

Potomac ALMANAC

SENIOR LIVING

PAGE 7

REAL ESTATE SALES, 2 ❖ KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 7

PHOTO BY PEGGY McEWAN

The White House at the corner of Travilah and Glen roads could become a country inn restaurant if owner Robert Eisinger gets approval for a sewer extension.

Thankful, Even In Pandemic

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Give Locally

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Country Inn and More At Glen and Travilah?

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8 12604 Bridgeton Drive — \$1,368,000



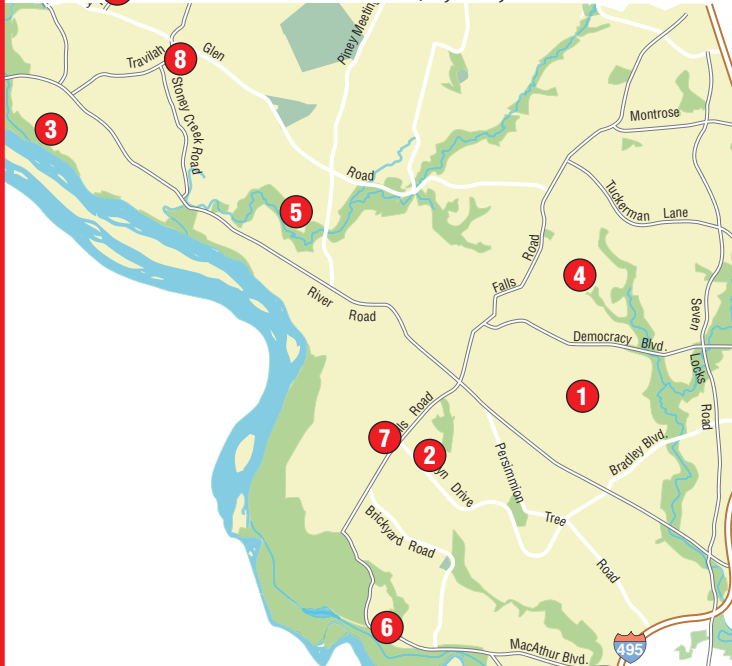
3 13731 Canal Vista Court — \$1,490,000



7 9304 Belmont Road — \$1,400,000



6 10710 Stable Lane — \$1,400,000



Potomac REAL ESTATE

September, 2020 Sales, \$1,525,000~\$1,368,000

IN SEPTEMBER, 2020, 84 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$3,600,000-\$555,000.



1 8900 Hunt Valley Court — \$1,525,000



2 10108
Garden Way
— \$1,500,000

Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City.....	Sold Price...	Type.....	Lot AC.	Postal Code ...	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
1 8900 HUNT VALLEY CT	6...	5...	2	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,525,000 ...	Detached..	2.020.....	20854.....	FALCONHURST	09/18/20
2 10108 GARDEN WAY	5...	3...	1	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,500,000 ...	Detached..	2.13.....	20854.....	POTOMAC STATION.....	09/18/20
3 13731 CANAL VISTA CT	6...	5...	1	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,490,000 ...	Detached..	1.26.....	20854.....	RIVERS EDGE.....	09/30/20
4 9233 CAMBRIDGE MANOR CT	5...	4...	1	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,450,000 ...	Detached..	0.92.....	20854.....	BELLS MILL HAMLET	09/30/20
5 11519 BIG PINEY WAY	4...	4...	1	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,450,000 ...	Detached..	2.01.....	20854.....	SADDLE RIDGE	09/25/20
6 10710 STABLE LN	6...	4...	1	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,400,000 ...	Detached..	0.36.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	09/21/20
7 9304 BELMART RD	5...	3...	1	.....	POTOMAC .	\$1,400,000 ...	Detached..	2.00.....	20854.....	GREAT FALLS ESTS..	09/11/20
8 12604 BRIDGETON DR	6...	6...	2	POTOMAC .	\$1,368,000 ...	Detached..	2.37.....	20854.....	TRAVILAH PARK.....	09/10/20

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A Time To Give Thanks

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

What would your answer be if a stranger asked you, "What are you thankful for this Thanksgiving?"

Or maybe you will have to answer that question at the dinner table Thursday.

Some years the answer could include being grateful for a trip to visit with friends or relatives, reuniting with high school friends from those just home from college, or having time to relax and enjoy the traditions of the holiday.

A Turkey Trot? Not this year. Touch football? No. deciding how to seat 20 dinner guests? No, again.

The coronavirus COVID-19 has changed Thanksgiving celebrations as well as many other parts of our lives.

But we can still be thankful.

The Roeser family John, Marla, and daughters Hannah, 8, and Izzy, 10 were eating outside Five Guys in Potomac Nov. 14.

Hannah and Izzy must have been hungry as they both said they were thankful for food. Izzy added shelter to her answer.

John said he was thankful for his health and Marla said, "Oh there is so much.

For my family and good health and the love of my family."

Family and good health were top of the list of most answers. So were friends.

Four friends who all went to grade school and high school together met outside Starbucks in Potomac to catch up with each other.

"I'm thankful for these girls," Grisel Castro said, pointing to the circle of friends.

Charine Kahn said she is a healthcare worker and is thankful for her health.

"I'm thankful I can do my work and stay healthy," she said.

Sofia Martinez, too, mentioned health.

"I'm definitely thankful for my health, especially at this time," she said. "And for my friends who keep me sane."

Sahara Mokhtari echoed the sentiments of her friends.

"I'm definitely thankful for my family and friends," she said.

Outside of the Safeway store, James Turner was ringing a bell for the Salvation Army.

"I'm thankful for being in the land of the living," he said. "Everyday I see all the bless-

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



The Roeser family Marla, John, Izzy and Hannah enjoy lunch at Five Guys Nov. 14.



Jennifer Luce and Jenny Hilligoss at Playa Bowls in Cabin John Shopping Center.

ings I've been given."

At Cabin John Shopping Center Jennifer Luce was waiting for a Playa Bowls smoothie with Jenny Hilligoss, 10, the daughter of a friend.

"I'm thankful that we're all healthy and I'm thankful that I still have a job and I can work from home," she said.

Then she added, "I'm thankful Biden was elected."

Jenny said she was thankful for her mom and her dad.

Outside Terri Zajdel said she was thankful to be alive.

Her granddaughter, Cecilia Weinstein, 8, said she was thankful for friends and family and life and everybody.

Alfred Bleicher and Lindsay Northrup sipped coffee while sitting on opposite ends of an outside

bench.

"Social distancing," Bleicher said, adding that he was thankful for his health.

Northrop said she was thankful for time with her family.

"Increasingly they are the only people I see," she said.

Grace Kavaho admitted to feeling depressed but added she has a lot to be grateful for.

"I'm thankful for my family. My family has been really nice to me during this time," she said. "I'm really thankful for my friends. I've been depressed and they have been sending me notes and cookies. I'm thankful for Joe Biden being president."

So, no matter what your age or where you are in life, there is always something to be thankful for.



James Turner, ringing the bell outside Safeway, is grateful for his many blessings this Thanksgiving.



Friends Geisel Castro, Charine Khan, Sofia Martinez and Sahara Mokhtari meet outside the Potomac Starbucks.



Cecilia Weinstein, 8, hugs her grandmother, Terri Zander, at Cabin John Shopping Center.

Sewer, Expansion at Glen and Travilah?

Citizens group hears plans for added commerce at Travilah and Glen roads.

By PEGGY McEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

The West Montgomery County Citizens Association hosted developers Guy Semmes and Robert Eisinger at its November meeting, to hear plans for future development at Potomac Oak Center and the recently renovated white house across the street.

Plans not only include a sewer extension but seem to be dependent on the approval of sewer at both sites, which are outside the area where sewer is permitted.

“WMCCA has previously opposed such an extension, but we look forward to a discussion of their current proposals,” the association’s November newsletter said.

Semmes, one of the owners of Potomac Oak Center, said getting sewer is important for the future of the center.

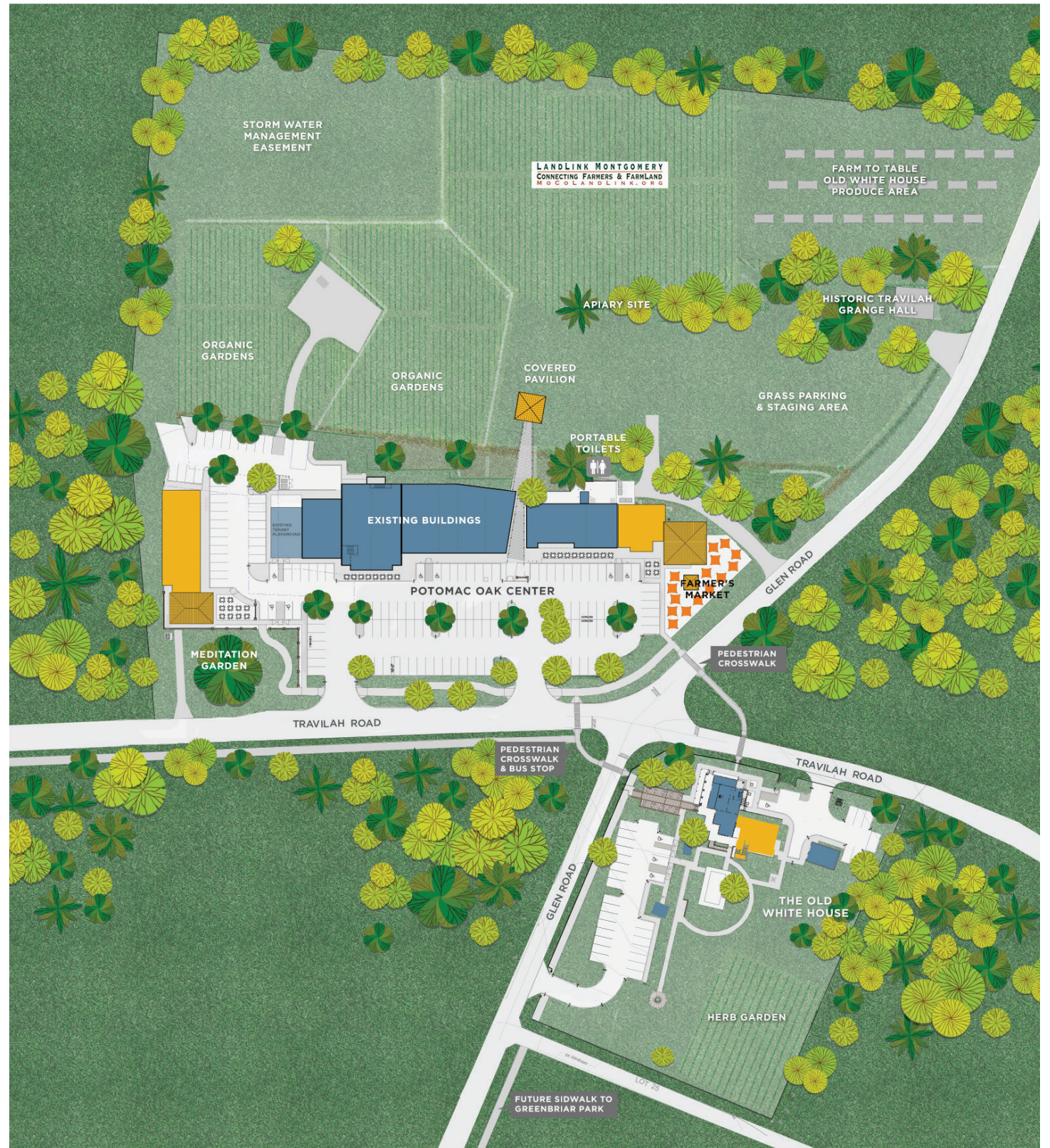
“With sewer we can attract the tenants we want,” he said. “We don’t want everything to change, we want it to be better.”

Across Travilah Road from the center is the White House. It is owned and was recently renovated by Eisinger. He, too, says his project needs sewer service in order to see the promise of future plans for his property.

He is seeking a conditional use permit to convert the house into a country inn.

“Not for overnight [stays],” he said, “But a country Inn like Comus Inn or Old Angler’s Inn,” two restaurants.

Both businessmen are seeking the change to sewer to upgrade their current sewage systems and therefore allow for more water



Site plan for changes proposed at Potomac Oak Shopping Center.



Some things stay the same. The Travilah Oak is 285 years old, recognized as standing at the time the Constitution was signed. The tree, part of the shopping center at Glen and Travilah, was measured in January 2011 by the Maryland Big Tree Program, and has a circumference of 18 feet, 4 inches; a height of 78 feet and a crown that stretches 108 feet.

flow and greater use.

Both properties are currently on well and septic.

Eisinger pictures the White House as serving up to 140 people per day with access to sewer, but only 40 without sewer, pulling some food and drink customers from those traveling to Glenstone, and also from surrounding residents. The old white house would also offer a stopping place for the many bicyclists traveling nearby country roads. Members of WMCCA expressed concern about the increase of traffic on Glenn Road the changes would bring about. The

road is already carrying increased traffic since the opening of Glenstone in 2018. [Due to COVID-19 Glenstone will close Nov. 22 until further notice.]

Potomac Oak Center is located on 10 acres, three are zoned for neighborhood retail. During the WMCCA presentation, Semmes said the back seven acres were designated for use through the Montgomery County Land Link Program, connecting farmers with available land, and there is also a place for a farmers’ market.

Semmes pointed out that these uses would be dependent on getting sewer and that the

use could change depending on community needs.

“We want to do something environmentally sound,” Semmes said.

The new sewer would be an extension of sewer on Travilah Road, 1000 feet from the intersection of Travilah and Glen.

The process of getting the proposed sewer service approved is in the beginning stages. Eisinger and Semmes have applied for the permit, but there are official meetings – including those with the community – meaning the proposed changes will be a while in coming, if at all.

Where to Give Locally in the Potomac Area

We list many kinds of non-profits in and around Potomac: food banks, animal adoption, arts, environment, housing; find what appeals to you, and pitch in. It's fair to say that most organizations would like financial contributions and volunteers.

Manna Food Center

Manna Food Center, the main food bank in Montgomery County, strives to eliminate hunger through food distribution, education, and advocacy. Manna provides food to 32,000 individuals each year and helps distribute rescued food to soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters county-wide. Nearly every social service organization in Montgomery County relies on Manna to provide food to their clients.

You can drop off food donations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at: the Warehouse, 9311 Gaither Road Gaithersburg, MD 20877

(301) 424-1130 info@man-nafood.org www.mannafood.org

Mercy Health Clinic in Gaithersburg is a non-sectarian, non-profit, community health clinic committed to providing high quality medical care to eligible patients free of charge. It serves around 2,000 patients annually with more than 50 volunteer physicians and over 100 medical and administrative volunteers. "At Mercy, we believe that we all benefit when everyone in our community has access to health care." The clinic is located at 7 Metropolitan Court, Suite 1, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. Phone 240-773-0300 or visit www.mercy-healthclinic.org.

Interfaith Works provides shelter, food, and clothing to low-income and homeless neighbors. Offices are at 114 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville, 20850 www.iworksmc.org.

Potomac Community Resources, Inc. promotes the full inclusion into community life of teens and adults with developmental differences by providing over 35 therapeutic, recreational, social, educational, and respite care programs. PCR's in-person programs remain suspended, but you can participate in our engaging

videos online, <https://pcr-inc.org/pcr-videos/> Donations to PCR make a difference in the lives of individuals with developmental differences and their families. Eighty-six percent of every dollar donated goes directly to its programs. Updated resources page, pcr-inc.org/community-resources/community-links/

Offices located at 9200 Kentsdale Drive, Potomac, 20854. Phone 301-365-0561 or visit <http://pcr-inc.org/>

Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (MCCH) a community-based nonprofit organization, is a leading provider of permanent housing, intermediate housing, emergency shelter, and supportive services for people experiencing homelessness. MCCH programs serve 1,600 men, women, and children each year, providing 60 percent of the emergency shelter beds in the county.

600-B East Gude Drive, Rockville, 20850, 301-217-0314 www.mcch.net.

ArtStream performances feature adult actors with intellectual and developmental disabilities including autism and other social and behavioral needs.

Actors, volunteer mentors and theatre professionals work as a team to create original performances for live audiences. ArtStream offers drama and life-skills classes and programs in military hospitals.

The group is based in Chevy Chase and normally holds programming throughout the region, but right now the virtual programs are thriving. 8401 Connecticut Ave. Ste 1230, Chevy Chase, 20815, 301-565-4567 www.art-stream.org.

Shepherd's Table is a nonprofit organization in downtown Silver Spring, supported by volunteers, religious organizations, government, businesses, foundations, and individual donors. It provides help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance. 8210 Dixon Ave., Silver Spring, 20910, 301-585-6463 www.shepherdstable.org.

The Fisher House program supports members of the military and

their families when they travel great distances for specialized medical care. Fisher House Foundation donates "comfort homes," including at Walter Reed in Bethesda. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful times.

Fisher House Foundation, Inc., 12300 Twinbrook Pkwy, Suite 410, Rockville, 20852, 301-294-8560, info@fisherhouse.org or www.fisherhouse.org.

KindWorks seeks to inspire action for a kinder world by meeting pressing community needs and building community by mobilizing individuals to assist in many kinds of volunteer service.

KindWorks, Inc., 7979 Old Georgetown Road, 10th Floor, Bethesda, 20814; Call 301-246-2452, email info@DoKindWorks.org or visit www.dokindworks.org.

Friends in Action is a program that provides intensive case management to low income Montgomery County families.

Families are assigned to an FIA case manager that will help create goals in areas of education and employment, health and mental health, parenting, budgeting, home management, and practical life skills. 301-762-8682 www.iworksmc.org/friends-in-action.

Montgomery Countryside Alliance promotes sound economic, land-use and transportation policies that preserve the natural environment, open spaces, and rural lands in Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve for the benefit of all Washington Metropolitan area residents.

Write P.O. Box 24, Poolesville, MD 20837, call 301-461-9831 email info@mocoalliance.org or visit www.mocoalliance.org.

Spirit Club Foundation Inc. is a non-profit organization organized to ensure that people with disabilities and other health-related challenges have the opportunity to exercise and learn about fitness and nutrition in an integrated setting.

PO Box 443, Kensington, MD 20895. SpiritClubFoundation.org

MCPAW (Montgomery County

Partners for Animal Well-Being) is the non-profit partner of the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center (MCASAC) working through MCASAC to keep homeless pets healthy and happy while awaiting adoption. Goals are: Reduce the number of animals that come to MCASAC; pamper, protect, and provide emergency veterinary care for animals inside MCASAC; educate and engage the community in causes for animal welfare. Visit <http://www.mc paw.org>.

PetConnect Rescue was founded in 2005, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and has evolved into a vibrant animal rescue organization.

Their mission is to save the lives of abandoned dogs and cats and place them in loving and permanent homes.

PO Box 60714, Potomac, 20859; 1-877-838-9171; info@petconnectrescue.org; www.petconnectrescue.org

C&O Canal Trust: By giving to the C&O Canal Trust, you will be joining a growing movement of citizens across the country who are taking personal responsibility for the future of "America's best idea" - our national parks. Give thanks for the C&O Canal you enjoy today and invest in its future.

www.canaltrust.org

Potomac Community Village wishes you a safe & happy Thanksgiving!

To learn more or to volunteer:
www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org
20854HelpDesk@gmail.com

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Glenstone Museum To Close Temporarily

All scheduled visits cancelled at least through the end of December.

Glenstone Museum will temporarily close beginning on Wednesday, Nov. 25. Following the standard Thursday-Sunday operating schedule, the last visitor day will be Sunday, November 22.

“With COVID-19 cases rising and the anticipated increase in travel and gatherings over the holidays, we want to do all we can to help support the health and safety of our community,” said Emily Wei Rales, director of Glenstone Museum.

Following a full closure in March, Glenstone has offered modified versions of its visitor experience that allowed the public to explore the art, architecture, and nature throughout the property. This included reopening the grounds on June 4, opening the Arrival Hall on July 2, reopening the Pavilions on July 23, and reopening the Patio for outdoor dining on October 29 – all to ensure the health and safety of visitors and associates. With each of these changes in operating status, Glenstone met or exceeded the requirements set by public



The Gallery hosts changing exhibitions in generously proportioned spaces and opens up to a terrace overlooking a pond. A limited palette of materials—zinc, granite, stainless steel, and teak—allows the architecture to exist in harmony with the surrounding landscape and the art it houses.

health officials.

Glenstone has canceled all scheduled visits through the end of December and will offer those individuals priority rebooking when a reopening date has been set. As of now, January visits are still scheduled but may be canceled at a later date.

Updates to Glenstone’s operating status will always be listed on www.glenstone.org. Visitors are encouraged to check www.glenstone.org for the latest information.

About Glenstone

Glenstone, a museum of modern and contemporary art, is integrated into nearly 300 acres of gently rolling pasture and unspoiled woodland in Potomac, Md., less than 15 miles from the heart of Washington, DC. Established by the not-for-profit Glenstone Foundation, the museum opened in 2006 and provides a contemplative, intimate setting for experiencing iconic works of art and architecture within a natural environment.

PHOTO VIA WWW.GLENSTONE.ORG

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.

NOV. 29 AND DEC. 6

The first-ever Bethesda Big Train Virtual Base Ball & Auction will be held on the evenings of Sunday, Nov. 22, Nov. 29, and Dec. 6, 2020 from 7 to 8 p.m. on bigtrain.tv. Sessions will include virtual conversations with baseball personalities, including Big Train coaches and former players, and awards. The highlight of the Sunday night events will be an online auction with spectacular memorabilia and experiences. To enhance the auction, they are looking for auction items valued at \$50 or more for fans seeking gifts for the holidays.

NOV. 27 TO DEC. 23

Sandy Spring Museum’s Fine Arts & Crafts Holiday Gift Show. Monday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Wednesday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Friday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Sunday 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. At 17901 Bentley Road, Sandy Spring. The annual Fine Arts & Crafts Holiday Gift Show features one-of-a-kind gifts handmade by local artists including jewelry, quilts, pottery, and other fine arts and crafts.

The museum’s resident artists will offer their newest creations ranging from glossy enamel work and mixed media collage to a variety of hand-forged jewelry and unique hand-built ceramics. In addition, local artists from the community will have hand-crafted items for sale. A percentage of sales supports SSM’s community generated programming. Visit www.sandyspringmuseum.org/giftshow.

THURSDAY/DEC. 3

Gala with a Twist. 5:30-7 p.m. Via Zoom. The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce will celebrate business and the past year at its Gala with a Twist. The evening

will be a celebration of the partnerships the Chamber has to help grow and sustain a healthy local economy. This year’s virtual event will introduce our new Board of Directors and recognize members who have made a significant impact to our business community throughout the year. Visit the website: <https://bit.ly/3iDhsGJ>

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Musician Joe Jencks. 7:30 p.m. Online at www.focusmusic.org. Performs from his new album. Poets, Philosopher, Workers & Wanderers. Presented on Facebook and YouTube at www.focusmusic.org for free. Tips and merchandise purchases encouraged. Info: Rob Hinkal at rob@focusmusic.org or www.focusmusic.org

LIBRARIES ADDS PRESSREADER TO ITS DIGITAL RESOURCES

Montgomery County Public Libraries continues to expand and introduce new digital programs and services to benefit the community. This week MCPL announced the launch of PressReader, allowing its library cardholders digital access to magazines and newspapers from more than 120 countries. PressReader brings one of the largest selections of global publications from multiple sources to MCPL. It offers quality content without advertisements or incomplete story extracts. MCPL cardholders can access more than 7,000 of the world’s top newspapers and magazines as soon as they are available on shelves. There are no limits on downloads and back issues.

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH THE 2020 HOLIDAY DRIVE

For more than four-and-a-half decades, Rockville’s Holiday Drive has helped the community’s neediest members. This year, with the need greater than ever, the drive will continue, albeit with minor changes to keep

everyone healthy and safe. Normally, the Holiday Drive collects food donations in November, for Thanksgiving, and toys in December for the gift-giving holiday season. This year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the city is requesting cash donations only that will be used to purchase gift cards for families in need. Giant grocery store cards will be bought in November so recipients can shop for Thanksgiving; in December, your donations will help purchase Target gift cards and books for children. Here’s how you can help: Make an easy, online donation. Send a tax-deductible contribution check. Checks can be made payable to Rockville Holiday Drive Fund, and sent to Rockville Holiday Drive Fund, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850. In December, the Holiday Drive will be seeking sponsors to buy gifts for families in need. For more information, contact Allison Hoy, volunteer coordinator, at 240-314-8304 or ahoy@rockvillemd.gov.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Difficult to Learn in Virtual Environment

I am writing in response to the article titled “Addressing the Demands of Virtual University Classrooms ” published in your newspaper on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020. As a college freshmen myself, I have also found it difficult to learn in a socially distanced, virtual environment. Being in person makes me feel more focused and engaged with the information that I am learning. While being behind a computer screen makes it easier for me to doze off and be easily distracted. Although, online learning is beneficial to me because I don’t have to commute and it gives me flexibility to attend class anywhere I’d like. Since my friends and I have felt the same difficulty of online classes, we would sometimes get together for a study group in order to help each other with our work. Our main goal really is just to pass our classes to the best of our abilities. Even though online classes are tough, I’ve also gained some new skills from online classes, such as new memorization skills. I cannot wait to go back to in-person classes, but at the same time I feel like my social skills have diminished quite a bit from the lack of social interactions I’ve had.

Maisie Nguyen
Springfield
Freshman in college

Seniors and the Flu

Getting vaccinated can reduce hospital visits and admissions during anticipated shortage due to COVID-19.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

While shopping for dinner on a recent Wednesday afternoon, Roger Whitehead spotted a sign near the pharmacy of a grocery store near his home in Alexandria.

"It was easy. Once I'd picked up my groceries, I stopped by the pharmacy before I got in the checkout line," said Whitehead, 65. "I filled out some paperwork and rolled up my sleeve. It took about 30 seconds."

To stave off an onslaught of emergency room visits as a result of both the flu and COVID-19 cases, particularly for the elderly, local health officials, are underscoring the importance of the flu vaccination. While it differs from year-to-year, flu season is typically at its peak from December through February. Getting a flu shot can reduce the risk of being hospitalized.

"Older people with certain health conditions, in particular, are at high risk of serious flu complications," said Kurt Larrick, Assistant Director, Arlington County Department of Human Services. "The best way to prevent the flu is by getting vaccinated."

It's not too late to receive a vaccine and an

option for seniors is Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent, licensed only for those over the age of 65. "It is especially important this year," said Dr. Travis Gayles, Montgomery County health officer. "[It] can also save health care resources for the care of patients with COVID-19."

Those over 65 are especially likely to get dangerously ill from catching the flu. "The flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 are both spreading disease this flu season," said Shauna Severo, Director of Fairfax County Health Services. "As the incidence of COVID-19 increases the healthcare system could be overwhelmed treating both patients with the flu and patients with COVID-19."

Local jurisdictions launched campaigns to facilitate access to the flu vaccine and to increase awareness among those who have not yet received it. "Arlington has partnered with other Northern Virginia jurisdictions on the Stay Well Nova Campaign, which is providing education, outreach, and resources around flu vaccine," said Larrick.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated against the flu every year, especially people who are at high risk.

FOR MORE FLU INFORMATION

- ❖ Fairfax County: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/flu>
- ❖ Alexandria: [alexandriava.gov/Health](https://www.alexandriava.gov/Health)
- ❖ Arlington: Stay Well Northern Virginia Campaign <https://www.staywellnova.com>
- ❖ Inova Flu Services <https://www.inova.org/our-services/inova-well/medical-wellness/immunizations>
- ❖ Montgomery County, Md.: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/resident/flu.html>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

Holiday Celebrations COVID Style

Dealing with separation from family and friends.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The decision to spend holidays away from loved ones can be a necessity during the coronavirus pandemic. For those who're accustomed to celebrating the season with large family gatherings, the solitude that comes with COVID-19 can be a difficult adjustment.

"First, acknowledge that this is going to be a different kind of holiday," said licensed psychologist Denise T. Dewhurst, Ph.D., Professor of psychology at Montgomery College. "Reach out to someone else you know who is also alone. Even a brief phone call benefit both of you."

A little forethought into how one's time will be spent will offer structure and can help manage feelings of loneliness, advises Dewhurst. "For some, this may be watching television, or reading. For others, it might be a hobby or craft."

"Work on creating something, maybe baking, art projects, family genealogy project, a journal about your life," added therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW. "Take a virtual tour of somewhere you would like to visit."

Practice gratitude, suggests Dewhurst. "Remind yourself of things you do have to be thankful for," she said. Connect with family members virtually. Talking to one person or one group at a time might allow for better conversations, she said.

Video conferencing with family and friends, particularly during a meal, can allow one to simulate being together in person. "Talking and seeing others' faces is second best to being there and definitely will feel more like you're part of things than not," said psychiatrist Gail Saltz, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the NY Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell School of Medicine. "Make a dish that matches the dish of where you would normally be going. Eating the same food, while having conversation increases the enjoyment and sense of being together."

Put on a mask and take a socially distanced walk or other outdoor activity, says Saltz. "It may not be the sit-down meal, but a safe masked, distant outside walk can provide some time together," she said.

Reminisce about past holidays and envision those that lie ahead. "Spend a part of the day looking at photos privately of those you love and remembering fun and close times you have had together," said Saltz. "Keep in mind that when this is over, you'll resume making more memories together."

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A Question of Time



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Let us presume, for the sake of this column, that I only have papillary thyroid cancer stage IV, and that my years as a non small cell lung cancer patient, also stage IV, are over. If true, it begs the question, which I have been asked twice since this recategorization has become - in my circle anyway, public knowledge: how does it make me feel (to no longer be one scan result away from having months to live to now having years to live)? As obvious an answer as it should be: I can't exactly get my mind around it. I keep hearing that "If it's too good to be true, it isn't" advisory in my head. I realize medicine is different, and that's what scares me.

Well, I can't really say I feel as if I have my life back because I never really lived like it was gone. I pretty much - treatments and side effects notwithstanding - tried to maintain my normal life and to continue my routine as well. I didn't stray too far from my well-established dos and don'ts. I didn't write down a bucket list and therefore spent no time pursuing long-standing goals. I just did what I have always done. I didn't want to be controlled by my cancer; doing things, taking trips, etc. just because I had a "terminal" diagnosis. To my way of thinking, that would have been akin to reinforcing a negative: a cancer that was likely to kill me sooner rather than later so I better do such and such or else. Instead, I just lived my regular life and felt no pressure to cross off items on a bucket list before I died. In spite of living life not as if I was dying, but as if I was going to be living, (unlike the country music song that expresses a different sentiment) I survived beyond my wildest timeline: so far, 11 years and nine months after initially being given a "13 months to two years" prognosis.

Fast forward to the most recent - and amazing news: I hadn't miraculously survived non small cell lung cancer after all, I had merely survived a very survivable and slow moving thyroid cancer (that has - or had previously, metastasized to the lung). Though my oncologist still thinks I have two types of cancer, my endocrinologist thinks I only have - and have had, one type, thyroid cancer. The Lombardi Cancer Center head and neck cancer specialist also feels like I have one cancer: thyroid. Her reasoning, after reviewing my medical records was a bit more direct: "if you had lung cancer diagnosed 12 or so years ago, we wouldn't be here having this discussion. You wouldn't be alive." So being alive is proof, a type of proof I suppose, that I've had thyroid cancer all along and never had lung cancer.

Not that I want to be thick-headed but after nearly 12 years of being told that I had lung cancer and living scan to scan every two to three months and anxiously waiting as well for my lab results every three weeks

I find myself unable to let go of the worst case scenario that has been my life since Feb., 2009, and embrace this amended diagnosis. I can't seem to turn off my internal anxiety/fear clock. In fact, it's still stuck in its original position. I'm like an ocean liner headed out to sea. It can hardly turn on a dime and neither can I. Certainly I want to believe it and I don't really doubt the thyroid cancer opinions I've received, but it just seems that having your wildest dreams come true after almost 12 years of trying to accept the reality of your cancer situation/early death is too much good fortune for anyone to imagine/realize. It's the opposite of normal. As much as one might want it to happen, it's just not the way it generally works. I don't suppose doctors hand out terminal diagnosis before giving it extra ample thought. And yet, I'm about to be living proof.

Nevertheless, every day, the shock of it begins to wear off and I can contemplate my future once again. No more will I count the days between scans. No longer will I dread reading my lab work and wondering what it all means. Oddly enough, what it all means is that I'll probably continue/resume my previous life, boring and mundane as it was because, well, it worked for me then so I imagine it will work for me now.

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

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