

At-large councilmember Will Jawando on the Glen Echo Carousel. The park celebrated the 100th anniversary of the carousel and the 60th anniversary of the park's desegregation. "I took my first ever ride today, a reminder of how far we've come and how far we have to go," Jawando said, via twitter, at the reopening of the ride last Saturday, May 1.

Potomac

ALMANAC

Much To Celebrate At Glen Echo

News, Page 4

Trees Create Havoc in Windstorm

News, Page 3

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Potomac REAL ESTATE

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IN FEBRUARY, 2021, 48 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD
BETWEEN \$2,599,000-\$305,000.



4 1582 Kimblewick Road — \$748,000



1 13611 Maidstone Lane
— \$777,000



3 11527 Deborah Drive — \$750,000



7 7916 Stable Way
— \$409,000



Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City.....	Sold Price...	Type.....	Lot	AC.	Postal	Code ...	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
1 13611 MAIDSTONE LN.....	7...	5...	1	....	POTOMAC	.... \$777,000	.... Detached ..	2.00.....		20854.....	RIVERS EDGE	.....	02/12/21
2 1481 DUNSTER LN	4...	2...	1	....	POTOMAC	.... \$777,000	.... Detached ..	0.21.....		20854..	POTOMAC WOODS	.....	02/19/21
3 11527 DEBORAH DR.....	4...	2...	1	....	POTOMAC	.... \$750,000	.... Detached ..	0.29.....		20854..	REGENCY ESTATES	.....	02/26/21
4 1582 KIMBLEWICK RD	4...	3...	1	....	POTOMAC	.... \$748,000	.... Detached ..	0.34.....		20854..	POTOMAC WOODS	.....	02/24/21
5 10666 MUIRFIELD DR.....	3...	2...	2	....	POTOMAC	.... \$650,000	.... Townhouse	0.03.....		20854..	INVERNESS NORTH	.....	02/18/21
6 7717 SCOTLAND DR #P-4.....	4...	3...	1	....	POTOMAC	.... \$470,000	.... Townhouse	0.04.....		20854	SCOTLAND COMMUNITY	.....	02/26/21
7 7916 STABLE WAY	2...	2	.....		POTOMAC	.... \$409,000	.... Townhouse	.....		20854.	RIVER FALLS CODM	.....	02/24/21
8 12655 TOBYTOWN DR	3...	1		POTOMAC \$305,000 Townhouse	0.00.....		20854	DARNESTOWN OUTSIDE	02/15/21

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WEEK IN NUMBERS (WIN)

BY KEN MOORE
THE ALMANAC

See montgomerycountymd.gov/vision-zero/2030plan.html.

881

Miles of connected multi-use trails are planned for the DMV region as part of the Capital Trails Network. "When we finish building the Capital Trails Network, nearly four million Washington area residents will live in close proximity to a trail and have easy access to an equitable, sustainable transportation system," according to Capital Trails Network plans.

Currently, the Capital Trails Network offers 479 miles of completed trails throughout the region and the network has 152 planned projects, totaling 402 miles of segments or connectors still to be built.

Montgomery County has 113.3 miles of built trails that will be part of the network, and 42.5 more miles are planned to be built.

The Capital Trails Coalition is a collaboration of public and private organizations, agencies, and volunteers working to advance completion of an interconnected network of multi-use trails for the Washington metropolitan area. Started in 2015, the Coalition has worked with each jurisdiction to identify planned trails that, once complete, will connect the region.

Planners believe that the \$1.09 billion investment to connect the 881 miles between Maryland, Washington and Virginia, will result in a \$2.05 billion economic impact, including \$4.9 million saved on gasoline expenses each year, 19,580 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions prevented each year, \$517 million in public health savings each year, 2.2 million of gasoline saved from being used each year, and 49.1 million less vehicle miles travelled each year. See <https://www.capitaltrailscoalition.org/>

1,562

People responded to the County Executive Marc Elrich's Vision Zero Plan, which seeks to eliminate all traffic, pedestrian and bicycling fatalities by 2030. Between 2015 to 2019, police reported 1,419 collisions that resulted in 1,461 serious injuries and 163 fatalities to drivers, passengers, pedestrians and bicyclists. The county averaged 30 fatal collisions a year from 2015 to 2019. The number of serious injury crashes for people biking and walking increased from 72 in 2015 to 80 in 2019. Fatal collisions declined from 2015 to 2017, but increased since 2017. People biking and walking represented 45% of fatal collisions.

"The number of serious and fatal injuries remains higher than we can accept," said County Executive Elrich. The Vision Zero concept for roadway safety originated in Sweden in 1997 and is credited for making that country's roads some of the safest in the world—even with increases in driving, walking, and biking. Vision Zero has been adopted by more than 40 jurisdictions in the United States. Montgomery County is one of the first counties in the United States to adopt a Vision Zero initiative.

553,448

People in the county (52.7 percent of residents) who have received at least their first dose vaccination, as of Monday, May 3. 383,332 residents have been fully vaccinated, 36.5 percent of county residents, according to the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services.

12.75

Percent of Black people who have received at least their first vaccination, even though Black people account for 18.68 percent of the population. Hispanic people are also underserved; they have received 13.9 percent of vaccinations, even though they account for 20.05 percent of the county's population, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

49

New Covid cases in the county reported Monday, May 3 by the Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services. The cumulative number of covid cases in the county is 69,964, including 1,866 in the 20854 zip code; 1,477 people in the county, including 63 people in the 20854 zip code, have died since the pandemic began.

54.16

Percent of vaccinations have been given to women (44.91 to men) in the county. Women account for 49 percent of the population.

60

When 60 percent of the population has received at least one dose of the Covid vaccine, the county will increase gathering limits to 250 people indoors and no limits outdoors. Now that the county has passed 50 percent of the population receiving a vaccination, gathering limits have increased to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors. When 60 percent of the population has received at least one dose of the vaccine, food establishments and religious facilities can move to 75 percent of maximum capacity; sports will increase capacity for participants and spectators to 250 people indoors and no limit outdoors and may engage in play with teams from outside Washington, D.C., Maryland or Virginia. And convention and banquet facilities will be increased to 50 percent of the facility's maximum capacity per State restrictions.

1

Person can make a difference for county roads, streams, stormwater ponds and eventually our rivers and waterways. Sign up to Plog at the Department of Environmental Protection website at <https://mygreenmontgomery.org/2021/greenfest-plogging-challenge/> and re-

SEE WEEK IN NUMBERS, PAGE 7

NEWS



PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

Wind gusts up to 60 mile per hour toppled pines at River Falls on Friday, May 5, 2021 on top of these unfortunate cars.

Fault!

Wind gusts toppled two white pines on top of two cars at River Falls tennis courts last Friday, April 30, a sight common around Potomac and the county on Friday after winds reached 60 miles per hour.

Elsewhere, Pete Piringer, county fire and rescue public information officer, posted photos of:

A large tree that fell on a house at Newington and Marengo roads in Bethesda and a "less than hot" tin roof that blew off a house on Golden Ash Way in Kentlands.

Crews from Montgomery County Fire and Rescue respond to more than 100 calls for service, mostly weather related, that included a couple of brush fires, a few collisions and some medical calls.

River Falls Community Center Association removed the two fallen trees as well as two additional trees that appeared to be leaning precariously after Friday's storm.

— KEN MOORE, THE ALMANAC



PHOTOS TWITTER PETE PRINGER @MCFRSPIO

A metal roof blew off a house on Golden Ash Way in Kentlands during Friday's



A large tree fell on a house in Bethesda during Friday's windstorm..

100th Anniversary of Glen Echo's Carousel



The Dentzel's Carousel Company installed Glen Echo Park's carousel, one of 135 functioning antique carousels in the country. On May 1, members of the County Council and Maryland's General Assembly, along with Rep. Jamie Raskin and County Executive Marc Elrich, celebrated the 100th anniversary of the carousel, and its reopening.



Del. Marc Korman (D-16) at the reopening of the Dentzel Carousel, which was installed in 1921.

The Almanac's calendar of events portends to bloom with lifting of restrictions as more county residents get vaccinated. On Tuesday, May 4, 2021, the county's Department of Health and Human services reported that 53.9 percent of Montgomery County residents have had at least one vaccination and 38.2 percent of residents have completed their vaccination doses.

The Glen Echo Park Carousel reopened to the public on May 1, 2021 and will be open on Saturdays and Sundays during May from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Memorial Day. See <https://glenechopark.org/> for ticket information.

"Due to capacity restrictions, tickets for each time slot are limited. We encourage all visitors to purchase tickets in advance to ensure that you can ride," according to Glen Echo Park's website.

THE ANTIQUE CAROUSEL is one of 135 functioning antique carousels in the country. The Dentzel's Carousel Company installed Glen Echo Park's carousel in 1921; the historic ride features 52 animals, 40 horses, four rabbits, four ostriches, one giraffe, one deer, one lion and one tiger.

The carousel is one of the only remaining historic rides from the

amusement park era at Glen Echo Park. It is ridden by more than 50,000 people each year.

In 2021, the carousel celebrates its 100th Anniversary in the Park. Last Saturday, May 1, 2021, members of Montgomery County's Council and Maryland's General Assembly celebrated on the historic ride, now open to the public again.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY students helped end segregation at the park for the 1961 season after leading successful protests in 1960.

In 1970, slated to be sold after the private Glen Echo Amusement Park was closed in 1968, the Glen Echo Park carousel was saved by a group of local citizens, led by Town of Glen Echo resident Nancy Long. Private citizens and foundations donated funds in support of a twenty-year restoration.

Josiah Henson Park

MontgomeryParks new historic site, Josiah Henson Museum and Park is also open from Friday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"My Name is Josiah Henson," is a 12 minute film that begins a self-guided tour of the newly opened Josiah Henson Museum and Park. Museum exhibits tell the story of Rev. Henson's early life located inside the historic Ri-

ley/Bolten House and attached log kitchen.

Josiah Henson Museum and Park, is open Friday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Take the virtual tour: <https://t.co/41ib044pot>.

Get timed tickets at <https://t.co/VOgTf3dKqT>.

Parking is only available at the Kennedy-Shriver Aquatic Center, located across the street at Wall Local Park, 5900 Executive Blvd, N. Bethesda. Follow signage for the "Pathway to Freedom" that leads to the Josiah Henson Museum and Park.



Maryland Sen. Susan Lee (D-16), pictured here at the Glen Echo celebration.



Del. Sara Love (D-16) at the carousel opening.



At-large councilmembers Gabe Alborno and Will Jawando, with Potomac's councilmember Andrew Friedson, at the 100th anniversary of Glen Echo's carousel on Saturday, May 1, 2021.

West Montgomery County Citizens Association

May Newsletter

VIRTUAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. via ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87030643694?pwd=c05KclRPUzRHczVEE9QMzVOZVc4dz09>

or call in with 301-715-8592 (Meeting ID = 870 3064 3694, Passcode: 928364)

A recording of this meeting, and hotlinks within the Newsletter, will be available on our website: www.WMCCA.org

SPEAKERS: District 15 Delegation: Maryland Sen. Brian Feldman; Delegates Kathleen Dumais and David Fraser-Hidalgo. Each year following the legislative session we invite our District delegation to update us on their work in the Maryland General Assembly.

"Our Members Speak Out"

submitted by President Ken Bawer

First of all, long time Board member and current Secretary Jill Phillips has resigned from the Board. We thank her for her many years of service to WMCCA and the community.

Our April General Meeting was an "open mic" session which generated lots of good discussions and information:

- ❖ Diana Conway raised the issue of synthetic turf fields in public schools. Diana made the points that they are hot, toxic, expensive, have a higher injury rate, and are unsustainable and unrecyclable. Synturf is also a source of microplastics pollution. Plus, there are no companies in the US that will recycle old synthetic fields. Kathy Michaels posted a set

of links on this topic in the chat. Diana also brought up the County's Climate Action Plan, which WMCCA submitted comments on, and noted the lack of measurable metrics to meet the stated goals. Diana posted emails to get involved with County activists.

- ❖ Don Libes asked about PFAS chemicals in WSSC's drinking water. These are a class of so-called forever chemicals that are very persistent in the environment and accumulate over time in the human body. Don said WSSC reports that the PFAS in their water is below EPA safe level amounts. Theodora Scarato said that PFAS chemicals are endocrine disruptors. She recommended the movies "Dark Waters" and "The Devil We Know" and posted links in the chat.
- ❖ Theodora Scarato brought up the newly proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) related to 5G cell towers which would mean that these towers could be installed as close as 30 feet from homes with no notice or public hearings, and the Hearing Examiner could allow them to be even closer. This could be voted on by County Council this summer. She posted a link for a letter-writing campaign (not a WMCCA initiative, although we have previously expressed our concerns).
- ❖ Regarding the proposed Heritage Gardens Senior Living Facility (on the previously 4th Presbyterian School property on S. Glen Rd. near Norton Rd.), ZTA 20-08 was introduced (as promoted by Heritage's attorneys) to redefine senior living facilities to allow the Heritage facility. The next step is a decision by the County Council regarding whether or not to enact the ZTA. Our issue is not with senior living facilities, but we oppose changing the zoning to allow increased density in low density residential zones under the guise of senior housing using the special exception

SEE WEST MONTGOMERY, PAGE 6

Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival

May 15th - 16th
Sat./Sun. 10am - 5pm

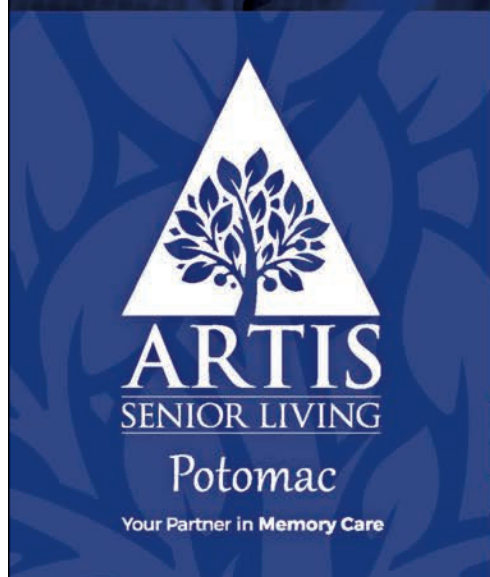
A Socially Distanced Outdoor Art Show

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A Howard Alan Event
561-746-6615

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How we talk about things can change the way we act and react to the world around us. This can also have a profound effect on our health. Words count—and if we're going to change the way we cope and carry on, we must start with the words we use.

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- Coping and creating with cognitive shift during confinement
- Reframing thoughts

This interactive program will offer exercises to help you change your words—and your world!

Please Register By Sunday, May 9th

Join us for this FREE Educational Webinar

Tuesday, May 11th

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

To Register

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During this pandemic, Potomac Community Village is active via Zoom and helping members where possible.

Our Help Desk is ready for you at
240-221-1370

To join our mailing list send email to
info@PotomacCommunityVillage.org

Visit us at
www.potomaccommunityvillage.org

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NEWS

West Montgomery County Citizens Association

FROM PAGE 5

- ❖ process.
- ❖ Susanne Lee reported the proposed Spectrum senior living facility on River Road at the former Behnkes and current Plants & Petals site got approval from the Hearing Examiner. However, the sale of the site, which we believe was contingent on conditional use approval, still has not gone through. This would be Spectrum's first facility on the East coast.
- ❖ Susanne also raised the issue of trees being cut in our area with only minimal tree planting to replace them and the issue of violations of forest conservation easements. She also brought up the issue of the violation of wetlands protections by developers. The Planning Board has admitted that they have no expertise in this area and continue to allow violations of State regulations.
- ❖ Regarding the sewer category change request by Potomac Oak Center (a.k.a. Travilah Oak Shopping Center) and "the old white house" at Travilah Rd & Glen Road, DEP has yet to make a recommendation. WMCCA opposes the request since it would set a dangerous precedent and encourage higher density development.

What Happened with HB 857

submitted by Carol Van Dam Falk

There is good and bad news to report on HB0857, the Maryland bill aimed at regulating the disposal chain of used synthetic turf fields. The good news is it passed overwhelmingly by the Environment and Transportation Committee (ENT) 19-3, which is a huge victory for all of its supporters including WMCCA. In addition, it attracted strong bipartisan support.

ENT and its chairman Kumar Barve had the primary jurisdiction of the bill. Unfortunately, the bill also went before the Maryland Economic Matters Committee, which voted it down. In order to move to the floor, a bill must get through all of its assigned committees, which normally is just one committee. It is not clear why the Economic Matters Committee voted against the legislation, given that Del. Mary Lehman, the sponsor of the bill (D21 PG County), had both the Synthetic Turf Council and the Tire Industry Association on board with her amendments. HB 857 was a straightforward bill; tell us where the synthetic turf field was when you had it, and tell us where it

went next. That was the extent of each owner's reporting responsibility; no strings attached. In any event, the bill will be back next legislative session.

Update on Wetlands & Forest Destruction at 13417 Valley Drive in Glen Hills

submitted by Susanne Lee

First a bit of background. On July 16, 2020, WMCCA member Sam Stavis reported to the Montgomery County Planning Department (MPD) what appeared to be illegal clear-cutting of forest on this vacant lot. MPD Forest Conservation Inspector Stephen Peck immediately examined the site and found not just destruction of the forest stand, but wetlands as well. He determined that more than 17,000 square feet of forest, including portions of a forest stream buffer, had been cut and cleared. The County issued a citation that included a \$1,000 fine and required submission of a Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) and a Forest Conservation Plan. He also referred the matter to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for wetlands violations. According to Mr. Peck, MDE issued a formal report and required the wood chips that were dumped within the wetlands to be hand removed. The initial restoration of the stream buffer, including hand removal of the wood chip piles, and planting was to be done in the Fall, 2020.

As of today, absolutely no restoration has occurred on the site, so we reached out for an update. The NRI/FSD documenting extensive wetlands and 2 streams was submitted on Dec. 18, 2020. The Forest Conservation Plan was not submitted until much later and review was completed by MDP in mid-March. With regard to the wetlands, according to Sean McKewen with MDE, recently he and Mr. Peck met on-site with the current property owner, the contract purchaser, and the developer's consultant "to discuss restoration at the... site, as well as their future plans Appropriate vegetation ... must be replanted within the area identified as nontidal wetland and the mulch must be removed from within the wetland and wetland buffer As for any future plans they have to apply for a Joint federal/State authorization for any activity that will impact nontidal wetlands, and/or the 25 -foot nontidal wetland buffer." Although we

still have not received the requested information regarding whether and what compliance action the State took against the owner for the initial violations, the State appears to be requiring compliance with the Federal and State wetlands regulations.

The County, however, even after determining that a major portion of the lot is composed of streams and wetlands and that "[t]he challenge is a delineated wetland and wetland buffer bisect the lot" has stated that because it is an "existing platted residential lot, the Planning Department has to allow for construction of a home."

Not only does this sound crazy, it is. The reason this lot has not been developed, even as much of the rest of the Glen Hills was built out, is because it is composed almost entirely of sensitive wetlands. These are so significant they were identified in the Potomac Subregion Master Plan environmental studies as critical components of the Middle Watts Branch tributary system and as such should be protected. Currently the biggest elephant in the room appears to be that the lot also doesn't meet the requirements for septic and the property owner has requested both public water and sewer connections. However, the sewer request must be denied because the lot clearly falls outside the approved sewer envelope for Glen Hills enacted by the County Council in the County Water and Sewer Plan.

2021 ELECTION OF WMCCA OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The election of the WMCCA Officers and Board of Directors will occur at our May 12th General Meeting. The Nominating Committee proposes the following slate of Officers and Directors to the membership for a vote.

Nominations may also be made from the floor.

President: CAROL VAN DAM FALK
Treasurer: BARBARA HOOVER
Immediate past President: KEN BAWER
Secretary: KATHY PETITT

President Elect: BARBARA BROWN
Newsletter: NANCY MADDEN

Vice President: SUSANNE LEE
Nominees for a two-year term: DONNA PERLMUTTER and THEODORA SCARATO

To serve 2nd Year of their two-year term (no action needed): GINNY BARNES

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WEEK IN NUMBERS (WIN)

FROM PAGE 3

ceive trash and recycling bags, gloves, one litter grabber and hand sanitizer.

"All of the trash that we see on the sides of the roads, on curbs, in streams, and in stormwater ponds eventually ends up in our rivers and waterways," said Department of Environmental Protection Director Adam Ortiz. "Imagine how much trash we can collect if everyone were to plog even a little bit every day."

See <https://mygreenmontgomery.org/2021/greenfest-plogging-challenge/> and help the county record the amount of litter picked up.

On April 28, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and One Montgomery Green (OMG) kicked off "Eco Evenings with DEP and OMG," a series of virtual town halls open to County residents to discuss relevant environmental topics. This series will have new discussions on the last Wednesday of each month. Eco Evenings will be hosted by Ortiz and Wendy Howard, executive director of OMG.

For more information about DEP, go to <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dep/>.

For more information about OMG, go to <https://onemontgomerygreen.org>.

4,700

County acres that the Montgomery County Department of Transportation is responsible for mowing on county property. In order to reduce noise pollution, air pollution and fuel consumption and costs, Montgomery County Department of Transportation deployed its first all-electric mowing team that will use only electronic equipment that produces zero emissions and is noticeably quieter than traditional gas-powered equipment. MCDOT will review the efficiency of the equipment following the mowing season to determine if the program will be expanded in future years.

"While it looks like a standard mower, its large electric battery makes it weigh 200 pounds more than standard equipment," according to MCDOT documents. "The mowing crew reports that the battery backpacks are heavy, but that a heavy backpack with lighter trimmer and blower equipment is much more comfortable to use than gas-powered blowers and trimmers where

the hand-held equipment is much heavier and harder on the body.

"The biggest challenge so far has been the limitations of battery life and related ability for the crew to cover the same amount of mowing area as a traditionally outfitted crew. The mowing battery can provide up to four hours of run time from a full charge and currently needs to return to the depot to charge for 12 hours.

12

Minute film, "My Name is Josiah Henson," begins a self-guided tour of the newly opened Josiah Henson Museum and Park. Proceed to the museum exhibits that tell the story of Rev. Henson's early life located inside the historic Riley/Bolten House and attached log kitchen.

MontgomeryParks new historic site, Josiah Henson Museum and Park, is open Friday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Take the virtual tour: <https://t.co/41ib044pot>.

Get timed tickets at <https://t.co/VOgTf3d-KqT>. <https://twitter.com/montgomeryparks/status/1387785009860390913?s=27>

Parking is only available at the Kennedy-Shriver Aquatic Center, located across the street at Wall Local Park, 5900 Executive Blvd, N. Bethesda. Follow signage for the "Pathway to Freedom" that leads to the Josiah Henson Museum and Park.

5/21

The date of this year's Bike-to-Work day, May 21, 2021. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) promotes this year's Bike To Work Day by featuring a different bike path/trail in Montgomery County each week through Sunday, May 30. Bike riders are asked to submit a favorite picture of themselves enjoying their ride along the featured trail to be entered into a weekly drawing. This week's featured location is The Bethesda Trolley Trail. Previously featured trails were the Capital Crescent, Sligo Creek, Carl Henn Millennium and Matthew Henson trails. For more information on the contest and future locations can be found at: tinyurl.com/4r7kd52w.

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.

THURSDAY/MAY 6

Spring Mental Health Forum. 6-8 p.m. The public is invited to attend a virtual mental health forum, Confronting Barriers to Mental Health & Addiction Services. The event will focus on equity, isolation, and the digital divide and how they impact mental health, substance use, and services for children. Speakers will address how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted these issues, as well as discuss possible future directions for treatment and recovery services. The event will feature three presentations, followed by a question and answer period with the presenters. Speakers are Dr. Alan Leshner, former director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse; Elizabeth Guroff, director of Trauma-informed Services, National Council for Behavioral Health; and Donna Keating, Montgomery County Community Engagement and Digital Equity Programs. The event is free, but registration is required. Participants will receive a link to join the Zoom event upon registration. Individuals who need special aids to attend this event, including sign language interpretation or translation assistance should email Diane Lininger at diane.lininger@montgomerycountymd.gov no later than Tues-

day, April 20 to request accommodations.

THURSDAY/MAY 6

Restoring More than Justice. 7-8:30 p.m. Virtual. This virtual discussion is about Alternative Sentencing in lieu of jail time and/or convictions for non-violent, misdemeanor defendants and the benefits to individuals and the community. The virtual discussion features area legal professionals: Fairfax County Commonwealth Attorney Steve Descano, Loudoun County Commonwealth Attorney Buta Biberaj, and Fairfax County General District Judge Michael Lindner. Visit the website: <http://bit.ly/3lrgfjk>

SATURDAY/MAY 15

Art in the Burg, Middleburg's Town-Wide Arts Celebration. The Middleburg Arts Council and the Town of Middleburg will host the spring installment of its biannual arts celebration, Art in the Burg. Artwork from more than 20 local and regional artists of different styles, forms and subject matter will be on display throughout the town, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. During this celebration of the arts, visitors will have the opportunity to connect with artists and discuss their creative processes in the beautiful historic setting of downtown Middleburg, which offers a wonderful variety of shopping and dining options as well. Visit www.middleburgva.gov/art or contact the Town Office at 540-687-5152.

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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Cats in the Belfry



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Have I mentioned in print lately that we, resident owners of "Belly Acres" in Burtonsville, are back to being a five-indoor-cat household? A few months back on a Sunday afternoon, my wife Dina offered up the seemingly harmless explanation for her need to go out that day. She said she was going to the local CVS for a few things, things which I had no interest or need to be involved in, so off she drove, with yours truly having nary a worry in the world. Little did I realize what actually was going on.

I don't recall exactly the time element because when my wife goes to the store - of any kind, without a chaperone, I know from decades of experience that left to her own devices, she won't be returning home anytime soon. So how ever long she was gone, I hadn't a clue or a concern. I know the drill. She's a big girl, but she is deliberate. At her main adult employer, the former Tivoli's Restaurant in Roslyn, the owners jokingly nicknamed her "Speedy," because she wasn't. Nonetheless, she was however, a valued, trusted and appreciated employee.

Eventually, I saw Dina drive down our driveway. She parked in her usual spot alongside the house. A few seconds later she walked empty-handed into the house and asked for my assistance in unloading whatever was still in the car. 'Whatever,' unbeknownst to me, were the two two-year-old tabby siblings she had just "rescued" waiting patiently in their cat carriers on the back seat. Dina could barely control her excitement as she opened the back door for me. At first glance, it became quite obvious what the 'whatever' was: it was Louie and Mia. I grabbed one of the cat carriers and walked into the house. Dina had not really mentioned, until she did, that she had been wanting to increase our cat count to five after last year's two losses: Biscuit and Chino, who both died within six months of one another, from complications due to their diabetes. Brothers in more than arms, Biscuit and Chino, who were nicknamed "The Buff Boys" due to their color, were the sweetest, most loving and affectionate cats one could ever hope to have.

Six months or so since the surviving brother, Biscuit had succumbed to his illness, Dina began her search for a new pair of cat siblings. After a few fits and starts and an application that was rejected, Dina's month-long

search was finally rewarded on this Sunday. She met the owners in Beltsville, Md. where they exchanged the necessary pleasantries. The couple had to give up the cats because their infant daughter was allergic to them/their dander. Regrettably they needed to find a new home for these two cats whom they had nurtured since they were kittens. They were very generous with their supplies. They gave us wet and dry food, litter, a litter box and some toys. After a few sad goodbyes, Dina drove off for home, cats in tow where cluelessly I had been minding my own business.

We each brought in a cat carrier and once inside, opened their doors and introduced the cats to their new home. Out they scampered and of course began to sniff. Our other cats were nowhere to be found which given the territorial disputes which often occur when new cats are introduced to an existing cat home, was fortunate in that their first steps were not in retreat from some unexpected cat attack. Though I wasn't of similar mind with respect to Dina's feeling that we needed more cats, I have nevertheless embraced their arrival. There is no doubt that their presence has brought new life (no pun intended) into our home. Now, everywhere I go, or look, there seems to be a cat to talk to (or a hissing/growling fight to break up). No matter. It's nothing that experienced cat owners wouldn't expect. And though I was definitely surprised when I saw the two cat carriers secured in the backseat, now nearly two months later, I couldn't imagine our life without them.

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