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Potomac ALMANAC

WELLBEING

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Carderock Springs Elementary School
Principal Jae Lee with Denise and Whit-
ney Durham on the first day of school,
Tuesday, Sept. 4.

Ready for School

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Former Fire Chief Jim Seavey Dies

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David, Dylan, Caroline and Sarah Schwartz



Juliet and Cyrus Moore



Sareena and Raina Alexander

Ready for School

A bus arrives at Carderock Springs Elementary School on the first day of school, Tuesday, Sept. 4. More than 163,500 students were expected to attend Montgomery County Public Schools' 206 schools for the start of the 2018-2019 school year — the largest enrollment in the district's history. There are nearly 900 new teachers, more than 250 new supporting services professionals and 25 new administrators this school year.



PHOTOS BY DEBORAH STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



PHOTO BY PEGGY MCEWAN

Robby Dodd, Walt Whitman High School principal, shows some of the memorabilia in his office. Dodd replaced retiring principal Alan Goodwin who served 14 years at the school.

New Leader At Whitman

High school starts year with new principal.

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
THE ALMANAC

He's an English major with a sense of history. He is also the new principal at Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda.

Robby Dodd took the job as principal this summer following the retirement of Alan Goodwin who led the school for the past 14 years.

Talking about Whitman's former principals is where Dodd's interest in history shows itself.

"The history of Whitman is fascinating to me, from a leadership perspective," Dodd

SEE NEW LEADER, PAGE 8

Former Fire Chief Seavey Dies

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
THE ALMANAC

Tuesday, Sept. 4.

CJPVFD announced his death on its Facebook page with the following notice: "We are deeply saddened to learn that early this morning, Chief James P. Seavey Sr. passed away surrounded by his family and loved ones. More updates and in-

Jim Seavey once said he started chasing fire trucks when he was 3 years old.

Later, he said, his nursery school class visited a D.C. fire department and he saw a firefighter slide down the pole to the floor below.

"I told my teacher, 'when I grow up, I'm going to be a D.C. fireman,'" he said.

And that is just what he did, but not all.

Seavey served as a D.C. firefighter and was also a volunteer with the Glen Echo Fire Department before moving to the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department where, among other positions, he served as chief.

Seavey died in the early morning of



Cabin John Park Volunteer former Fire Chief Jim Seavey

formation regarding his memorial service are to come. Rest in Peace, Chief Seavey."

On Aug. 28 this information was posted on the website of the Retired Firefighter's Association of Washington, D.C.: "On Behalf of the Seavey Family, we inform you that Captain James Jim' Seavey has recently been placed in hospice care. Captain

Seavey is resting comfortably at his home among his family and closest friends. Currently there is no accurate prognosis; however Captain Seavey is alert and able to communicate."

OPINION

Making It Feel Like Home

Potomac Elementary
School opens in
temporary location.

BY PEGGY McEWAN
THE ALMANAC

Moving can be a time of angst as can changing schools, but when the whole school moves to a new site, it's a whole different story.

Potomac Elementary School students are faced with that change this week when school started.

The old school building on River Road closed for good this summer and the inside: books, wall hanging, flags, papers and pencils along with staff and students all moved to Radnor "holding" school in Bethesda while a new school is built on the old site.

"There's been such a feeling of anxiety about [the move]," said Gregg Baron, assistant principal. "We worked hard to bring things, 'from home'."

But, he noted, people were walking around at the school's Open House Friday, Aug. 31 happy with what they were seeing.

"You can feel the positive energy," he said.

The buzz seemed positive with parents and students greeting school friends, familiar teachers and staff and everyone scrambling to find the right classrooms.

"I like it, I like how it is bigger and the lunchroom is nicer," said Chinwe Chuke, 8, a third grader.

And the commute, an issue of much debate before the move?

"That's going to be an issue, we will have to be organized about getting her to the bus on time," Christine Chuke, Chinwe's mother, said. "You definitely don't want to miss the bus."

Principal Catherine Allie said she was happy to see so many parents at the Open House. "We are open for business," she said.

The school has 365 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. It is also one of two Montgomery County Public elementary schools hosting a Chinese Immersion Program. To accommodate the students, there are 11 portable classrooms, called cottages.

"I think it's great," third grade teacher Stacy Hinton said. "Dr. Allie has put so much love into [getting the school ready]. And I love the windows. Some of the rooms at Potomac didn't even have windows."

Visitors were greeted in the main lobby of the school where staff answered questions and gave out maps so everyone could find their way around.



Faculty and Staff of Potomac Elementary School greet students and parents at the school's Open House. Potomac Elementary will be housed at the old Radnor Elementary School in Bethesda during the construction of a new school in Potomac.

PHOTOS BY PEGGY McEWAN/THE ALMANAC



Kenner Medina, 10, hugs his 5th grade math and science teacher Caihong Cui at Potomac Elementary School at Radnor Open House Friday, Aug. 31.



Potomac Elementary School alumni sell popsicles and cold water outside the school's new site at Radnor during the Open House Friday.

"Where is the playground," a student asked counselor Lizabeth Borra, who told her which hallway to take to get there.

"It's going really well," Borra said. "People have been really complimentary of the building. County building services, the movers, ev-

eryone, it was a team effort [getting the school ready]."

There was even artwork from the old building already installed at Radnor.

"It's really nice," Kenner Medina, 10, a 5th grader said. "The playground is amazing."

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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Support C&O at 8th Annual 'Park After Dark' Gala

To be held Sept. 15.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

Why is the C&O Canal National Park so special? "It's one of those sacred places everyone needs at home," said C&O Canal Trust Board Member Francis Grant-Suttie. "Here is this extraordinary place in our own backyard where you can sit on a rock and meditate, hike, run, kayak or walk your dogs. There's always something going on in nature and if you slow down, listen and observe, you can see what nature will put in your pathway."

Potomac residents are frequent volunteers, helping to maintain the park, its locks, the lockhouses, trails and more. Members of the Canal Trust along with the National Park Service, Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern and the C&O Canal Association are the stewards who keep the park a gem for all.

On Saturday, Sept. 15, the Canal Trust will host the 8th annual "Park After Dark" benefit gala from 6-10 p.m. at the Historic Great Falls Tavern. Three hundred guests will gather in a candlelit setting to feast on food from Corcoran Caterers, consume libations, dance to the sounds of the 19th Street Band,

enjoy s'mores by the campfire, mingle with friends old and new and bid on silent auction items.

"We are excited to be hosting our 8th Annual Park After Dark fundraiser to benefit the C&O Canal National Historical Park," said Heidi Glatfelter Schlag, director of marketing and communications for the C&O Canal Trust. "This event is a unique opportunity for park lovers to come together in a picturesque setting under the stars to raise money for the C&O Canal. The theme is 'My Canal.' Attendees will be able to tell their canal stories through writing or drawing, and then hang them on a "towline" — like a clothesline, but named after the towlines used to pull the canal boats. We will also have an audio recorder for people who want to share their stories orally. There will also be pins available featuring various canal activities — kayaking, running, dog walking, etc. — that we hope people will wear, so they can meet others at the event who share their interests."

Schlag continued, "We will be holding a paddle-raise at this year's event to raise funds to sustainably restore sections of the



Candlelit setting for "Park After Dark" gala at the Great Falls Tavern.

towpath damaged by years of heavy traffic and the spring floods, which caused over \$14 million in damage. Repairs will include fixing the breach at Mile 52.5 near Brunswick, filling in wash-out, removing tree roots and other hazards, grading the towpath for better drainage, and resurfacing it with a material similar to that used on the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) rail trail. The goal for the evening is to raise \$35,000 or more to support the project."

Michael Mitchell, chairman of the board of the Canal Trust, said, "Park After Dark is

an extremely important fundraiser because the Interior Department, which funds all the U.S. National Parks, is severely underfunded. Just in our park, we have gone from a staff of 135 to 75 — and that makes the volunteer programs such as the Canal Trust even more important and necessary. We must not only complete a lot of the work that was formerly done by the National Park Service but we must be able to fund it. We are excited that we recently received a grant from the State of Maryland to re-water the canal. This will be an amazing engineering project which will open up

more recreational space for all.

"We are very appreciative for the substantial amount of funding from our corporate and individual sponsors such as the Marriott Foundation, Daofeng and Angela Foundation, A.R. Landsman Foundation, Jewell Foundation and Kiplinger Foundation, Minkoff Development Corporation, Quality Systems and Products and many more."

"What do I like best about the Canal?" Mitchell answered, "It's a one-stop shop for

SEE GALA, PAGE 8

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WELLBEING

Aiming for Long-Term Fitness

Study shows physical declines can be detected as early as age 50.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

I've been doing it since before I retired," said Rich White, a former accountant who lives in Alexandria. "It's easier to get up and get it out of the way so I don't miss it. Both of my parents died prematurely of heart attacks. That's when I decided to start running to get in shape. Eventually that turned into a habit of daily strength and aerobic exercise."

White's assumptions about preserving his physical health are underscored by a report from the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development at Duke University School of Medicine which found that physical decline begins when people are in their 50s, much earlier than people might notice or expect.

The study looked at 775 adults ranging in age from 30 to 90 to assess changes in fitness abilities like endurance, balance, speed and strength. Researchers found that exercise efforts must begin before the age of 50 in order to help halt the decline and maintain mobility and independence longer in life.

"Our research reinforces a life-span approach to maintaining physical ability — don't wait until you are 80 years old and cannot get out of a chair," said lead author Katherine S. Hall, Ph.D. in releasing the study.

By having participants stand on one leg for 60 seconds to measure balance and sit and rise from a chair for 30 seconds to measure lower body strength, researchers were able to detect a decline beginning in

Emma Warner, 72, meets her trainer at a Montgomery County Recreation Center gym twice a week. Together they perform a combination of exercises aimed at improving her strength, balance, endurance and flexibility.

"We stretch and do yoga poses, sometimes we speed walk outside and I also do exercises with two or three pound dumbbells," she said. "But my mother is 98 and is in pretty good health, so I figure I have good genes. I just need to work on fitness to maintain."

As people age, change and decline is inevitable, but the rate and severity can vary based on genetics and the level of activity in one's lifestyle. Regular exercise can have a profound effect on the way in which one ages.

"People have their actual age, which they can't do anything about, and their biological age," said Martin.

"Someone could be 40 years old, live a very inactive lifestyle and not eat very well, which may cause them to be closer to 60 in terms of their biological age. And vice versa, someone who is 60 could be very active and eat a healthy diet and feel like they are much younger, perhaps a biological age closer to mid-40s."

Fitness instructor Amy Traum has clients who run the age gamut from college students to retirees, but her overarching advice to getting in shape is similar. "Everyone needs a well-rounded exercise program that includes stretching, balance exercises,

strength and cardio," she said. "I always begin and end classes with stretching and I try to add strength and balance elements like a weighted deadlift."

Those new or newly returning to exercise should start slowly and gradually, says Traum. "It sounds like common sense, but I can't tell you the number of people who come to my classes with no experience and try to work way above their fitness level

"Our research reinforces a life-span approach to maintaining physical ability — don't wait until you are 80 years old and cannot get out of a chair."

— Katherine S. Hall, Ph.D.

"Someone could be 40 years old, live a very inactive lifestyle and not eat very well, which may cause them to be closer to 60 in terms of their biological age. And vice versa, someone who is 60 could be very active and eat a healthy diet and feel like they are much younger, perhaps a biological age closer to mid-40s."

— Joel Martin, Ph.D., assistant professor of Kinesiology, George Mason University

one's 50s. The findings show the need to understand and preserve muscle strength.

"Most tissues in the body respond to stress placed on them by becoming stronger or adapting to handle the stimulus you place on them," said Joel Martin, Ph.D., assistant professor of Kinesiology at George Mason University. "If you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and stronger. If you don't do any sort of physical activity to stimulate your muscles then they get smaller and become weaker. Use it or lose it."

and either get injured or discouraged," she said. "There's nothing wrong with starting out slow, sticking with it and making gradual progress. Also make it fun, like walk or jog with a friends or take a dance or Zumba classes."

"Eating a healthy and nutritious diet is also important," added Martin. "The antioxidants in foods, especially fruits and vegetables, can help to preserve and protect tissues from damage that occurs as part of the natural aging process."

ENTERTAINMENT

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

DANCING

Weekly International Folkdancing.

Thursdays, 7:30-11 p.m. at Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Drive, Bethesda. Circle and line dances from Eastern Europe. Lesson at 7:30, followed by requests. Glen Echo Folkdancers welcome beginners of all ages; no partner needed. Wear comfortable shoes. \$7. Call 301-466-3018 or visit www.dancingplanetproductions.com.

Thang Ta. Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m. at Sutradhar Institute of Dance and Related Arts, 1525 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring. Learn the ancient art of the sword and spear. \$25. Visit www.dancesidra.org.

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. capitalblues.org

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. Beginner swing dance lesson at 8 p.m., followed by dancing. Admission \$16-\$18, age 17 and under \$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. 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. For just the Milonga, cost is \$10 and the open dance with DJ runs 8:30-11 p.m. No partner required. www.glenechopark.org, 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. Lessons at 7 p.m., followed by the called dance with live music at 7:30. \$13 for nonmembers, \$10 for FSGW members, \$5 ages 17 and under. www.glenechopark.org, 301-634-2222.

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

FRIDAY/SEPT. 7

Opening Reception. 6-9 p.m. at Artists & Makers Studios 1, 11810 Parklawn Drive, Suite 210, Rockville and Artists & Makers Studios 2, 12276/12280 Wilkins Ave., Rockville. Artists & Makers Studios are featuring three lush exhibits at two locations with a three-gallery retrospective exhibition that spans a lifetime of glass artist Nancy Weisser's art making, a solo exhibit for Spencer Dormitzer, and a group exhibit of the lavender fields of Provence with Glen Kessler's Compass Atelier in the galleries. Visit artistsandmakersstudios.com for more.

SEPT. 7-SEPT. 26

Art Exhibits. Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Artists & Makers Studios 1, 11810 Parklawn Drive, Suite 210, Rockville and Artists & Makers Studios 2, 12276/12280 Wilkins Ave., Rockville. Artists & Makers Studios are featuring three lush exhibits at two locations with a three-gallery retrospective exhibition that spans a lifetime of glass artist Nancy Weisser's art making, a solo exhibit for Spencer Dormitzer, and a group exhibit of the lavender fields of Provence with Glen Kessler's Compass Atelier in the galleries. Visit artistsandmakersstudios.com for more.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 8

Library Book Sale. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac. Monthly Potomac Friends of the Library Book Sale includes books, DVDs, and more for children, teens, and adults. All are welcome. Call 240-777-0690 or visit www.folmc.org/potomac-chapter/ for more.

Dulcimer Music. 12:30-3 p.m. at Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center, 11710 MacArthur Blvd.,

Potomac. Live music by the Mountain Dulcimers of Northern Virginia. Visitors can try playing. The programs at Great Falls Tavern are free, but there is an entrance fee to the park of \$10 per single vehicle. Call 301-767-3714 for more.

Live Comedy. 8 p.m. at Post 41 - Cissel-Saxon American Legion Post 41, 905 Sligo Ave., Silver Spring. A line-up of all immigrant and 1st generation performers hits the stage with Comedy as a Second Language. This will be a night of comedy with Martin Amini, Jennifer Amo, Umar Khan and Sharon Kang. \$15 online, \$20 at the door (students tickets available). Tickets available at www.eventbrite.com/e/comedy-as-a-second-language-tickets-48795087420.

All-Chopin Concert. 8 p.m. at Westmoreland Congregational UCC, 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. Pianist Stanislav Khristenko will present an all-Chopin concert to open the 2018-19 Washington Conservatory Concert Series. Free, with donations welcome at the door. Visit www.westmorelanducc.org/ for more.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 14

Paul Stanley Art Exhibition. 6-9 p.m. at Westfield Montgomery Mall, 7101 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda. Wentworth Gallery presents a collection of works from legendary musician and fine artist Paul Stanley of KISS. All artwork is available for purchase. RSVP to 301-365-3270 or montgomery@wentworthgallery.com.

SEPT. 14-16

“The Last Five Years.” At Randolph Road Theatre, 4010 Randolph Road, Silver Spring. Produced by The Montgomery Playhouse and Theatre@CBT, this musical by Jason Robert Brown follows an interfaith couple through their five-year relationship, with them falling both in and out of love. Jamie Wellerstein, a rising novelist with strong Jewish roots, works to balance his suddenly successful career while embarking on a relationship with Cathy Hiatt, a struggling non-Jewish actress, who is left to deal with her stalled career while watching her husband from the sidelines. Visit facebook.com/TheatreatCBT and montgomeryplayhouse.org.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 15

Park After Dark. 6-10 p.m. at Historic Great Falls Tavern, 1710 Macarthur Blvd., Potomac. Celebrate the C&O Canal at Park After Dark, the C&O Canal Trust's annual gala fundraiser, held under the stars at Historic Great Falls Tavern. This year, guests will enjoy great food, libations, a campfire, unique auction items, music and dancing with The 19th Street Band, and more. There will also be a paddle raise to raise money to help resurface the towpath. \$250 per person. All but \$50 of the ticket price is a tax deductible donation to the C&O Canal Trust. This event has sold out in previous years. Order tickets at www.ParkAfterDark.org.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 16

Waltz Dance. 2:45-3:30 waltz workshop; 3:30-6 p.m. dance at the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Featuring the ensemble Larry Unger & Friends with a mix of folk waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambo, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. Admission is \$13. No partner required. Call Joan Koury at 202-238-0230 or Glen Echo Park at 301-634-2222, go to www.WaltzTimeDances.org or e-mail info@WaltzTimeDances.org.

MONDAY/SEPT. 17

PCV Book Group. 1:30-3:30. Call for location. The PCV Members' Book Group will discuss “A Gentleman in Moscow” by Amor Towles. For Potomac Community Village members only. Visit www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org or call 240-221-1370.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 18

Read to a Dog. 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac. Every first and third Tuesday of the month, school-age children, especially beginners learning to read and those who want to improve their confidence in reading skills, are invited to practice reading aloud in short (10-15 minute) semi-private sessions with a certified therapy dog. First-come, first-served. No registration required; no younger siblings. Free. Call 240-777-0694.

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Poise Under Pressure – Or Not



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't want to self-indulge too much, but given the potentially life-changing seriousness of my upcoming Sept. 26 CT scan, I'm having a little trouble getting myself started in the morning – and throughout the day also, if you must know the truth? (I realize you all have your own lives to lead so that last sentence-ending question was more rhetorical than actual.)

Nevertheless, if you're still reading, you're still interested so I'll try to string together some "insightful commentary and thoughtful humor," (an original characterization of my columns) to keep you on the page. Although, given the subject of this week's column, it might be hard to tiptoe through the tulips.

The difficulty I'm having is being unable to ignore, "totally," (my mother loved to mimic the generation that popularized that word) the reality of my situation.

Typically, I've been able to maintain a relative calm and detached disposition as I go from one cancer-related thing to another. None of the tasks I must perform or the responsibilities I've assimilated into a routine (24-hour urine collection, pre-chemotherapy lab work, chemotherapy, quarterly CT scans, annual brain MRI, quarterly appointments with my oncologist, have changed who I like to think I am compared to who I was pre-cancer diagnosis, 2/27/09; despite having the weight of a "terminal" diagnosis/original "13 month to two year" prognosis on my shoulders/literally in my lungs.

To quote Popeye the Sailor Man: "I y'am who I y'am." (And I still don't like spinach, certainly not out of a can.)

And though I've done a pretty good job of flicking these flakes of pressure and anxiety off my shoulders like unwanted dandruff, the fact is – as with dandruff shampoo or any other personal hygiene product for that matter – unless one is diligent, vigilant and cognizant of its likely recurrence, nothing will change.

Unfortunately, cancer doesn't quite react that way. It will change and it can overwhelm even your best efforts and can cause harm not only internally but externally as well (emotionally). Fending off these emotional pressures is challenging and dare I say, presents as many problems as the growth and movement of one's tumors and the side effects of one's treatment does.

What makes my present situation feel different and a bit off-putting is that what has happened has happened after nearly five years of relative peace and quiet (I was never characterized as in "remission," by the way). It seems the possibility of having to go back, so to speak, and return to the scene of the crime – against my body/life expectancy; and moreover, having to restart the process, ratchets up the stress to previously unknown heights.

And part of me is wondering (worrying actually) if I'm up to the challenge again, emotionally and of course, physically as well; whether my body can sustain the damage its likely to experience if we have to reload.

I use the word 'reload' for a reason. Without invoking too many war metaphors, being diagnosed with cancer is like being drafted into the Army, except you have little training for the battles you're about to fight. And as much as fighting against cancer is a battle, it's more a war against attrition in which the bad guys (cancer) regularly defeat the good guys (people diagnosed with cancer). In general, the cancer experience is no picnic.

It reminds me of a long-ago M*A*S*H episode in which the doctors operated through a particularly difficult surgical session after which Henry (Lt. Col. Blake) and "Hawkeye" (Capt. Pierce) went outside the operating room/tent for some relief. "Hawkeye" clearly agitated over a patient he couldn't save; Henry tried to offer him some comfort with the following words: "There are certain rules about war. And rule number one is young men die. And rule number two is, doctors can't change rule number one."

What scares me about cancer is, it follows no rules and like war, leaves devastation in its wake. I just hope I'm not about to be another casualty.

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

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Edward Jones

NEWS

New Leader at Whitman

FROM PAGE 3

said. "I'm sitting at the desk of Jerome Marco, the second principal, he was here 30 years."

And, Dodd added, he is only the fourth principal in Whitman's history. The first was Daryl Shaw, who opened the school in 1962.

"I'd love to be here a long time," he said. "I'm already very, very happy here."

Then he pointed out that his office is "Whitman Blue," "that's what I call it," he said of the sky-blue walls adorned with memorabilia including a picture of Whitman himself.

Dodd said he considers himself

"... this is a high performing, motivated staff."

— Robby Todd

the consummate Montgomery County Public Schools company man. His father was an MCPS elementary school principal, then an associate superintendent.

Dodd grew up attending county schools, graduating from Paint Branch High School, where he met his high school sweetheart, now his wife. The couple has two children.

With all his years with teachers — his father, his mother who taught for a while and his sister who is currently a kindergarten teacher — Dodd said his first thought was not to teach.

"I didn't think I wanted to teach," he said. "But I knew I was good with kids."

He tried it and went back to school to become certified to teach, and the rest is his own history.

Dodd has been a principal in both elementary and middle schools and, for the last three years, has trained principals.

As for this, his first time work-

ing in a high school, Dodd says he is confident in his ability to build relationships with high school students.

"Alan Goodwin got me in here from the get go," he said. "I was here a half dozen times before I started."

One piece of advice he got from Goodwin, Goodwin's "Golden Rule" he said was: "When kids come to you with an idea, say yes. If they want it, they will find a way to make it happen."

Dodd is also confident about his relationship with the community; during the summer had three Meet and Greets for the community. He also had high praise for Whitman's faculty and staff.

"I have the feeling this is a high performing, motivated staff," he said. "The signs are good."

"We have a fairly new administrative team," he said, noting that two of the four assistant principals, Michelle Lipson and Phillip Yarborough, are new to the school.

He said the theme for the year is Honoring the Past and Teaching the Future.

One challenge he knows the school community has to face is student suicide.

"It is a recurring theme I've heard from staff and kids," he said. "How can we help kids balance their education lives and personal interests. How can we address stress with mindfulness?"

He is also concerned with equity — making sure Whitman is inclusive and that students of color feel included and welcome. And achievement for all, though it has a top reputation, Whitman does have students at risk of falling between the cracks.

"The way to get the most out of kids is to have good teachers," Dodd said. "It's long been known that the teacher can really account for a significant part of achievement. I think we have a good staff that will really think about these things and focus [on them]."

Gala To Benefit Park

FROM PAGE 5

so many things in our lives. Our sons completed their requirements for Eagle Scouts at the Canal. Our family loves the outdoors and it's a beautiful location for photography. The history is so important to our nation — and I'm just fortunate to have a legacy leadership role. The C&O Canal brings so much of what I love together all in one place. I'm looking forward to an incredible Park After Dark

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