

Potomac ALMANAC

Nina Molkara, of Potomac, places her ballot in the drop box at Potomac Community Center on Tuesday morning.



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PHOTO BY PEGGY MCEWAN

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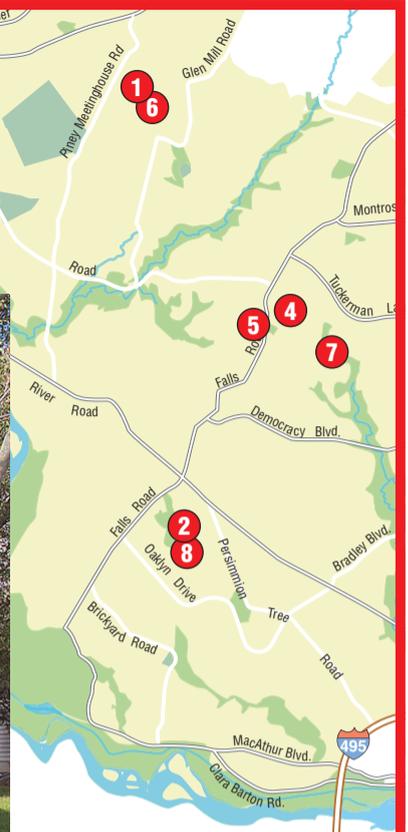
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Potomac REAL ESTATE

August, 2020 Sales, \$1,149,000~\$989,000

IN AUGUST, 2020,
82 POTOMAC HOMES
SOLD BETWEEN
\$5,800,000-\$305,000.

1 13330 Deerbrook Drive
— \$1,149,000

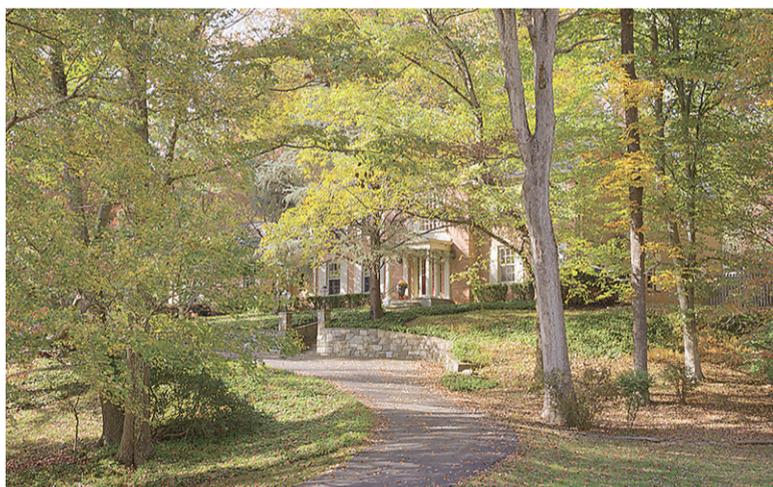


PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/
THE ALMANAC

6 13302 Morning Field Way
— \$1,015,000



7 8729 Sleepy Hollow Lane — \$995,000



3 14601 Pettit Way — \$1,099,000



2 9405
Duxford Court
— \$1,100,000

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

1	13330 DEERBROOK DR.....	6... 5... 1	....POTOMAC	.. \$1,149,000	... Detached..	0.17.....	20854	....PINEY GLEN VILLAGE	08/21/20
2	9405 DUXFORD CT.....	4... 2... 1	....POTOMAC	.. \$1,100,000	... Detached..	0.36.....	20854	....HERITAGE FARM	08/28/20
3	14601 PETTIT WAY.....	5... 4... 1	....POTOMAC	.. \$1,099,000	... Detached..	2.19.....	20854	....RIVERWOOD	08/21/20
4	11400 ROUEN DR.....	0... 0... 1	....POTOMAC	.. \$1,075,000	... Detached..	0.35.....	20854	....LAKE NORMANDY ESTS	08/31/20
5	9513 FOX HOLLOW DR.....	4... 3... 1	....POTOMAC	.. \$1,041,000	... Detached..	0.24.....	20854	....BEDFORDSHIRE	08/17/20
6	13302 MORNING FIELD WAY	4... 4... 1	....POTOMAC	.. \$1,015,000	... Detached..	0.29.....	20854	....POTOMAC GLEN	08/17/20
7	8729 SLEEPY HOLLOW LN..	6... 3... 1	....POTOMAC	.... \$995,000	... Detached..	0.27.....	20854	....FOX HILLS	08/31/20
8	9401 DUXFORD CT.....	5... 2... 1POTOMAC \$989,000	... Detached..	0.35.....	20854HERITAGE FARM	08/20/20

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8 9401 Duxford Court — \$989,000



The night before Election Day at Potomac Community Center.



Darius A. Stanton greets voters outside the polling place at Potomac Community Center on Election Day.

PHOTOS BY PEGGY MCEWAN

Election Day in Potomac

Montgomery County had 682,639 active voters as of Oct. 31

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

Election Day 2020 arrived preordained as “an election like no other.” That could mean changes required by the pandemic such as required face masks and social distancing, or it could mean early voting, mail-in ballots, early and late returns or, perhaps, the candidates themselves.

Whatever the reason, Election Day in Potomac was different this year. Most polling places did not have long lines, most also had discreet police protection – at Potomac Community Center there were two police cars parked across Falls Road. At Winston Churchill High School, two police cars were not as noticeable, but they were there, parked up a side street facing the school.

The Recreation Center even had a greeter, hired by the State of Maryland to assist with crowd control. There was no need for that, but the greeter, Darius A. Stanton, was a friendly addition to the day.

“Welcome, thank you for coming,” he said to arriving voters and then walked them to the entrance and opened the door.

Most people responded with the same openness:

“It’s a privilege,” or “We’re happy to be here,” some responded.

There was no wait inside, with



Maryland “I voted” stickers handed out to voters in Potomac.

the gymnasium set up for 106 voters according to Shala Shamim, site manager.

The biggest rush they had was 42 people waiting when the doors opened at 7 a.m.

Though he did not arrive at the opening, one Potomac resident said he waited to vote today because he always votes on Election Day.

“I like to [vote on Election Day] because at my age this is the way it is,” he said. “The other aspect of it is if you do the early voting and something comes up, you can’t change your mind.”

Sima Andallibi, also of Potomac, said she had come to the Recreation Center two times in the last week but did not vote because it looked too busy.

Today though it was perfect, she said. No wait.

Over at Churchill, the number of voters appeared even more sparse.

When the polls opened there this morning, there were “36, [voters] I think,” said Elizabeth Simon, a Co-chief Election Judge at the school.

“It’s been a little bit slow,” another judge, Hank Greeves, said. “The consensus is that most people voted early.”

Churchill voters were serenaded by Potomac resident Karen Buglass playing her mountain dulcimer. The music was part of a nationwide program: Play for the Vote.

The program is new this year, started by Mike Block, a cellist from Boston, who began the non-partisan initiative with the idea to increase voter turnout and making it a more positive experience.

Buglass, who also teaches the mountain dulcimer, said she gets a lot of political emails and saw the invitation to Play for the Vote among them.

“I am not involved with organizing; just a volunteer musician,” Buglass said. “I understand there are over 600 volunteers in 48 states. And this effort began only within the last four weeks.”

She said she volunteered because, “I wanted to thank voters for showing up at the polls and offer something I hope will make any wait they experience more enjoyable.”



Potomac resident Karen Buglass plays her mountain dulcimer in front of the polls at Winston Churchill High School Tuesday as part of the national Play for the Vote program.

State of the Potomac River Health of Potomac River declines on recent report card.

By PEGGY MCEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

For the first time in a decade, the health of the “Nation’s River,” our own Potomac, has declined.

The most recent Potomac Report Card was published Oct. 20 by the Potomac Conservancy, which works to keep pollution out of the river and local streams. Always aiming for an “A,” the Conservancy had to accept a “B-minus” this year, down from a solid “B” in 2018.

The report is issued biennially and the latest tracks data from 2018-2019 according to Potomac Conservancy president Hedrick Belin.

“Our goal is achieving a fishable, swimmable river, a river where people can do recreational activities, a river that doesn’t have pollution,” Belin said.

The river earned an “abysmal” D just ten years ago, according to the report.

“Overall, in the last decade, we’ve seen some great progress,” Belin said.

Belin pointed out some newer challenges the river faces, specifically from climate change.

“We are seeing storms that are much more intense,” he said. “When it rains,” he said, “there is



The Potomac River is the source of drinking water for more than 6 million people in the Metropolitan area.



A chute of the Potomac River near Great Falls.

PHOTOS BY PEGGY MCEWAN

run-off.”

“Polluted stormwater runoff from urban and suburban areas continues to climb and is the fastest growing source of pollution to the Potomac River,” according to the report.

Some other threats to the river’s health mentioned in the report are:

- ❖ Rapid deforestation and

“Our goal is achieving a fishable, swimmable river, a river where people can do recreational activities, a river that doesn’t have pollution.”

— Hedrick Belin, Potomac Conservancy

sprawl which are stripping the land’s ability to absorb rainwater as streets, parking lots, and rooftops replace natural ground cover.

❖ Higher-than-average precipitation making stormwater more difficult to manage.

❖ The current administration’s environmental rollbacks, including the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule under the Clean Water Act of 1972 have worrying

negative impacts for the health of the Potomac River watershed.

❖ The EPA’s failure to enforce the Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan could cause failure to meet 2025 goals for Bay restoration.

The report card assesses data on five significant river health indicators: pollution, fish, habitat, land, and people, to come up with a final grade, according to the Potomac Conservancy website.

“We need to turn to nature-based solutions, trees are very important,” Belin said. “The more green on the ground, the more the land can absorb [runoff].”

Potomac’s lower density zoning is designed to protect the water quality in the Potomac River.

“Watts Branch, Muddy Branch, and Great Seneca Creek [all in the Potomac planning area] drain into the Potomac River at points upstream of raw water intakes of the filtration plants that supply suburban Maryland and the District of Columbia with drinking water, leaving little time, especially during low flows, for aquatic systems to assimilate and mitigate effects of urban development,” says the Potomac Master Plan. “For this reason, protecting water quality in the Subregion is of the highest priority.”

Though Belin agrees that the current administration has not been good for rivers across the country, he is encouraged by America’s Conservation Enhancement Act passed in October with bipartisan support in Congress and signed by the president.

The Act has a provision to protect the Chesapeake Bay by reauthorizing and increasing funding for the Bay Program and the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.

The Potomac River will benefit from this funding as it is the second largest source of freshwater flow into the Bay, Belin said.

The Potomac Conservancy was founded in 1993. “It is the only independent nonprofit that focuses exclusively on the Potomac River,” according to its website: potomac.org.

“Polluted stormwater runoff from urban and suburban areas continues to climb and is the fastest growing source of pollution to the Potomac River.”

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With its Members
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NEWS

West Montgomery County Citizens Association

VIRTUAL MEETING

Wednesday, Nov. 18 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.
We will record this meeting for future viewing.

SPEAKERS: November speakers are Guy Semmes and Robert Eisinger. They will present their plans for future development of the Potomac Oak Center and the white house at Travilah and Glen Roads, including their sewer extension request. WMCCA has previously opposed such an extension, but we look forward to a discussion of their current proposals.

Playing Whack-a-Mole For You

By President Ken Bawer
This past month our Board members have been busy working on issues that impact our quality of life. It feels like we are playing whack-a-mole because some of these issues had been put to rest (or so we thought) only to pop up again!

Potomac Oak Shopping Center (sometimes called the Travilah Oak Shopping Center) and Transquest LLC's white house at Travilah Road & Glen Road: The owners of these two properties have asserted the only way to make them more commercially viable is to have sewer lines extended to each of them. The shopping center has always been on septic, as is the much larger Harris Teeter supermarket a few miles away on Route 28. Transquest states it wants to turn the house into a Country Inn through the Conditional

Use process. After failing to get approval in 2008 for the shopping center, in large part because of the fact that these properties are well outside of the sewer envelope, this issue has popped up again. Allowing this extension of the sewer line outside of the sewer envelope could result not only in a dramatic increase in commercial activity inconsistent with the Master Plan requirements for this low density area, but also set a dangerous precedent, as it would invite the argument from developers that if the County can do it for one property here, they can do it for others. Attend our virtual General Meeting on Nov. 18 to hear their presentation and ask your questions.

Heritage Gardens Townhouse Development on South Glen Road: Last January, the developer withdrew their application for a Conditional Use (formerly, and more accurately, called a zoning special exception) after we and the Greater South Glen Neighborhood Association argued before the Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (OZAH) that the proposed development did not meet the County's requirements for an Independent Living Facility for Seniors. The consensus is that they knew they were going to lose on the motion to dismiss it because it didn't meet the definition and was simply a glorified townhouse development. Now this issue has popped up again – see the article below.

Forest Conservation Easement violations: This issue has popped up on Valley Drive and another on South Glen Drive. In both cases the cutting of trees was reported and determined to be illegal by the For-

SEE WEST MONTGOMERY, PAGE 6

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Arson Arrest in Potomac House Fire

Around 10:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 26, first arriving firefighters on Korman Drive in the Bedfordshire neighborhood of Potomac encountered a car on fire in the driveway and smoke coming from the house.

At one point, 50-60 firefighters were on the scene, according to PIO Pete Piringer.

One woman was rescued via ladder from the second floor of the burning house. She was taken to the hospital for possible smoke inhalation.

Investigators, including police and an accelerant-detection dog, found multiple fires in the house in addition to the car.

The woman occupant had retreated to an upstairs bedroom and closed the door. Five cats were rescued, with animal services assisting.

Montgomery County fire and explosive investigators and police asked for information about the fire(s) and possible burglary on Korman Drive in the Bedfordshire neighborhood, in Potomac. Anyone with information, who saw something suspicious, or heard



The fire on Korman Drive in Potomac on Oct. 26 was investigated for arson.

something unusual, is asked to call Montgomery County's Arson Tipline at 240-777-2263.

John O'Donnell, 34, of Bensalem, Pa, was taken into custody in Pennsylvania and charged with Attempted 1st Degree Murder, Home Invasion, 1st Degree Arson, 1st Degree



Arrested: John O'Donnell, 34, of Bensalem, Pa.

Burglary, 2nd Degree Arson, Reckless Endangerment, and Malicious Destruction.

O'Donnell was being held as a Fugitive Of Justice in Bensalem, on \$500,000 cash bond and was awaiting an Extradition Hearing, according to Pete Piringer of Montgomery County Fire and Rescue.



The woman occupant was rescued through the window of an upstairs bedroom.

PHOTOS FROM @MCFRPIO VIA TWITTER.

West Montgomery County Citizens Association

FROM PAGE 5

est Conservation Inspector. The Valley Drive property was issued a citation for cutting and clearing more than 17,000 square feet of forest including portions of a forest stream buffer. The citation included a \$1,000 fine and required a Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation and Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) to be submitted for approval. The citation requires the FCP to be approved and the planting requirements to be implemented this Fall 2020.

We are following developments at the proposed Spectrum Retirement facility on the old Behnke's / Potomac Petals & Plants site on River Road.

WMCCA is also investigating if tax incentives can be obtained by putting part of a property into a conservation easement with a land trust. Please email President@WMCCA.org if this interests you – we want to understand the level of interest in the community.

Other work by the Board includes preparing WMCCA comments on the County's draft for the new General Plan, called Montgomery Thrive 2020. You can comment as individuals in writing and/or sign up to testify at the Nov. 19, 2020 Public Hearing.

On a lighter note, there is some interesting native plant activity

even as we approach Winter. Our latest blooming tree Witch Hazel is in flower. If you are lucky enough to spot them, two of our native orchids have new leaves: Putty Root and Cranefly Orchid. Plus, our area is full of fall blooming native flowers including goldenrods and asters. I encourage you to go see these and other native plants in our parks and neighborhoods. Consider native plants for your gardens as well – they are needed to feed our native insects which the birds depend on.

Oh No - Please No More Heritage Gardens / Senior Living Zoning Busters

By Susanne Lee

On Oct. 29, 2020, the Montgomery County Planning Board approved for transmittal to the County Council a Zoning Text Amendment to change the definition and therefore requirements for a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC). West Montgomery joined with the Greater South Glen Neighborhood Association to oppose the ZTA. In addition to turning the concept of a CCRC upside down, like Heritage Gardens, it appears to be another effort by the building industry to use age restrictions to end run around the prohibition on townhouses, duplexes and triplexes in low den-

sity zones and double or triple the allowed density of the land.

Without getting too far into the zoning ordinance weeds, but in a large nutshell, planning staff introduced the ZTA describing it as a response to an aging County population that wants more housing options and doesn't want to be limited to living in large nursing homes. While certainly a laudable objective, the County Planning Department itself recently conducted an extensive study of senior housing needs and existing and proposed facilities. The study also contained multiple recommendations to address future needs. [Meeting the Housing Needs of Older Adults in Montgomery County (2018)] What is clear from the study is that there are already many housing options with still more under construction.

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Meeting-the-Housing-Needs-of-Older-Adults-in-Montgomery-County-Final5-24-18.pdf>

Rather than focusing on the study results and the changes in the zoning code proposed there, in what can only be described as bizarre, the ZTA changes the definition of just one type of housing – Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC). CCRCs are unique

in that they provide “long-term uninterrupted care that includes independent living units, residential care/assisted living services, and skilled nursing care, usually in one location, and usually for a resident's lifetime. CCRCs allow residents to ‘age in place’ as they typically sign a contract for lifetime care.” Housing Needs study at p.15. There are also specific state law requirements for CCRCs. The study identified nine in the County. They provide multiple levels of services, including nursing care, to over 4,000 seniors in a variety of housing types, including townhouses and detached single family, e.g., Friends House, The Village at Rockville, Asbury Methodist Village, Ingleside at King Farm, etc.

Likewise, the County requirements currently define CCRC as a “building or group of buildings providing a continuity of residential occupancy and health care for senior adults.” It “must include dwelling units for either independent or assisted living or both, plus a nursing home of a suitable size to provide treatment or care of the residents.” Emphasis supplied. The new ZTA would require both independent living and assisted living, but totally eliminates the requirement for nursing home care, making it optional. This change turns the basic concept of CCRCs

- ensuring lifetime care - on its head. It appears, however, to solve the problem of at least one of the clients of Lerch, Early & Brewer, the law firm the staff report indicates is “interested in the introduction and adoption of the potential legislation.” The firm represented the Heritage Gardens townhouse development on South Glen Road. More recently, in a Feb. 28, 2020 Advisory Opinion provided to Lerch Early, the Director of the Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings stated that Lerch Early's client's proposal that included building 45 duplex and triplex buildings could not be approved as an Independent Living Facility or alternately as a CCRC because it didn't include a “a nursing home and comply with State law.” By eliminating the nursing home component, the ZTA would remedy their client's problem and presumably via a conditional use allow construction of these duplexes and triplexes in low density zones.

REMINDER: IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2020-2021! Please renew or become a new member of WMCCA. Go to our website www.wmcca.org to download a membership form or join using PayPal: Individual: \$25 / Family: \$50. We also welcome donations to our Legal Fund. WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Decompressing After A Divisive Election

Limit time on social media or watching post-election coverage.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The moments that stretched her to her professional limits came immediately after the 2016 presidential election. As a psychotherapist, Kendra A. O'Hora, Ph.D., owner of Wellness & Co., had to help her patients process the overwhelming emotions that they were experiencing after that tumultuous political season.

"That day was the hardest day of my career," she said.

This year's election however, has been much worse, notes O'Hora. "It's unlike anything I've ever experienced in my therapy office," she said. "For the first time ever, we are offering appointments this week specifically for those who are struggling to process."

The divisive 2020 election season has been a source of significant tension, not only locally, but nationwide. Nearly 70 percent of adults in the United States report feelings of stress as a result of this year's cycle, according to a study by the American Psychological Association (APA).

Adding the recent racial unrest and the coronavirus pandemic that's caused record deaths and wreaked havoc on the economy, the current environment — with no relief in sight — has left three out of four adults anxious about the nation's future. The current political season provides the perfect storm for mental health issues that will last for decades, say local mental health professionals.

It's understandable to feel stressed, overwhelmed, exhausted, and anxious right now, says Heather V. Ganginis Del Pino, Ph.D., licensed psychologist and associate professor of psychology at Montgomery College. "If your feelings start to interfere with your everyday life and if having those feelings are causing you distress, you might want to seek help from a professional, if one is available to you," she said.

Shock, anger, relief, disillusionment and even neutrality are all normal at this time, suggests Fairfax therapist Jana Wu, LCSW. "Emotions might run the gamut and might shift as the days progress or after engaging in dialogue with others."

"You may be asking yourself, 'What's normal to feel right now?'" added O'Hora. "The long and short of it? Everything. Most people know that anger, frustration, annoyance, and stress are what we like to call iceberg or secondary emotions. In a sense, they are what's on the surface,

when there's oh so much more underneath."

Social support is important, particularly for those without access to mental health therapy, added Del Pino. "It can feel good to help someone else, so check in on friends and family that you know are struggling or donate your time to a cause that is important to you," she said.

Limiting the amount of time one spends on social media or watching post-election coverage can help ease feelings of distress, said Wu. "Take in material that inspires and speaks to your values," she said. "Speak to and engage with community that also shares your values about next action steps to take. Practice self-care and care for others in your community, environment, and home. I personally meditate and listen to sources that inspire me to engage in life in a thoughtful way."

Focus on the bigger picture advises therapist Steven Rosenberg, Ph.D. "Avoid contentious situations and confrontations over political differences," he said. "You are not going to change anyone's mind. Remember, just as you have your own political views, others are entitled to have theirs. Let them. The issues facing our country

can't be resolved in one election. Volunteer for an organization that is working on an issue or cause that you feel strongly about."

Decompress by showing yourself compassion and withholding self-judgement, says Del Pino. This could mean making sure you take care of yourself though exercise and sleep, she said. "You can spend breaks doing something you enjoy or

just breathe while giving yourself time to notice your own feelings and thoughts.

If you are feeling stressed or anxious about the outcome of the election, acknowledge your stressful feelings and thoughts but also try to notice any feelings that might be hiding under the anxiety and stress.

It's important for parents to recognize and help children process intense emotions, says Del Pino. "Help children process their feelings by simply asking them how they feel. Let them know you are there if they need to talk," she said. "While acknowledging that this is a stressful time in our country, parents should avoid expressing their own opinions.

If you have young kids, limit the amount of news you are watching with them around and instead play a game, sit with them while they do homework, engage them in conversation, or do something active together."

Maintaining a consistent daily schedule, particularly with regard to sleep, suggests Del Pino. "[It] is so important, especially during times of stress," she said. "If your child is having trouble sleeping, or if you are, encourage your child to read something fun before bed or download one of the many free mindfulness or sleep applications that will help your child get in the mood for sleep."

"If you are feeling stressed or anxious about the outcome of the election, acknowledge those stressful feelings and thoughts..."

—Heather V. Ganginis Del Pino, Ph.D.,
licensed psychologist

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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Better Late Than Never ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... to get a second opinion about one's first cancer; especially if there's now a second cancer to consider. For most of the nearly 12 years during which I've been a cancer patient, my diagnosis has been non small cell lung cancer stage IV. Within the past 10 months or so, it has become apparent and subsequently confirmed by a surgical biopsy of a tumor located in my lungs, that I have papillary thyroid cancer. The big question remains - and has not been agreed to by my endocrinologist and oncologist, is whether I have two types of cancer or just one. And moreover, whether I've always had two types or one primary - previously undiagnosed, that has now metastasized after 10-plus years from the thyroid into the lungs?

From my understanding - or actually what I've been told, it's possible, though hardly prudent to biopsy all the remaining tumors in my lungs to confirm exactly what type (types) of cancer I have. According to my doctors, the medical risks to me are too great. Therefore, the decision has been made to treat the thyroid cancer and to monitor - for lack of a better description, the lung cancer. And I can live with that (hope to live with that I should say). Nevertheless, it seemed an opportune time to get, for the first time in my cancer life, a second opinion. This week, after waiting out the transfer of medical records and a thyroid cancer specialist's evaluation, Team Lourie will be going to the Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University Hospital for an independent assessment. To say we are extremely anxious is an understatement.

When I was initially diagnosed in late Feb., 2009, we did not get a second opinion. Perhaps we were naive, but at the moment the oncologist told us my diagnosis - and prognosis: non small cell lung cancer stage IV. he was not the least bit perplexed and the path forward seemed clear, and we didn't question him too much. A week later, I began chemotherapy. I have never wavered in this decision and I have no regrets about the path I chose. The fact that I have lived years beyond my prognosis has occasionally given me moments of curiosity as to why I was so amazingly lucky to have survived when so many others have not. Not wanting to look a gift oncologist in the mouth (if you know what I mean), I rarely thought to ask. I mean, I was doing so well.

Then about two years ago, a lump appeared under my Adams Apple. Upon examining me/it, my oncologist characterized it as a clone of my lung cancer and did nothing more than note its size and shape when he regularly examined me until the first of three biopsies (of a lymph node) was ultimately performed. It indicated thyroid cancer. This was new information to my oncologist. And so I was referred to an endocrinologist. She took one look at my "Adams Apple tumor" as I called it, and did a needle biopsy right then and there - in her office. She called me two days later with the results. Again, it confirmed thyroid cancer which subsequently led to the removal of my thyroid a month or so later. A few months after that, a hospitalization followed for radioiodine treatment to locate and kill any remaining thyroid cancer. Within another month I began chemotherapy treatment for thyroid cancer. Which is how I am presently being treated. Nothing more has changed. However, we wondered, what about my lung cancer? It was not being treated? As George Costanza asked after having sex with the cleaning lady on an old Seinfeld episode: "Was that a bad thing?"

And so we have taken steps to find out what it is we don't know that maybe the doctors know. Unfortunately, my original tissue sample is too degraded to re-biopsy, but all other relevant medical information has been transferred. I don't suppose we'll be able to go too far back in time, but given the future that I ended up having, there's no time like the present to review the past.

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