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# Potomac ALMANAC

Jaxon and Madison Liu come to  
Georgetown Hill Early School's  
opening in Potomac Village.



## Excitement in the Air for Opening

CHILDREN, PAGE 3

## DON'T FEED The BEARS!

LARGE MAMMALS, PAGE 3

## Kevin Brandt to Leave C&O after 23 Years

NEWS, PAGE 2

## HomeLifeStyle

PAGE, 4

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## NEWS

# After 23 Years On the Canal

**Kevin Brandt, C&O Canal National Historical Park superintendent retires.**

BY PEGGY MCEWAN  
 POTOMAC ALMANAC

When Kevin Brandt came to the C&O National Historical Park in January 1996, it was just after a major snowstorm followed by heavy rains. The Potomac River at Little Falls crested at 19.29 feet on Jan. 21, 1996, historically the fifth highest crest on record.

"Eighty percent of the park was underwater," he said.

As a matter of fact, damage in the park, 184.5 miles along the C&O Canal from Washington, DC to Cumberland, MD, was so bad a colleague called to see if he was really going to accept the position,

he said.

He also said he only expected to be in the position for two or three years, but on Sept. 14, he retires as superintendent of the park after 23 years.

"Some people joke that C&O stands for challenges and opportunities," Brandt said.

Though that is often true, he said, he stayed because of the people, those he worked with and those in the community.

"People care," he said.

He said safety is the most important part of his job, safety of visitors and safety of employees. The park has close to 5 million visitors each year.

He is most proud of the work being done on the historic structures along the canal. So far seven lockhouses have been restored in collaboration with Canal Quarters, a program of the C&O Canal Trust, that allows people to stay overnight in a bit of living history.

"You can't walk past a lockhouse that's shuttered without thinking

SEE AFTER 23 YEARS, PAGE 7

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# NEWS

## Georgetown Hill Grand Opening in Potomac Village

The entire community was invited to Georgetown Hill Early School's grand opening of its Potomac Village Campus. Food, fun, games, pets, bounce house, music and more as Georgetown Hill and locals celebrated the opening of their newest location right in Potomac Village. As one visitor reported, "There was a lot of excitement in the air." Sprinkles offered donuts and bagels, Tally Ho offered pizza, and River Falls Seafood offered a variety of lunch items. For more information, see [georgetownhill.com/daycare-locations/potomac-village-campus/](http://georgetownhill.com/daycare-locations/potomac-village-campus/)



Andrew Brock with Backyard Inflatables.



PHOTOS BY DEBBIE STEVENS

Dargan Bladen, Buckeye, Rachel Webber and Hazel with D&D Pony Rides.



Linda Tecler, teacher for 38 years, and Ellen Cromwell, founder of Georgetown Hill Early School.



Peter, Ellen and Kristen Cromwell, Vince Sewell, Liliana Winestone the school director, Linda Tecler and Kristen Raymond. Ellen Cromwell is Georgetown Hill's founder.



Representing the Potomac Chamber of Commerce, Jill Phillips awarding the Certificate of Achievement to Georgetown Hill Early School, with Liliana Winestone, Peter and Ellen Cromwell representing the school.

SEE MORE GEORGETOWN HILL PHOTOS. PAGE 6

## Bears! No Need to Be Afraid (Or Friendly)

Two Potomac families, and likely more, noted recent visits from young bears. Steven Smith reports from S. Glen Road: "I spotted this bear on my patio attacking my bird feeder and metal suet stand. I took several pics and videos while calling 311 who patched me through to the wildlife authorities. They advised I should make noise to scare it away, and that they were aware of its presence in the neighborhood. ... The bear ran away after I knocked on window."

Eugene Roesser said "This was our visitor yesterday at our Fox Hunt Lane home. (see page 6) USDA is tracking this guy who apparently was thrown out of the den by his mother and has been on the move for about three weeks in the area in search of

territory of his own. First time in 57 years out here that we have seen one here."

Currently in Montgomery County, black bear sightings are a rare occurrence and most occur during the months of June and July when young, solitary bears (most often young males) are striking out on their own and travelling considerable distances in search of a suitable home range to call their own, according to Montgomery County. The vast majority of these young bears are transient and they find their way to more desirable, bear habitats in western Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia. These sightings are exciting, but can be alarming to residents who are not expecting to see bears travelling through.

Some Maryland wildlife professionals

think that Montgomery County will be the next county to be home to a permanent, breeding population of black bears. As more, young, solitary bears visit Montgomery County in search of suitable habitat; it is likely that some will begin to find select areas favorable, resulting in the animals staying in the county. This makes it more likely that a breeding population will be established.

The most important thing for the benefit of both bears and people is to keep black bears wild and fearful of humans. The best approach to avoiding negative interactions with black bears is to do your part to not attract bears in the first place. Black bears that become too comfortable around hu-

SEE MORE BEARS. PAGE 6



Bear helps himself to bird food on South Glen Road.



Want to know more about “aging in community” here in Potomac?

Bring a Friend Social Lunch  
Thursday, Sept 12, 12 noon  
Tally Ho Restaurant, Potomac Village

A Talk on Downsizing, Clutter  
Thursday, Sept 26, 7 pm  
Potomac Community Center  
FREE and open to all

240-221-1370 to RSVP, learn more  
[www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org](http://www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org)

Past issues of

**THE CONNECTION**  
NEWSPAPERS

back to 2008  
are available at

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

## HomeLifeStyle

By combining a first level floorplan reconfiguration with a partial second floor “pop-up,” Glickman Design Build generated almost 800 square feet of new living space for a three generation family of five. The top level, now private quarters for the twin boys, includes two bedrooms, a 71 square foot work station alcove, and a loft devoted to video games and entertainment.



## McLean ‘Pop-up’ Accommodates Growing Family

Solution combines first level floorplan reconfiguration with attic conversion to create budget-friendly increase in living space.

BY JOHN BYRD  
THE CONNECTION

Brian and Jee Coyle, two professionals in their early forties, had occupied their two-level 1,400-square-foot Colonial in McLean for over a decade. The busy household included Jee’s mother, Penvadee (65), and twin sons—Ty and Miles (10), who were fast-approaching the stage when more independence and privacy is an emergent priority.

Living arrangements called for Brian and Jee sharing the ground-level master suite on the southwest rear corner of the house while the twins bunked in a single first floor bedroom, sharing a hall bath with a tub.

Penvadee’s suite was situated on the lower level where Brian also retained a small office. The close-knit family daily shared meals and lots of quality-time pursuits. But needed changes were anticipated.

Looking ahead, the Coyles recognized they would soon want more usable square footage. Thoughts of finding a larger house nearby didn’t last long since the family considered the circa 1960s brick-facing original something of a classic, and particularly appreciated the good local schools. Still, a remodeling solution that would allow each generation to have a level to themselves made practical sense.

By making over the existing house, the boys might pick up a bedroom each, plus a shared bath and spaces for study and entertainment.

Brian would gain a larger and more private office. Yet the quest for more additional square footage also seemed something of a “reach” since the existing floorplan was notably cramped, situated on a one



**BEFORE:** Situated at the top of a hill on a one third-acre lot, the Coyle’s 1,400 square foot circa 1960’s Colonial..

third acre lot on a hill and offered few visible expansion options. Still, there were opportunities worth examination.

“An open attic with about six feet of headroom was accessible from a staircase in the dining room,” Brian said. “We could picture this as a potential new top level, but weren’t sure of the cost issues, which members of the family would live there or any of the design details.”

Taking the inquiry to the next step, Jee began investigating ideas on “Houzz,” a popular consumer web site. They noticed Glickman Design Build emerged in relation to a nearby makeover that proved to offer spot-on relevance to the Coyle’s goals.

“We had no idea how a new top level should be configured,” Brian said. “But Glickman’s advanced computer imaging technology (CADD systems) made it easy for us to not only model alternate floorplan configurations, but also to narrow-down our many finishwork choices.”

Better yet, the Coyles found that the feasibility study phase of Glickman’s agreement allowed them to closely examine a host of the technical issues while absorbing design fees into the building process.

“The contract permitted us to imagine a large range of options without adding cost,” the homeowner said. “We even considered relocating the master bedroom to the top floor, or bumping out the front. This freedom to explore every consideration was liberating.”

In the end, the attic was converted into a 776-square-foot suite designed primarily for the twins. Each son has a private bedroom. There’s a 78-square-foot master bath; a roomy work station and a spacious loft devoted to video games and entertainment.

Their former first floor bedroom has been converted into Brian’s 150-square-foot office. The now open first level plan is an improvement on all fronts.

“The whole first floor circulates much better” said Brian. “There’s more natural light throughout the primary living area, and it’s a much interactive floorplan. Great for the entire family.”

For Information: 703-832-8158 or 301-444-4663 or [GlickmanDesignBuild.com](http://GlickmanDesignBuild.com)

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## NEWS

### Immunization Requirements For Students: Free Immunizations Offered

**I**ncoming students entering grades seven through 12 are required to have one Tdap (Tetanus-diphtheria-attenuated pertussis) and one meningococcal (MCV4) vaccination. Students who do not show proof of vaccinations by Monday, Sept. 23 will be excluded from school until documentation is received.

Montgomery County Health and Human Services staff will provide free Tdap and MCV4 vaccinations to incoming students at several locations throughout the county. No appointment is necessary. A parent or designated adult must be present. Please bring a copy of the child's immunization record to the clinic.

#### THE LOCATIONS AND CLINIC HOURS ARE:

Germantown Health Center 12900 Middlebrook Road, Germantown  
 ♦Thursdays, Sept. 12 and 19, 1 to 4 p.m.  
 ♦Monday, Sept. 23, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 ♦Tuesday, Sept. 24, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 Dennis Avenue Health Center 2000 Dennis Avenue, Silver Spring  
 ♦Tuesdays, (Sept. 10, 17, 24), 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

♦Thursday, Sept. 19, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 ♦Monday, Sept. 23, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 ♦Wednesday, Sept. 25, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 School Health Services Center 4910 Macon Road, Rockville  
 ♦Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
 Silver Spring Health Center 8630 Fenton Street, 10th floor, Silver Spring  
 ♦Wednesday, Sept. 18, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 ♦Tuesday, Sept. 24, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 Select schools will also offer vaccinations at special clinics:  
 Monday, Sept. 16 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.  
 ♦Roberto Clemente Middle School, 18808 Waring Station Road, Germantown  
 ♦Argyle Middle School, 2400 Bel Pre Road, Silver Spring  
 ♦Benjamin Banneker Middle School, 14800 Perrywood Drive, Burtonsville  
 Tuesday, Sept. 19 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.  
 ♦Julius West Middle School, 651 Great Falls Road, Rockville  
 ♦Montgomery Village Middle School, 19300 Watkins Mill Road, Montgomery Village  
 ♦Silver Spring International Middle School, 313 Wayne Avenue, Silver Spring  
 For more information on immunizations, call the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services' Immunization Program at 240-777-1050 or School Health Services at 240-777-1550.

#### BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

#### SEPTEMBER

**National Suicide Prevention Month.** Since 2008, people around the country have observed

September as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, raising awareness about suicide and to provide education, support, advocacy, and resources to those in need. Below are a few ideas about how one can observe National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month:  
 ♦Share your story on social media, at an event, or with your community.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION**

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Montgomery County Recreation is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).  
 Please contact a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist at 240-777-6870 or [rec.mainstream@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:rec.mainstream@montgomerycountymd.gov) to request accommodations.

**KING STREET** **KING STREET IN OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA, VA**

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**FREE ADMISSION**  
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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22**  
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# ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**Wings of Fancy.** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, through Sept. 22, at Brookside Gardens South Conservatory, 1800 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton. A live butterfly and caterpillar exhibit. Visitors will be surrounded by hundreds of live butterflies from North America, Costa Rica, Africa and Asia. Learn about their metamorphosis, the role butterflies play in healthy ecosystems, and how to ensure these insects thrive. Call 301-962-1400 or visit [www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/brookside-gardens](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/brookside-gardens).

**Two Exhibit Opening for September.** Through Sept. 25, Artists & Makers Studios on Parklawn Drive in Rockville hosts two artists in three galleries for the month of September. Master artist Robert Stark of Union Dale, Pennsylvania – who divides his time between Susquehanna Studio in Pennsylvania and Albuquerque, New Mexico – will fill two galleries at Parklawn. Rosa Inés Vera has exhibited throughout the DMV and internationally, and her work will occupy the third Parklawn Gallery. A Gallery Talk for “Inside, Outside” at Parklawn with invited speaker Jorge Gastelumendi who is the Global Director of Water and Energy Policy at The Nature Conservancy, is planned for Sept. 14, 3-4 p.m. Visit [artistsandmakersstudios.com/](http://artistsandmakersstudios.com/) for more.

**Art Exhibit: Line of Sight.** Through Oct. 5, Wednesday-Sunday, noon-6 p.m. at Waverly Street Gallery, 4600 East West Highway, Bethesda. In Line of Sight, ceramics and watercolors explore the interplay between nearness and distance, drawing out the impact of direction, and perspective on perception. Jennifer Coffin’s ceramic pieces present the detail, texture, and immediacy of form experienced in entering a landscape. Rebecca Anderson’s

watercolors layer the effects of distance and proximity with the sense of atmosphere and space. A reception is planned for Friday, Sept. 13, 6-9 p.m. Meet the artists Saturdays, 3 p.m. Visit [www.waverlystreetgallery.com](http://www.waverlystreetgallery.com) or call 301-951-9441.

**Double Vision.** Through Oct. 6, gallery hours at Photoworks at Glen Echo Park. Photoworks presents “Double Vision” a faculty/student exhibit showcasing the excellence of the classes at Photoworks. For this exhibit, each faculty member chose student work that best represented their class. There are 38 photographers represented. An opening reception is planned for Friday, Aug. 30, 6-8 p.m. Visit [glenechophotoworks.org/](http://glenechophotoworks.org/) for more.

**Visual Poetry.** Through Oct. 6, at the Popcorn Gallery at Glen Echo Park. Photoworks Gallery announces a new collaborative exhibit in the Popcorn Gallery that will feature work that challenged the photographers to ponder the poetry in their images and to assign words to the photos in the exhibit. An opening reception is planned for Friday, Sept. 6, 6-8 p.m. with a live reading from Poet E. Ethelbert Miller at 7. Visit [glenechophotoworks.org/](http://glenechophotoworks.org/) for more.

**Maryland Renaissance Festival.** Crownsville, Md. The Maryland Renaissance Festival celebrates its 43rd season with nine weekends of thrills, feasting, handmade crafts, entertainment and merriment. The 27-acre Village of Revel Grove comes to life each autumn with more than 200 professional performers on 10 stages in the forests and glades with over 140 artisans exhibiting crafts in their own renaissance shops, five taverns featuring cool libations, and 42 food and beverage emporiums. Tickets Sept. 14-Oct. 20, \$12-\$27. Group and multi-day discounts available. Children under 7, free. Visit [www.marylandrenaissancefestival.com](http://www.marylandrenaissancefestival.com) for more.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 12

**Bring a Friend Social Lunch.** Noon-1:30 at Tally Ho Restaurant, 9923



## Pups on the Patio

Enjoy happy hour with menu specials, bar specials including craft cocktails, “pup” associated drinks and pet-friendly giveaways and surprises. Guests can enjoy drinks, appetizers and dinner with their pets outside on Silver’s patio. A portion of the proceeds goes to an animal charity rescue group each week. 4-7 p.m. every Thursday through Sept. 26 at Silver, 7150 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda. Visit [www.eatatsilver.com](http://www.eatatsilver.com) for more.

Falls Road, Potomac. Join Potomac Community Village for social lunch. Bring a friend or come on your own. Participants pay for their own meals. RSVPs preferred by Wednesday, Sept. 11 but not required. Call 240-221-1370 to RSVP.

## FRIDAY/SEPT. 13

**Nando’s Fiery Friday Night Concerts.** 6:30-8:30 on the Rio Lakefront at 209 Boardwalk Place, Gaithersburg. Dine al fresco and see The Eclectiks live on the Boardwalk Stage (near Union Jack’s). Visit [www.riolakefront.com/events/nandos-fiery-friday-night-concerts/](http://www.riolakefront.com/events/nandos-fiery-friday-night-concerts/) for more.

**Live Music: Shemekia Copeland.** 8 p.m. at AMP by Strathmore, 11810 Grand Park Ave., North Bethesda. Award-winning blues, R&B and Americana vocalist Shemekia Copeland, is touring in support of her latest Alligator Records release,

America’s Child. \$25-\$45. Visit [www.ampbystrathmore.com](http://www.ampbystrathmore.com) or call 301-581-5100.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 14

**Kensington Parkrun.** 9-10:15 a.m. at Rock Creek Trail at Beach Drive and Cedar Lane. Kensington parkrun is a free, weekly, timed 5K run/walk on Rock Creek Trail and is part of the larger parkrun global community of more than 1300 events intended to build healthy and well-connected communities. All ages and abilities welcome. Register before first time. Visit [parkrun.us/kensington](http://parkrun.us/kensington) or email [kensingtonoffice@parkrun.com](mailto:kensingtonoffice@parkrun.com) with questions.

**Book Sale.** 10 a.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac. Monthly Potomac Friends of the Library Book Sale features books, DVDs, and more available for children, teens, and adults. All are welcome. Call 240-777-0694.

**Bands on the Boardwalk.** 6-9 p.m.

on the Rio Lakefront at 209 Boardwalk Place, Gaithersburg. See Sons of Pirates live on the Boardwalk Stage. Live music every Saturday through September. Visit [www.riolakefront.com/events/concerts-on-the-boardwalk/](http://www.riolakefront.com/events/concerts-on-the-boardwalk/) for more.

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 15

**Waltz Dance.** 3:30-6 p.m. at the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Introductory Waltz Workshop from 2:45-3:30 p.m. Featuring the ensemble Cabaret Sauvignon playing a lively mix of folk waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambo, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. Admission is \$13, \$5 for full-time students with student ID. No partner required. Call Joan Koury at 202-238-0230 or Glen Echo Park at 301-634-2222, or visit [www.WaltzTimeDances.org](http://www.WaltzTimeDances.org).

## MONDAY/SEPT. 16

**“A History of Maryland Through its Gardens.”** 8 p.m. (doors open at 7:30), at Brookside Gardens, Visitors Center/Education Building, 1800 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton. The Silver Spring Garden Club hosts a talk with Barbara Glickman. The history and horticultural highlights of approximately 11 gardens and their homes and owners are covered in some detail, with a brief discussion of several other sites. Bring a healthy, established (indoor or outdoor, from your garden or store-bought) plant to swap. Join for refreshments after the talk. Free and open to the public. No RSVP required. SSGC dues are \$10 per year for individual or \$15 for a couple/household membership. Learn more at [groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SilverSpringGardenClub/info](http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SilverSpringGardenClub/info).

## TUESDAY/SEPT. 17

**PCV Members’ Book Group.** 1:30-3:30 p.m. Talking about “The Silent Patient,” by Alex Michaelides. Non-members are welcome to come once to learn about Potomac Community Village. Call the Help Desk at 240-221-1370 for location.

# Georgetown Hill Grand Opening

FROM PAGE 3



**John Phillips of Squeals on Wheels Mobile Petting Zoo, with Snowball, Dalila Sewell and Kenley Morillo.**



**Cutting the Ribbon are Jill Phillips with the Potomac Chamber of Commerce, Liliana Winestone, and Peter and Ellen Cromwell.**

PHOTOS BY DEBBIE STEVENS



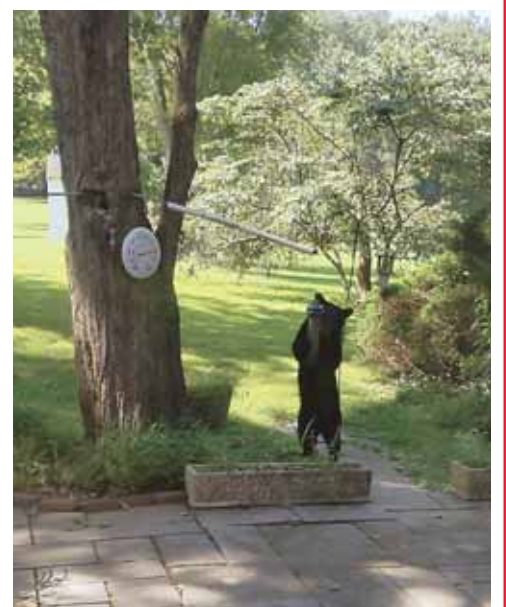
**Young bear on patio in Potomac recently.**

## Bears

FROM PAGE 3

mans can quickly become pests as they exploit potential food sources like pet food bowls left outside, bird feeders, compost piles, trash cans, bee hives, vegetable gardens, fruit trees and agricultural crops.

Park and wildlife officials ask resi-



**Bear attacks bird feeder on South Glen Road.**

dents to report any Black Bear sighting (and any bold or aggressive bear behavior) to wildlife authorities

❖For emergencies involving bears or other wildlife around your home or elsewhere in

SEE BEARS, PAGE 7



## News

# Don't Feed The Bears!

FROM PAGE 6

the county, contact the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Emergency Number 410-260-8888.

If you experience problems with bears or other wildlife around your home contact the Maryland Wildlife Information Line, toll free, at 877-463-6497

M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks Wildlife Ecology Unit – 301-962-1344

Western Maryland is home to a thriving population of black bears, and Maryland allows a limited number of hunters a chance to hunt Maryland's largest game animal throughout Garrett and Allegany counties.

❖**NEVER FEED BEARS** (intentionally or unintentionally). Feeding black bears can seem fascinating and fun, but it is a recipe for disaster. Feeding bears is illegal in the State of Maryland.

❖Don't leave bowls of pet food or water outside. If possible, keep all pet food indoors at all times.

❖Keep garbage in sturdy, clean containers with tight fitting lids. (Bear proof cans are recommended in areas where bear interactions become common.) Secure all trash cans and clean them regularly to minimize strong food odors.

❖Keep compost that contains food materials in enclosed bins away from your residence

❖Keep barbecue grills clean and secure

❖Always walk your dogs on a leash

❖Do not tolerate bears becoming comfortable around your yard – encourage them to leave by making loud noises, etc.

**SOURCE:** <https://www.montgomeryparks.org/caring-for-our-parks/wildlife/black-bears/>

## After 23 Years On the Canal

FROM PAGE 2

what life would have been like to work along the canal," Brandt said. "For me, our heritage is a way to understand where we came from, where we want to go."

Working with the Trust has been particularly satisfying, he said, developing programs like Canal Pride, which puts volunteers to work in the park, and Canal Classrooms, a program begun in 2013 for students in grades K-12.

Brandt is a 40-year veteran of the National Park Service. He began his career in 1979 managing the restoration of historic structures in numerous parks around the country including Yellowstone, Hot Springs and Bryce Canyon national parks, Padre Island National Seashore, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Chattahoochee River and Glen Canyon national recreation areas and Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve.

"I've worked in some gems of the National Parks," he said.

Brandt is a native of Ames, Iowa and grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio before attending The Ohio State University, graduating in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture. Brandt and his wife, Nancy, have four children and live in Lynchburg, VA.

He has taken a position as a project manager for the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, where he will work on historic preservation projects.

His successor at the C&O National Historic Parks has yet to be named.

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lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known



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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.  
**-Werner Heisenberg**

## Time and Again



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not to be morbid in the least – or self-indulgent in the most (last week's column, "Something or Nothing" notwithstanding), but recently I've had cause to hear about the future and be more concerned about the present.

I have a homeowner problem that like all such problems, is way beyond my limited skills: a crack in the concrete slab which "porches" our house, apparently caused by a very large and old tree growing way too close to this slab.

This is not a water-leaking-into-the-house problem. This is a structural-type problem identified by a home appraiser whom I've paid for – but not bought, to process a mortgage refinance.

Given the two-week time-frame during which I was expecting to schedule this assessment – considering the time-sensitivity of these applications, I was flabbergasted to learn that my expectations were totally unreasonable. Two weeks! I might as well have been asking for two months, which is what I ended up getting.

After hearing the nearly identical appointment-unavailability story multiple times, and getting increasingly frustrated and impatient at the unlikely timely resolution of my problem – in my lifetime (no joke), I finally heard from a company that was able to schedule an appointment which they did so with an apparent straight face (as much as I could glean over the phone): "I can have someone to your house on Oct. 25." I snickered.

"October 25! That's two months," I said. ("I could be dead by then," I said to myself.) To the woman I said, "No. I need someone sooner, in the next week or so. Good-bye." (I made this call on Aug. 21.)

When I hung up the phone I started laughing at what I didn't say and why I hadn't said it. Being that I have stage IV lung cancer, I am not exactly on firm footing.

I didn't say to the woman that I could be dead by then because those words were, figuratively speaking, a bit too close to my literal reality. It was a case of fiction being a bit too close to fact and my mouth actually being able to cash that check.

In addition to providing fodder for this column, my calls to miscellaneous home improvement/concrete/foundation repair companies left me not high, still dry, but totally unrequited. I needed help. I put myself out there and received practically nothing in return. It is a lesson I'll take to the grave.

I don't want to sound unreasonable because I still think I'm of sound mind (not so much sound body), but being diagnosed with cancer does, at least in my experience, move up your timeline, so to speak. There's a certain amount of patience and accommodation that is totally ripped from your subconscious.

When your life is in jeopardy, dealing with the daily double: life and death, becomes extraordinarily difficult, regardless of whether your answers are in the form of questions. The uncertainty of it all is very off-putting. Sometimes, you don't know whether you're coming or going.

Trying to live a "normal" life under these kinds of constraints – and restraints – can make Jack a very dull boy. And very often this dullness manifests itself in one's inflexibility.

When your life is at stake, it's nearly impossible to act as if it isn't. Your brain seemingly gets rewired and re-purposed. As much as you attempt to retain your old and familiar self, this newer cancer-affected version slowly takes over.

You're not exactly in "The Twilight Zone," but "imagine if you will" at age 54 and a half, expecting to live into your mid-80s as both your parents did, instead being told that you have "13 months to two years" to live?

Though I've taken it mostly in stride and lived way beyond my oncologist's expectations, to say one's stride is not changed by the experience is to give naivete a whole new meaning. (Not to mention the fact that the neuropathy in both my feet makes walking extremely difficult.) Nevertheless, life goes on.

As such, as much as I want to plan for the future, sometimes, it's the present for which I need to plan.

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

## POTOMAC ALMANAC

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**7 11221 Broad Green Drive**  
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\$970,000



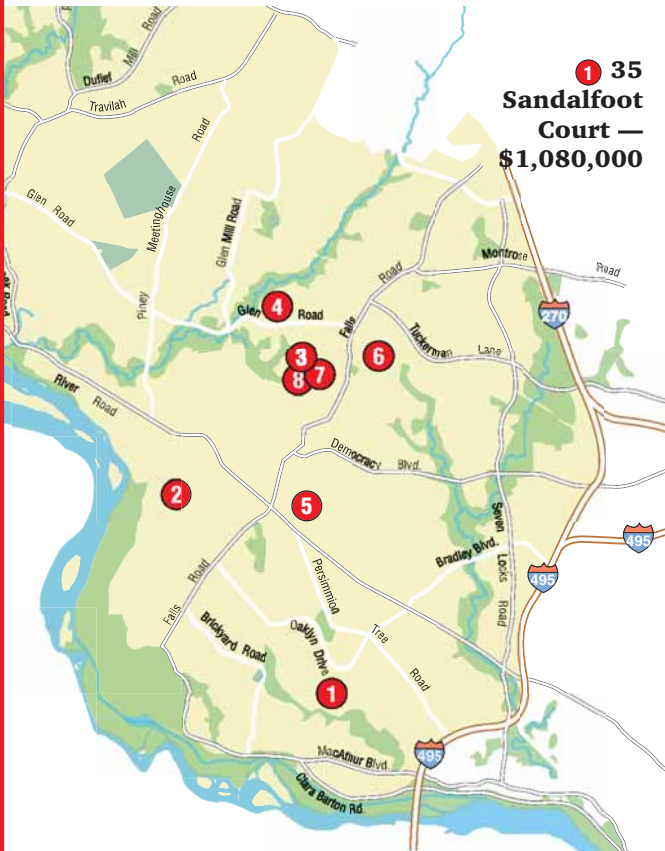
**5 9924 Conestoga Way — \$980,800**



**2 10904 Burbank Drive — \$1,030,000**



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<b>2</b> 10904 BURBANK DR .....	5	..	7..	2	POTOMAC	.. \$1,030,000 ....	Detached .....	2.99 .....	20854 .....	POTOMAC MANOR .....	06/24/19
<b>3</b> 11300 BROAD GREEN DR .....	4	..	3..	1	POTOMAC	.. \$1,025,000 ....	Detached .....	0.45 .....	20854 .....	BEDFORDSHIRE .....	06/20/19
<b>4</b> 11845 BEEKMAN PL .....	4	..	4..	2	POTOMAC	.. \$1,000,000 ....	Detached .....	1.09 .....	20854 .....	GLEN MILL VILLAGE .....	06/13/19
<b>5</b> 9924 CONESTOGA WAY .....	5	..	3..	0	POTOMAC	.... \$999,000 ....	Detached .....	0.36 .....	20854 .....	NONE AVAILABLE .....	06/14/19
<b>6</b> 11320 ROUEN DR .....	5	..	3..	1	POTOMAC	.... \$995,000 ....	Detached .....	0.36 .....	20854 ..	LAKE NORMANDY ESTATES ..	06/18/19
<b>7</b> 11221 BROAD GREEN DR .....	4	..	3..	1	POTOMAC	.... \$980,800 ....	Detached .....	0.49 .....	20854 .....	BEDFORDSHIRE .....	06/21/19
<b>8</b> 11205 BROAD GREEN DR .....	4	..	3..	1	POTOMAC	.... \$970,000 ....	Detached .....	0.36 .....	20854 .....	BEDFORDSHIRE .....	06/25/19

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