

Potomac ALMANAC

Changing Seasons Around Potomac

PAGE 6

Two boys enjoy the stream and woods on Friday, March 11 when it was in the 60s. Their grandmothers took them for the nature outing in the same woods where their Dads played 30-some years earlier.

Honoring Josiah Henson

PAGE 4

Eagles Are Thriving

PAGE 8

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Potomac REAL ESTATE

November, 2021 Sales, \$1,550,000~\$1,375,000

IN NOVEMBER, 2021, 55 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD
BETWEEN \$5,350,000-\$555,000.



1 12107 Glen Mill Road
— \$1,550,000



4 12646 Travilah Road
— \$1,480,000



3 11929 Glen Mill Road
— \$1,500,000



7 11609 Karen Drive
— \$1,375,000



5 10229 Holly Hill Place — \$1,460,000



6 9901 Bluegrass Road
— \$1,500,000

Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City.....	Sold Price...	Type.....	Lot AC.	Postal Code ...	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
1 12107 GLEN MILL RD.....	7	...	7	...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,550,000	Detached..	2.44.....	20854..POTOMAC OUTSIDE	11/30/21
2 14041 GORKY DR	5	...	4	...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,550,000	Detached..	2.00.....	20854...ESWORTHY PARK	11/30/21
3 11929 GLEN MILL RD	5	...	4	...		POTOMAC	\$1,500,000	Detached..	0.93.....	20854..... HOLLINRIDGE	11/15/21
4 12646 TRAVILAH RD	4	...	4	...	2	POTOMAC	\$1,480,000	Detached..	2.94.....	20854DARNESTOWN OUTSIDE	11/30/21
5 10229 HOLLY HILL PL.....	6	...	5	...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,460,000	Detached..	0.47.....	20854..POTOMAC VILLAGE	11/10/21
6 9901 BLUEGRASS RD	5	...	4	...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,450,000	Detached..	0.41.....	20854..POTOMAC VILLAGE	11/10/21
7 11609 KAREN DR.....	8	...	6	...		POTOMAC	\$1,450,000	Detached..	0.40	20854.LAKE NORMANDY ESTS	11/05/21
8 2 WARDE CT	7	...	6	...		POTOMAC	\$1,375,000	Detached..	0.53.....	20854....MCAULEY PARK....	11/05/21

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SCREEN SHOTS

The Grand Prize Winner was Dena Shao, Thomas Wootton High School. Screen shots from her winning video are shown here. See the powerful video at bit.ly/3I1xLdk

'Heads Up, Phones Down' Teen Video Contest Winners Announced

Dena Shao of Wootton High School in Rockville was the grand prize individual winner as the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) announced the winners of its "Heads Up, Phones Down" student video contest.

The Clarksburg High School team of Aniket Belur, Mohit Belur, Ryan Ngo and Agustin Saldana was the group grand prize winner. The contest, which asked students to produce videos encouraging peers to not allow cell phones to distract them while driving and walking, received more than 170 entries.

The contest was open to Montgomery County public and private high school students. Video entries were submitted individually or as a group of up to four in English or Spanish.

A team from the MCDOT Safe Routes to School office visited the schools of the grand prize winners on Friday, March 11, to surprise the creators of the top entries with prizes, balloons and fanfare.

"These teens have produced some powerful videos that will help us eliminate distracted driving and increase pedestrian

safety," said County Executive Marc Elrich. "Often the best messaging is peer-to-peer. These videos will help grow a culture shift of awareness and responsibility."

A grand prize and first and second runner-up prizes were awarded in the group and individual categories. Winning group submissions split the grand prize with gift cards for each member. Individual submission winners qualified for prizes including a PlayStation Five, an Apple Watch or tripod.

The contest winners, with links to their winning videos:

Individual Category:

Grand Prize Winner:

Dena Shao, Thomas Wootton High School.
Video Link: bit.ly/3I1xLdk

First Runner Up:

Elias Bernstein,
Winston Churchill High School.
Video Link: bit.ly/3pYFT8b

Second Runner Up:

Hailie Clarke, Montgomery County Virtual Academy (Home school: Northwood High School).
Video Link: bit.ly/3MCMM8W



SCREEN SHOT

First runner up in the contest was Elias Bernstein, Winston Churchill High School.
Video Link: bit.ly/3pYFT8b

Group Category:

Grand Prize Winners:

Aniket Belur, Mohit Belur, Ryan Ngo, Agustin Saldana, Clarksburg High School.
Video Link: bit.ly/3t1AejO

First Runner Up:

Nicholas Bourg, Julian Ekernas, Alexander Risso, Montgomery Blair High School.
Video Link: bit.ly/3pUv47b

Second Runner Up:

Anvika Deva, Sailaja Kadali, Akshya Ma-

hadevan, Riona Sheikh, Richard Montgomery High School.

Video Link: bit.ly/3wdk5tF

"We know that young drivers, ages 15-19, are the age group with the largest proportion of distracted drivers at the time of a fatal crash," said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. "Distracted driving and walking are serious issues. These videos will help remind everyone that, while cell phones are an important part of our daily lives, paying attention can be the difference between life and death when you're behind the wheel of a car."

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.

MARCH 1-APRIL 30

Exhibition Title: "Essence". Solo Art Exhibition for Artist: Vian Borchert. At The Framer's Choice Gallery, 402 Main Street, Gaithersburg. Artist Talk and Reception: Saturday, April 23, 3-5 p.m. Gallery Hours: Monday - Saturday: 10 a.m. to

3 p.m. Exhibition link: <https://www.vianborchert.com/exhibitions/386-essence-fcg-2022.html>

THURSDAY/MARCH 17

St. Patrick's Day Comedy. 8 p.m. At Silver Spring Black Box Theatre, 8641 Colesville Road, Silver Spring. Improbable Comedy and Jenny Cavellero bring you Seltzer: A Sober Comedy Show. Enjoy mocktails and comedy with Elena Torres, Von Mychael, Sandi Benton, Elani Nichele and host Jenny Cavallero. Tickets and more information at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/>

seltzer-a-sober-comedy-show-tickets-272479472437

SATURDAY/MARCH 19

Pressenda Chamber Players. 8 p.m. At Westmoreland Church, One Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. The concert includes Beethoven String Quartet in E-Flat Major, No. 10, Op.74 and Boccherini String Quintet in F Major Op.13 No. 3. An ensemble of varied combinations of strings and piano, The Pressenda Chamber Players was founded by Artistic Director and cellist, Tobias Werner. Each ensemble member has achieved significant

success as both solo and chamber musician. The ensemble has been Ensemble-In-Residence at the Washington Conservatory of Music since its founding in 2016.

SATURDAY/MARCH 19

Mega-Folk Concert. 7 p.m. At Olney Theatre Center, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney. Reba and her husband Vic Heyman were more than "ultimate folk music fans." Their generosity in things both tangible and intangible was career changing for many artists, especially those early in their

Careers. FocusMusic and co-sponsors the Songwriters' Association of Washington, Uptown Concerts and the World Folk Music Association, presents a tribute concert featuring Stephanie Corby, Ronny Cox, Terry Gonda and Kirsti Reeve, Lara Herscovitch, The Kennedys, Kate McDonnell, Dan Navarro, Tom Prasada Rao, Jenny Reynolds, SONiA disappear fear, LisaBeth Weber, Annie Wenz and Jack Williams. Contact: www.focusmusic.org

It's Josiah Henson Parkway Now



New sign for Josiah Henson Parkway.

Montrose Parkway has been renamed.

In response to a request by many African American leaders and historic preservationists, the Montgomery County Planning Board approved a resolution to rename Montrose Parkway in North Bethesda in honor of Reverend Josiah Henson.

In a letter sent to Gwen Wright, planning director at the Montgomery County Planning Department, Councilmember Riemer detailed the historical reasoning for this formal request, which was supported by community leaders whom he has worked closely with over the years to highlight the legacy of Rev. Henson, including Catherine Leggett, chair of the Museum Advisory Board, and Warren Fleming, an advocate who has worked to bring more County-wide recognition of Rev. Henson's life and legacy.

"It is important that we provide Reverend Josiah Henson with the public recognition he justifiably deserves, and this new street name is a great step forward," said Councilmember Riemer, chair of the County Council's Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee. "It will give our residents and children a symbol of the fight for freedom that Henson embodies while reminding our community of our unique history and the role of African American leaders since our founding. I am honored to help make Josiah Henson Parkway a reality in partnership with community leaders and our County government."

The parkway stretches about two miles and runs through the northern part of the property once known as Riley Farm, a plantation where Josiah Henson was enslaved before his self-emancipation. Henson escaped to Canada with members of his family in 1830. Upon arriving in Canada, Rev. Henson dedicated his life to serving the abolitionist movement at a global level as well as founding a trade school and leading a community called Dawn.

The parkway is located nearby the Josiah Henson Museum and Park, which was funded by the Council and opened in April 2021.

"The renaming of Montrose Parkway is a

very appropriate way to commemorate Josiah Henson, a Montgomery County historic figure of local, national, and international significance," said Montgomery Planning Director Wright. "Reverend Henson, whose 1849 autobiography, 'The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, Now an Inhabitant of Canada' inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's landmark novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin. This book, in turn, inspired and inflamed the abolitionist movement in the mid-nineteenth century."

"Today we celebrate another milestone for Josiah Henson," said Warren Fleming. "The renaming of Josiah Henson Parkway will enable travelers to learn and understand the injustice Josiah Henson encountered and how Montgomery County is continuing to promote equality for its citizens."

"It is fitting that the county has taken measures to honor [Rev. Henson's] legacy by building a center to honor him on the land where he was once enslaved," said Linda M. Plummer, president of the Montgomery County NAACP. "As this county strives to acknowledge the wrongs of our history and remove the remaining vestiges of these past mistakes, it is also fitting that the county pay tribute to those people who have been marginalized in formal accounts of our county's history."

As a conductor of the Underground Railroad, Henson helped lead more than 100 people from enslavement in the United States to freedom in Canada, even establishing the Dawn Settlement for fugitive slaves in 1841. Then, in 1849, he published his autobiography, where he recounted the horrors of slavery that he witnessed when living in Montgomery County.

The resolution to rename the Montrose Parkway to Josiah Henson Parkway was supported by local organizations and federal representatives alike.

"Since 1938, the Luxmanor Citizens Association has represented the community that includes 900 households in Luxmanor, Windermere, and the Oaks. Our community was built on the plantation where Reverend Henson was enslaved and is home to the historic log kitchen, Riley-Bolton House, and the Josiah Henson Museum and Park," said



Council President Gabe Alborno and Councilmember Andrew Friedson hold either end of the Josiah Henson sign, along with Councilmember Hans Riemer.

Josiah Henson Museum & Park tells the story about the life and challenges of Reverend Josiah Henson, enslavement in Maryland, and the ongoing struggles of racial equality and justice.

Sheri Steisel Weiss, president of the Luxmanor Citizens Association (LCA).

"Renaming Montrose Parkway will indelibly honor Rev. Henson and his life of perseverance and determination; providing him the public recognition he justifiably deserves while reminding our community of our unique history and the role of African American leaders in Montgomery County since its earliest days," said U.S. Rep. David Trone (MD-6).

Matthew Logan, executive director of Montgomery History said: "While renaming the road will be entirely symbolic, it will nevertheless be meaningful. Such measures like this contribute to and reinforce more complete and nuanced historical narratives, such as those now offered by Montgomery Parks at the excellent Josiah Henson Museum."

Eileen McGuckian, president of Montgomery Preservation, Inc. said: "Rev. Henson was an important personage, a Marylander who became renown nationally and internationally as a successful escapee from bondage who not only rescued others but dedicated his life to educating and supporting those who were able to find freedom."

<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Attachments-Renaming-Montrose-to-Josiah-Henson.pdf>

More on Josiah Henson Museum and Park: <https://montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/josiah-henson-park/>
11410 Old Georgetown Road
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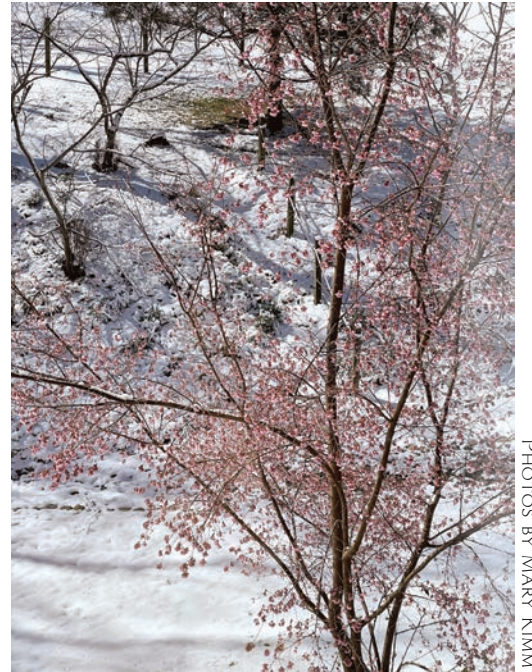
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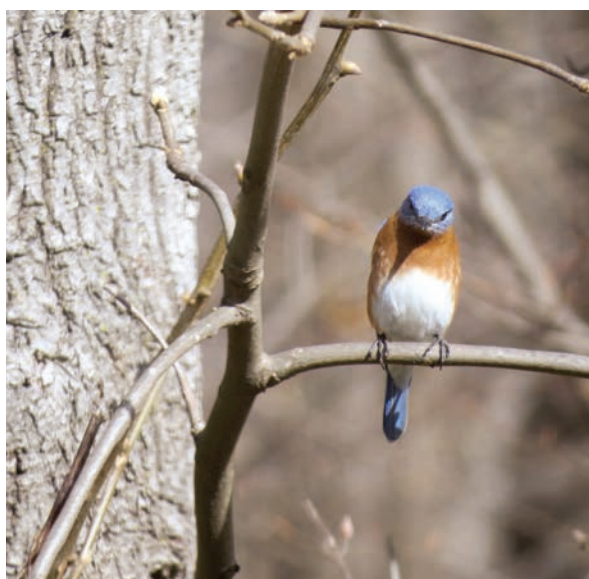
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Changing Seasons Around Potomac



PHOTOS BY MARY KIMM

The photo on the left was taken on Friday, March 11 at 62 degrees. The photo on the right was taken on Saturday, March 12 at 31 degrees, and dropping ... While the blossoms weren't as bright after the snow melted, they still did attract pollinators.



Bluebirds bring happiness to everyone who sees them. Right now bluebird pairs are house hunting, looking for an appropriate hole in a tree or a house that has been set up for them especially.



The earliest blooms aren't cherry or daffodil or even snow drops. The earliest blossoms are skunk cabbage, seen here in one of Potomac's stream valley parks. According to wildflowers.org, "This distinctive plant of marshy woods sprouts so early in spring that the heat of cellular respiration resulting from its rapid growth actually melts snow or ice around it. Its strong fetid odor, especially when the plant is bruised, ... lures insects that pollinate it."



The snow on Saturday, March 12 was less surprising than the wind and the change in temperatures. Friday the sun was out and temperatures were in the 60s, before the temperatures plunged into the 20s the next day.



PHOTOS BY MARY KIMM

Two boys enjoy the stream and woods on Friday, March 11 when it was in the 60s. Their grandmothers took them for the nature outing in the same woods where their Dads played 30-some years earlier.

Changing Seasons Around Potomac



They might not be first, and they also are not native, but daffodils are reliable and deer do not eat them.

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Bike to Work Friday, May 20



Imagine if Bike to Work Day could also be “Bring Your Dog to Work Day.” This bicyclist is toting his dog in the trailer by Potomac Village.

National Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 20. Registration for the event is now open. The first 15,000 bicyclists who register and participate will get a free T-shirt and are automatically entered into a raffle for a chance to win a new bike.

The event is held across the nation on the third Friday of May to celebrate bicycling as a clean, fun and healthy way to get to work. Bike riders in Montgomery County can stop by one of the six pit stops sponsored by the County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) for refreshments, to listen to music and visit local vendor displays during varying times on May 20. There will be free raffle prizes throughout the morning and a grand prize raffle of a new bike at each MCDOT-sponsored pit stop. Teleworkers and leisure riders are encouraged to participate.

“This event brings awareness to the importance of biking as a great alternate mode of transportation,” said Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich. “It’s a healthy and fun way to travel and it is good for our environment. Biking can help expand mobility in the County while reducing carbon emissions. I encourage residents to give it a try—even for a short trip.”

The Metropolitan Council of Government’s Commuter Connections, a network of transportation organizations

in which MCDOT participates, and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) are the co-organizers of Washington Region’s Bike to Work Day event. All participants should visit the Find Your Pit Stop Map to plan a route in advance. <https://www.biketowork-metrodc.org/find-your-pit-stop>

MCDOT-sponsored pit stops will be at the following locations:

Downtown Bethesda at Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues

Friendship Heights at the Shops at Wisconsin Place

North Bethesda at Pike and Rose, next to Bark Social

Rockville at Fallsgrove Village Center

Rockville Town Square at Dawson’s Market

Silver Spring Downtown at Veterans Plaza

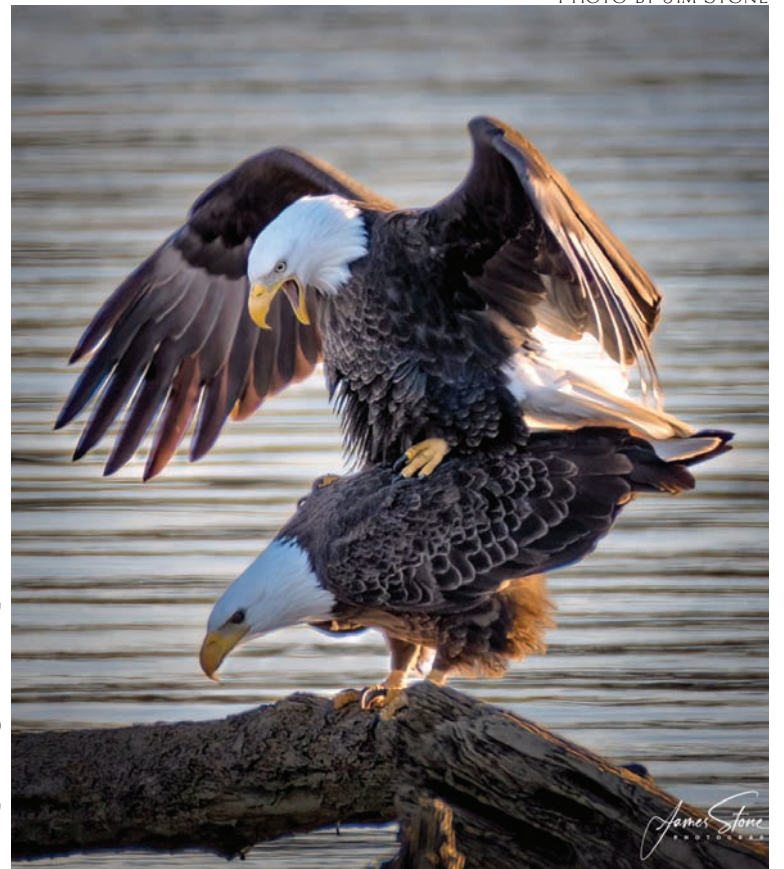
The events from the previous two years were modified to avoid gathering because of COVID-19.

“We are glad to get back to our traditional celebration this year,” said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. “This is a fun event that we hope residents will enjoy participating in. Our County has over 100 miles of bike lanes, with over five miles of protected bike lanes, and that network is growing. With spring coming, Bike to Work Day is a good reminder to get your bike cleaned up and ready for use this season.”

All riders are encouraged to wear a helmet.



Bald eagle nest in Dyke Marsh.



Bald eagles mating.

Bald Eagles Are Thriving but Face Challenges

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE ALMANAC

“Virginia’s tidal rivers are just loaded with bald eagles,” Jeff Cooper told 210 people attending the March 2 meeting of the Friends of Dyke Marsh. These large raptors with an 80-inch wingspan regularly breed, nest, forage and migrate on and near rivers like the Potomac. People see bald eagles frequently at Dyke Marsh, Mason Neck and Fort Belvoir. Cooper is wildlife biologist with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources and has worked with birds for over 30 years and co-authored 17 papers.

In and around Dyke Marsh and Mason Neck, there are nests every half mile or so because there’s so much food available, he said. In recent years, Dyke Marsh has had three active bald eagle nests.

Bald eagles feed mainly on fish which they catch with their sharp yellow talons. “They make their living with their feet. Virginia is rich in aquatic resources,” Cooper said. When an eagle pair raises their young, they forage near their nest, so eaglets’ success is highly contingent on habitat quality, Cooper said. Bald eagles are highly territorial and mate for life.

The Potomac and James Rivers consistently see high use by migrant and “local” eagles, breeding pairs, offspring and all age classes. From Dyke Marsh south to where route 301 crosses the Rappahannock River is what wildlife biologists call a “bald eagle concentration area.” The area also has non-paired, adult bald eagles called “floaters,” birds constantly roaming the landscape trying to find mates. Floater numbers are increasing because the area is so saturated with breeding pairs.

The Chesapeake Bay is the epicenter of eagle conservation, having the densest breeding population in the lower 48 states and a critical stop on the Atlantic flyway, and northern and southern populations rely on the Bay for winter or summer habitat.

“What happens in the Bay has an impact,” Cooper said.

Belle View resident Carolyn Gamble commented, “Jeff Cooper’s talk opened my eyes to how much bald eagles depend on our stretch of the Potomac River as well as the entire Bay area. I enjoyed learning from someone with many years of ‘hands-on’ experience and have a greater appreciation for the DWR’s research.”

Tagging and Tracking Eagles

Cooper and his colleagues tag bald eagles in Virginia’s coastal plain, generally east of Interstate 95. In 2007, they started tagging with cellular transmitters to trace the birds’ movements. He has tagged over 130 bald eagles and over 40 golden eagles. Golden eagles are found in mountainous regions. Adults are dark brown all over with a golden sheen on their neck and head visible from some angles. Like bald eagles, they have a powerful beak and talons.



Jeff Cooper holding a bald eagle at Rappahannock River National Wildlife Refuge.



Jeff Cooper measures eagles’ beaks. Here, Sandy Spencer holds the eagle, caught at Virginia’s Rappahannock River National Wildlife Refuge.

To capture an eagle, Cooper puts out road-kill deer and he hides; when the eagle feeds on the bait, Cooper shoots a 40-by-60-foot, rocket-powered net over the birds. He also uses a bow net with a leather trigger and at times to snare an eagle, puts foam in a gizzard shad to make the fish float. For most eagles, he takes measurements and blood samples, bands them and attaches a transmitter on the eagle’s back.

The process takes from 35 minutes to one hour.

To count nestlings and check their health,

he climbs trees like an arborist. “I was put in the emergency room a few times because of eagle claws,” he snickered.

Challenges

Lead levels in both eagle species are a serious threat today. Cooper cited a February paper by Vince Slabe and others with Conservation Science Global which found that nearly half of bald and golden eagles tested between 2010 and 2018 in the U. S. show

SEE BALD EAGLES, PAGE 10
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Potomac REAL ESTATE

November, 2021 Sales, \$1,365,280~ \$1,195,000

IN NOVEMBER, 2021, 55 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$5,350,000-\$555,000.



2 12700 Maidens Bower Drive
— \$1,314,500

3 8419 Harker Drive
— \$1,285,000



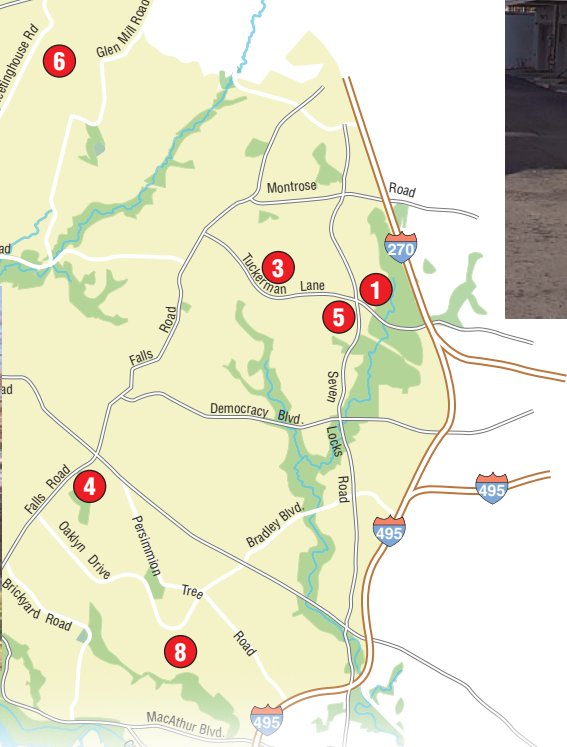
1 11302 Emerald
Park Road #Lot #47
— \$1,365,280



5 7900 Crestdale Drive — \$1,200,000



4 9616 Falls Bridge Lane
— \$1,220,000



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

1	11302 EMERALD PARK RD #LOT47 4...	3...	2	POTOMAC	\$1,365,280	Townhse	0.06	20854	CABIN JOHN VILLAGE	11/30/21
2	12700 MAIDENS BOWER DR...	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,314,500	Detached	2.64	POTOMAC HILLS	11/19/21
3	8419 HARKER DR	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,285,000	Detached	0.21	HIGHLAND STONE	11/30/21
4	9616 FALLS BRIDGE LN	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,220,000	Detached	0.45	HERITAGE FARM	11/24/21
5	7900 CRESTDALE DR	3...	3...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,200,000	Townhse	0.09	POTOMAC CREST	11/17/21
6	13522 BROADFIELD DR	4...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,200,000	Detached	0.23	PINEY GLEN VILLAGE	11/22/21
7	14540 PETTIT WAY	4...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,200,000	Detached	2.56	DARNESTOWN OUTSIDE	11/16/21
8	8306 TURNBERRY CT	3...	3...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,195,000	Townhse	0.14	AVENEL	11/01/21

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NEWS

Bald Eagles Are Thriving but Face Challenges

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

FROM PAGE 8

signs of chronic lead poisoning. This was the first study to sample eagles across the entire country. Eagles scavenge and ingest spent lead ammunition from carcasses and gut piles left by hunters. "Chronic poisoning suggests repeated exposure to lead over the long term," the authors wrote. Lead poisoning can make birds weak, emaciated and uncoordinated, thus less able to evade predators and dangers. The study, published in Science, is at <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.1258444>.

Collisions with both civilian and military aircraft are another threat. Cooper called Virginia and Florida "hotspots" for eagle-aircraft strikes. Most airports are located in prime eagle habitats because they are near water. Eagles are "big birds," Cooper said, and have crashed through cockpits. In the Chesapeake Bay region, there were seven airstrikes between 1990 to 2009, 18 from 2010 to 2015, and some are not reported. Cooper is working with Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia, where between 2013 to 2020, he tagged over 130 eagles with cellular transmitters for an aircraft strike study.

Back from the Brink

Haliaeetus leucocephalus, the bald eagle, was once headed for extinction in the lower 48 states. In 1963, only 417 nesting pairs were documented. Scientists attribute their decline to DDT and other compounds in pesticides that moved up the food chain and made eggshells so thin that chicks failed to hatch. In 1967, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) put the bald eagle on the endangered species list. In 1972, Congress banned DDT and bald eagle population numbers started to rise. In 2007, FWS removed bald eagles from the endangered species list. Since 1977, Virginia's breeding population has increased ten-fold, says William and Mary's Center for Conservation Biology website.

Mount Vernonite Greg Crider promoted the talk among his friends and neighbors and found it "very informative and interesting. Apparently, the characteristics of our area are the most attractive on the east coast which is why we are seeing more bald eagles," he said.

You can view the presentation at www.fodm.org. Cosponsors of the meeting were the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, the Northern Virginia Bird Club, the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and the Friends of Mason Neck State Park.

Several live cameras monitor bald eagle nests, including nests at the National Arboretum, <https://naeaglecam.org>, and the Dulles Greenway, <http://www.dulles-greenway.com/eagle-cam/>.



Jeff Cooper releasing the bald eagle.



Jeff Cooper puts metal bands on eagles' ankles.

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Geneva Day School Celebrates

Cookies emblazoned with #1, colorful balloons, and special signage. . . Geneva Day School's celebration that readers of "Bethesda Magazine" have again recognized it as "Best Pre-school" and for a first time, dubbed Geneva Summer Program "Best Summer Program."

Geneva heartily thanks all family, friends, and neighbors for this expression of support. The Parents' Association will host an Online Auction including wine baskets, an oil painting, other artisanal pieces, experiences, and so much more. Bidding is set for March 28 - April 3.



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Nothing Sensational Here



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Can I admit to a lack of sensation? It might sound a bit odd, but I don't feel like I have cancer. Furthermore, when I go to a medical facility to have one thing or another done, I never feel as if I'm on a slippery slope, health wise. Naively or not, what I most think and feel about whatever procedure or diagnostic scan I'm having or prescription drug I'm ordering, is that I'm at a certain age, over age 65, where some of the parts don't work as well as they used to, and a tune-up, so to speak, is merely the cost of doing business, if you know what I mean? The older one gets, the more difficulties there are getting from here to there – and everywhere in between; with varying hurdles at almost every step (more so if there's a bend-over involved). For some inexplicable reason, I don't see the cancer issue as the extremely serious and complicated problem that it is. I just see it as another day alive and in semi paradise (especially considering my original two-year prognosis).

And though I joke when referring to being in paradise, compared to the "terminal" diagnosis I was initially given by my oncologist, specifically: "13 months to two years," in late February 2009, it's impossible for me to consider any blip on my health radar now as anything but amazing good fortune that I'm still even blipping. As in I'm still alive being able to experience any blips/symptoms. (The presumption being that one doesn't feel symptoms when they're dead, so my thinking is, if I'm still feeling; then I'm still in the game, and it's a game I very much want to continue to play.) Honestly though, none of it really bothers me, too much.

For a while, back in early 2009 when Team Lourie was trying to assimilate the "terminal" diagnosis I received: (stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer), it was difficult to see a future. Heck, it was difficult to see a present – which by the way, had just been taken away. But my attitude then, as it remains so today, is a kind of blissful ignorance while respecting and adhering to the many medical steps I regularly take. I mean it's serious, of course, very serious. Still, I do my best to compartmentalize the bad and try to live my good life going forward; as if nothing has been taken away.

Thinking back, thirteen years ago, when I was initially diagnosed, seems like an eternity, another lifetime, one might say. Considering I'm now living in year 14 after being told I might not make it to year two, and perhaps you can appreciate how little – and even some big things, don't bother me nearly as much as one might imagine. Having dodged a bullet (a hail of bullets, actually), I don't feel as if I'm on shaky ground. Quite the contrary. I feel like I'm on hallowed ground. I've not been to the mountain top or seen a burning bush, but I have lived a life I had no expectation of living.

I may not be "The Iron Horse" (Lou Gehrig), but I feel very fortunate, nonetheless. Life has gone on. Amazing.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for
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