

# Potomac ALMANAC

## Crescendo Levels

NEWS, PAGE 3

Intense rains lead to high Potomac River levels at Great Falls. The water will reach nearly 10 feet at 10 p.m. Tuesday night as measured at Little Falls. This photo, taken on Monday, March 1, at 5 p.m., shows the river crescendoing at 7 feet.

## Potomac Author's 4th Novel

BOOKS, PAGE 2

## What's Coming In Potomac?

WEST MONTGOMERY, PAGE 4

## WELLBEING

PAGE 7

ATTENTION POSTMASTER:  
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL  
REQUESTED IN HOME 3-4-21

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EASTON, MD  
PERMIT #322

REAL ESTATE SALES, 2 ♦ KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 7

PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

MARCH 3-9, 2021

ONLINE AT [POTOMACALMANAC.COM](http://POTOMACALMANAC.COM)



# Potomac Author Shares Glimpse of Afghan Life

BY PEGGY MCEWAN  
POTOMAC ALMANAC

**N**adia Hashimi is a good storyteller. In her first three novels she tells of life in Afghanistan as people live according to ancient traditions, affecting life in ways American readers can hardly imagine.

With the publication this week of her fourth novel, “Sparks Like Stars,” she moves her storytelling from that society entering the 20th century to a time of revolution that results in taking the country back to the ancient ways.

“My goal,” she said, “is always to show as much as possible the spectrum of Afghanistan history.”

In this novel she said she wanted to reflect the 1970s when Afghanistan experienced “a time of remarkable promise.”

U.S. State Department employees considered it a place of sophistication and safety, a time Hashimi



Potomac author Nadia Hashimi.

drew from research into State Department notes.

“It was a different time,” she said, thinking of the American stereotype of Afghan culture.

Hashimi’s parents lived in Kabul during that time and, she said,

they think of it as “the best of times.”

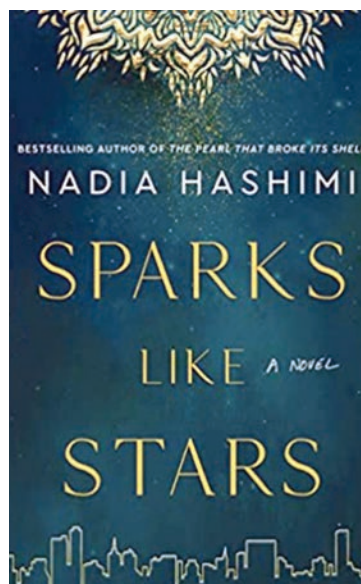
All that changed in 1978 which is when “Sparks Like Stars” begins.

From the book jacket: “Kabul, 1978: The daughter of a prominent family, Sitara Zamani lives a life in Afghanistan’s thriving cosmopolitan capital. The 1970s are a time of remarkable promise. ... But ten-year-old Sitara’s world is shattered when communists stage a coup, assassinating the president and Sitara’s entire family. Only she survives.”

The book follows Sitara as she finds safety from the rebels and is smuggled to the United States.

She becomes a surgeon and falls in love with a man with whom she cannot share her story, no matter how often she determines she will.

After 30 years of living with a false identity, her world and memories reach a turning point that



The cover of Nadia Hashimi’s latest novel, “Sparks Like Stars.”

propels her to return to Kabul to learn about the fate of her family and her own identity.

Her time in Afghanistan frees her from the haunting memories of that night in 1978, allows her to come to peace with the death of her family, and live again as the young girl of promise her parents nurtured.”

**NADIA HASHIMI**, whose parents came to the United States in the 1970s, was born in New York. She attended Brandeis University and SUNY Downstate College of Medicine.

She is a pediatrician, married to a neurosurgeon. They are the parents of four children.

Hashimi said she used to write when her children were in school but has found it hard to find writing time this year. Still, she managed to finish “Sparks Like Stars.”

“My husband suggested I write,” she said.

“He knew I loved books, he felt like I had something I wanted to tell.”

That was after 9-11 when many Americans developed a stereotype of Afghanistan as a backward country, an enemy of the United States.

“I hoped to change American knowledge of Afghan culture,” she said.

She is working on that goal with four novels and two children’s books published since 2001, all sharing insight into Afghan life.

“Sparks Like Stars” is available at local bookstores and online.



## My Loved One Has Dementia... Now What?

*Presented by Rebekah Wilson, MSW, Dementia Care Trainer, Consultant and Owner of Aging Care Coach, LLC*



In this presentation, Rebekah will help caregivers understand the diagnosis, differentiate forms of dementia and prepare for future care needs throughout the progression of dementia.

*Please Register By Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>*

**Join us for this FREE Educational Webinar**

**Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**  
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

**To Register**  
240-293-0456  
[TheArtisWay.com/PotomacAlmanac](https://TheArtisWay.com/PotomacAlmanac)



**Virtually Hosted By Artis Senior Living of Potomac:** 8301 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20817  
Check out our other nearby communities in Olney, MD and Herndon, VA.

**Your Partner in Memory Care**





## Solar Permitted in Reserve, Carefully

Areas with the soils needed for growing food are protected.

BY KEN MOORE  
POTOMAC ALMANAC

**H**ans Riemer voted against his own bill to permit industrial solar in the Agricultural Reserve. But other councilmembers told him what they believe the headline should read.

"I believe when we are all done here the headline will be Montgomery allows solar in the Ag Reserve, which is huge," said Nancy Navarro (District 4).

"I do think the headline will be today that we've opened up solar in the ag reserve," said Will Jawando (at-large).

"That should be the lede line in this story," said Craig Rice (District 2).

Riemer objected that the council made changes to his original bill; in the end, the council protected the two classes of soil most needed for farming and made any solar project a conditional use. The Planning Department conducts intake review on Conditional Use cases to verify completeness.

Once applications are deemed acceptable, they are sent to the Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (OZAH), which ultimately approves or denies the Conditional Use.

"What we proposed is to power 50,000 home with this clean energy and really that would be the cornerstone of our climate change agenda here in Montgomery County," said Riemer (at-large). "I think everyone knows where I stand."

The 1980 County Council protected 93,000 acres of land from development and developers, saying it should be protected forever. The decision was a climate-change masterpiece lauded across the country for its vision.

"It is very expensive to build rooftop and parking lot solar and as a result of that cost compared to the anticipated revenue there is just not a lot of it happening," said Riemer.

"It is just not profitable, not profitable enough," he said.

**THE FINAL VOTE** was 7-2, with Riemer and Tom Hucker dissenting.

"We unanimously declared a climate change emergency and when you have an emergency, you take action, you take action rapidly," said Hucker.

Evan Glass didn't support the changes, but voted for the final bill.

"I am deciding that I am going to vote for this, because I've been elected to

get things done and not to take protest votes," said Glass (at-large).

"It's not what a climate emergency demands of us," he said. "My vote today is to start that process officially but we have a long way to go."

"While it may mean that there are not as many projects that can move forward I do believe it opens the door for some projects to move forward," said Sidney Katz (District 3).

The Council mandated that the Planning Board examine how the projects work by 2023, so it can make changes, adaptations, improvements, additions, or protect the Reserve more.

In that time, the market and its rapid technological advances will determine the validity of Riemer's objections and if solar projects can or can't move forward in other parts of the county, concerns raised by Riemer, Hucker and Glass.

Potomac's councilmember, Andrew Friedson, spent a lot of time during the process explaining the importance of the Agricultural Reserve and why he fought to protect the "integrity of the Reserve."

Advocates have as well. Gabe Alborno (at-large) said he's learned "so much" about both solar and the Agricultural Reserve and "have come to even better appreciate the steps that the county took 40 years ago to establish the Agricultural Reserve, which at the time, and even today, was one of the most profound climate actions decisions as a body as a jurisdiction could have made."

"That one third of our land can not be developed except for agricultural use is profound, something that needs to be recognized and celebrated for generations to come," said Alborno.

Unfortunately, the process pitted people who would understand the importance of both causes against each other.

"None of us would disagree with the urgency and concern of climate change and the fact that it is an existential threat facing our country and our world.

There's no question about that," said Alborno.

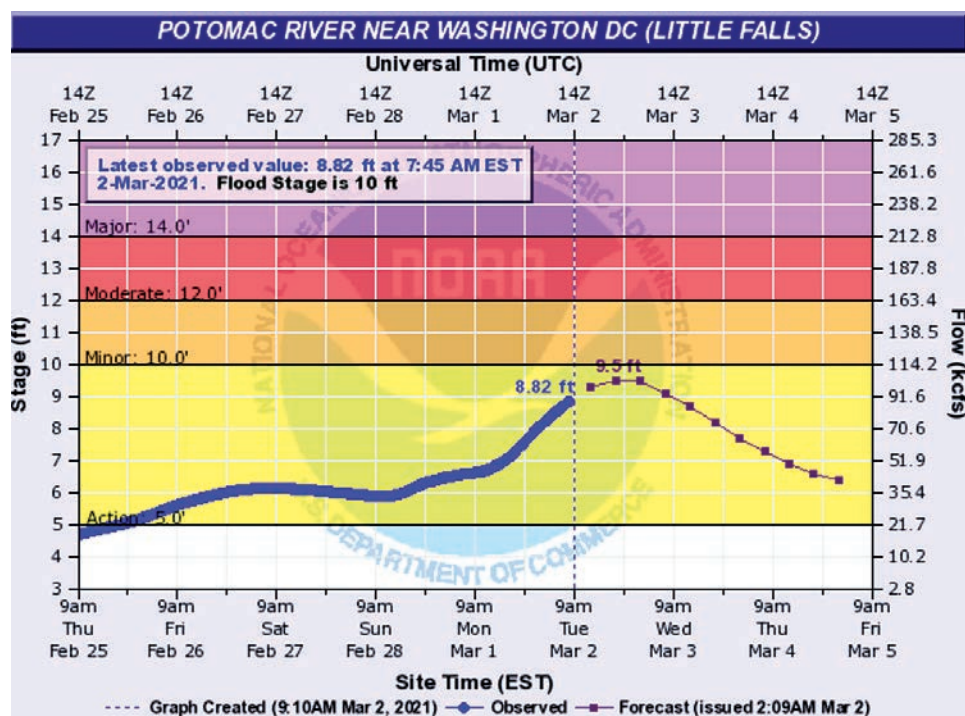
"I appreciate all the correspondence and communication and I know this issue has generated a lot of emotion and I've certainly felt it on a number of occasions," he said. "I've been called a climate denier in the last few weeks and I've been told I'm radically opposed to solar, both of which are completely false and couldn't be farther from the truth."



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

## Crescendo Levels

Potomac River Levels at Great Falls will reach peak at just short of level, 10 feet, at 10 p.m. Tuesday night. Photos taken here on Monday, March 1, at 5 p.m., show the river crescendoing at 7 feet.



SOURCE: NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ADVANCED HYDROLOGIC FORECAST

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### NOW THRU MARCH 20

Holy Child's Gala Car Raffle. Beep, beep - win a Jeep! Enter to win a 2021 Jeep Wrangler Islander (valued at \$41,000) provided by Safford Automotive Group OR \$30,000 cash. Only 1,961 tickets will be sold by Connelly School of the Holy Child and the lucky winner will be drawn during the Holy Child Gala on March 20. Purchase 1 ticket for \$100 or 3 tickets for \$250. All proceeds benefit Connelly School of the Holy Child on Bradley Blvd. in Potomac. Purchase your ticket today. Visit: [www.holychild.org/carraffle](http://www.holychild.org/carraffle)

[holychild.org/carraffle](http://holychild.org/carraffle)

### WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Second Chance Addiction Care of Potomac is launching a Women's Book Club for women to discuss books on recovery. The book club will allow women to come together, build community during these trying times, discuss relevant books, and celebrate recovery and each other. For women currently struggling with addiction or who may thinking about getting help, the book club may be a comfortable way for them to obtain peer support and gain the strength to begin the recovery process. To join, email: [bookclub@secondchancecare.com](mailto:bookclub@secondchancecare.com). The first 5 women to join will receive

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 5



# West Montgomery County Citizens Association

## Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 10, 2021  
at 7:30 p.m. via ZOOM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84121029826?pwd=dUgxak-53WEIONIVqS2YzalJFTnh5UT09>  
or call in with 301-715-8592  
(Meeting ID = 841 2102 9826,  
Passcode: 190467)

A recording of this meeting, and hotlinks within the Newsletter, will be available on our website: [www.WMCCA.org](http://www.WMCCA.org)

**SPEAKER:** Caroline Taylor, Executive Director of the Montgomery Countryside Alliance

"The mission of the Montgomery Countryside Alliance is to promote sound economic, land-use and transportation policies and programs 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." Caroline will provide us with an update on issues in the Ag Reserve.

## "Waiting for Godot (and a Vaccine)"

submitted by President Ken Bawer  
President@WMCCA.org

I am ready for Spring. I am ready for the pandemic to be over. I am ready to resume former activities. And I am waiting for a vaccine. Fortunately, we are headed in the right direction: the days are getting longer, and the vaccines are rolling out. Johnson & Johnson, whose vaccine has just been approved by the FDA for emergency use, projects to have 20 million doses ready in March and 100 million by June. None of these can come fast enough, but at least there is light at the end of the tunnel and these will all certainly arrive before Godot.

❖ We recently signed onto two letters that commented on the County's draft Climate Action Plan. One, from the MoCo CAP Coalition, provided an extensive critique of the entire 130-page document. The other, from the Montgomery Coalition to Prevent Stream Destruction, provided comments relating to "stream restorations".

❖ There are six Water & Sewer Service Category Change Requests that we continue to follow in our area. Some of these property owners requested conversions from septic systems to WSSC sewer service even though they don't qualify by law. Plus, two new requests were made as 2Q 2021 applications. Several of the owner requests claimed special circumstances and asked that they not be held to the same rules as everyone else. Why is it important to limit sewer line sprawl? The answer is to protect the water quality of streams in our low-density areas from polluted runoff associated with large impervious surfaces and higher density development. Water from Watts Branch, Piney Branch, and Muddy Branch are taken up by the WSSC Potomac River Filtration Plant on River Road.

The County Department of Environmental Protection is working on



See update below on accelerating plans to add 4 toll lanes to the Beltway and I-270.

a "technical update" to the Water and Sewer Plan. We anticipate an attempt to weaken the rules for sewer line connection which would lead to more sewer line sprawl in our area.

❖ Proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA 20-01) with amendments for Community Solar in the Agricultural Reserve was approved by the County Council. Rather than the original text, which would have allowed much more expansive installation of solar arrays in the Ag Reserve, the amendments – which we supported – ensure that each construction application must be approved on a case-by-case (Conditional Use) basis. This was a compromise situation to somewhat stem the tide of creeping industrialization in the Ag Reserve – this area was created as an agricultural reserve, not an industrial zone.

❖ WMCCA signed onto a letter by the Montgomery Coalition to Prevent Stream Destruction asking for a temporary pause in "stream restorations" in the County and Parks to allow a reexamination of their desirability.

❖ As expected, the Planning Board approved the Forest Conservation Plan Amendment for Congressional Country Club. We opposed the plan since it will allow the cutting of previously protected trees and will allow armor-plating of their stream with boulders instead of controlling their stormwater at its source.

❖ Finally, we met with and provided suggestions to the County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding new septic legislation they will be proposing to require septic tank pumping every five years.

## Spectrum Retirement Communities, LLC

submitted by Susanne Lee  
On Feb. 25, 2021 the Montgom-

ery County Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings approved Spectrum's application and granted conditional use approval to allow the construction and operation of a residential care facility for individuals 62 years and older at 9545 River Road (currently Potomac Petals and Plants, formerly Behnke's garden center). The facility is approved for 100 units with up to 130 beds (assisted living and memory care units). Eighty-five parking spaces must be provided and up to 43 employees may be on site at any one time. Although not included as a condition in the decision, in its revised application Spectrum agreed to reduce the building height from three to two stories. Spectrum now joins the other two new residential care facilities approved by OZAH: Brandywine (140 assisted living and memory care units) 10800 Potomac Tennis Lane next to ManorCare and Arden Courts; and Artis Senior Living (72 memory care units) 8301 River Road near Sunrise at Fox Hill. It will be interesting to see how marketable the Spectrum units will be given the number of such units already available and under construction in Potomac and nearby, the documented desire of seniors to age in place, and the issues surrounding congregate living facilities that have been tragically underscored during the pandemic.

## Synthetic Turf Disposal

submitted by Carol Van Dam Falk  
WMCCA submitted testimony last week and testified before the Maryland Environment and Transportation Committee via zoom on Wednesday, Feb. 24 in favor of HB0857, which would require manufacturers and owners of synthetic turf and turf infill to file with the Maryland Department of the Environment, disclosing the owner and

location of the field and infill. This after one Montgomery County high school's used-turf field was dumped in a Baltimore County community and another was shipped off halfway around the world to Malaysia, purportedly to be recycled. The following is an excerpt from Carol Falk's testimony:

"Roughly 40,000 scrap tires go into the making of each synthetic turf field, along with hundreds of tons of mixed plastic. That means each synthetic turf field that is either carted off to a landfill or dumped at unmarked locations contains tens of thousands of pounds of plastic material containing PFAS (polyfluoroalkyl substances) and other harmful chemicals, in addition to hundreds of thousands of pounds of pulverized infill of tire or other plastic.

"Every year, more than a thousand of these synthetic turf fields have to be ripped out, (typical lifespan is 8-10 years) and disposed of according to the Synthetic Turf Council, (STC) the industry's leading association.

The STC estimates that 80 million square feet of plastic carpet weighing 40 million pounds and 400 million pounds of infill, usually made of tire waste, are disassembled and it all has to go somewhere. The disturbing fact here is that no one is monitoring, much less regulating where used-synthetic turf fields go when they are removed. Several municipal solid waste disposal facilities in Maryland have said they would not accept used-synthetic turf waste due to the weight and volume that are associated with a single playing field.

"In addition, recycling facilities in this country have rejected synthetic turf fields and infills because it is usually too costly to separate the materials. That means these chem-

ical-laden plastic carpets are either being incinerated, repurposed, or dumped "in ravines, deserts, woods, and empty lots" according to a Fair Warning investigative report, and dumping often happens in lower-income communities. That is a big problem, not only here in Maryland, but everywhere. The direct impact on aquatic life has also been documented in many sources.

"Since no regulations currently exist governing the disposal or recycling of these materials, synthetic turf companies have been known to make unsubstantiated claims regarding reuse, recycling, and disposal of their product at the end of their lifespans, as they have done with officials and parents within Montgomery County Public Schools at "information meetings."

If the Synthetic Turf Council recommends end-of-life chain of custody certification, and it does, why wouldn't Maryland lawmakers support such legislation?

We are hoping Maryland lawmakers agree with us. We will update you on whether HB 857 is favorably reported out of committee.

## Rushing Beltway Expansion Won't Solve Congestion

submitted by Carol Van Dam Falk

Even though the final environmental impact statement is not expected until the Fall, on Jan. 27, 2021 Maryland highway officials announced they are plowing ahead with plans to expand I-495 and I-270, adding 4 toll lanes to each roadway. As currently envisioned, the plan also would include a managed "lane fly-over" cross ramp at River Road that would cross Seven Locks Road and encroach on the historic Moses Hall and Cemetery off Seven Locks Road.

"Alternative 9" will add four High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes: two in each direction: to I-495 between the American Legion Bridge and the I-270 spurs

to I-270 between the Beltway and Interstate 70 in Frederick

In mid-February, MDOT selected Accelerate Maryland Partners, a consortium led by Transurban, to do "predevelopment" work on its \$11 billion-plus 495/I-270 road widening project. As John Stout, the U.S. PIRG transportation advocate wrote in a Washington Post Feb. 2 opinion piece, "The science is clear: Highway expansion doesn't solve traffic congestion. Wider roads mean more drivers. Expanding our highways traps us in our cars, increases harmful air pollution and destroys our environment. Among the wasteful highway boondoggles still moving forward amid the coronavirus pandemic, few would harm local residents' health more or cause greater, irreversible environmental damage than Maryland's Capital Beltway project."

The expansion is opposed by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, environmental activists, the U.S. Navy, and County residents who say the expansion will threaten hundreds of acres of natural parkland and streams and destroy numerous homes.



# BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 3

a free copy of the first book to be discussed! The book club is free and open to all women -- you need not have any existing connection to Second Chance to participate. The book club will be online until it is safe to meet in person.

## LIBRARIES PRESENT WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

Montgomery County Public Libraries will celebrate Women's History Month throughout the month of March. The month-long celebration, "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced," offers programs suitable for adults and residents of all ages, featuring lectures, discussions, and story times. All events are virtual and free.

Events include:

Thursday, March 4; 12 – 1 p.m.

Beyond the 19th: The Equal Rights Amendment

Ranger Susan Philpott of the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument explores the evolution of the ERA--and the concept of equality--over the past century.

Monday, March 8; 2 – 3 p.m.

The Path to Leadership: The Next Chapter; Influential Women in Montgomery County Politics

Claire McDonald, creator of Montgomery History's online exhibit "The Path to Leadership," discusses the influence of Montgomery County women in the political arena pre- and post-suffrage.

Wednesday, March 10; 1 – 2 p.m.

Grit and Gusto: Farmerettes and Suffragettes

On the celebration of Centennial of America's entry into World War I, this new presentation highlights how women in Maryland rallied to new involvement and activism during 1917-1918.

Friday, March 12; 3 – 4 p.m.

The Better Angels: Five Women Who Changed Civil War America

Historian Robert C. Plumb will discuss his new book "The Better Angels: Five Women Who Changed Civil War America" released in March 2020.

Saturday, March 13; 10:30 – 11 a.m.

Family Storytime @ MCPL

Join us for stories about resourceful, adventurous, brave, and downright determined princesses!

Wednesday, March 24; 2 – 3 p.m.

A Tale of Two Counties: The Status of Women in Montgomery County

Dr. Patricia Maclay, Commissioner with the Montgomery County Commission for Women will present an overview of the Commission's work in the community.

Thursday, March 25; 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Women against Slavery: Then and Now - Book Talk: "Speak a Word for Freedom: Women against Slavery"

Women abolitionists have always faced opposition, but they have persevered. The author will highlight the valiant work of several women abolitionists past and present.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY TO RE-OPEN RECREATION CENTERS

Montgomery County Recreation will reopen eight community recreation centers on a limited schedule beginning, Monday, March 1. This means that individuals, or households, may now schedule a time to use the fitness room, gymnasiums, and other rooms without the structure of a class. This is the next step following the successful opening of instructor-led, in-person classes on Feb. 16.

The community recreation centers

[www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

that will open are: Bauer Drive; Damascus; Nancy H. Dacek North Potomac; Jane E. Lawton; Plum Gar; Potomac; Praisner; and White Oak.

Residents must have a Fit N Play Pass to reserve a fitness room or gym activities. A six-month Fit N Play pass is available to County residents, 18 years and older, for \$55. Passes are free for youth, 17 and younger.

## VIETNAM VETERANS DAY MARCH 29

The Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs is honoring dozens of Montgomery County Vietnam War and Vietnam Era veterans with detailed tributes displayed on a special website created by the commission.

The tribute honors the veterans leading up to National Vietnam War Veterans Day, which is observed every year on March 29. The special day recognizes U.S. Armed Forces and Uniformed Services personnel with active duty service between Nov. 1, 1955 and May 15, 1975, regardless of location of service.

The Montgomery Commission on Veterans Affairs website includes photos, military histories and later personal updates of Vietnam veterans who are either originally from the County or who lived in Montgomery after their service. The site can be viewed at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vietnamvetday](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vietnamvetday).

Anyone who would like to share their story or the story of a friend or family member for the website tribute can e-mail [Carly.Clem@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Carly.Clem@montgomerycountymd.gov) and provide the following information:

Servicemember or veteran's name.

Your name (if submitting on behalf of a servicemember or veteran) and your relationship to the individual.

Branch of service and rank.

Years of service.

Brief narrative of their service.

Live in or once lived in Montgomery County. If you attended high school here, name school from where you graduated.

Photo(s) (preferably one during service time and one present day).

## MCPS REPLACING 326 DIESEL SCHOOL BUSES WITH ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUSES

As part of its commitment to sustainability, MCPS is replacing 326 diesel school buses with electric school buses over the next four years.

On Tuesday, Feb. 23, the Montgomery County Board of Education approved a \$1,312,500 four-year contract between MCPS and HET MCPS, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary created by Massachusetts-based Highland Electric Transportation, Inc., for the purpose of this project.

The vendor will invest in the upfront costs of purchasing the electric school buses with the plan to recoup that investment over time through decreasing vehicle prices, less expensive fuel and maintenance savings. The cost to MCPS includes use of the bus, all charging infrastructure, charge management, electricity and maintenance reimbursement.

The total lifetime contract cost for the 326 electric buses, which will eventually replace the current fleet, is \$168,684,990. MCPS expects to cover the cost of the contract over time with funds that otherwise would have been spent purchasing and operating diesel school buses.

**CALENDAR**

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Let us know about an upcoming event**

[connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar)

**Potomac Community Village**  
continues to offer rides to members who need that help and presents many programs for our members.

To learn more about us  
please visit

[www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org](http://www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org)

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Bernstein is pleased to announce that **Joseph M. Brodecki** has again been recognized as a **Washingtonian Top Financial Advisor**

Joe Brodecki cares for clients the same way he looks after family. Before he invests one dollar he listens carefully and takes the time to understand what matters most to you. Joe co-founded Bernstein's DC office after a successful career as a nonprofit executive including leading fundraising that raised \$200 million to create the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Joe specializes in high net worth individuals/families and nonprofit organizations as an integral member of his clients' trusted advisory team of attorneys, accountants and consultants. Multiple times these advisors have successfully nominated Joe as a "Top Financial Advisor" including recognition in January 2021 Washingtonian magazine.

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# Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

## December, 2020 Sales, \$1,310,000~\$1,123,000

IN DECEMBER, 2020, 78 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$4,200,000-\$425,000.

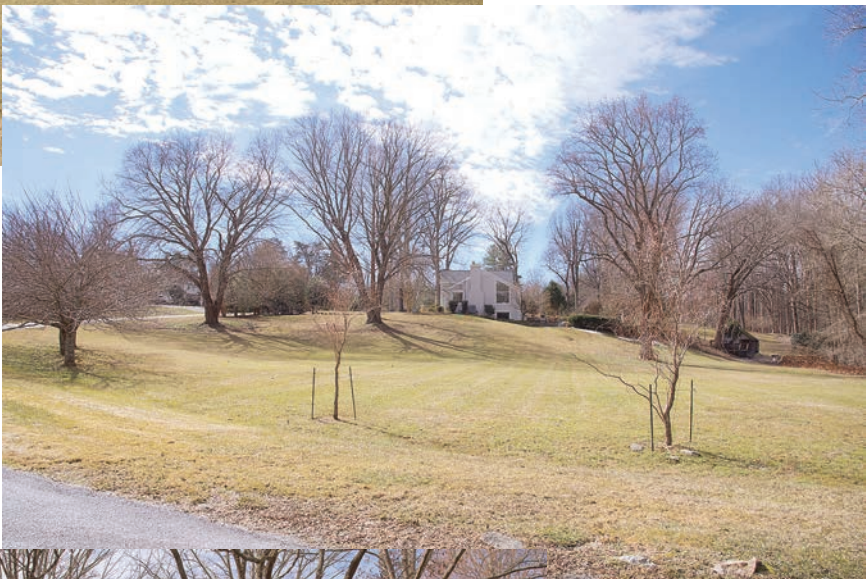


1 12517 Palatine Court — \$1,310,000



7 12500  
Park Potomac Avenue  
#508N  
— \$1,150,000

8 12500  
Park Potomac Avenue  
#608  
— \$1,123,000



2 10801  
Spring Knoll Drive  
— \$1,300,000



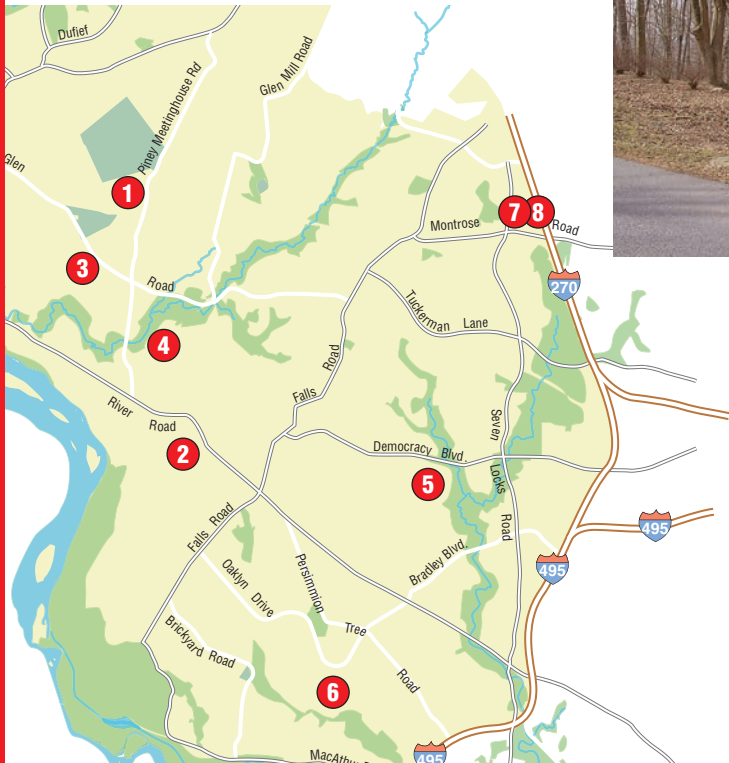
3 11646 Partridge Run Lane  
— \$1,250,000



4 11200 Tara Road — \$1,200,000



6 9453 Turnberry Drive  
— \$1,160,000



Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City.....	Sold Price...	Type.....	Lot AC.	Postal Code ...	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
1 12517 PALATINE CT .....	4...	4...	1	....	POTOMAC	\$1,310,000...	Detached ..	2.00.....	20854 .....	PALATINE .....	12/28/20
2 10801 SPRING KNOLL DR...	4...	3	.....	....	POTOMAC	\$1,300,000...	Detached ..	2.00.....	20854 .....	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	12/01/20
3 11646 PARTRIDGE RUN LN	3...	4...	0	....	POTOMAC	\$1,250,000...	Detached ..	2.15.....	20854 .....	DARNESTOWN OUTSIDE	12/23/20
4 11200 TARA RD .....	6...	4...	2	....	POTOMAC	\$1,200,000...	Detached ..	2.00.....	20854 .....	POTOMAC VIEW ESTS	12/29/20
5 10023 KENDALE RD .....	3...	2...	2	....	POTOMAC	\$1,180,000...	Detached ..	0.49.....	20854 .....	MCAULEY PARK ....	12/04/20
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# A Schedule Can Anchor Your Day

How creating a daily routine can ease anxiety during times of uncertainty.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE ALMANAC

Her days were overwhelmingly stressful. Holly Platt, a Bethesda mother of two, was preparing to sell her home and searching for a new one, home-schooling all while running her full time math tutoring business. She often ran late to appointments or missed them entirely. A friend suggested that she create a daily routine for herself that included blocking off specific time each day to complete tasks.

"Even morning, I pull up my daily calendar and enter yoga for 30 minutes, making and eating breakfast, and walking my dog Leo," she said. "Covid has been hard for everyone, but I hear a lot of people saying now that they are scheduling a specific time for daily activities to force them into a routine."

Platt is not alone in her strategy. Creating a routine – even for those who consider themselves to be whimsical and balk at the idea of strict scheduling -- can benefit from setting aside a specific time to complete at least one or two activities each day.

"Creating a daily routine is fundamental in developing a healthy relationship with one's own needs," said Jennifer Ha, Ph.D., Visiting Professor of Counseling at Marymount University. "Without this regular and intentional mindful attention, your mood and overall mental health can deteriorate, sometimes without one even realizing it."

Part of protecting mental health is having a sense of stability. "As human beings we thrive with a degree of predictability and certainty," added Diana Fuchs, Ph.D., a retired clinical psychologist based in Springfield. "We want to know that we have some control over our

lives and what's going on around us, especially when we have major world pandemic that makes us feel as if the fabric of society is being unraveled."

In fact, studies show that undertaking some activities on a schedule helps to reduce stress during negative life events, including one study found in the Occupational Therapy Journal of Research. "Daily routine gives us a sense of predictability, decreases anxiety related to uncertainty and provides a comfort

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PHOTO COURTESY OF HOLLY PLATT

**Creating a daily routine which includes walking her dog Leo has given Holly Platt a sense of order and peace.**

that no matter how difficult the day might be, some things will be predictable and as we prefer them," said Dr. Gail Saltz, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the NY Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell School of Medicine. "This may be especially true for people that find change anxiety-producing and find transitions difficult."

From improving sleep quality to pledging to drink more water each day, a routine can improve one's overall well-being. "An exercise routine is healthy physically, but also mentally by decreasing stress and improving mood," said Saltz. "Having predictable work hours, separate from other hours, ... decreases ... likelihood of burn out."

Though the end result might be similar for most people, creating a routine is a highly individualized process, said Fuchs. "It can be helpful to visualize our day by writing out our daily routine," she said. "For example, 'At 3pm I get to leave work and see my

son. At 8pm, I get to snuggle up with a cup of tea and read a good book."

Treat a routine like a medical appointment that you schedule in advance and commit to keeping, suggest Fuchs. "No doubt most of us already have some form of routine when it comes to self-care, brushing teeth and taking a shower, for example," she said. "Break down your day into smaller, manageable time frames. 'Ultimately you want to construct a time frame that works best for you.'"

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## Back to Abnormal



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Well, those last two weeks were kind of fun (comparatively speaking), to the dozen or so previous weeks. 'Fun', when you're a cancer patient experiencing side effects from treatment, is a moderation, absence even of said effects. My recent two-week break from taking my thyroid cancer medication was due to those side effects. Mentioned in a previous column, I was having balance and dizziness issues. In short, I couldn't walk or drive - for that matter, in a straight line. After consulting with my oncologist who deferred to the oncology pharmacist who's been monitoring/adjusting my medication dosage, it was agreed that I should cease and desist until my symptoms subsided. As of this past Thursday, my symptoms had mostly disappeared so I have resumed my treatment, albeit at a lower dose. (This will be the second reduction in my dose since we've been trying to find the sweet spot where the tumors are stable and the side effects are manageable.)

Actually, these last two weeks of being side-effect free was more than just a break in the action. It was a revelation of sorts. The infirmity/muscle weakness I was having was not due to the older age I have become. It was the medication. During this past fortnight, I began to feel like myself again. I could get in and out of chairs without pacing myself. I could roll over in bed and pull up the covers without a fuss. And of course, I could walk and drive a straight line. It was wonderful. When one is in the midst of a cancer diagnosis/existence, any indication that your bodily functions are performing "within normal parameters," to quote Lt. Comm. Data from "Star Trek: Next Generation" is somewhere between reassuring and life affirming.

Generally speaking, we all know that cancer doesn't make its diagnoses big and strong. Realistically speaking, you're happy with normal. Conversely, when 'normal' isn't how you feel, it's hard to portend that death/disability is not fast-approaching. Moreover, it's an especially slippery slope when one has been given a "terminal" diagnosis originally and more recently had that diagnosis modified to include a second type of cancer: papillary thyroid cancer stage IV, to go along with my pre-existing non small lung cancer, also stage IV. One has to fight emotionally to keep from getting lost/going down that rabbit hole. Any good news/an unexpected positive reaction with your disease, like your mind and body returning to pre-cancer normalcy is about as good as it gets. So even though I'm back on the medicine, I feel empowered, upbeat, hopeful even. To that end/continuation of life, I am not going to worry yet that the reduced dose will allow my tumors to grow. I'm just not going to go there. What would be the point? I'll find out soon enough, a few days after my next CT scan in mid-March. Until then, I am going to bask in my semi return to glory.

Speaking of 'glory,' as a cancer patient, one has to grasp and hold on to anything of emotional, physical, psychological or spiritual value. In addition, what information you receive which is not particularly positive, in that it's premature/unproven/not corroborated by science, has to be compartmentalized. As with Jerry Seinfeld, you have to put it in the vault and almost throw away the key. Allowing negative possibilities or unpalatable scenarios to take root in your brain really does a disservice to your potential survival. Ever since I was diagnosed with a "terminal" form of cancer, I've tried not to put the cart in front of the horse, if you know what I mean? The diagnosis was bad enough on its own. I didn't/don't need to make it worse by piling on. If and when my life becomes more challenging/more cancer centric than it is now, I'll deal with it. I don't need to bring it on any sooner than is absolutely necessary. I've had 12 years I wasn't expecting since receiving an initial "13 month to two" year prognosis. Twelve years later, I don't see any reason to change my approach.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for  
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