

Potomac ALMANAC

The pandemic means no open houses or haunted houses at county fire stations this year, but it's still Fire Safety Week.

Nothing Is More Local Than Fire Safety

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WELLBEING

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West Montgomery Opposes 495/270 Widening

NEWS, PAGE 4

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IN JULY, 2020, 92 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN
\$3,820,000-\$468,000.



2 10423
Grey Fox Road
— \$1,310,000



6 10105 Bevern Lane
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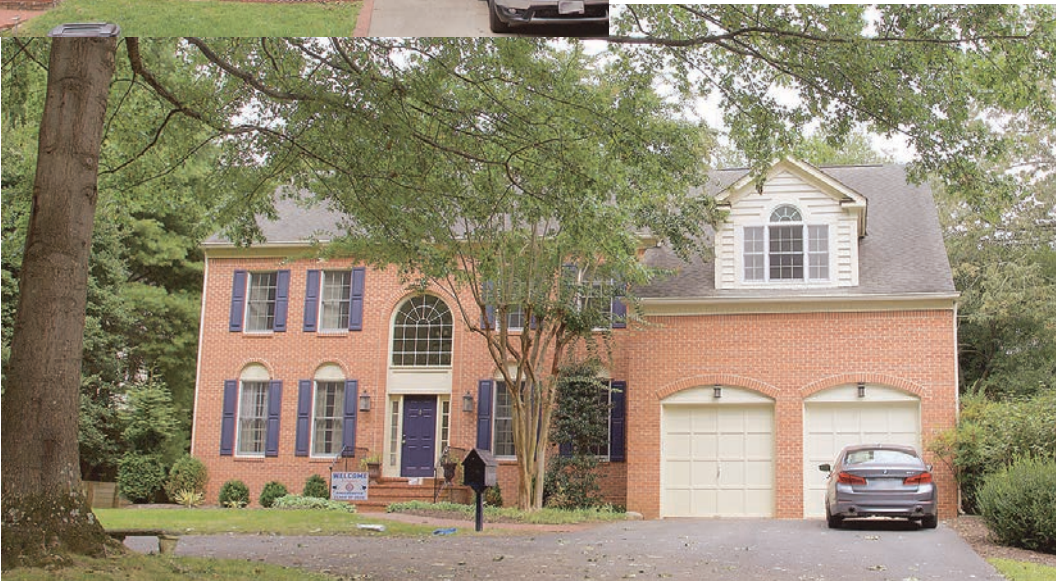
7 12445 Ansin Circle Drive — \$1,210,000



5 7805 Stable Way
— \$1,249,000



8 9720 Holloway Hill Court
— \$1,200,000

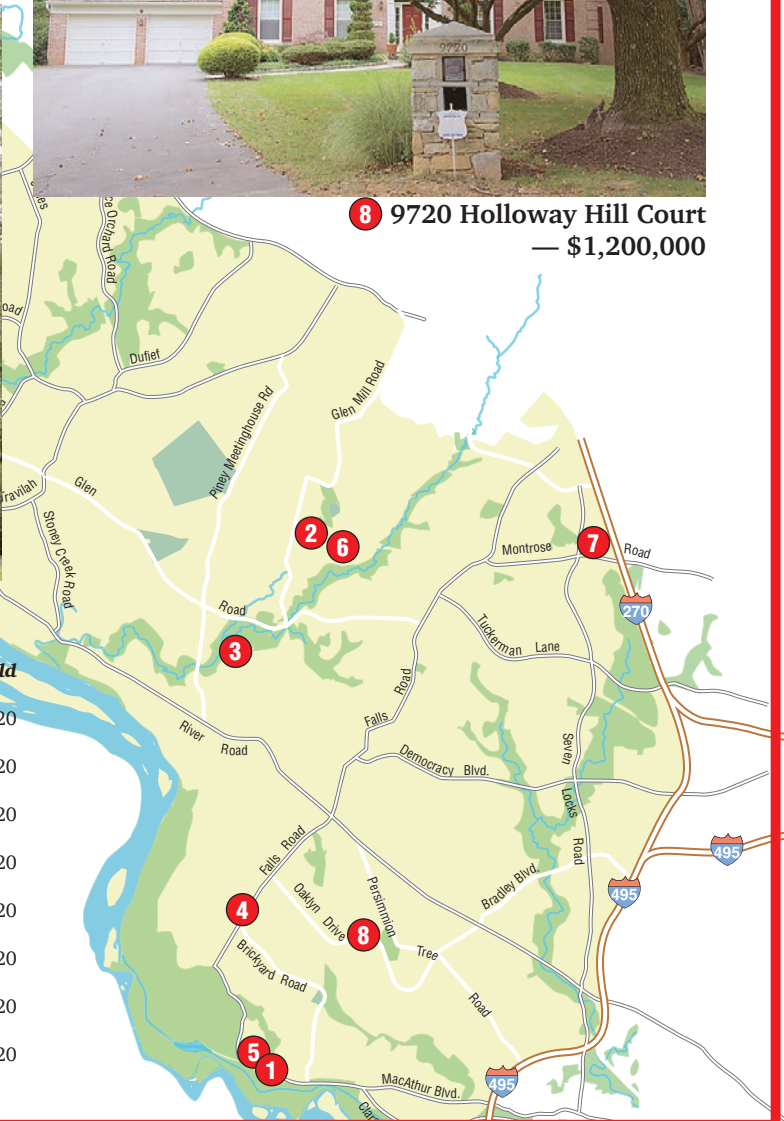


1 10555 MacArthur Boulevard — \$1,325,000

Address.....BR FB HB Postal City.....Sold Price... Type.....Lot AC. Postal Code ... Subdivision..... Date Sold

1	10555 MACARTHUR BLVD .	6...	5...	1	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,325,000 ...	Detached..	0.51.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	.....	07/07/20
2	10423 GREY FOX RD	4...	3...	1	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,310,000 ...	Detached..	0.79.....	20854...	GLEN MEADOWS...	.....	07/07/20
3	10800 BALANTRE LN.....	6...	5...	2	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,287,500 ...	Detached..	2.00.....	20854	POTOMAC VIEW ESTS	.....	07/31/20
4	9100 FALLS RD.....	5...	4.....			POTOMAC .	\$1,250,000 ...	Detached..	2.00.....	20854..	GREAT FALLS ESTS .	.....	07/31/20
5	7805 STABLE WAY.....	4...	4...	1	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,249,000 ...	Detached..	0.16.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	.....	07/13/20
6	10105 BEVERN LN.....	4...	5...	1	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,235,000 ...	Detached..	0.93.....	20854.....	HOLLINRIDGE	.....	07/31/20
7	12445 ANSIN CIRCLE DR	4...	3...	2	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,210,000 ...	Townhse...	0.05.....	20854....	PARK POTOMAC	...	07/13/20
8	9720 HOLLOWAY HILL CT..	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC .	\$1,200,000 ...	Detached..	0.56.....	20854.....	AVENEL	07/24/20

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Fire Prevention Week, Time to Prepare

Focus on fire safety and general safety at home and in the community.

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

Oct. 4-10 is National Fire Protection week and Pete Piringer, Chief Spokesperson for Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service (MCFRS) is encouraging all County residents to be prepared for an emergency.

"A few minutes of planning can make all the difference in an emergency," Piringer tweeted Oct. 2. "What's YOUR plan? MCFRS urges you to 'Take 10 on 10/10' to check smoke alarms, practice & update your #Fire-Safety & home/work escape plans - Got 10 mins? It could save your life ... Close Your Door, too."

In honor of Fire Prevention Week, County Fire Chief Scott Goldstein announced the "Take 10 on 10/10" campaign, asking everyone to take 10 minutes on Oct. 10 to check their smoke alarms and replace any 10 years or older, practice a family fire drill and create a Family Emergency Kit.

Smoke Alarms do expire according to a press release from MCFRS.

"Like any electronic device, smoke alarms wear out over time and need to be replaced. Replace all smoke detectors older than 10 years."

A state law aimed at reducing home fire deaths went into effect in 2013. It requires replacement of any battery-only operated smoke alarm with a unit powered by a 10-year sealed-in battery – ultimately affecting the more than 800,000 Maryland homes with battery-operated smoke alarms. These sealed-in, long-life battery alarms provide continuous protection for a decade, and national fire experts like the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) recommend their use.

A Home Fire Drill Can Save Your Life

Less than a quarter of households surveyed have actually developed and practiced a home escape plan. Fire safety experts say to map out a home escape plan complete with a meeting place, and to practice your plan with a home fire drill.

"It's important to keep enough supplies in your home to meet the needs of your family for at least three days. Assemble a Family Emergency Kit with items you may need in an emergency. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as suitcases, duffle bags or covered storage containers," the press release explained.

Detailed information on how to prepare a Family Emergency Kit visit

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/oemhs/kit/index/html.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) announced that the theme of Fire Prevention Week 2020 is "Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen."

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires



Montgomery County's Fire and Rescue crews respond to a lot more than fires. On Sunday, Oct. 4, that included a tractor trailer accident with fuel spill blocking the I-270 Spur, technical rescue along the Potomac River, kitchen fires and more. Preparing for a potential second wave of COVID-19 and educating on fire prevention are all in a day's work.



As we prepare for a potential second wave of #COVID19, we're building a sizable supply of #PPE: 400,000 face shields, 600,000 gowns, 1 million gloves, 12 million masks, supplies will be used by first responders, @MoCoDHHS, shelter employees, etc.

and home fire injuries in the U.S, according to the NFPA. They encourage people to use the week of October 4-10 to educate themselves on cooking hazards, the dangers of unattended cooking, and precautions they can take to prevent cooking-related fires.

According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Almost half (44%) of reported home fires started in the kitchen. Two-thirds (66%) of home cooking fires start with the ignition of food or other cooking materials.

"We know cooking fires can be prevented," said Lorraine Carli, NFPA's vice-president of outreach and advocacy. "Staying in

the kitchen, using a timer, and avoiding distractions such as electronics or TV are steps everyone can take to keep families safe in their homes."

"The most important step you should take before making a meal is to 'Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen!'" she said. "A cooking fire can grow quickly. I have seen many homes damaged and people injured by fires that could easily have been prevented."

Safety tips to prevent a cooking fire:

Never leave cooking food unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling. If you have to leave, even for a short time, turn off the stove.

If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or



Masks on Montgomery County! MOM - Wear a face covering on public transportation, at businesses & services & outdoors when it is difficult to maintain (6') physical distancing. A properly fitted mask should fit snugly & cover both your mouth & nose. SEE: buff.ly/2BiuQA8



Technical Rescue - Potomac River IAO Great Falls, Mather Gorge, trail off Sandy Landing, injured person fall from rocks. Oct. 4 just before noon.

Update - @COcanalNPS IAO South of Mather's Gorge Potomac River, injured person climbing rocks fell to rocks below & reportedly not in water, i'm not sure if incident is in Virginia or Maryland, both FFx & MoCo investigating/searching.

Update - Potomac River @mcfrs Swift Water Boats @mcfrs SW730 on scene w/ patient on Virginia Shoreline just south of Sandy Landing on beach @ffxfirerescue

boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

You have to be alert when cooking. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have taken medicine or drugs, or consumed alcohol that makes you drowsy.

Always keep an oven mitt and pan lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan to smother the flame. Turn off the burner, and leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.

Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

For more general information about Fire Prevention Week and cooking fire prevention, visit www.fpw.org.

West Montgomery County Citizens Association

JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL MEETING!

Wednesday, Oct. 14 at 7:30 p.m. via ZOOM

WMCCA Meeting (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88978882296>)

or call in with 301-715-8592 (Meeting ID = 889 7888 2296)

No advance registration required, but only the first 100 participants will be allowed into the meeting. We will record this meeting for future viewing.

SPEAKER: Tina Cappetta - C&O Canal National Historical Park Superintendent

Our October speaker has over 32 years of experience working across a variety of national park units. Tina Cappetta was selected as the Superintendent of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park in January 2020. She has previously served as Superintendent of the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Hampton National Historic Site, and Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. Additionally, she served as Superintendent at the Women's Rights National Historical Park. Her earlier experience includes Chief of Interpretation and Resources Management at Booker T. Washington National Monument, Education Specialist at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, and Park Ranger at the Colonial National Historical Park and Gettysburg National Military Park. Superintendent Cappetta will provide an update on projects, issues, and challenges in our cherished park.

A Year Like No Other

By President Ken Bawer

This pandemic is possibly the worst disaster that many of us have experienced in our lifetimes. Our region is fortunate to not be plagued by many natural disasters routinely faced by other parts of the country such as large-scale forest fires. But the COVID-19 pandemic is a different beast – it is not limited by geography. And there are segments of our population that are bearing the brunt of the disease – the elderly, low income folks, people of color, and those with

pre-existing conditions. Our thoughts go out to those in our community who have lost family members, friends, colleagues, and neighbors. Beyond loss of life, additional hardships caused by the pandemic are many faceted - lost jobs, closed businesses, students having to attend school remotely and the burden that places on entire families. Maybe we can all reach out with a kind word of encouragement, a word of thanks to essential workers, and an offer of assistance to a friend or neighbor. Of course, we have an election coming up. You are encouraged to vote by whatever method meets your own comfort level to protect your personal health.

I would be remiss in not thanking our outgoing President Susanne Lee for her innumerable contributions to the community this past year. The same goes for our entire Board (we are all volunteers) who have spent countless hours on issues of importance to our members. In closing, remember that we are YOUR citizens association. The Board doesn't have all the good ideas or know all the issues, so please come to us with any ideas or suggestions you might have. Plus, you don't have to be a Board member to get involved. If there is an issue that you are passionate about, any member can participate with us on a particular project.

Spectrum Senior Living (CU-20-5) OZAH Hearing Postponed

By Susanne Lee

As described in our May, 2020 Newsletter, Spectrum Retirement Communities, LLC, a Denver-based corporation that operates 48 senior living facilities in 10 states, proposes to construct its first facility on the East Coast at 9545 River Road near the intersection of River and Persimmon Tree Road. The site is the current location of Potomac Petals and Plants and was previously the site of Behnke's Nursery. The 5-acre site is zoned RE-2 Residential – single family houses built on 2 acre lots. Spectrum proposes to construct an assisted living facility with 100 plus units,

including some memory care units. In order to do so in this single family residential zone, it must obtain a Conditional Use approval from the Montgomery County Office of Zoning and Administrative Appeals (OZAH). Neighbors near the site have been actively involved in responding to the proposal. The conditional use hearing before OZAH was originally scheduled for July 17, 2020, but has been postponed to Nov. 2, 2020.

To obtain additional information and keep up to date with the proceedings, check the OZAH website at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ozah/> and the Montgomery County Planning Board's DAIC Dashboard at the link below. If this link does not work for you, you can search for the file on the Montgomery County Planning Board website by using their Spectrum Case No. CU202005.

<https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/daiclinks/pdoxlinks.aspx?apno=CU202005&projname=Spectrum%20Retirement>

Beltway Expansion Opposition

By Carol Van Dam

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan's push to widen Interstates 270 and 495 for toll lanes in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties continues despite the pandemic. There is pushback from many communities, including our own and from The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The Commission staffers said a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) released recently fails to properly analyze impacts on low-income communities, understates the loss of parks and cultural sites, and neglects to account for current and future stormwater runoff. Please write a letter in response to the draft DEIS. According to Arlene Montemarano with CABE, "any letters sent to MDOT must contain the exact words..."I support the no-build option." If they don't, MDOT will not count your letter as being in opposition, no matter how eloquent the letter. The comment period deadline for DEIS is Nov. 9, but the County has

asked that any residents submitting comments get them to County officials no later than Oct. 16.

Public comment letters should be addressed to:

Email: lchoplin@sha.state.md.us

Lisa B. Choplin, DBIA, Director, I-495 & I-270 P3 Office

Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration

I-495 & I-270 P3 Office, 707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop P-601, Baltimore, MD 21201

with copies to:

Governor Lawrence J. Hogan: governor@mail@maryland.gov

Comptroller Peter V.R. Franchot: pfranchot@comp.state.md.us

Treasurer Nancy Kopp: Treasurer@treasurer.state.md.us

County Executive Marc Elrich: marc.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov

Councilmembers: County.Council@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov Councilmember.Katz@montgomerycountymd.gov

2020 ELECTION OF WMCCA OFFICERS AND BOARD of DIRECTORS:

The election of the WMCCA Officers usually occurs at our May General Meeting. However, because the May meeting was cancelled, the election will occur at our General Meeting on October 14th. The Nominating Committee proposes the following slate of Officers and Directors to the membership for their vote. Nominations may also be made from the floor.

President: KEN BAWER

Treasurer: BARBARA HOOVER

Immediate Past President: SUSANNE LEE

Secretary: JILL PHILLIPS

President Elect: CAROL VAN DAM FALK

Newsletter: NANCY MADDEN

Vice President: BARBARA BROWN

Nominees for a Two-Year Term:

GINNY BARNES, SAMUEL STAVIS

To Serve 2nd Year of their Two-Year Term (no action needed): GEORGE BARNES, KATHY PETITT

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TASTE OF FENTON VILLAGE

The fall Taste the World in Fenton Village celebration in Fenton Village will take place throughout October.

In the past the event had taken place the third Saturday in May, however, with COVID-19 response, the spring event did not occur with the usual festivities and restaurants were open for carry out only. Providing this month-long event makes it possible for people to enjoy the rich cultural traditions and flavorful meals for which the Taste the World in Fenton Village is known for. More than 40 independent small restaurants will participate in the event. Fenton Village is a diverse, eclectic neighborhood adjacent to downtown Silver

Spring. The Silver Spring metro is three blocks away and multiple buses travel to and from the village. There is also a parking garage located in the middle of Fenton Village.

FRIDAY/OCT. 23

Meet Jennifer Ryan. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Zoom Virtual Event sponsored by Friends of the Library Potomac Chapter. Jennifer Ryan will speak about her best selling books the Spies of Shilling Lane and The Chilbury Ladies Choir. The Spies of Shilling Lane her latest novel is funny WWII story about a woman who resolves to find and then rescue her missing daughter. Visit the website <https://www.jenniferryan-author.com>. Join in Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/91018889970> Or Dial In: 301 715 8592; Meeting ID: 910

1888 9970

OCT. 30 AND 31.

Kentlands Ghostwalk. 7 p.m., 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. At Gaithersburg Arts Barn, 311 Kent Square Road, Gaithersburg. Drawing from historical accounts and documented experiences of the paranormal, this virtual walking tour explores the property of the Kentlands estate including inside the historic Kentlands Mansion, Arts Barn, and surrounding area. Discover the stories behind the street signs and the history of your neighborhood while hearing tales of the spirits who may still linger. Cost is \$15. Visit the website: <https://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/about-us/city-facilities/arts-barn/arts-barn-calendar/kentlands-ghost-walk>

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE NEARS

Montgomery County citizens who wish to vote in the 2020 Presidential General Election need to submit their registration to vote or any update to their current voter record including mailing address no later than Tuesday, October 13, 2020. Registering to vote requires that you be a US citizen, live in Montgomery County, Maryland, and are or will be at least 18 years of age on or before November 3, 2020. Registered voters can review/update their voter record by texting CHECK to 77788, or <https://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch> or call 240-777-8500 to verify their voter registration using the automated phone system or for assistance. Individuals who are not registered but

have a valid Maryland Driver's license, Permit or MVA ID can register by texting VOTE to 77788 or at <https://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1>.

Individuals without a Maryland Driver's license, Learners Permit or MVA ID can visit www.777vote.org to download a voter registration application to mail to the Board of Elections or call 240-777- 8500 for assistance.

For more information on voter registration visit www.777vote.org, the Maryland State Board of Elections' website at <http://elections.maryland.gov>, or follow the Montgomery County Board of Elections on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.

News



Paintings from the vantage of the Billy Goat Trail.



CALENDAR

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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

~~Free and open to all~~

Potomac Community Village

Join via Live Zoom

The Journey-The Camino de Santiago

By *Kathleen M. McGuinness*, a Washingtonian senior who made this 500 miles pilgrims' journey on foot alone a year after breaking her back.

Wed, October 14, 1:00pm –2:00pm

Register at 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com



Landscapes Are Vivid, and Get Haikus, in Steve Moen's 'Across the Gorge and Other Spaces Between'

Painter Steve Moen ponders time and the human experience through his solo exhibit *Across the Gorge and Other Spaces Between*. Moen depicts landscapes marked by passing millennia — places where tectonic shifts have summoned peaks, rains have carved gorges, and erosion has polished hillsides into cliff-faces. Places where the hands of giants have thumbed the terrain into tableaus.

His solo exhibit will be on view at The Art League Gallery, Oct. 7 — Nov. 8, 2020.

The Gallery is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday from 11a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. The works will be available to view and purchase on-line starting Oct. 8. Moen will also do a live interview via Zoom on Friday, Oct. 9 at 6 p.m.

As an avid hiker, beekeeper, mushroom-hunter and naturalist, Moen's love for the environment is "tender as a sapling." He paints the passing of seasons — contrasting an oak tree's fleeting shift from emerald to amber with the ancient, unyielding rocks they grow upon.

Moen bases landscapes of respites like the Billy Goat Trail along the Potomac River on paintings he composes on-site, painted on portable pieces of tin flashing. He enjoys using "forgotten" techniques throughout his process, methods humble and bygone; as such, a combination of vinegar

and steel wool is all Moen uses to coax tannins from his hand-stained wooden frames.

Moen also holds a lifelong interest in linguistics and writing. He has incorporated this dual passion into his exhibit by coupling each painting with one of his haikus. "I'm very curious about the common roots of human languages, and thinking about language as ancient sounds," he says. "I decided to write haikus for my exhibit because of the sound relationships in their [poetic] structure ... and I wanted to see how they enhance the shapes and colors in my paintings."

His former career in commercial printing, where the subtractive color model CMYK uses cyan, yellow, magenta, and black to create a spectrum of other colors, influences the artist's palette. In *Finding Self*, viewers are treated to a landscape of spearmint hills and blush-hued rocks, everything defined with Moen's characteristically thick strokes of graphic lines. Moen's paintings invite us to take comfort in the season's unwavering cycles and to remember that our human experience is just a single note in nature's song. But it will echo long and far—across the gorge and the spaces in between.

The Art League is headquartered in the landmark Torpedo Factory Art Center at the Alexandria Waterfront, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

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2020 WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

October 10 Washington, D.C.

Additional Walks available. Find one near you at alz.org/walk

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Last Weekend Was a Time to Trot with the Tigers

By PEGGY McEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

Change is the way of life for 2020 and the Holy Child annual Tiger Trot changed with the times. This year the 5K fun run was held as a virtual race and could be run anytime between Friday, Oct 2 and Sunday, Oct. 4, either indoors or out, on a track, or through a neighborhood. Wherever.

"It's a really fun event and we're kind of saddened that we have to have it virtually, but we are excited," said Lisa Terminiello, a member of the organizing committee along with Caren Garayta, Christy George, and Gina Whitney. "It's just different."

"Having it be virtual is something new for us," Whitney said. "It's been a bit of a learning curve."

Last week's Tiger Trot was the 10th annual at the Connelly School

of the Holy Child on Bradley Boulevard in Potomac.

The run is a combination fundraiser and team builder for the students, coming at the end of Tiger Week, the school's annual spirit week. This year spirit week, too, was held virtually though students had started in person classes.

"It just started this week with two cohorts, A and B. A goes two weeks, then B goes," Terminiello said. "Everyone just wants to be

there, it's a bummer."

Participants in the Tiger Trot got to select the locale for their run, though they were also encouraged to join virtually in the main events on Sunday, October 4th. The day started with a virtual warm-up at 8 a. m. and closed with a virtual Mass broadcast from the school's Chapel at 11 a.m.

Usually the run is held between the two, Terminiello said.

Response to the virtual race was

"pretty good," according to Terminiello and Whitney.

Final numbers were not in before the race because runners were allowed to register up to race time this year.

Many people posted photos of the school Facebook page showing great enthusiasm for the event. Students, faculty, and families all came together to make this unusual race in an unusual year an unusual success.



Photos of members of the Holy Child community participating in the Virtual 5K, from the school's Facebook page.



WELLBEING

Creating a Spooky and Safe Halloween in the Age of COVID-19

Ideas for frightful revelry abound even amid coronavirus concerns.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Cartoon character Marshall from Paw Patrol will be searching for chocolate while a tiny pop star tracks down toys as Arlington mother and teacher Becky Beach and her family celebrate the spookiest day of the year. Forgoing trick-or-treating, she, her husband and young son will gather with other family members for a modified Halloween celebration.

"We are going to buy Halloween-themed party toys and candies for our children to hunt," said Beach. "It will be similar to an Easter egg hunt, but for Halloween. We are maintaining the joy by allowing our children to still wear their Halloween costumes, but we won't be going out."

Like other annual traditions, COVID-19 has transformed the way festive events are celebrated. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials are encouraging revelers to err on the side of caution this season. As Halloween approaches, some parents are faced with a quandary: allowing children to engage in the frightful fun of the day without compromising safety.

"Some Halloween activities pose higher risk than others," said Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu, MD, director, Fairfax County Health Department. "In general, the more closely you interact with others and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread."

The CDC has grouped activities into low-risk, moderate-risk and high-risk categories. The sugar-laden but beloved tradition of trick-or-treating is considered among the riskiest of ghoulish traditions while celebrations with family members are among the lowest.

There are parents who are comfortable with activities considered by the CDC to be moderate-risk, such as open-air, one-way, walk-through where appropriate mask use is enforced, like Markoff's Haunted Forest and Enchanted Forest at Calleva Farm in Potomac, says Dr. Bitu Nasseri, MD. "Overall, the CDC guidelines make good sense. They are based on intelligent considerations broken down by how much you want to expose your children," she said. "The main takeaway is to not be in large crowds or crowded streets, as kids will inevitably remove masks. Going house to house and allowing people to hand out individual candies increases the risk of COVID exposure exponentially ... and should be avoided at all costs this year."

Creativity is the theme this season and traditions of holidays like Easter and Christmas are offering Halloween inspiration says Fairfax mother and blogger Alice Anderson. "We want to keep things as fun as possible for our kids so we are going all out on party ideas this year," she said. "We usually go to a pumpkin farm with fun activities but have decided to make our own fun at home with that as well. Our kids are excited to help make decorations and get everything set up."

Starting new traditions and borrowing ideas



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALICE ANDERSON

Alice Anderson and her family will wear costumes and celebrate Halloween with a family party due to COVID-19 safety concerns.

from other holidays is the way that Alexandra Fung, a Mount Vernon mother, will deal with the disappointment that her children will feel when they aren't knocking on doors in anticipation of treats. "Egg hunts at Easter have long been a favorite activity at our house, so carrying the tradition over to Halloween has everyone excited, from our toddler to our teen," she said. "And, having it at night with flashlights, and the promise of some king-sized candy bars, makes it all the more fun for everyone."

From reading books filled with ghosts and goblins to creating a season-long calendar, reminiscent of those used for Advent, inspiration abounds, says psychologist Reena Patel. "Create a month of Halloween countdown," said "Why not? We do it for Christmas too. Make a countdown calendar and for each day and have a Halloween surprise, like a Halloween coloring sheet, candy corn puzzle, pencils, stickers. Anything small that represents and leads up to the big day."

"We have a bunch of activities planned for our party at home," added Anderson. "We are going to make decorations, play Halloween games, carve pumpkins, make a DIY (do-it-yourself) maze, eat yummy treats, and finish the night watching the new Scooby Doo movie. I think Halloween can be as fun as you make it and our kids will be happy spending quality time together as a family."

While independence-seeking teens and tweens might not be wowed by Halloween candy hunts and spooky-themed cartoons at home, they can still enjoy a frightful evening while maintaining safety. "They should have small get-togethers at their friends' houses for Halloween," said Beach. "Check for fevers if inviting teens to your home for Halloween before admitting them in your home. Make sure your teen social distances themselves and wears a mask and/or gloves to keep safe."

Perspectives on Halloween safety vary, acknowledges Karen Aronian, Ed.D. "Some door-to-door trick-or-treating will still happen, but some neighborhoods are doing the same 'pod' [small group] approach with Halloween that they have done with schooling, by going out in safe pods of kids predetermined by parents," she said. "Homes that do decide to give out candy should mark their house with a sign that says, 'covid safe' meaning gloves, masks and social distancing will be observed."

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EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

EDITORIAL

PHONE: 703-778-9415

E-MAIL:

almanac@connectionnewspapers.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Carole Dell, Kenny Lourie,
Peggy McEwan, Ken Moore

Contributing Photographers

Deborah Stevens, Carole Dell

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh

Production Manager

Geovani Flores

ADVERTISING

For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Display Advertising:

Kenny Lourie 301-325-1398
klourie@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk

Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Jerry Vernon

Executive Vice President
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

CIRCULATION

circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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An Update About Some Down Time



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I want to give you a blow-by-blow concerning my treatment switch over to thyroid cancer from lung cancer but the last two columns were written four weeks ago in the same week in expectation of a weekend away, so these observations will be new-ish in that they will be hot off the press, so to speak. Away with the kind of friends who are empathetic, sympathetic and who never make me feel pathetic in any of my struggles. In short, the best kind of friends. This is important because when one in the group goes above and beyond in the wrong direction, like heading from one's present cancer direction to a yet altogether new less desirable cancer direction: stable non small cell lung cancer stage 4 being treated with immunotherapy to stage 4 papillary thyroid cancer being treated with chemotherapy, is hardly a conversation that makes for fun even if I now have my own sort of "BOGO." And though the 'shopping 'buy' may be familiar, the cancer 'buy' is not nearly so familiar. Generally speaking a "BOBO offer is of interest, a cancer one not so much. In fact, it's not much of a bargain at all.

The worst of now being treated for papillary thyroid cancer is the array of side effects which are manifesting. They're not exactly debilitating, they're just one big nuisance broken into about eight different nuisances - and I will spare you the details. The net effect of all these side effects is that for the first time in approximately two years, and I feel extraordinarily lucky to be able to say this, once again I feel like I have cancer. And though it's unlikely it's simply side effects which are doing all the talking, rather than the cancer metastasizing, which it already has anyway since the thyroid cancer is now in the lungs, it's impossible not to consider the consequences. I mean cancer doesn't just travel around to make new friends and influence people. It sort of has a task: to damage and destroy. And I have to admit: feeling as if I didn't have cancer is much more preferred than how I feel now.

Nevertheless, it's not as if I feel at death's door (well, not the front door anyway). It's more a feeling of death being at the back door. Not a direct assault, mind you, more of an indirect one. And I'm sure they still count as much as all the others. Unfortunately, I fear an accumulation of these indirect assaults can cause as much cumulative damage as a direct hit. Ergo, I'm wondering if this rear-type assault/indirect-type hit is an indication of future/perhaps even present trouble? Moreover, I wonder if having to defend myself on two fronts (primary and secondary) will weaken the resistance. Because as many World War II movies as I've seen, the resistance rarely seemed to have enough supplies to carry out their mission.

Being in a new battle, even it involves familiar elements: blood pressure readings, EKGs, CT scans, lab and face-to-face appointments, doesn't totally regularize the experience. The reason being that this familiarity is breeding contempt because I have been there and done that. Yet, here here I am having to do it all over again and I find myself quoting Shakespeare or the Three Stooges: "something is rotten in Denmark."

Being a cancer patient is like being unable to send your legs out for a walk as Lt. Com. Henry Blake wanted to after a long period of surgery during a particularly high-casualty episode on the television series, M*A*S*H. And as a previously diagnosed as "terminal" cancer patient, neither can I disconnect from my mortality thoughts any more than Henry could exercise his legs. So what I'm left with is either bucking up or venting to friends and family. I'm lucky to have an outlet. I imagine it is much more difficult for those who don't.

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

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