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Potomac ALMANAC

Hungry red-winged
blackbird chicks in
a buttonbush.

It's Nesting Time

PAGE 8

Cherry Blossom
Festival

PAGE 4

Safe at Home

PAGE 7

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Potomac REAL ESTATE

October, 2021 Sales, \$1,800,000~\$1,405,000

IN OCTOBER, 2021, 58 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN
\$4,200,000-\$530,000.



6 12021 Wetherfield Lane — \$1,475,000



1 10709 Stapleford Hall Drive — \$1,800,000



5 11616 Luvie Court — \$1,525,000



2 10811
Barn Wood Lane
— \$1,770,000



7 9810 Newhall Road
— \$1,425,000



3 7305 Brookstone Court
— \$1,600,000

Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal City.....	Sold Price...	Type.....	Lot AC.	Postal Code ...	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
1 10709 STAPLEFORD HALL DR.	6...	7...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,800,000	Detached..	0.96.....	20854...	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	10/29/21
2 10811 BARN WOOD LN	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,770,000	Detached..	2.02.....	20854...	RIVER OAKS FARM	10/20/21
3 7305 BROOKSTONE CT	6...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,600,000	Detached..	2.16.....	20854....	MAZZA WOODS....	10/06/21
4 12508 NOBLE CT	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,539,888	Detached..	2.00.....	20854.....	PALATINE	10/15/21
5 11616 LUVIE CT	4...	3...	2	POTOMAC	\$1,525,000	Detached..	0.87.....	20854...	MERRY GO ROUND FARM	10/07/21
6 12021 WETHERFIELD LN	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,475,000	Detached..	2.11.....	20854....	LAKE POTOMAC....	10/29/21
7 9810 NEWHALL RD	5...	6...	2	POTOMAC	\$1,425,000	Detached..	1.11.....	20854...	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	10/08/21
8 8013 COBBLE CREEK CIR	5...	4...	1	POTOMAC	\$1,405,000	Detached..	0.24.....	20854...	POTOMAC CREST ..	10/04/21

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HTTP://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/NEWS/2021/NOV/16/OCTOBER-2021-58-POTOMAC-HOMES-SOLD-BETWEEN-4200000/



PHOTOS BY MARY KIMM

Sunrise over the misty woods.

Some Potomac Scenery



Daffodils leading down the path to a Potomac stream.



Cherry blossoms on the wane.



Cherry tree blooming in Potomac.

Prevailing Wage Requirements Expanded

Today, the Montgomery County Council unanimously enacted legislation, spearheaded by Councilmember Tom Hucker and Councilmember Will Jawando, which will expand Montgomery County's prevailing wage requirements and adopt Maryland's prevailing wage law regarding the contract threshold limit. Bill 35-21, Prevailing Wage Requirements – Construction Contracts – Amendments, is co-sponsored by Council President Gabe Alborno, Vice President Evan Glass and Councilmembers Craig Rice, Sidney Katz, Hans Riemer and Nancy Navarro.

The legislation expands the prevailing wage requirements to include additional construction-related jobs and for construction projects financed by the County to match the State's lower prevailing wage threshold limit. It also applies prevailing wages for mechanical systems service contracts and includes a local hiring mandate to increase jobs locally in the County. The legislation passed with an amendment to apply prevailing wage rates to certain construction contracts that receive a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOTs), but it also provides an exemption for affordable housing projects owned by the Housing Opportunities Commission, nonprofit developers who provide reduced rental units or accept rental assistance.

Councilmember Hucker said, "By helping local workers and contractors compete for public construction projects, this bill will create more middle-class jobs with

benefits, reduce demand on our social services, incentivize excellent apprenticeship training, and expand workforce and economic opportunities for our young people."

"Research shows that on projects where prevailing wage laws exist, there is a boost in worker productivity and safety," Councilmember Jawando said.

Baltimore-D.C. Metro Building and Construction Trades Council (BDCBT) President Stephen Courtien said: "This impactful legislation ensures more workers have the opportunity to earn a family-supporting wage in Montgomery County and continue contributing to the County by working on projects that benefit all residents."

Bill 35-21 is similar to existing legislation found in the surrounding jurisdictions of Anne Arundel County and Baltimore County and would align recent changes in Maryland law governing the disbursement of funds from the Build to Learn Act.

Under Montgomery County's current prevailing wage law, contractors of construction projects are excluded from the prevailing wage requirement if the project is valued at less than \$500,000. The State of Maryland's threshold for prevailing wages was recently lowered to \$250,000, which would expand the number of workers who will qualify for the prevailing wage. This legislation will lower the prevailing wage threshold limit from \$500,000 to \$250,000 or apply the State's prevailing wage threshold to construction contracts, whichever threshold is lower.

Hearings on Operating Budget

On April 19, 20 and 21, the Montgomery County Council will hold public hearings on Montgomery County's Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget. Budget public hearings will be held on April 19 and April 20 at 1:30 p.m. and April 19, 20 and 21 at 7 p.m.

"Budgets are moral documents that establish our priorities, reflect our community needs and underscore our collective values," said Council President Gabe Alborno. "Montgomery County's operating budget is our most significant policy document and one of the best tools to fund pivotal and essential services to improve the quality of life for County residents."

Residents are encouraged to

provide feedback as the County moves through the budget process.

Residents will have the opportunity to testify both in-person and virtually via Zoom for the daytime public hearings on April 19 and 20. The evening public hearings on April 19, 20 and 21 will be conducted virtually. Residents can sign up to testify by clicking the "sign up" button for public hearings on the Council's calendar <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/calendar.html>

Individuals will receive a confirmation email with the appropriate instructions to participate in the meetings.

If you need help signing up, call 240-777-7803.

SEE HEARINGS, PAGE 6



CHERRY BLOSSOM



PHOTOS BY PAT MCGEEHAN

Cherry blossoms almost at full peak on Monday, March 21. Scattered visitors walk around the Tidal Basin and the sunlight filters through the blossoms as dawn turns into a bright spring day.

Cherry Blossom Celebration Showcases Blooms in Full Display

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE ALMANAC

Pat McGeehan got a jump start on the cherry blossom crowd on Monday at 7:30 a.m. when she drove to the Tidal Basin with a friend. She said they drove around the Tidal Basin and back and found a parking place pretty easily. Arlington resident McGeehan added that when they left at 9 a.m. there were several parking spaces still available. She said she always goes early. "It's just easier." And she adds, "the trucks aren't out yet selling everything with cherry blossoms."

McGeehan says today in addition to the locals and tourists there were the usual women in their wedding dresses in full regalia. "There was a woman who was a Georgetown law graduate in her academic gown. Someone with four kids was taking a family portrait and I saw what seemed to be the American University girls soccer team."

McGeehan says over the years she has seen it all—people in Japanese ceremonial garb and Latin American fifteen-year-old girls celebrating their quinceanera. It seems whatever you have to celebrate, you can do it at the cherry blossom festival.

McGeehan says there was a large group who had set up tables and were having breakfast with juice and donuts. "When they cleared out, it wasn't too crowded." There were some dog walkers and scooters and runners but who could think they could actually run through the crowd around the Tidal Basin?

McGeehan has been coming to the Cherry Blossom festival for decades and went during COVID, too. She remembers coming with her husband and four sons who are now in their 40s and 50s. "And my teenage grandchildren come now, too."

The opening ceremony for the 2022 National Cherry Blossom Festival was held on Sunday, March 20, the first day of spring. The festivities will be hosted from March 20-April 17 as a sign of friendship between Japan and the United States dating back to 1912 with the gift of cherry trees from Tokyo to Washington, D.C. The festival will feature four weeks of activities including traditional and contemporary arts and culture—art bloom and petal palooza, a number of musical presentations, Japanese stone lantern lighting, festival walks and run, the traditional kite flying day and the National Cherry Blossom Festival parade down Constitution.



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>

MARCH 19-MAY 1

Ham License Class. 1-4 p.m. Via Zoom. The Montgomery Amateur Radio Club is offering a free online Zoom amateur radio Technician license class on seven Saturdays from March 19, 2022 through April 30, 2022 from 1-4 p.m. This is a great opportunity for you to get your amateur radio license. Free. Visit the website: <https://www.marclub.org/mweb/education/classes/technician.html>

MONDAY/MARCH 28

Tannahill Weavers. 7:30 p.m. At St. Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville. "The music may be pure old time Celtic, but the drive and enthusiasm are akin to straight ahead rock and roll." - Winnipeg Free Press. Tickets are \$22/advance; \$27/at door, available at www.imtfolk.org

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 30

Author Georgia Hunter. 2 p.m. Via Zoom. Sponsored by Montgomery County Public Libraries. Author Georgia Hunter will join Montgomery County Public Libraries for a virtual "Meet the Author" event. She will be discussing her acclaimed novel, "We Were the Lucky Ones," about her family's survival during WWII. Physical and digital copies can be found in MCPL's catalog. Registration is required. Visit this link (<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6208377>) to learn more and register. Participants must be signed into Zoom to join.

MARCH 30-APRIL 27

"The Prayer for Peace." At Artists & Makers Studios, 11810 Parklawn Drive, Rockville. Featuring artist Nana Bagdavadze who will exhibit her work to honor Ukraine as well as resident artists' "Threads." The April 2 opening is from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. An Artist Talk will be held Saturday, April 16 from 1-3 p.m.

SUNDAY/APRIL 3

Terrarium 101. 2:30-3:30 p.m. At Kentlands Mansion, 320 Kent Square Road, Gaithersburg. Build your own habitat in this terrarium workshop. Participants will create their own self-sustaining terrariums using different soil layers, rocks and small tropical plants in large mason jars. An expert art instructor will teach participants how to design their own additions to the habitat, like creatures, forestry and fairy houses using modeling clay. One registration includes materials for one terrarium by one adult and child. All participants must adhere to safety guidelines including social distancing and mask wearing.

SUNDAY/APRIL 3

Singer David Mallett. 7:30 p.m. At The Arts Barn, 311 Kent Square Road, Gaithersburg. Singer-songwriter,

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

David Mallett is one of America's true original troubadours. In a career spanning four decades, he has recorded 17 albums, had several hundred covers of his songs, including the American folk classic "Garden Song" [Inch by Inch, Row by Row] and performed in clubs, concert halls and festivals across the US, Canada and Europe. He has appeared on numerous broadcasts, including National Public Radio's A Prairie Home Companion. Known for his carefully written, poetic offerings, his body of work has provided material for an eclectic list of artists that includes Alison Krauss, Pete Seeger, Hal Ketchum, Emmylou Harris, John Denver and the Muppets. Tickets are \$30. COVID protocols, details and tickets at <http://www.wfma.net/mallett22.htm>. Visit www.focusmusic.org

COUNTY TO PROVIDE AT-HOME PCR TEST KITS

To continue making COVID-19 testing available, Montgomery County residents can pick up free at-home polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test kits at locations throughout the community, beginning Wednesday, March 16. The "20/20 GeneSystems" tests will be available to County residents while supplies last. Residents can receive a maximum of two test kits per person (each kit contains one test) per visit. Tests can be picked up, self-administered at home, and then returned to marked drop boxes at the pick-up locations below:

Bauer Drive Community Recreation Center - 14625 Bauer Drive, Rockville
10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday - Thursday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday
Noon to 5 p.m., Sunday
Nancy H. Dacek North Potomac Community Recreation Center - 13850 Travilah Road, Rockville
10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday - Thursday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday
Noon to 5 p.m., Sunday
Dennis Avenue Health Center - 2000 Dennis Avenue, Silver Spring
9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday - Saturday
East County Community Recreation Center - 3310 Gateshead Manor Way, Silver Spring
10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday - Thursday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday
PlumGar Community Recreation Center - 19561 Scenery Drive, Germantown
10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday - Thursday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday
Wheaton Community Recreation Center - 11701 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton
10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday - Thursday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday
Noon to 5 p.m., Sunday

Residents should bring proof of residency when picking up tests. Examples include a driver's license or bill that shows you are a resident of Montgomery County. Test kits are registered by the individual taking the test and emailed results will be available within 48 hours of test kit return. Test kits are picked up from drop-off boxes daily.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 6

Dr. Whyte's New Book

Released March 8, 2022

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR DIABETES RISK

JOHN WHYTE, MD

Chief Medical Officer of WebMD



From the Chief Medical Officer at WebMD, the world's largest provider of trusted health information, learn how to reduce your diabetes risk and change your mindset from I hope I don't get diabetes to I can prevent diabetes.

You Have Diabetes

Three words no one ever wants to hear, yet each year, over a million people in the United States do.

So now what?

Take Control of Your Diabetes Risk shares straightforward information and equips you with strategies to help you on a journey to better health, including:

- Knowing the causes of the different types of diabetes
- Learning the role food, exercise, and sleep play
- Understanding the relationship between diabetes, heart disease, and cancer
- You have the power to reclaim your life after a prediabetes or diabetes diagnosis.

...and this book will show you just how easy it is.

Order this and Dr. Whyte's other books on Amazon.com



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SENIOR LIVING



PHOTOS COURTESY McLEAN QUILTERS UNLIMITED

Members of McLean Quilters Unlimited display quilts that members donated to Mary Marshall Assisted Living.

Local Quilters Use Craft to Support And Bring Cheer to Northern Virginia

McLean Quilters Unlimited gifts quilts to Mary Marshall Assisted Living and other organizations.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Patsi feels loved when she looks at hers while Diana's keeps her warm and comfortable at night. The vibrant colors of Don's brighten his room. These reactions are from seniors - all of whom are residents of Mary Marshall Assisted Living in Arlington — to quilts gifted to them on Valentine's Day. The quilts were handmade by the charitable artisans of McLean Quilters Unlimited.

"The quilts...truly touched my heart and the hearts of the residents," said Divina Alston, Mary Marshall Executive Director. "To think of the craftsmanship and hours it took to complete each quilt makes them extra special. Knowing the love and care that was put into them, brought out a lot of smiles. The residents were thrilled to go in their private rooms to place their quilt on their beds or chairs to brighten their living space."

McLean Quilter Unlimited, one of the 11 chapters of Quilters Unlimited of Northern Virginia (QU), donated a total of 60 handmade quilts to the residents of Mary Marshall. This is just one of the philanthropic projects that members undertake each year. They've given quilts to organizations such as the Fairfax Ronald McDonald House, US Army for Afghan Refugees, Fair Oaks Hospital's Teddy Bear Project, Fairfax County Animal Shelter and Assistance League of Northern, Virginia.

"We seek out worthy causes through word of mouth in the community. They're often associated with other activities our members support, like support for



In addition to Mary Marshall Assisted Living, members of McLean Quilters Unlimited have gifted their work to organizations such as the Assistance League of Northern, Virginia.

refugees through a church or synagogue," said Alcy Frelick, president of Mclean Quilters Unlimited. "Mary Marshall House came to our attention through one of our members."

In addition to offering support to nonprofit organizations, their mission is to preserve the tradition, culture and history of quilting. The McLean guild has 80 members and is open to anyone regardless of their experience or skill level. Quilters Unlimited's chapters have more than 1,000 members.

"As members, we gain friendship, encouragement, appreciation for our work, creative inspiration and quilting techniques," said Frelick.

The group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Arlington. Meetings are open to visitors. The work of the McLean Guild, as well as that of others in Northern Virginia, will be on display at an online exhibit that starts during the first weekend of June. For more information, visit: www.quiltersunlimited.org.

Hearings on Operating Budget

FROM PAGE 3

The registration deadline for the operating budget public hearings is April 18 at 5 p.m.

Residents can also submit written or prerecorded audio or video testimony for Councilmembers to consider throughout their budget deliberations. While this testimony will not be aired during the Council's public hearing, all comments provided will be reviewed by Councilmembers and will be available to the public on the Council's web page. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/PHSignUp.html#wu-foo-k4vngbt1aqs1s>

The deadline to submit testimony is midnight two business days before Council action. Written testimony can also be mailed to the Montgomery County Council at 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, Md. 20850.

The Fiscal Year 2023 Recommended Operating Budget totals \$6.3 billion. County Executive Marc Elrich presented his recommended operating budget to the Council on March 15, 2022. During the next two months, the Council will analyze these recommendations and is scheduled to adopt the FY23 County budget in late May. The budget will take ef-

fect on July 1.

The public hearings will be available via streaming on the Council's Facebook (@MontgomeryCountyMdCouncil) or YouTube (@MoCoCouncilMD) pages or the Council website at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/OnDemand/index.html>.

For residents who are not English dominant, arrangements for interpretation services can be made for testifying by contacting Lucia Jimenez at Lucia.Jimenez@montgomerycountymd.gov or calling 240-777-7832. Requests for interpretation services must be made three working days prior to the Council public hearing date.

Comments and suggestions are welcome online at <http://tinyurl.com/zrbwh5v>; via email at county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov; by sending regular mail to County Council, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, Md. 20850; or by calling the Council's budget hotline at 240-777-7802. Residents can also provide comments on the operating budget via social media using #MoCoFY23.

Information on the County's 2023 operating budget can be found at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/omb/publications.html>

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

In-person PCR testing continues at multiple sites throughout the community. Find a schedule of testing locations on the County's website.

"Providing an option for residents to perform self-PCR testing at home is one more way the County is helping residents remain safe and healthy," said Dr. James Bridgers, acting County health officer. "Testing continues to be important to contain the spread of COVID-19 in our community." More information on COVID-19 and the County's response is available on the COVID-19 website.

FREE ONLINE WORKSHOPS FOR JOB SEEKERS

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) is offering online workshops and one-on-one sessions geared toward assisting job seekers and entrepreneurs throughout March. All workshops are free and offered virtually.

An internet connection and a device (such as a smartphone, tablet or computer) are required for participation.

Throughout March – 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, March 21: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6205796>
Monday, March 28: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6205821>
Wednesday, March 16: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. How to Apply for Jobs with Montgomery County Government
Find out everything you need to know about applying for jobs within Montgomery County Government. Register: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/5821903>
Wednesday, March 16: 1-3 p.m. How to Prepare for your Virtual Job Interview
Learn how to differentiate yourself from other candidates, be Zoom-ready, package your experience, tell your story, be ready for challenging questions, and feel more confident in your next interview. Register: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6209309>

NEWS

Potomac Community Village April 28 Event

“Unleashing Your Hidden Powers to Enhance Your Home Safety”

On Thursday, April 28 at 7:30 pm, Potomac Community Village (PCV) will hold a free and open-to-all Zoom presentation, “Unleashing Your Hidden Powers to Enhance Your Home Safety,” presented by nationally-recognized aging-in-place expert Louis Tenenbaum.

With more than 75% of seniors desiring to stay in their homes as they age (AARP, 2021 Home and Community Preference Survey), rates for retirement homes continue to be unaffordable for many, topping \$71,000 annually for assisted living, and \$156,000 annually for a nursing home (Genworth Financial 2021 Cost of Care Survey) in the DC metro area.

Tenenbaum will share his expertise on home modifications that make seniors safer as they age. He will speak about proposed federal legislation that makes it easier for seniors to pay for these needed changes to homes, and about already existing state and county programs that offer tax credits for these changes. Tenenbaum will also guide listeners in how to implement these home modifications in a cost-efficient, smart, and effective way.

April 28 is also the kick-off date for the “PCV Safe Home Bonus Program,” a program just for PCV members that offers a subsidy for home safety improvements, such as grab bars, railings, ramps, lighting, and no-step bathing, for up to \$100 or 50% of the cost, whichever is less.

Explains PCV President Owen Ritter, “Our goal with the PCV Safe Home Program is to be proactive, so members make their homes safer now, and prevent a future fall or other accident. It’s all part of our mission as an aging-in-place Village to keep people safe in the homes they want to continue to live in.”

He adds, “We’re making the April 28 presentation free and open to everyone because we think it’s important for everyone in our community to be safer and healthier, even if they’re not our members.”

Reservations are required to attend the April 28 “Unleashing Your Hidden Powers to Enhance Your Home Safety” Zoom event. Anyone may RSVP by visiting the PCV website at www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org and then clicking on the calendar listing for April 28 and following the instructions for registering; or may do so by calling the PCV Help Desk at 240-221-1370.

Tenenbaum is also the founder of HomesRenewed (www.HomesRenewed.org), a coalition of businesses, consumers and nonprofits working together to increase the number of age-friendly homes. He was named a Next Avenue “Influencer in Aging” in 2016 and is currently working with members of Congress to pass legislation that offers a refundable, lifetime tax credit to cover 100 percent of the costs of aging-in-place modifications up to \$30,000.

Montgomery County residents can currently take advantage of a county program, Design for Life, which provides tax credits of up to \$2,000 per year for the cost of qualified home safety and disability modifica-

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Louis Tenenbaum

tions, and a Maryland program, an Independent Living Tax Credit, for 50% of qualified expenses up to \$5,000.

PCV will also provide information to its members about the county Design for Life program, and the state Independent Living Tax Credit, and how to file for them.

“This new Home Safe project is a perfect time for Potomac area residents to join PCV and take advantage of the help and guidance we can offer, as well as the subsidy program,” says Ritter. “New members will find that, through the hard work of our volunteers and current members, Potomac Community Village has not only survived the pandemic, but adjusted by creating innovative programming and services to help our members cope during this difficult time and into the future.”

Potomac Community Village (PCV) is an all-volunteer nonprofit aging-in-place Village, part of the national Village movement, and active in Potomac, Maryland for almost 10 years. PCV provides social, educational and wellness activities with a mission of enabling Potomac-area residents to remain in their homes as they age and be contributing members of the community. Members are linked with volunteers who provide assistance when needed with transportation, computer and other technical problems, simple household chores, friendly visits and other services.

Programming includes a monthly newsletter with valuable information for local seniors, a monthly book discussion group, a monthly luncheon, walks and hikes and Zoom and in-person programming. Additional information may be found at www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org, or contact at 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com, or 240-221-1370. PCV welcomes volunteers of all ages.

Introducing *PCV Safe Home* -
to age-in-place safely and cost-effectively
in the home you love

*Unleashing Your Hidden Powers
to Enhance Your Home Safety*

Thursday, April 28, 7:30 pm
on Zoom

240-221-1370 to RSVP, details
www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org

We Need Your Help Again

We are sincerely grateful and thankful to you for helping in 2021 to save one of America's oldest newspapers, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, publishing continuously since 1784

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Potomac ALMANAC
CENTRE VIEW

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Special Connections Calendar 2022

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursdays unless noted.

MARCH

3/2/2022.....Wellbeing
3/9/2022.....HomeLifeStyle
3/16/2022.....A+ Camps & Schools
3/23/2022.....Senior Living
3/30/2022.....Spring Family Fun

APRIL

4/6/2022.....Wellbeing
4/13/2022.....HomeLifeStyle
4/20/2022.....A+ Camps & Schools
4/27/2022.....Senior Living

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THE CONNECTION **Alexandria Gazette Packet** **Mount Vernon Gazette** **Potomac ALMANAC**

It's Nest-Building Season



Osprey bringing a stick to build up the nest on the Potomac River.



Ospreys are refurbishing last year's nest over Walt Whitman Middle School's ballfield.



Ospreys have returned to the Martin Luther King Park nest site.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

One of three active bald eagle nests in Dyke Marsh is very visible now along the trail.



Hungry red-winged blackbird chicks in a buttonbush.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE ALMANAC

Keen-eyed Mount Vernonites have recently been watching osprey pairs add sticks to last year's nests atop light poles at Martin Luther King Park and Walt Whitman Middle School's ball field.

Birds are resourceful and make many different nest types. Songbirds make cup-shaped nests; woodpeckers, cavity nests; orioles, hanging sock-like nests; and shorebirds, scrapes in the sand. Master builders, many birds can weave materials and hold materials in place with their beaks and feet.

Nest materials vary by habitat and can include leaves, grass, twigs, moss, feathers, snake skins, fur, spider webs and experts say, virtually anything they can carry.

To bind nests together, they may use saliva, mud, caterpillar silk and leaf mold. Manmade materials like plastic tape and cellophane

may substitute when snake skins are scarce. For nest linings, birds use finer materials to cushion and insulate eggs, things like grass, needles, reeds, mosses, lichens, down and feathers.

OSPREYS

In the past two weeks or so, ospreys returned to Northern Virginia from their southern wintering grounds in Florida, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Ospreys are 23-inch-long, chestnut brown and white raptors. Locals have watched them carry and add sticks to their nests. Many osprey pairs return to the same nest each year. They nest near water, including the Potomac River, and have been nicknamed "fish hawks" because they are excellent anglers, with live fish representing most of their diet.

An osprey nest is an unkempt jumble of sticks lined with materials like grasses and flotsam. They build nests in trees and on



A Carolina wren nest that fell out of a tree after the nesting season. The bird would use plastic tape around the leaves on the bottom.

platforms, utility poles, channel markers, waterfowl blinds and even moored boats. They often "decorate" their nests with plastic and Styrofoam scraps and other debris. People have found oddities like shoes, cans and even a Barbie doll in an osprey nest. After years of adding materials, nests can be

ten to 13 feet deep and three to six

Bald Eagles

Bald eagle nests are very visible now, before tree leaves come out. All ages are delighting in watching a pair bring food to a nest, presumably to eaglets, along Dyke Marsh's trail.

An adult bald eagle, the nation-



The wren lined the nest of leaves and sticks with soft moss.

al bird, weighs between 10 and 14 pounds and has an eight-foot wingspan. Bald eagles build nests of sticks and other materials and make some of the largest nests in the world, some stretching to 10 feet across. Like ospreys, they nest near water and typically return to the same site each year and en-
SEE IT'S NEST-BUILDING, PAGE 9
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It's Nest-Building Season

FROM PAGE 8

large the previous year's nest. Between May and July, the eagle chicks will fledge at age 10 to 12 weeks.

Carolina Wrens

Carolina wrens, 0.74-ounce, brown birds with a distinctive white eyebrow, curved beak, erect tail and a loud, melodious call are some of the most assiduous and inventive nest builders among birds. They make cup-shaped, three-to-six-inch-wide nests in tree hollows, open cavities, crevices, overhangs, stumps and brush piles. They have built nests in flower pots, mailboxes, old coat pockets and old boots. The nest is "loosely constructed of a great variety of materials such as bark strips, dried grasses, dead leaves, pine needles, hair, feathers, straw, shed snakeskin, paper, plastic or string," says Cornell University's All about Birds.

Marsh Wrens

Dyke Marsh's spring visitors were once serenaded by hundreds of trilling marsh wrens, the only known nesting population in the upper Potomac River tidal zone. Sadly, breeding pairs have not been documented in the preserve for several years. Their decline is perplexing, perhaps due to loss of habitat. For nesting, these birds prefer tall, dense, emergent vegetation in or next to water. Males build football-shaped, coconut-size nests by weaving grasses through and around cattails or rushes and they construct "dummy nests" to perhaps deceive predators. Females line one of the nests with grass or other fine materials.

Woodpeckers

Woodpeckers are cavity nesters. Pileated woodpecker males, for example, carve holes in large trees, often dead trees. This "Woody Woodpecker" bird with a bright red crest makes an oblong-shaped entry hole, rather than the circular shape of most woodpecker holes. During nest-building season, people can see them tossing out woodchips from inside the hole. The nesting cavity can be from 10 to 24 inches deep. Conservationists often urge people to leave dead trees or snags for woodpeckers and other birds.

Wood Ducks

Wood ducks also build nests in tree cavities, natural holes or holes left by woodpeckers, usually near water. Wood ducks cannot make their own holes. Females pluck down feathers from their breasts to line the nest. Some parks like Huntley Meadows have specially-designed boxes mounted on poles to provide artificial nesting sites for wood ducks. Proper dimensions are critical, especially for the entry hole.



A piping plover nest with eggs on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The plover makes a saucer-like scrape in the sand and surrounds it with shells and shell fragments.

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An Eastern screen owl, a cavity nester.



American robin on her nest.

Ground-nesting Birds

Many bird species, especially game birds like turkeys, pheasants and quails, nest on the ground, in habitats like fields and grasslands. Northern Virginia has very little suitable habitat left for these birds.

One of the most familiar ground-nesting birds is the Canada goose, a bird that builds a bowl-shaped nest from lichens, moss, grass and other plant materials near water, like Huntley Meadows Park's wetland, usually on a place that gives them an unobstructed view in most directions.

Out on Virginia's barrier islands, some shorebirds, like piping plovers, make nest scrapes, shallow, saucer-type depressions above the high tide line. Piping plovers are pale brown and white birds, six to seven inches long. In Virginia, they inhabit wide open beaches and sand or washover flats. Known as "precocial birds," the chicks leave the nest within four to six hours and can find food on their own.

People may want to avoid tree work in the spring and early summer since this is prime nesting season for most birds. We often don't know which birds are nesting where until fall when leaves start falling.

The Author's Clothesline Bird

Carolina wrens are common backyard birds and resourceful nest builders. Many times, Carolina wrens have chosen my clothespin bag as a nest site. When I got a new bag, I hung the old one on a low tree limb and they immediately made themselves at home there. A few years ago, in six hours, they built a nest in a pair of L.L. Bean shorts hanging on my clothesline.

One summer, a Carolina wren spent fall nights in my raggedy, gray, Victoria's Secret, cotton, hip-hugger panties pulled out of the rag bag and hanging on my clothesline. To experiment, I also put out newer hot pink, bright turquoise and school bus yellow cotton underwear. No go. "My" wren chose the ratty gray.

Ornithologists say that this little bird is adaptable. I'll say.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Dr. John Whyte, WebMD chief medical officer, with his wife, Alisa and sons Luke, 8, and Jack, 6. Dr. Whyte's newest book is "TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR DIABETES RISK."

Interview with Local Physician Author

"Take Control of Your Cancer Risk: A WebMD Essential Guide."

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE ALMANAC

John Whyte, MD, MPH of Great Falls, authored the newly released book, "Take Control of Your Cancer Risk: A WebMD Essential Guide," [2021]. Whyte is the Chief Medical Officer at WebMD.

Anyone who has sought out what to do for a medical condition or information about a trending public health interest on the internet has come across WebMD. Now in its 25th year, WebMD reports it provides credible and relevant health news and information on managing diseases and staying healthy.

Whyte is a board-certified internal medicine physician who has been interacting with the public on timely public health issues for two decades. As Chief Medical Officer, he leads the five-person physician

team at WebMD. He is in charge of initiatives to build strategic partnerships that will result in meaningful change in the face of critical public health issues.

Whyte said he chose to write "Take Control of Your Cancer Risk" because "there was a lot of misinformation" about cancer. The public, he said, is unaware of the critical functions of food, sleep, stress, and the

meaning of physical activity as it relates to cancer.

Whyte said their motto at WebMD is "Better information."

Better health."

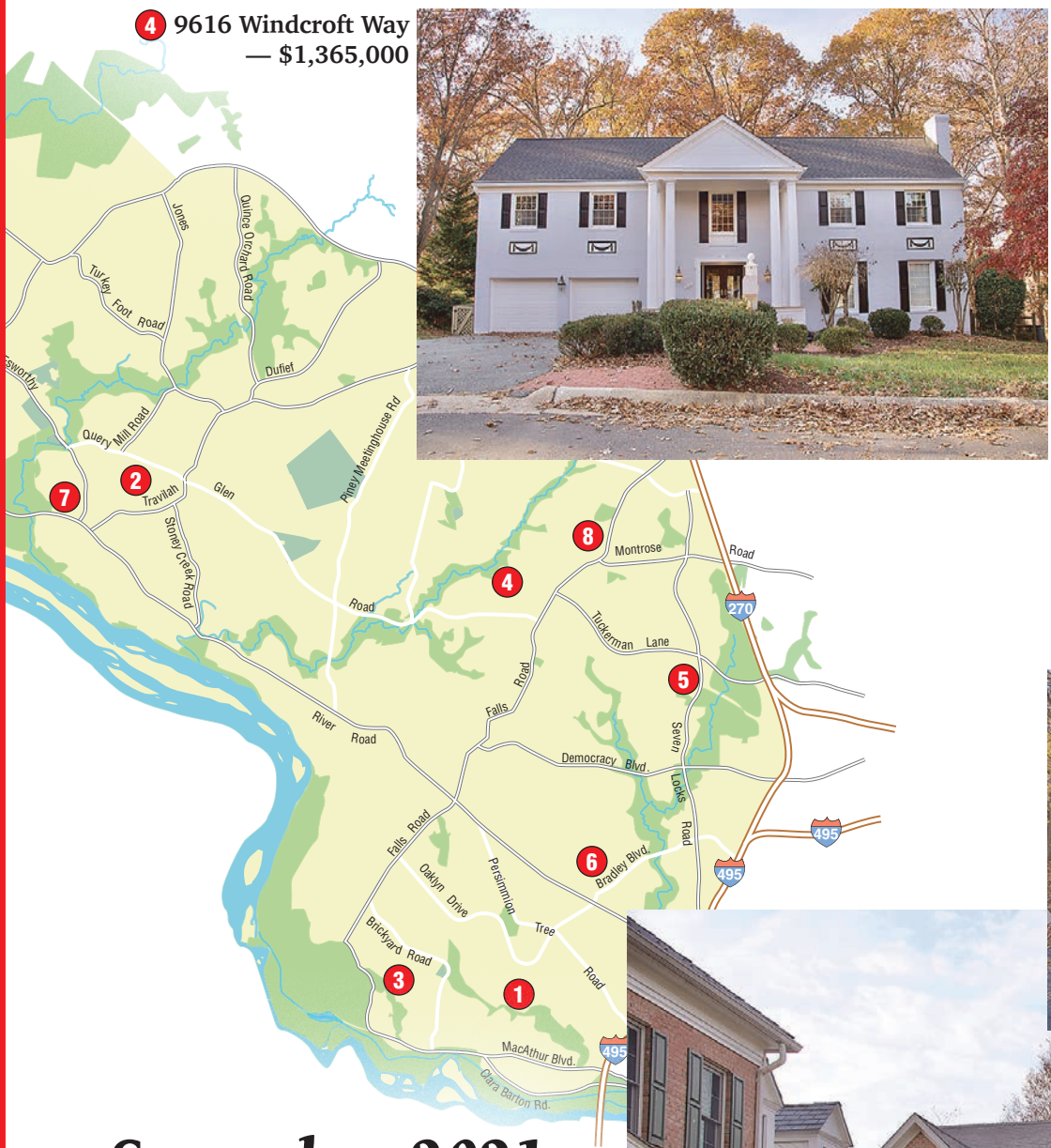
Whyte observed in his conversations with patients, particularly regarding screenings and strategies to prevent cancer,

that patients had wrong information, and particularly they were misinformed about cancer's genetic connection. He recalled

some of his patients saying, "I do not have a family history

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Take Control of Your Cancer Risk: A WebMD Essential Guide.

FROM PAGE 9

of cancer ... [so] I am not going to get cancer." Some patients think it is simply bad luck.

Only approximately 30 percent of cancers are caused by genetics or inherited mutations, Whyte said. The remainder is dependent on one's way of life and there are steps we can take to mitigate risk, guided by science. Whyte continues to see patients on a weekly basis at Kaiser Permanente in Northern Virginia.

The book's target audience, Whyte said, is people ideally in their 20s and 30s. "That's when we want people to adopt these healthy lifestyles. Because we know it's your daily choices over time, not any particular day or week of our choices, but really what we do over the years. And that's often what people forget."

However, he said, it is never too late to adopt healthy lifestyle approaches even if one has cancer or is older. "They still may reduce the severity of the disease if you already have cancer. They may help you in terms of your response to treatment. Because if you're overall healthy to begin with, you're going to respond better to chemotherapy agents. So, it's never too late to make healthy changes."

In his book, Whyte talks about exercise, and that many people don't exercise.

"But when we exercise, do we ever regret it? Do we think I wish I didn't go for a ride? Wow, I wish I didn't go swimming? We feel great afterward. And it's the same thing as adopting healthy choices at any age. You will feel better," Whyte said.

The same holds true for smokers. They don't want to give it up because they get some benefits. Whyte said, "But you know when they quit smoking, no one ever says, 'Oh, I wish I didn't quit.'"

It comes down to the immediate versus the long-term reward, regardless of lifestyle choice, whether exercise, smoking, drinking, food, weight loss, etc. Whyte said he tells his patients who are overweight that if they lose just half a pound a month or even a pound a month, in four years, they could be 40 to 50 pounds less than most of their friends who will be twenty pounds more. "If you eat that cake, you might feel good

while you're eating it, but 30 minutes later, you don't. ... It's that long-term strategy."

Whyte said that he has never seen anyone that has adopted healthy eating say, "I don't feel good. They always say I feel so much better. I have more energy ... Let's be honest; they don't say that in the first month, they don't, I know. It takes time. But that's where we need to be in it for the long haul."

Turning his attention to telemedicine, the practice of a physician using technology to deliver care to a patient at a distance versus in-person visits, Whyte said virtual connections would continue to serve a purpose in the healthcare system. But people need to come back into the office for recommended cancer screening tests such as colonoscopies, mammograms, and others [prostate,

cervical, skin, lung] to find cancer early.

Whyte said that there are estimates they will see "at least 10,000 new cases of cancer that are going to be advanced because people in the United States didn't come in" to see their physicians during COVID.

"Take Control of Your Cancer Risk," John Whyte, MD, Chief Medical Officer of WebMD [2021], is available on Amazon.

According to WebMD, Whyte formerly worked at the Food and Drug Administration of the United States, at the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, serving as the director of professional affairs and stakeholder engagement. He spent nearly a decade at Discovery Channel, serving as chief medical expert and vice president of health and medical education. Whyte completed an internal medicine residency at Duke University Medical Center and earned a Master of Public Health in health policy and management at Harvard University School of Public Health. Before arriving in Washington, Whyte was a health services research fellow at Stanford and an attending physician in medicine. He has written extensively in the medical and lay press.

"When we exercise, do we ever regret it? Do we think, 'I wish I didn't go for a ride? Wow, I wish I didn't go swimming?' We feel great afterward."

— Dr. John Whyte

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Cause for Concern?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If you've read any of my columns, you might be able to guess the answer. In my mind, it's not so much cause for concern as it is a topic for conversation. The topic being the side effects of cancer medicine/treatment. I remember hearing/reading that as it relates to cancer patients, sometimes the side effects of the medicine so severe/so debilitating that the patient must stop the treatment (which I never have). And in stopping what's managing – so to speak, the tumors, the tumors start growing and the cancer starts spreading and then shortening your life. In the past when I've asked my oncologist what would happen to my stable tumors if I were to stop treatment, he unequivocally stated: "I know what will happen. The tumors will grow." And as you might imagine, tumors growing has been my greatest fear.

Per my last series of diagnostic scans in late Dec. and early March, tumors are stable, and life goes on. I had been anxious about these scans because previously we had reduced the dosage of my thyroid cancer medicine down to 10 mg from the initial 24 mg. We had to do this because the side effects from the medicine was adversely affecting my ability to perform my activities of daily living. Walking upstairs or even a modest incline would take my breath away; as would bending over or even standing over the commode. However, this original maximum dose was keeping the tumors stable. Why risk that just so I can breathe easier?

In talking with my oncologist over the years, I've learned – and experienced, that cancer medicine is constantly adjusted and changed your body reacts negatively. The goal, according to my oncologist is to try and find that "sweet spot" as I call it. That's the spot where the minimum amount of medicine tolerated by the patient is doing the maximum good, and of course, when the side effects are the least impactful. Which is where I've been for the past six months or so: reduced dose, less side effects, while still having "stable" results on my quarterly scans.

Recently however, my breathing has become more labored, even while performing less arduous tasks. My wife, Dina, asked me today, after she saw me pull over in the house and sit down to catch my breath, if I thought I should contact my oncologist and tell him of my recent difficulties because it's new-ish and any new symptoms need to be reported to the doctor.

But lowering my dose yet again really scares me. At some point/dosage, the medicine stops being effective. And I'm not sure if one can experiment with a lower dose and if there are complications/disappointments, simply revert to the higher dose and return to the previous abnormal? My oncologist has also said that he can try to keep me from going down, but once down, he can't likely bring me back up. Ergo, my dilemma.

Obviously, it's prudent to keep the oncologist in my loop; he does kind of have my life in the speaker of his stethoscope and should be apprised of all changes in my health. Nevertheless, a reduction in my medicine could be a turning point in the wrong direction, and one quite frankly from which I might never recover.

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

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