrons to partake in seasonally fresh food. Admission prices vary based on farm. Visit <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices/agfarmtour.html> for a full schedule.

SUNDAY/JULY 29

KENsington Fitness Festival. 1-4 p.m. at 10417-B Metropolitan Ave., Kensington. Benefitting the Spirt Club Foundation. An afternoon of fitness classes and activities, including Zumba, Yoga, volleyball, soccer, fitness demonstrations, and other activities. The event is free for the whole family, including food provided by local restaurants. Call 202-204-1144.

AUGUST 2018

Riley’s Rumble Half-Marathon. See www.mcrrc.org.

Montgomery County Agricultural Fair. See www.mcagfair.com.

THURSDAY/AUG. 2

Live Music: Tom Bailey. 8 p.m. at the Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center, Montgomery College, 51 Mannakee St., Rockville. The Thompson Twins’ Tom Bailey, with a new band, will be touring and performing The Thompson Twins’ hits. \$55-65. Call 240-567-5301 or visit www.montgomerycollege.edu/pac for tickets.

FRIDAY/AUG. 3

Three Exhibits/Two Locations. 6-9 p.m. Artists & Makers Studios on Parklawn Drive and Wilkins Avenue in Rockville are featuring three exhibits at two locations with the three gallery Olney Art Association Invitational, Cherie Redlinger & Klaudia Levin, and Jabari C. Jefferson in the galleries of both studio centers. Opening Reception. 6-9 p.m., Friday, Aug. 3, 2018 at Artists & Makers Studios 1, 11810 Parklawn Drive, Suite 210, Rockville, and Artists & Makers Studios 2, 12276/12280 Wilkins Ave., Rockville. These exhibits at both locations continue through Aug. 29, 2018. Visit www.artistsandmakersstudios.com.

SATURDAY/AUG. 4

Dulcimer Music. 2:30-3 p.m. at Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center, 11710 MacArthur Boulevard, Potomac. Join the Mountain Dulcimers of Northern Virginia for live music and try playing this unique instrument. Park entrance fees may be charged at Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center but park ranger programs are free. Call 301-767-3714.

FRIDAY/AUG. 10

Tie Dye Party. 4-5:30 p.m. at My Gym Potomac, 11325 Seven Locks Road, Potomac. 1.5 hours of fun games, tie dye, and pizza for the family. Cost is \$20/members; \$25/non-members. Bring something white to tie dye and they provide the rest. Contact Ronni Oppenheim at potomac@mygym.com.

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Phoning It In



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For my next post-scan, face-to-face appointment with my oncologist, we won't in fact be seeing him face to face. Instead, we will be speaking with him phone to phone. This bothers or concerns me not in the least. "I only mention this in passing," ("The Exorcist," 1973) and as a topic for this week's column since I'm being CT-Scanned on Wednesday, July 25.

Typically, we would meet my oncologist in person a week or so after my scan to allow for proper reporting/interpreting of the scan. This appointment would have been made — or attempted to have been made, during the previous face-to-face appointment, three months prior. However, sometimes the computer program managing such scheduling doesn't provide the doctor's schedule so far in advance.

When this happens, the doctor/staff makes a note in the computer's margins, so to speak, to schedule me automatically when the appointments become available. Well, for some reason, that didn't happen this cycle. That became clear to me when, a few weeks before my presumptive appointment, I went online to see when my it had been "computerized." I noticed it hadn't. I immediately called oncology to make inquiries and to schedule this kind-of-important, post-scan appointment.

I spoke with one of the nurses — with whom I'm familiar, and explained my circumstances. She went on the computer, entered my member number and, if I understand the process correctly, typed in something like "next available appointment."

"Aug. 31," she said.

I said "What? I usually see the doctor the week after my scan."

"That's the next available appointment," she repeated. (I'd mutter "incredible" to myself but I have some prior experience with such blips.)

Stammering as I gathered my thoughts, the nurse casually offered up the chance of a phone appointment. "Sure!," I said, (having received a similar offer once before).

The nurse said "How about Aug. 6?" 12 days post scan and much sooner than Aug. 31. (Normally we try to schedule the follow-up in-office appointment for the following Friday, 10 days after the Wednesday scan which ideally would have been Aug. 3).

"Perfect," I said, since I'm home on Mondays and my wife, Dina, coincidentally had already scheduled that day off from work. (The phone-appointment process involves putting the phone on speaker — so that all parties can participate, and exercising some patience. It's a little awkward but given the appointment unavailability, it's what we have to do.) Not stressing too much about this unexpected set of circumstances, I am now prepared to move forward and hope for the best — results.

The only semi concern I do have is what if the conversation, different than the previous phone-appointment conversation, involves some significant decision-making/discussing about Kenny's life treating forward. If the conversation is potentially life-altering, I'd rather look my oncologist in the eyes rather than hear his voice over the phone.

And, of course, being that there are very few guarantees in the cancer business, there is absolutely no assumption to be presumed that since I'm having a phone appointment that somehow that means all is well with yours truly. Hardly. I haven't even had my scan yet. It simply means that the doctor is already double-booked for the time frame in consideration.

However, on the totally-plus side: There's no 45 minute drive to and from. Once on site, there's no 15- to 20-minute wait in the reception area. Then there's no 10- to 20-minute wait/getting vitals in the examining room until my oncologist comes in. And finally, there's no 30- to 45-minute appointment with my oncologist since there's no physical examination and no ability as well to computer-review the actual scan. It's simply questions and answers. This all works perfectly well when the scan shows "stable."

But, what if?

I don't do "what-ifs." I do what I do until I'm told otherwise (that's why I'm a good husband). Moreover, I don't worry about things I can't control. My scan is in 10 days and it will show what it shows.

In the interim, I will hope for the best and await further instructions.

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

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