

Potomac ALMANAC

Six Bedrooms with Ensuite Baths for Visiting Family

HOMELIFESTYLE, PAGE 7

Who Is Getting Vaccinated?

PAGE 3

Designer Tracy Morris created spaces in this Potomac home to allow the owners to host their grandchildren and adult children.

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MARCH 10-16, 2021

REAL ESTATE SALES, 2 ❖ KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 7

PHOTO BY ANGIE SECKINGER

Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



1 10721 Red Barn Lane — \$4,250,000



4 10827 Lockland Road — \$2,050,000



5 9912 Scotch Broom Court — \$1,310,000

January, 2021 Top Sales

IN JANUARY, 2021, 45 POTOMAC HOMES
SOLD BETWEEN \$4,250,000-\$386,000.



2 9911 Logan Drive — \$2,825,000



7 10107 Gary Road — \$1,785,000

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

1	10721 RED BARN LN.....	6... 8 ... 1	....	POTOMAC .	\$4,250,000 ...	Detached..	5.00.....	20854.	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	01/22/21
2	9911 LOGAN DR.....	6... 6 ... 2	....	POTOMAC .	\$2,825,000 ...	Detached..	0.88.....	20854	WILLIAMSBURG ESTS	01/27/21
3	11216 RIVER VIEW DR	5... 5 ... 2	....	POTOMAC .	\$2,210,000 ...	Detached..	1.70.....	20854.....	MARWOOD	01/22/21
4	10827 LOCKLAND RD	8... 9 ... 3	....	POTOMAC .	\$2,050,000 ...	Detached..	2.41.....	20854.....	POTOMAC	01/26/21
5	9912 SCOTCH BROOM CT..	5... 5 ... 2	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,925,000 ...	Detached..	1.22.....	20854	LAKE NORMANDY ESTS	01/05/21
6	9901 CARMELITA DR.....	5... 4 ... 2	....	POTOMAC .	\$1,920,000 ...	Detached..	0.60.....	20854.....	MCAULEY PARK....	01/19/21
7	10107 GARY RD	6... 5 ... 2	POTOMAC .	\$1,785,000 ...	Detached..	1.26.....	20854...	POTOMAC HILLS...	01/29/21
8	8945 ABBEY TER.....	5... 5 ... 2	POTOMAC .	\$1,720,000 ...	Detached..	0.48.....	20854.....	AVENEL	01/29/21

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8 8945 Abbey Terrace — \$1,720,000

State of the County Under Covid

BY KEN MOORE
THE ALMANAC

County Executive Marc Elrich chose to give his annual state of the county address last Friday, March 5, exactly one year since the first cases of Covid were reported in Montgomery County.

"That day, the Governor declared a state of emergency, and the state of emergency continues today," said Elrich. "Covid has shaken up everything in our lives, everything."

More than 63,898 Montgomery County residents have tested positive for Covid-19, some with lingering effects. More than 1,300 people have died. "We have lost too many of our residents to this virus, it has taken its greatest toll on our elderly population and communities of color," he said.

"The steps we have taken to protect public health have been hard on all of us. It has been difficult for our businesses, for our non-profits, our educators, our children and their parents. These restrictions have been painful but were necessary to save lives," he said. "Every decision that opened things up to allow more interactions between people also allowed more routes for the virus to spread, and minimizing that spread and its deadly

One year later:

- ❖ More than 1,380 people in Montgomery County have died
- ❖ 63,898 have had covid, some with lingering effects
- ❖ Businesses face restrictions and tough economy
- ❖ Many families are threatened by eviction

consequences have been our goal."

The case counts in Montgomery County are lower than surrounding jurisdictions and jurisdictions statewide as well as nationwide. Some people have asked Elrich to reduce restrictions because numbers have lowered since the peak of the last wave.

"I try to remind them that those numbers are low because we implemented the necessary restrictions and they are low because of our residents who have been willing to follow the guidelines even as their lives have been severely disrupted," said Elrich.

Earlier in the week, during his weekly conference with health officer Travis Gayles, Elrich pointed to new variants from Brazil, South Africa, England, New York and California that aren't as responsive to vaccines. He urged people to refrain from travel during Spring Break, Easter, Passover and other holidays.

"Throughout this pandemic, you, our residents, have been reasonable, understanding and engaged. Even when you haven't

agreed with some of the tough decisions that have been made, you have done your best to follow the guidelines and keep our community safe."

The county has provided more than \$70 million in relief. "We've tried to help our many businesses who are struggling to keep their doors open," he said. And \$50 million in relief for families who have lost income because of the pandemic.

But the need is greater than the county can provide alone, said Elrich. Help from the state and federal level is "imperative to ensuring that we were able to recover from the pandemic and rebuild our economy," he said. "Our businesses and hard hit residents need an economic stimulus in order to prevent business closures and evictions."

"Covid has demanded that all of us change the way we do things," he said.

Vaccination clinic at
Richard Montgomery
High School last week.



Who Is Getting Vaccinated? Communities hardest hit by the pandemic have been last to get the vaccine.

BY KEN MOORE
THE ALMANAC

Black people make up 19 percent of the County's population but account for only eight percent of people pre-registering for vaccinations to combat COVID; Latino people also make up one-fifth of the county's population but make up just nine percent of people pre-registering. White people who make up 43 percent of the population account for 66 percent of those pre-registering to receive vaccinations.

"Black residents are dying at higher rates and we're not getting vaccinated. Our Latino population has also been disproportionately affected by this disease," said Will Jawando, who with the rest of County Council wrote to Gov. Larry Hogan last week, highlighting the racial inequities in vaccine distribution.

"When you look within the county, you see real serious disparities," said County Executive Marc Elrich,



Montgomery County Council with Dr. Travis Gayles, county health officer, and Dr. Earl Stoddard, head of emergency management, discussing vaccinations.

a couple days before giving his virtual state of the county address on Friday, March 5, the grim one year anniversary of Covid in Montgomery County.

And the actual distribution of the vaccine across the state from the Maryland Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccination Dashboard shows worse disparities, according to Montgomery County documents.

"We need a statewide approach that factors in race and ethnicity. We want everyone to have access and it needs to be done in a targeted way," said Jawando.

"Unfortunately, we are seeing the same trend of racial inequity in both the vaccine distributions and pre-registration system," according to the letter from the full Council.

Among people aged 45-54, Black and Latino death rates are

at least six times higher than that for whites. Black people are dying from COVID-19 at approximately the same rate as white people who are more than 10 years older, according to data from the Brookings Institute.

"People of color not only die from COVID-19 at the highest rates, they die younger," according to the Council letter.

The latest CDC data on

COVID-19 deaths and projections from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluations estimate that U.S. life expectancy has dropped by 1.1 years. However, life expectancy for Black people dropped 3.6 years and 2.5 years for Latino people.

The Council wants all vaccine distributors to be fully transparent and report distributions based on race, age and zip code on a weekly basis.

"Many retail outlets and pharmacies have no protocol or accountability for racial equity in their distribution process. The first-come, first-serve system that is used is inherently tilted towards those with access," according to the Council. "It is clear that our vaccine registration systems must immediately be revised to include a prioritization based on race and ethnicity."

The Council wants the Department of Health and Human services and county government to

SEE WHO IS GETTING, PAGE 5



Multiple concurrent, conflicting and overlapping proposals concerning police in schools.

Some of the people who testified about school resource officers.

Students Request Mental Health, Not Police

BY KEN MOORE
THE ALMANAC

With a new initiative introduced by Councilmember Nancy Navarro last week, four different proposals on the School Resource Officer program are being considered concurrently.

One would eliminate police assigned to schools altogether, citing data and concrete evidence of the disproportionate treatment of students of color; one attempts to combat discriminatory treatment with more training and protocols but allows the school superintendent to decide; the School Board, which was to make a recommendation in January, is now scheduled to make its own recommendation in May after getting its own opportunity to hear more feedback from students and parents. The school system has already increased the scope of the restorative justice program that has demonstrated effectiveness in pilot schools; council recently allocated \$750,000 to expand the program into 40 middle schools. There were three public hearings last week -- two before the school board and one before the council.

Navarro proposed a new approach last Friday, March 5, after hearing a significant majority of those who commented in the public hearings ask the Council to remove police from schools.

"The events of the past several months offer us a real opportunity to re-imagine and implement a public safety vehicle that de-emphasizes punitive law enforcement within our schools, and instead provides

Black students account for 45 percent of arrests and 43 percent of suspensions even though they account for only 22 percent of the student body. "Low-income students and students with disabilities were also over-represented among student suspensions; boys and students with disabilities were also over-represented among student arrests."

—County Council's Office of Legislative Oversight

appropriate mental health and mentoring supports for our children," said Navarro, a former member of Montgomery County's Board of Education.

Her bill would eliminate the current SRO model and focus instead on the mental health needs of students.

According to Council documents, "under the umbrella of racial equity and social justice," her proposal would:

- ❖ Move SROs out of school facilities creating a team cluster model.

- Include positive youth development initiatives and mental health supports in the cluster model with appropriate training for team members.

- ❖ Define and restrict the offenses for which school personnel can call the law enforcement team.

- ❖ Enhance school-based services and stu-

dent-centered supports including counselors, parent community coordinators, Street Outreach Network, Wellness centers, Linkages to Learning, and other student-centered programs.

- ❖ In addition, there would be an awareness program for school personnel to make sure they are informed of the availability of student support services.

JOINT SESSIONS of the council's education committee and public safety committee were already to focus on the first two bills.

Bill 46-20, School Resources Officers – Prohibited was introduced by Councilmembers Will Jawando and Hans Riemer and co-sponsored by Council President Tom Hucker on Nov. 17, 2020. The Bill prohibits Montgomery County Police Department from deploying school resource officers to work full-

time in schools. Those advocating for the removal of officers from schools believe the \$3 million to fund the program could provide counselors, social workers, and health professionals to better help students.

Bill 7-21, Police – School Resource Officer – Building Positive Law Enforcement Relationships Within Schools was introduced by Councilmembers Craig Rice and Sidney Katz on Feb. 2, 2021. This Bill would authorize the Chief of Police to assign a law enforcement officer to work as a school resource officer in a county school upon the request of the superintendent of schools, with a requirement for enhanced training for a school resource officer. This bill would require the County to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Montgomery County Public Schools governing the assignment of a school resource officer.

According to council documents, this bill would "continue funding the SRO program and add additional training requirements for SRO's that include de-escalation techniques, mediation and conflict resolution, child and adolescent development, gang prevention and response, truancy prevention, trauma-informed response practices, and restorative justice. "These training topics align with a law enforcement goal to change student behavior rather than to change policing behavior and practices to engender greater student trust and community support. It remains unclear how the training requirements for Bill 7-21 align with current SRO training requirements," according to Montgomery County's Office of

SEE STUDENTS, PAGE 5

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Students Request

FROM PAGE 4
Legislative Oversight.

IN A PAST contentious committee meeting, Craig Rice promised Jawando that for every person Jawando finds against the SRO program he can find one that supports the program. But almost all people testifying before the Board of Education last Tuesday and Thursday, March 2 and March 4, including students, alumni, teachers, juvenile justice attorneys and advocates, want the program to be eliminated.

They cite statistics acknowledged by the school system that Black students account for 45 percent of arrests and 43 percent of suspensions even though they account for only 22 percent of the student body.

"Low-income students and students with disabilities were also over-represented among student suspensions; boys and students with disabilities were also over-represented among student arrests," according to the council's Office of Legislative Oversight.

People who want the program to continue testified last Thursday, March 4, before the County Council, including a past and present high school principal, the state's attorney's office, some PTA presidents and a student at Clarksburg High School who alerted the officer in his school about a student who came to the high school with a gun. But most who testified called for ending the SRO program.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S Office of Legislative Oversight concluded that Rice's bill to improve relationships with law enforcement officials in schools "would not advance racial equity and social justice because it would not prioritize reducing the statistical disparities in student arrests or suspensions by race, income, or disability status."

"There are two questions to consider regarding SRO programs," according to the Office of Legislative Oversight. "Do SRO programs advance safety for all students without unfairly targeting some student subgroups? Are SRO programs the best use of scarce resources for improving school climates and student outcomes?"

"A review of the research suggests "no" responses to both questions," the Office of Legislative Oversight concluded.

"Further, prior research suggests that school-police partnerships, even those aligned with best practices, yield school discipline and arrest rates that disparately impact Black and Latinx students as well as students with disabilities."

Five of MCPS' 25 high schools accounted for nearly half (49 percent) of all student arrests between 2016-17 and 2018-19: Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School (72 arrests); Watkins Mill High School (62 arrests); Northwest High School (48 arrests); Paint Branch High School (42 arrests); and Clarksburg High School (39 arrests).

Who Is Getting Vaccinated?

FROM PAGE 3

coordinate on the selection of a mass vaccine site in Montgomery County.

"If we are provided the vaccines, we will open up a mass vaccination site in the County.

We're ready to do it," said Elrich, at last week's press conference.

This week, Council president Tom Hucker and vice president Gabe Alborno reiterated the need for a mass vaccination site in Montgomery County.

"It is imperative that our COVID-19

response provides equitable access to health care that includes a vaccine registration and distribution system that prioritizes our communities of color who are most negatively impacted. We cannot wait any longer; the time to act is now," according to the Council.

On Tuesday, March 9, Montgomery County reported that 187,164 people have received their first vaccination (17.8 percent of the population) and 93,895 people have been fully vaccinated (8.9 percent of the population).

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.

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:

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 6



Hello Spring!

Potomac Community Village

Learn more about us at

www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org



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

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Faith Ringgold Monographic Exhibition to Open at Glenstone

Glenstone will be the only U.S. venue for Faith Ringgold, marking the museum's first presentation of a touring exhibition.

Glenstone Museum in Potomac will be the only U.S. museum to host a major monographic exhibition of more than 70 works by American artist Faith Ringgold (b. 1930, Harlem, NY), including nine from the Glenstone collection, as part of a two-year international tour organized by the Serpentine in London. Titled Faith Ringgold, the traveling show will open at Glenstone this spring, following a presentation at the Bildmuseet in Umeå, Sweden that closed in January. One of the artist's largest survey exhibitions to date, the Glenstone presentation will feature approximately 30 additional works on loan not exhibited earlier in the tour.

Glenstone is currently operating as an outdoor-only experience. Reopening dates and plans for indoor experiences, including the Faith Ringgold exhibition, will be announced soon.

"Faith Ringgold's powerful depictions of the African American experience are as arresting today as they were when she first started making art nearly sixty years ago," said Emily Wei Rales, director and co-founder of Glenstone. "Her art has had a strong presence at the museum ever since we displayed one of her iconic paintings in our inaugural installation at the Pavilions in 2018, so it only seemed fitting for Faith Ringgold to be the first touring exhibition hosted at Glenstone."

Over the course of her career, Ringgold has worked in a variety of media, most notably quilting, painting, performance, and soft sculpture. She is the author of several children's books. Ringgold is one of 33 artists inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters recently.

The works on view in Faith Ringgold highlight both the artist's range and her incomparable ability to focus the act of artmaking into a critical agent of social change. The exhibition features key examples from the full spectrum of the artist's oeuvre, beginning with her early 1960s paintings and the political posters that she made in response to the increasing racial violence that was tearing at the seams of American society.

Later, Ringgold restricted her palette to dark colors and Black skin tones, all but

abandoning white paint. During a flurry of creative momentum in the 1970s and 1980s, storytelling and performance became increasingly vital to the artist's practice. Ringgold moved away from traditional painting and began incorporating the fabric arts into her work, creating three-dimensional sculpture, multimedia performances, and finally, paintings on unstretched canvases stitched with fabric borders that were inspired by Tibetan tankas. This technique eventually developed into her signature story quilts, combining her affinity for detailed narratives with the vibrant tradition of African American quilting.

Faith Ringgold was initiated by the Serpentine and curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Melissa Blanchflower. For its presentation at Glenstone, the exhibition is curated by Emily Wei Rales.

"An extraordinary painter, activist, and storyteller, she documents and bears witness to major moments in modern history," said Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director, Serpentine. "It is hard to believe the Serpentine exhibition was Faith's first European institutional show. She is among the most important figurative and political painters of our time. ...

"As Faith herself says: Raise your voice. Unite. Tell your story. Do the work and keep doing it."

The exhibition debuted at the Serpentine on June

6, 2019 and closed on September 8, 2019. It was on view at the Bildmuseet from August 27, 2020 to January 10. After delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the presentation at Glenstone Museum will open this spring.

Glenstone will publish an expanded second edition of the Serpentine's 2019 catalogue, which is available for pre-order on Glenstone's website. Starting today and through the run of show, all proceeds from Faith Ringgold-related sales on the website and at Glenstone's Bookstore will be donated to the artist's visual arts non-profit organization, the Anyone Can Fly Foundation. More information about the foundation can be found at www.anyonecanflyfoundation.org.

About Glenstone

Glenstone, a museum of modern and



Faith Ringgold; the only U.S. venue of the touring exhibition will be at Glenstone. The American Collection #6: The Flag is Bleeding #2, 1997

The works on view in Faith Ringgold highlight both the artist's range and her incomparable ability to focus the act of artmaking into a critical agent of social change.

contemporary art, is integrated into nearly 300 acres of gently rolling pasture and unspoiled woodland in Potomac, Montgomery County, 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. The museum includes its original building, the Gallery, as

well as additional structures opened in its 2018 expansion: the Arrival Hall (LEED platinum), the Pavilions, and the Café (both LEED gold).

Glenstone is currently open as an outdoor only experience, Thursdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors are invited to explore the grounds or participate in self-guided sculpture tours. Admission to Glenstone is free and visits can be scheduled online at: www.glenstone.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

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.

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ner 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



Interior designer Tracy Morris used dark wood cabinetry and a soapstone backsplash in this Potomac home to create a look that reflected the owner's Italian heritage.

Potomac Home Gets Family Friendly Remodel

Six bedrooms each with its own bathroom.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Having relocated 18 times in 30 years, a local couple had enough design experience to have ideas in place when they moved into their Potomac, Maryland home. The couple asked Tracy Morris of Tracy Morris Design to bring their vision to fruition. They wanted to make sure that their newest house would allow them to host family members comfortably.

"They wanted a place where their adult children and grandchild to visit," said Morris. "The husband and wife were high school sweethearts and they were so kind and easy to work with."

Originally, the couple has set out to make only minor changes, but in the end, the project evolved into a complete overhaul.

"The wife wanted the new kitchen to reflect her Italian heritage."

— Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design

"They kept adding things they wanted to change and the project grew bigger, said builder Shayne Cochran, owner of Accent General Contracting. "We gutted the kitchen, bathrooms and master suite. By the time that we were done, we'd almost changed the entire house."

One of biggest overhauls was the kitchen which now includes dark wood cabinetry and a soapstone backsplash. "It was originally an odd galley style kitchen," said Morris. "The wife wanted the new kitchen to reflect her Italian heritage. The trick with that was using more earthy materials."

The home has six bedrooms and eight bathrooms. The original master suite had a large bedroom and a small bathroom. The new space in a sitting area that overlooks the yard.

"The couple wanted a smaller bedroom



PHOTOS BY ANGIE SECKINGER

The master bathroom, designed by Tracy Morris, includes a freestanding tub which allows the owner to take relaxing baths.



Designer Tracy Morris created spaces in this Potomac home to allow the owners to host their grandchildren and adult children.



Soft neutral colors offer a sense of serenity in this Potomac home by interior designer Tracy Morris.

and a larger bathroom," said Morris. "We added Kohler accessories and a free-standing tub with bubblejets. That was big for the wife."

Each bedroom in the home has its own bathroom and there are two powder rooms.

"This is one of my all-time favorite projects," said Morris.

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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"Cancerversary"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I realize I'm cancer-centric, especially in these columns, but for some reason that centrality didn't acknowledge my February 27th cancer anniversary. That date, in 2009, is when I was originally diagnosed with stage IV, non small cell lung cancer, the "terminal" kind. I remember it well. It was a Thursday. It was the initial Team Lourie meeting with my soon-to-be new best friend: my oncologist. A week or so prior, I had received the first indication - from my primary care physician, that my life was about to change: the results from the previous surgical biopsy confirmed a malignancy. It's rather an awkward dynamic to meet someone - for the first time, who immediately becomes the person who will control, manage and in effect, be responsible for whether you live or die, and for how long. From then on, he becomes the most important person in your life; a person who is now entrusted with your most precious asset: your health.

It was not an unfamiliar experience for me meeting someone cold and attempting to build a rapport. As a long-time salesman, that was my modus operandi. Whether in person or over the telephone, I have regularly been engaged in this kind of pursuit: trying to create an environment of trust and honesty in order to reach a shared goal. Previously, it was about making a sale; now it was about understanding my options and agreeing on a course of treatment. However, the one major difference between these two pursuits, was control, or rather the lack thereof. Cancer was now in control as compared to my life as a salesman where I chose it because it allowed me to be in control: who I called, when I called, scheduling appointments, et cetera. Soon it became apparent, I was no longer in Kansas anymore. I was in the hands - figuratively speaking, of my oncologist - in Maryland: my new boss. If I wanted to live beyond the "13 month to two year" prognosis I was given, I would have to be as attentive and compliant as possible.

In spite of our shotgun-type of relationship, we have persevered together, which has enabled yours truly to acknowledge, albeit a week or so later, an amazing achievement: 12 years and still living. Not that my circumstances have become de rigueur, hardly; especially since the thyroid cancer diagnosis of late has put into question my original non small cell lung cancer stage IV diagnosis. Apparently, after making a few inquiries, it appears unlikely that we can litigate the past any more than we can guarantee the future. It seems that cancer, whichever type, will be a part of my life and likely a part of my death as well.

I'm surprised how it's (my life) all turned out and grateful to whomever for what I'm not entirely sure. Nevertheless, somehow it's worked and here I am: alive and reasonably well. Not cancer free and never to be cured of my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer; still, it's a living and it sure beats a dying. Treatment and scans and all will continue, but so what. Originally it appeared my die was cast, but as it has happened, not nearly so fast.

All of which is nothing new, really. A cancer diagnosis is all about change, ceding control, and hanging on for dear life as you will be up and down and all-round, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Expecting a normal kind of pattern to your future life ended the moment a biopsy confirms a malignancy. Either you adjust to the vagaries of your cancer life or you will die having failed. I think I have succeeded beyond my wildest expectations. So much so that I didn't even acknowledge my "cancerversary" last week. I guess I needed the week off from worrying about it and didn't even realize it. I have to admit though, it felt good not focusing on it for a change. Almost like I was a "normal" person.

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

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