

# Gaithersburg Holiday Art & Craft Festival

at Montgomery County Fairgrounds

(formerly a Sugarloaf show)

November 19, 20, 21

Fri./Sat. 10am - 6pm / Sun. 10am - 5pm

Montgomery County Fairgrounds  
(501 Perry Parkway in Gaithersburg, MD)



ADVANCE TICKETS  
ON EVENTBRITE  
2 FOR \$15

\$10 at GATE  
(good for all 3 days)  
Children under 12 Free



# Potomac

## ALMANAC

A broad view from the Billy Goat Trail of the Potomac River, including kayakers and Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department boats.

### Great Day On the River, But Still a Few Calls

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### Covid Cases On the Rise

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REAL ESTATE SALES, PAGE 2 ❖ KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 11

PHOTO BY KEN MOORE/THE ALMANAC

NOVEMBER 17-23, 2021

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



# Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

## August, 2021 Sales, \$1,400,000~\$1,300,000

IN AUGUST, 2021, 76 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$4,675,000-\$455,000.



**6** 9612 Windcroft Way — \$1,350,000



**7** 12104 Drews Court — \$1,350,000



**1** 11713 Greenlane Drive — \$1,400,000



**4** 7604 Brickyard Road — \$1,378,000



**2** 10501 Democracy Boulevard — \$1,400,000



**5** 7304 Brickyard Road — \$1,370,000

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

<b>1</b>	11713 GREENLANE DR	7... 5... 2	POTOMAC	\$1,400,000	Detached..	0.27.....	20854..	REGENCY ESTATES	08/26/21
<b>2</b>	10501 DEMOCRACY BLVD	4... 4... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,400,000	Detached..	0.51.....	20854.....	BLenheim	08/13/21
<b>3</b>	14609 PETTIT WAY	6... 5... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,399,000	Detached..	2.00.....	20854.....	RIVERWOOD	08/31/21
<b>4</b>	7604 BRICKYARD RD	6... 4... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,378,000	Detached..	0.38.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	08/20/21
<b>5</b>	7304 BRICKYARD RD	4... 3... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,370,000	Detached..	0.41.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	08/17/21
<b>6</b>	9612 WINDCROFT WAY	4... 4... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,350,000	Detached..	0.37.....	20854.....	FALLSREACH	08/23/21
<b>7</b>	12104 DREWS CT	4... 4... 2	POTOMAC	\$1,350,000	Detached..	2.00.....	20854.....	BEALLMOUNT	08/11/21
<b>8</b>	7808 MARY CASSATT DR	5... 4... 1	ROCKVILLE	\$1,300,000	Detached..	0.42.....	20854..	WILLERBURN ACRES	08/06/21

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[HTTP://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/NEWS/2021/JUL/16/POTOMAC-HOME-SALES-JUNE-2021/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/jul/16/potomac-home-sales-june-2021/)





## ‘Substantial Transmission’ of Covid To Bring Back Mask Mandate

**D**r. James Bridgers, acting County health officer, notified the Montgomery County Council today that the County returned to “substantial transmission” of COVID-19 based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. This change means that the Board of Health regulation mandating masks be worn indoors will resume on Saturday, Nov. 20 at 12:01 a.m. According to the Board of Health regulation, if the County’s rate of

transmission is measured as substantial for seven consecutive days, the indoor mask mandate returns.

At presstime, Montgomery County is experiencing 60 cases per 100,000 population. Anything over 50 is deemed as “substantial transmission” by the CDC; anything over 100 is considered high transmission. The CDC recommends use of masks indoors in the case of substantial or high transmission.

Montgomery County has had

83,793 total cases. The 20854 ZIP code for Potomac has had 2,488 cases.

In early August, the Montgomery County Council, acting as the Board of Health, voted unanimously to require that all residents, regardless of vaccination status, wear face coverings indoors in public spaces once Montgomery County became an area of “substantial transmission” of COVID-19. See Board of Health regulation 19-975 for more detailed information. The

CDC, recommended in July that jurisdictions with substantial or high transmission rates of COVID-19 should require that masks be worn indoors. The CDC defines substantial transmission as 50-99 cases per 100,000 residents over a period of seven days.

Visit the County’s COVID-19 data dashboard to review the latest metrics and key indicators. The dashboard is updated daily by 2 p.m. Find additional information on masks and transmission lev-

els on the COVID-19 website. If you are not vaccinated, find free vaccination clinics at [www.GoV-AXMoCo.com](http://www.GoV-AXMoCo.com). If you feel sick or think you may have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested. Find free testing clinics at [www.MoCo-COVIDtesting.org](http://www.MoCo-COVIDtesting.org).

For the latest COVID-19 updates, visit the County’s COVID-19 website and follow Montgomery County on Facebook @MontgomeryCountyInfo and Twitter @MontgomeryCoMD

## Is a Solution for White’s Ferry on the Horizon?

**A**fter purchasing historic White’s Ferry in February 2021, Chuck and Stacy Kuhn encountered obstacles to reopening this important Potomac River crossing. The ferry needs to regain the right to access in Virginia.

In response to the suspended service, Loudoun and Montgomery counties conducted a study to evaluate alternatives and address issues, challenges and opportunities for restoring the service.

Below is a statement from Chuck Kuhn, owner, White’s Ferry about the just released study:

“We appreciate the work and insights from the recent joint study by Montgomery and Loudoun Counties. It underscores White’s Ferry importance to the region and also revealed the difficulties in maintaining and making the ferry a private successful enterprise as the previous owners recognized. We remain committed to making White’s Ferry operational and affordable for customers. The ferry is a scenic crossing but also an important connection that helps employees get to work and contributes to the economy in many other ways. The impasse has cost people time and money and added traffic and environmental woes to our community. We look to the counties to help us move forward and support whatever direction they deem best to get White’s Ferry working for our region.”

Established in 1786, the ferry remained a significant transportation route between Maryland and Virginia, carrying nearly 800 daily users when it was operational. White’s Ferry represents a piece of the region’s past as an early commerce route that built and sustained local economies and remains so today. The Kuhns have already embarked on a number of upgrades to the ferry to bring more operational and environmental efficiencies to improve services and preserve a piece of history. More information and updates about the Ferry can be found at [WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



White’s Ferry operating in simpler times.

<https://www.whites-ferry.com/>.

White’s Ferry is a historic cable ferry crossing the Potomac River connecting Loudoun County, Va., north of Leesburg, and Montgomery County, Md., southwest of Poolesville.

In December 2020, ferry operations abruptly ceased over disputes and lawsuits related to the ownership and access to the Virginia-side landing. The owners of that property and the owners of White’s Ferry could not come to an agreement regarding compensation for the use of the landing and access road. Service has been suspended throughout 2021, significantly impacting travel time and costs for the many regular users of the service, who raised their concerns to elected officials on both sides of the river.

During the spring of 2021, ferry assets

(and later, property) on the Maryland shore were acquired by Loudoun County businessman Chuck Kuhn. His stated goal was to restore service and manage the operation to ensure that it was once again, and for years to come, available for travelers. In response to the impasse and the suspended service, Loudoun County and Montgomery County evaluated alternatives for restoring White’s Ferry service across the Potomac River between the two counties. The study intended to address both short-term and long-term operations, issues, challenges and opportunities for restoring and potentially enhancing this important regional transportation link.

### Study Results

Ferry service across the Potomac River is recognized as an important part of the region’s transportation network. White’s Ferry

ceased operations on Dec. 28, 2020, following a Circuit Court opinion in a private lawsuit over the use of private land for the ferry landing in Virginia. Prior to closing, White’s Ferry transported approximately 600 to 800 vehicles per day across the river and connected bicyclists and pedestrians between Montgomery County, Md., and Loudoun County, Va.

Montgomery County worked jointly with Loudoun County to conduct a study of the White’s Ferry’s operations as well as an evaluation of land ownership and acquisition scenarios for the Virginia landing. The study evaluated the long-term feasibility and reliability of the Potomac River ferry service between Montgomery and Loudoun Counties, and helped identify alternatives for ferry operations with a common goal of re-establishing daily ferry service that bene-

SEE IS A SOLUTION, PAGE 7



# Leave the Leaves

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE ALMANAC

**T**hat annual suburban fall ritual is underway: raking, blowing and bagging leaves. Bags bulging with leaves line many streets awaiting pickup. But some people are asking, “Why?”

Some homeowners are leaving fallen leaves on the ground to support insects. Many people compost leaves to enrich the soil after the leaves biodegrade. Mulched leaves are “black gold,” many gardeners tout.

## Wintering Insects Need Leaves

Insects are everywhere, from the tundra to the tropics, in the soil, water, wood and plants. They are an important part of the web of life, “the little things that run the world,” biologist Edmund O. Wilson noted. Insects recycle nutrients, pollinate plants, control pests and disperse seeds.

Insects go through three or four life stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult. Some, like dragonflies, do not have a pupa stage. Many insects rely on fallen leaves for cover, insulation and protection from predators over the fall and winter.

For example, some butterfly and moth species spend the winter in leaves as eggs, caterpillars, pupae or adults. Justin Wheeler of the Xerces Society wrote, “Red-banded hairstreaks lay their eggs on fallen oak leaves, which become the first food of the caterpillars when they emerge. Luna moths and swallowtail butterflies disguise their cocoons and chrysalises as dried leaves, blending in with the ‘real’ leaves. ... bumble bees also rely on leaf litter for protection.”

Most native bee species spend the winter in nests that their mothers prepared and like bears, and hibernate through the winter. Around 70 percent of bee species nest in the ground, reports the Xerces Society. Dead organic material is also home to worms, snails, spiders, beetles, millipedes and microscopic critters like bacteria and fungi. Animals like chipmunks, turtles, birds and amphibians rely on these insects for food. It’s all intertwined.

University of Delaware entomologist Dr. Doug Tallamy has explained, “There are 70 species of moths and several butterfly species that develop as caterpillars on dead leaves. Over 90 percent of the caterpillars that develop on trees drop from the trees to pupate in leaf litter or the loose soil it protects so removing leaves from an area definitely hurts insects.”



Northern Virginia streets are lined with bags of fallen leaves in the fall.



Many people bag leaves and leave them on the street for county pickup.

Several studies in recent years have sounded alarms. Insect abundance has precipitously declined and the world has lost more than one-quarter of its land-dwelling insects in the past 30 years, reported Science magazine in 2020. These trends could lead to unprecedented extinctions, a phenomenon some call “the insect apocalypse.”

## End Gas-powered Leaf Blowers

Leaf blowers are a favorite tool of many homeowners and landscape firms. Former Washington Post gardening columnist Adrian Higgins wrote in 2016, “Since the 1970s, the soundscape has been shaped by the leaf blower ... what was once a weekend phenomenon from a gadget-minded homeowner is now a weekday, day-long assault on neighborhoods,” adding that it’s “become a three-season mainstay for [landscaping] crews.”

A Northern Virginia group called Quiet Clean NOVA is campaigning to ban gas-powered leaf blowers because of their noise pollution, disruption to peace of mind, planet-warming emissions, risk to operators’ hearing, habitat destruction and disturbance to wildlife.

“High levels of noise pollution exert a deleterious effect on wildlife,” says Quiet Clean Director

Joan Lowy. “For example, loud noise interferes in communication between birds, impacting their courtship and production of chicks. Loud noise also favors predators, as prey lose their ability to hear them.”

Quiet Clean advocates argue that a gas-powered blower emits 23 times the carbon monoxide and 300 times more hydrocarbons than a Ford F-150 pickup truck. The machines’ airspeeds stir up inhalable, fine particulates from the ground, including animal feces, pesticides, fungal spores, pollen, mold and heavy metals. Gas-powered blowers “blast air up to 280 miles per hour, eroding topsoil and sending pollen, fertilizers and herbicides adrift,” wrote Monica Cardoza in a 2020 National Audubon Society article.

Over 100 U.S. cities have banned gas-powered leaf blowers or limited their use to certain times, including the District of Columbia and Chevy Chase Village.

Lawn equipment manufacturers have a different view. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, based in Alexandria, says on its website, “Business owners want clean parking lots and landscapes, communities want neat and clean parks free of debris that can harbor insects



Lenten rose plants live among the fallen leaves.



A harvestman (daddy longlegs) navigates dead leaves.



Many ferns species can grow amid fallen leaves.

and pests, and homeowners want attractive front yards. Leaf blowers are often the best equipment to achieve those goals.

“Today’s leaf blowers are quieter and more efficient than ever before,” they maintain. “Most modern blowers are 75 percent quieter than blowers manufactured only a decade ago. And many manufacturers have reduced the emissions of small engines by as much as 90 percent.”

There are several quieter and less-polluting alternatives to gas-powered leaf blowers, including battery-powered blowers, mulching lawn mowers, rakes and

brooms. And Lowy advises, “If you feel you have to remove leaves, we recommend that you designate at least a corner of your yard for a brush pile. Small animals like rabbits, salamanders and turtles will make their homes in these piles.”

“Leaves are not litter,” says the Xerces Society. “They’re food and shelter for butterflies, beetles, bees, moths and more.” And unlike leaf blowers, these critters barely make a sound.

Information: Quiet Clean NOVA, <https://quietcleannova.wordpress.com/>  
The Xerces Society of Invertebrate Conservation, <https://xerces.org/>



# 7+4+11 County Council Will Soon Have 11 Members, 7 by District

**T**he Montgomery County Council recently received a briefing from the Commission on Redistricting about their recommended redistricting map that creates seven new Council districts. The Commission was charged with presenting a redistricting plan for Council districts and a report explaining their recommendations to the Council. The eleven-member volunteer commission includes registered Democrats, Republicans, independents and those who are unaffiliated.

The Commission's report to the Council can be viewed here. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/BCC/redistricting/materials/FinalReport.pdf>

The Montgomery County Charter, as amended by the voters in the 2020 general election, states that the County shall be divided into seven Council districts. Each district must be compact in form and composed of adjoining, contiguous territory. Moreover, the populations of each district must be substantially equal.

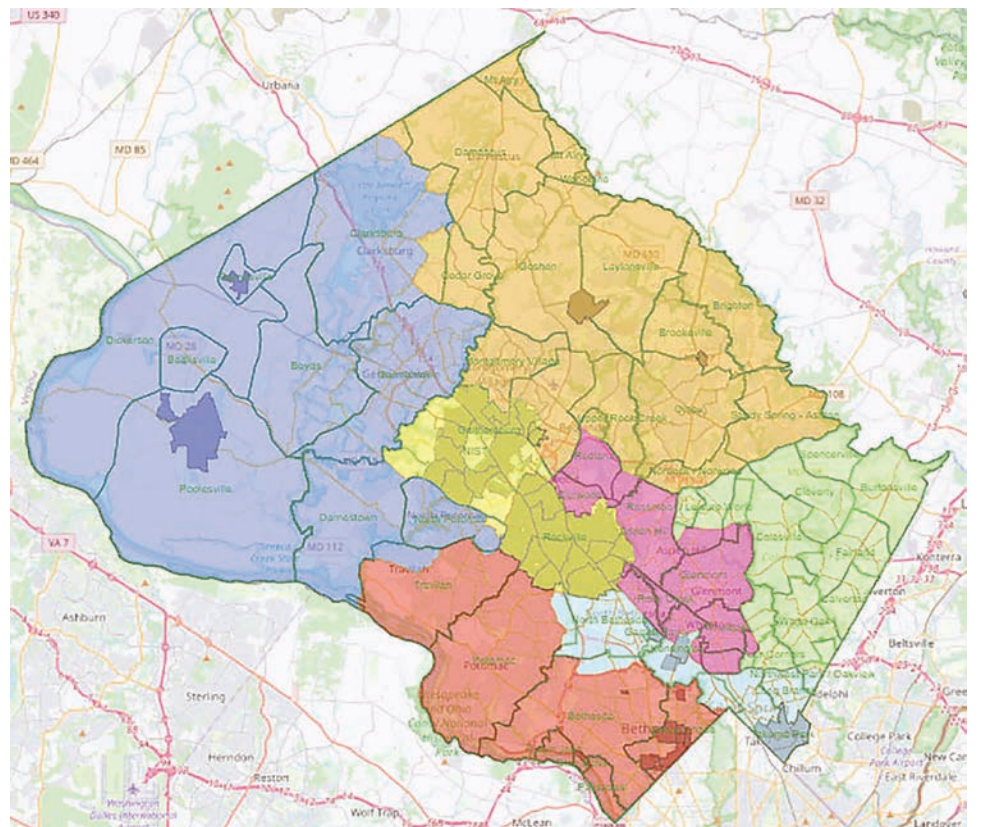
Before 2020, the Charter required the County to be divided into five Council districts. The new requirement for seven districts applies to the upcoming 2022 elections, and the Council will consist of eleven members in total in December 2022. Seven

district Councilmembers will be selected by registered voters who live in each district and four at-large members will be selected by all voters across the County.

Last week, the Council introduced Bill 41-21, Elections Council Districts - Boundaries, which is the enabling legislation that would revise the boundaries of the Council districts as recommended by the map proposed by the commission. Today the Council received testimony during the first public hearing on the proposed redistricting map and Bill 41-21.

The Council's second public hearing on the proposed redistricting map and Bill 41-21 will be held on Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. The Council is expecting a large number of speakers for the public hearing and wants to hear from diverse voices across the County. Pre-registration for the public hearings includes being placed on a wait list. Council staff will send confirmation notices to each resident with the Zoom information, once it's determined how many speakers can be accommodated at the public hearings. Residents should pre-register for the public hearing on the Council's web page here <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/calendar.html>.

Community members must receive a confirmation notification from the Council that



County Council districts will look substantially different in the near future. This is the Redistricting Commission's proposed map. There will be seven local districts to replace the current five. There will still be four at-large members of County Council for a total of 11, compared to the current nine.

they have been added to the speakers list to testify live. This confirmation notification will include the Zoom information.

Those who cannot join the public hearings

are encouraged to submit written, audio or video testimony on the Council's web page here. Residents without internet access can

SEE 7+4+11 COUNTY, PAGE 7

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A helicopter provided a vantage point for rescuers responding to several calls along the Potomac River near Great Falls on Sunday, Nov. 14. None of the situations appeared to be serious enough to require the helicopter for medical evacuation.



PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE/THE ALMANAC

People enjoying the view of the Potomac River from the Billy Goat Trail on Sunday, Nov. 14, were dressed warmly, although the colder weather hadn't yet arrived.

# Beautiful Day Along the River Still Results in a Few Calls for Help



While technically the fall colors are past their peak, the reflections on the Potomac River doubled their beauty.

**O**n Sunday, hikers, kayakers, paddle boarders and bicyclists were out on the cool but pleasant day to enjoy recreation and exercise along the Potomac River and the Billy Goat Trail in Potomac.

Serious kayakers navigate these waters, but swimming is prohibited; it's an extremely dangerous section of the river. So when a 911 call came in to Fairfax County indicating that a boater was in distress, Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department launched their swift water rescue boats to check it out. After investigating, the rescue crews determined that the calls were initiated by bystanders spotting a paddle boarder in the water, but everyone was safe and accounted for. Pete Piringer, spokesperson for Montgomery County Fire and Rescue, called it a "good intent" call.

But it wasn't the only emergency call from along the river for Cabin John to respond to on Sunday. A hiker on Billy Goat Trail A experienced a medical emergency on the trail, and the swift water crews responded again. Rescue from the Billy Goat Trail is often accomplished by transferring the patient to boats from the trail and getting them to EMS vehicles. The one adult patient with non-life-threatening condition was moved to EMS staging for evaluation, Piringer tweeted.

Another person was injured in a fall off a bicycle further up the C&O Canal and towpath. Cabin John responded in aid of Frederick County in that call.





Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department launched swift water rescue boats in the Potomac Gorge area responding to a call about a boater in distress near Rocky Island. Kayakers are visible mid-river.



Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department on the scene.



Mallard ducks browsing in the C&O Canal.

## Beautiful Day Along The River

FROM PAGE 6

### Tweets verbatim:

mcfrsPIO (@Pete Piringer) Tweeted: Potomac River, IAO Rocky Island, boater in distress, person on water, good intent, via 911 call to FFxCo, several recreational boaters in area indicated a paddle boarder was in water & all are accounted for & ok see @mcfrs SW710, SW710B, A733, ALS710, UTV711, SW730, SW730B in area & responded @MCFRS EMIHS (UTV711) w/ 1 adult patient, NLT & moving patient to EMS staging for evaluation

mcfrsPIO (@Pete Piringer) Tweeted: Billy Goat Trail A, @COcanalNPS, medical emergency on trail, @mcfrs SW710, SW710B, A733, ALS710, UTV711, SW730, SW730B in area & responded @MCFRS EMIHS (UTV711) w/ 1 adult patient, NLT & moving patient to EMS staging for evaluation

mcfrsPIO (@Pete Piringer) Tweeted: Mutual Aid FredCo @COcanalNPS MM43 (Adamstown) injured person from fall, off bike, @mcfrs UTV714 assisting



Swift water rescue boats head back to shore.



A broad view from the Billy Goat Trail of the Potomac River, including kayakers and Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department

PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE/THE ALMANAC

## Is a Solution for White's Ferry on the Horizon?

FROM PAGE 3

fits the community.

The joint study was led by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and the Loudoun County Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure. The study's scope includes:

Roadway access and ferry use along

with any other pertinent transportation issues

Identifying legal and regulatory requirements associated with ferry operations.

Landing site improvements and landing location options.

Operating alternatives that may include a public/private partnership.

The study is interesting and the photos are worth looking at. You can however, sum up the 137 pages by saying that no simple solutions presented themselves.

See more at [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT/Resources/Files/White's%20Ferry%20Study%20Final%2010\\_20\\_21.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT/Resources/Files/White's%20Ferry%20Study%20Final%2010_20_21.pdf)

### 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.

#### SATURDAY/NOV. 20

Winter Dreams. 8 p.m. At F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville. The Washington Balalaika Society Orchestra concert's theme is "Winter Dreams." The program will include three pieces from Georgy Sviridov's suite "The Snowstorm," excerpts from "The Nutcracker," and a perennial WBS favorite, "Russian Winter." The soloists will be Peter Omelchenko, domra, and special guest artist, Elina Karokhina, balalaika. Visit <https://www.rockvillemd.com>.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

gov/382/F-Scott-Fitzgerald-Theatre

#### SUNDAY/NOV. 21

Waltz Dance. 3:30-6 p.m. At Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Featuring the ensemble Taylor Among the Devils playing a lively mix of folk waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambo, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. There's a 2:45 - 3:30 p.m. Introductory Waltz Workshop. Admission is \$15, \$5 for full-time students with student ID. No

partner required. Visit [www.WaltzTimeDances.org](http://www.WaltzTimeDances.org).

#### LIBRARIES OFFER FREE ONLINE WORKSHOPS FOR JOB SEEKERS

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) is offering free online workshops and one-on-one sessions geared toward assisting job seekers and entrepreneurs throughout November. All workshops are offered virtually. An internet connection and a device (such as a

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

## 7+4+11 County Council

FROM PAGE 5

also sign up to testify by phone by calling 240-777-7803. Written testimony can also be mailed to the Council at 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, Md. 20850.

The Montgomery County Charter requires that the Council hold a public hearing after receiving the plan from the commission. If within 90 days after presentation of the commission's plan no other law reestablishing the boundaries of the Council districts has been enacted, then the plan as submitted becomes law with an effective date of Feb. 1, 2022.

The Council public hearings will be held virtually on Zoom and can be viewed live on County Cable Montgomery (Xfinity/RCN Channel 6 or in high definition on Channels 996/1056 and on Verizon Channel 30). They will also be streamed on the Council's Facebook (MontgomeryCountyMDCouncil) and YouTube (MoCoCouncilMd) pages

POTOMAC ALMANAC ♦ NOVEMBER 17-23, 2021 ♦ 7





Bees entering a hive.



John Ferree checking beehives at Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

# Backyards Are Buzzing with Beekeeping

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE ALMANAC

**W**hen Mount Vernonite Liz Craver recently opened one of her backyard honeybee hives, she knew immediately something was wrong because the buzzing was unusually loud. She instantly diagnosed the problem. She had a queenless hive. Beehives need queens and without them, honeybees become agitated and aggressive.

Craver raises honeybees in her backyard, one of several area beekeepers who do it mostly for the intrigue, the science and the environment, not to sell honey.

An 18th century "Mount Vernonite," U.S. president General George Washington and enslaved people kept bees too.

Today, John Ferree manages nine honeybee hives at the Mount Vernon Estate, where "his" bees have provided pollination services to the plantation's garden and orchard plants for 20 years. Ferree also manages between 160,000 and 200,000 honeybees in hives on the roof of Washington, D. C.'s Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and several other spots.

Nearby, Jonna Sanders does Slovenian-style beekeeping. Traditional American beekeepers have vertical frames in their hives that they pull up and out for inspections. Sanders' hives have pull-out horizontal frames that slide out and are covered by a cabinet door. Bees enter hives from the bottom and build combs on the frames.

## Bees Bedazzle

"When I open a hive, I'm amazed at the wonderment of it all," says Ferree. And peeking into a hive does provoke wonder. Apiarists check their hives off and on. The frames are covered with masses of brownish, squirming honeybees, some with tiny, yellow pollen puffs on their legs.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Liz Craver and Honey from her hives.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Liz Craver and friend.

Beekeepers look for larvae, broods, miniscule white bee eggs, the shape of a rice grain but one-tenth the size, and for pests. They listen to the constant hum, which to most apiarists is like a captivating symphony.

And they scan for honeybee queens which are larger than the worker bees. A queen will have a mating flight, mate, return, lay eggs and spend the rest of her life in the hive. Ferree's seen queens fight until one is left and the win-

ner becomes the reigning queen. If the hive becomes too crowded, the bees swarm to form another hive.

## Pollinators

Pollination produces seeds when bees carry pollen grains from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma of flowers of the same species. Supporting plant pollination is a major reason to keep honeybees, argues Virginia's state apiarist, Keith Tignor.

Bees will fly up to three miles.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

John Ferree with his beehives at Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens.

## Helping Pollinators

There are 19,200 bee species in the world. North America has around 4,000 bee species. Most are small, solitary bees that do not live in a colony and live in the ground. Settlers brought honeybees to the colonies around 1620 to make honey so they are not native to North America.

Pollinators include bees, butterflies, birds and bats. Pollinators are responsible for the reproduction of over 85 percent of the world's flowering plants, including more than two-thirds of the world's crop species, says the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation.

- Provide nest sites, like tree snags, bare ground and brush piles.
- Plant native plants. They support four times more bees than non-natives.
- Plant in clumps, clustering similar blooms together.
- Choose plants that bloom at different times of the year.
- Provide natural connectivity between land fragments.
- Avoid pesticides.

Northern Virginia Beekeepers Association, <http://www.novabees.org/>

Ferree's Mount Vernon honeybees pollinate the estate's gardens and orchards, crops like squash, apples and alfalfa. Craver's bees fly a few miles to Huntley Meadows Park, she maintains.

Several studies have found that insect pollinators, including bees, are in decline. "During the past 30-plus years, our nation's pollinator populations have suffered serious losses," says the U.S. Department of Agriculture website. Stressors include habitat loss, non-native plants, a changing climate, pesticides, other chemicals and disease.

## Assessing the Temperament

Craver, an architect and seven-year beekeeper, has about 300,000 bees, 40-60,000 each bees in six hives.

"They're booming this year," she observes, "because we've had a long nectar flow. Spring flowers bloomed for a long time."

Some beekeepers mail-order queens, but Craver prefers that her bees make their own queen. She takes a frame of eggs from one hive and puts it in a queenless hive

SEE BACKYARDS, PAGE 9

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



# Backyards Are Buzzing

FROM PAGE 8

where the bees select one of the eggs, build a cell, feed the larvae royal jelly and grow a queen. Then the queen matures, goes on mating flight, mates and returns to the hive, a 28-day process.

When inspecting hives, Craver asks herself, is the hive queen right? This means the queen is there and laying, the brood pattern is good, the hive has workers and drones and the hive has a contented “temperament.” She can “read” the “demeanor of the hives,” she says. “It’s easy to tell if they’re happy.”

River Farm, the American Horticultural Society’s headquarters in Mount Vernon, has beehives too. AHS spokesman David Ellis, Director of Communications, explained, “We strive to make our grounds an ideal habitat for pollinators by providing a tremendous diversity of plant species, including plants that bloom at different times of the year, providing water sources from fountains and ponds and setting aside uncultivated, naturalistic areas that offer nesting sites and cover for native pollinators.” He added, “Hopefully the pollination services from our honeybees also extend to the vegetables and fruits grown by some of our nearby neighbors.”

## Slovenian Beekeeping

Another Mount Vernon-area resident, Jonna Sanders, uses the Slovenian beekeeping system, the same approach that her great-grandparents used in Slovenia in the early 1900s.

After taking a class with the Northern Virginia Beekeepers Association and with Ferree as her mentor, she imported some Slovenian AZ hives, named for their inventor, Alberti Znidars, and now has six hives in her yard with about 30,000 bees per hive. The Slovenian system has more weather protection, creates fewer hive disturbances and avoids using smoke to calm the bees, a common beekeeping practice. As someone with scoliosis, she sees the hives as easier to handle for people with disabilities.

A neighbor’s commercial mosquito spraying killed her bees at one time, she’s convinced, because the company used a class of insecticides called neonicotinoids that can disrupt bee’s reproduction, foraging and overall activity. Sanders was so concerned that she convinced Virginia Delegate Paul Krizek to introduce legislation earlier this year to discourage neonicotinoids’ use.

The state is now leading a study



Jonna Sanders and her Slovenian-style beehive.



The author ... at Mount Vernon Estate with Ferree.

group to examine ways to reduce the risk to pollinators from neonicotinoid pesticides.

Referencing her Slovenian ancestry, “Bees are in our blood, in our culture,” Sanders stresses. As a five-year-old, she played with bees. In the fall, she will start a Ph.D. program in entomology with a focus on honeybees. “It’s snowballed on me,” she chuckles.



This is a queen cell that the bees made to raise a new queen.

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# Potomac Village Garden Club and Potomac Library



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Potomac Village Garden Club held a garden party at the Potomac Library on Oct. 16 to introduce beautiful new gardens added to the grounds.

The grounds around the Potomac Library are expanded, planted and tended by members of the Potomac Village Garden Club. With help from the Friends of the Library, Potomac Chapter, and the Glenstone Foundation, the gardens continue to expand and delight.

Potomac Village Garden Club held a garden party at the Potomac Library on Oct. 16 to introduce beautiful new gardens added to the grounds. All Covid protocols were followed as cider, donut holes and bunny, bee and butterfly gummies were offered and enjoyed.

Member Carol Dietzel introduced the Peter Rabbit Herb Garden, which she carefully tends. Education chair Linda Rieger organized an herb matching game for children.

Peter Rabbit, an important Friend of the Potomac Library, appeared to the delight of young and old

alike. The glass cases inside the library were arranged with herb uses and Peter Rabbit memorabilia.

Devar Burbage was present for the dedication of the new butterfly garden planted in memory of his wife, Suzie Burbage. Devar made a beautiful wood box to hold information brochures available to library visitors.

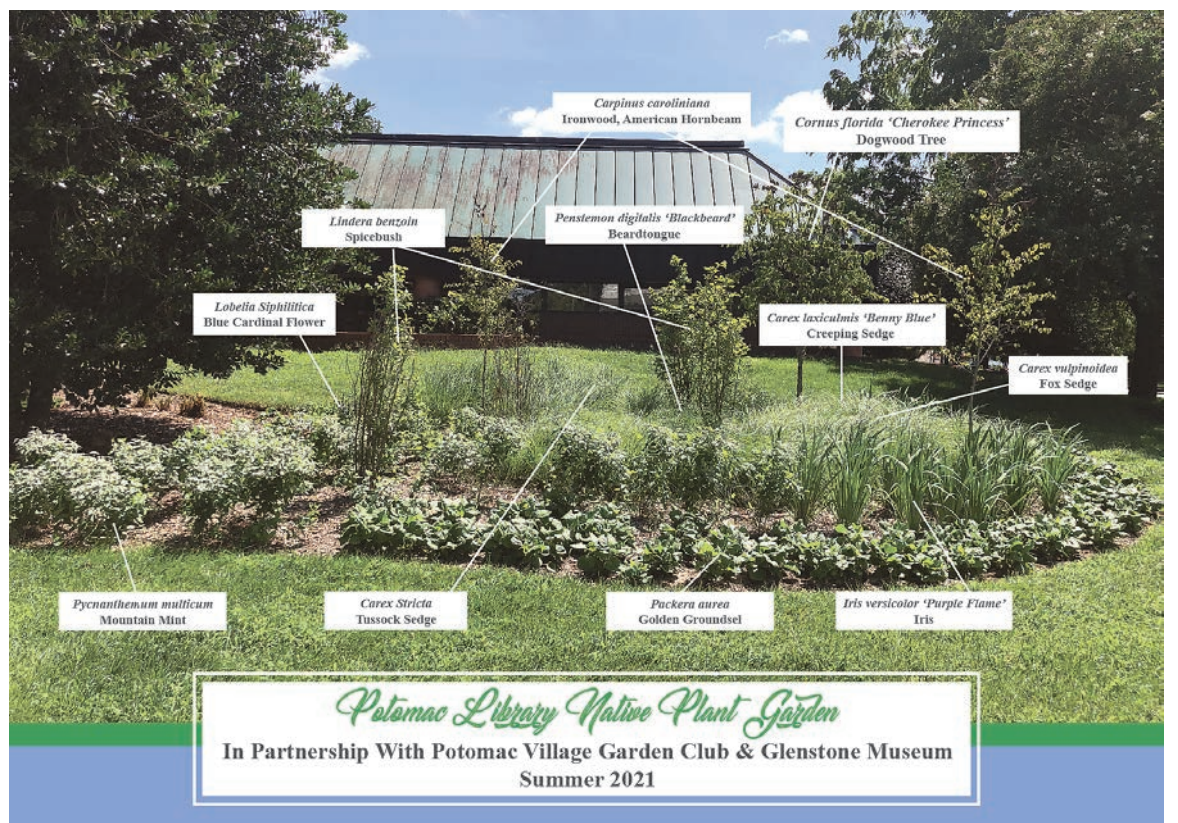
Library Garden Co-Chair, Cindy Hall, introduced the Falls Road Native Gardens. She has spent several seasons planting ferns, iris and other plants from her garden in the wooded area. She is also a superior weeder.

In April, with major help from the Glenstone Foundation, the club expanded the native plant garden into a sunny area.

Visitors can see the plant identifications are available in Devar's box outside the library entrance.



The native plants installed in phases around the Potomac Library





# NEWS

## Children's & Teens' Connection 2021

Please send all submissions via email by Friday, Dec. 3. This edition publishes Dec 15.

During December of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, families, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish every kind of artwork that can be submitted to us as a jpeg, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

Pandemic planning has made for a short deadline, and, like everything else, the 2021 Children's Connections will be different than in the past.

For 2021, please send a curated collection of art from your class. We will do our best, but we are unlikely to be able to print every item submitted. Please include the first and last name of the student with each submission.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email. Writing should be submitted in .docx format or in google doc. If you are sharing a google doc with us, please turn on link sharing so that anyone with the link can edit the document and share with kimm.mary@gmail.com. Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

Some suggestions, but different ideas are welcome:

- ❖ Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite activity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or

larger art projects are also welcome. Holiday themes are also encouraged.

- ❖ Short answers, 100-200 words on: If you could give your parents, family or friends any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal or food or toy? Describe a good friend. Describe one of the best gifts you've ever given or received. Discuss a hobby or sport that you are involved in. Your opinion about any topic.

- ❖ Poetry or other creative writing. To be published, we must have the full first and last name of the student artist or writer.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Home schoolers' contributions are welcomed. Please send all submissions via email by Friday, Dec. 3, 2021. The Children's & Teens' editions will publish on Dec. 15, 2021.

You can see the 2019 editions (pre-pandemic) by visiting [www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/) and scrolling down to Children's Edition. You may also see the 2020 editions at the bottom of this email.

Email submissions for the Children's Editions to [kimm.mary@gmail.com](mailto:kimm.mary@gmail.com).

For advertising, please email Debbie Funk at [debfunc@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunc@connectionnewspapers.com).

**Mary Kimm**  
Editor and Publish

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

smartphone, tablet or computer) are required for participation.  
Throughout November – Every Monday: 9:30-11:30 a.m. H.I.R.E. (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) Sessions  
Sign up to meet virtually/confidentially one-on-one with a career counselor for advice and assistance with your job search. Register:  
Monday, Nov. 22: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/5727226>  
Monday, Nov. 29: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/5727277>

#### MONTGOMERY COUNTY THANKSGIVING PARADE ON NOV. 20

Looking for a safe and fun outdoor family event for the holidays? The Montgomery County Thanksgiving Parade will usher in the holiday season on Saturday, Nov. 20 at 10 a.m. The parade kicks off with the thrilling sounds of marching bands, spinners with gold and orange hoops and streamers, and Thanksgiving-themed costumes and units, as well as a 12-foot turkey. Brian van de Graaff, ABC7 meteorologist, will be returning as the parade emcee.  
In this year's parade, the Chanukah celebratory units appear early on because Chanukah comes early this year, just after Thanksgiving. The parade is filled with gymnasts and tumblers, performing dogs, colorful Mexican, Peruvian, and Bolivian dancing groups, fire trucks, music, colorful inflatable characters, and ends with Christmas trees, reindeer, presents, elves, and Santa! Special performances include dances from The Nutcracker's The Waltz of

the Flowers by the Maryland Youth Ballet and Akhmedova Ballet's choreographed interpretation of ice skating at the Silver Spring Rink. Families in attendance will be able to socially distance themselves, as the parade route continues for a mile along Ellsworth Drive, to and along Georgia Avenue, ending at Spring Street. The best area for those seeking more personal space is Georgia Avenue, since Ellsworth Drive can become quite crowded.  
More information about the parade can be found at: <https://www.silverspringdowntown.com/montgomery-county-thanksgiving-parade>. You can also call MC311 at 3-1-1 (or 240-777-0311 if outside the County) Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

#### MONTGOMERY COUNTY BEGINS VACCINATING CHILDREN AGES 5-11

Following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) full approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 years of age, Montgomery County can now begin vaccinating young people in this age group. The County's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) began vaccinating children in this age group on Thursday, Nov. 4. The vaccine will also be available at pharmacies, private physicians, and retailers such as CVS, Giant, Safeway, and Walgreens to help make the vaccination more available to the estimated 100,000 children who are ages 5 to 11 in the county.  
For the latest COVID-19 updates, visit the County's COVID-19 website and follow Montgomery County on Facebook @MontgomeryCountyInfo and Twitter @MontgomeryCoMD.

## POTOMAC ALMANAC

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## "One-Hundred Seventy-Three Minutes"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

That's exactly how long the pre-recorded, artificially-computerized voice said I would have to wait on the phone if I wanted to speak with an actual person. For those of you arithmetically challenged, 173 minutes is almost three hours. Seeing no point in holding that long, I hung up the phone. EZ-Pass of Maryland is not as easy as I had hoped. Sure the transponder on my car has changed the way I toll around. I only wish I had been earlier to the party. But I waited until the monthly fees were eliminated before I joined. Had I been more on the ball, I would have been sailing through toll plazas up-and-down the east coast years ago. Nevertheless, I'm in the game now (last few years) and enjoying modern technology as it simplifies and eases the occasionally arduous task of driving through tolls - yours truly now being for whom the bell now calculates.

However, I needed to contact the EZ-Pass offices to question a \$25 "replenishment"/charge/debit to my EZ-Pass account. My car/transponder had been sitting in my driveway for most of the last week, undriven by anyone anywhere near a toll. Yet there it was in my email: a courtesy email advising of the \$25 charge/debit to my account. I was curious; having been told recently by my wife, Dina, of an EZ-Pass audit which showed phantom-charges (charges for roads not driven). As a result, I thought I would pursue the questionable debit to my account with a real person. I googled the EZ-Pass phone number and naively called it thinking I might get some satisfaction/resolution. Neither of which I did, but I did get a subject for this week's column.

To be fair-ish, the message does refer the caller to the EZ-Pass website, but that requires the caller to know their account number and password, which of course, I don't. As the message continued however, it spoke to this very circumstance and advised that if one didn't know their account number/password, press #2 I think it was, and then hang on to speak with someone. That's when I heard the 173-minute warning shot fired across my brow. That's when whatever hope I had of a reasonable reconciliation ended. I couldn't justify/tolerate the time it would take to possibly reconcile/credit my account the \$25. I figured my time was more valuable than that so I hung up. Alas, poor Yurik. It was not to be or be at all. I can't think of a more efficient way to solve a dispute in your favor: making callers wait three hours on hold just to talk to a person who might credit back an unnecessary debit into their account. Hardly a guarantee. More likely a definite maybe.

In effect: there's no dispute. There's no discussion and there's no reconciliation. The money's gone and I have absolutely no way/recourse to "replenish" my bank account. Sure, I could call back when the message advises due "to extremely high call volume," but when would that be? Midnight probably, on a weekend. But guess what? There's nobody home at that time. Apparently, the only time to get through to someone is when there's nobody around to be gotten through to. Granted, it's only \$25, but I'm entitled/deserving of an explanation. If I thought of it, I could certainly get paranoid about computers having access to my bank account and/or credit card information. I realize it's the way of the world to provide this information to total strangers/computer programmers, but if I have no real way to settle a dispute of a charge/debit, it makes me rather nervous. Dollars could very well disappear in the interests of whomever has access to the account. If I can't talk to a human being - in less than three hours, then in point of fact, I have no recourse. And no recourse is hardly the stuff from which dreams are made. It's the complete opposite, actually. It's a nightmare, and one from which we might never wake up.

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



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