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Burning Down The House

NEWS, PAGE 3



Rockville volunteer firefighter Robert James cools off in a stream of water after having spent most of his Sunday participating in a controlled burn exercise of a house in Potomac. Firefighters from the Rockville and Laytonsville District Volunteer Fire Departments and the Montgomery County Fire Department participated in the training event.

A Sewer Too Far?

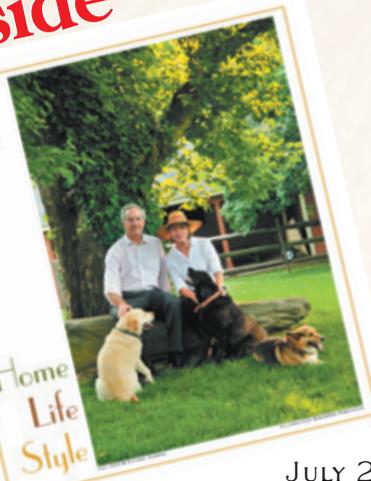
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A Sewer Too Far?

A possible sewer extension to Potomac Oak Center could bring welcome change or troubling precedent.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

When it comes to retail centers in Potomac, most people go to Potomac Village or Cabin John Mall. Beyond that, people are likely to venture into Bethesda or Georgetown when the time comes for shopping. Guy Semmes and Michael Denker want to change that.

The two men own the Potomac Oak center in North Potomac at the intersection of Glen and Travilah Roads. Built originally in the early 1980s and formerly named the Glenvilah shopping center, the two purchased it in 2003 with hopes of eventually turning their little center into a third nexus of community and retail activity in Potomac.

The unassuming string of shops split be-

tween two buildings is home to a handful of local enterprises. Most of the customers that the center sees are daytime laborers and contractors stopping in for lunch or a snack, or mothers dropping their children at karate class, Semmes said. Over the years he has had representatives from coffee shops, grocery stores and restaurants approach him about leasing space there, but when prospective tenants learn the center doesn't have a sewer hookup they lose interest. Semmes and Denker want to change that too.

Semmes and Denker are the two men behind the local construction firm Hopkins & Porter and both were born and raised in Potomac. They point to a time when the intersection at Glen and Travilah Roads was the heart of the community of Travilah. Since then it has remained a loose center of North Potomac, but the two envision a shopping center roughly 30 percent larger than the current space that would bring back that bygone time of bustling community activity complete with a coffee shop, small restaurants, a higher-end grocery or convenience store and familiar fixtures to their center like Kicks Karate and Diana Nails. The only way for that to happen, they say, is to get a dedicated sewer line extended to the property.

"Our promise [is] that if we can get the sewer here, we'll make it look like a place that you'd want to go," said Denker.

"Our promise [is] that if we can get the sewer here, we'll make it look like a place that you'd want to go."

— Michael Denker



PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

With business partner Michael Denker to his left, Guy Semms (outstretched arms) explains the proposal to extend sewer service to the Potomac Oak Center and the subsequent renovation of what Semmes said is an underutilized community hub.

Last spring the two took a water/sewer category change proposal to the Montgomery County Council that would have extended a sewer line along Travilah Road to their shopping center. Twice a year the council hears a bevy of water/sewer category changes but with mounting concerns from council members, residents and local citizen groups, Semmes and Denker requested that their proposal be deferred so that they could go back to the community and try to gain support for their proposal. Since that time Semmes and Denker have met frequently with members of the community and with representatives from groups like the West Montgomery County

Citizens Association and the North Potomac Citizens Association, both of which are publicly opposed to the idea.

THE TROUBLE with the proposal, say opponents, is that it could open up a Pandora's box of sorts. In particular, the proposal flies in the face of the Potomac Subregion Master Plan, which was established by the Montgomery County Planning Board and the County Council in 2002, according to George Barnes, a West Montgomery board member. Much of Potomac — particularly North Potomac — relies on septic systems instead of sewer. That has helped

SEE SEWER EXTENSION, PAGE 15

Back From the Drawing Board

Koh Country Inn proposal is back, and neighbors are still concerned.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

Five months ago Francis Koh was told to go back to the drawing board. His plan to build a facility that would combine the features of a restaurant, inn, and banquet hall across from the WSSC filtration plant on River Road had drawn the ire of his would-be neighbors and the skepticism of the Montgomery County Planning Board.

With his plan facing denial he instead requested a deferral, which was granted.

The Planning Board's commissioners told him to start over with his vision and to scale it down.

Now he's back, and so too is the ire of those who live nearest to the proposed facility. At a meeting between Koh and his potential neighbors on Wednesday, June 25, Koh unveiled his scaled-down plan and did his best to assuage fears that the restaurant would clog River Road with traffic, fill the nighttime air with noise, and be an eyesore.

"We live in a very quiet community, we have children," said Mo Izadi, who lives close by on Lake Potomac Drive. "We just want to live in there peacefully. This is disturbing our community very badly... it doesn't fit in there."

"We all pay top dollar for our homes and this is going to ruin it in every way you can imagine."

— Mo Izadi

GONE FROM KOH'S old proposal are plans for a banquet hall that would have been host to weddings and similar gatherings. The core of the plan remains the same, however: a small, high-end restaurant with 10 to 12 rooms for guests who want to stay a night or a weekend. The plan also calls for an antique store that has long operated on the property to continue to do so.

"To us, having ... that antique shop helps make our restaurant unique," Koh said.

The Koh's property is currently zoned for residential use but the Kohs are seeking a change to a Country Inn zoning category that would permit the proposed uses. When originally created, the

County Inn Zone was designed to grandfather in establishments like Normandie Farms and the Comus Inn, small restaurants that were established before Montgomery County zoning ordinances were first established in 1958 and that were no longer compatible with the residential areas surrounding them. If approved, the Koh property would be just the second project in the county to obtain the Country Inn zoning change for new construction.

Koh's newest plan is down slightly in square footage from his original proposal that was over 35,000 square feet on the 5.61 acre property that sits between 12201 and 12219 River Road.

As part of any plan that Koh proceeds with, he would be required to repair environmental damage done to the property by the previous owner, who

SEE REVISED PLAN, PAGE 12

Burn It Down

Norton Road home used as a training exercise for the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

Black smoke drifted through the sky above Potomac Village on Sunday, but not a siren was heard. The smoke came from a home on Norton Road that burned to the ground as passersby and firefighters alike looked on and did nothing.

More than 30 members of the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department station 3 and the Laytonsville Volunteer Fire Department station 30 used the home at 10111 Norton Road on Sunday, June 29 as a venue to practice their organizational and fire fighting tactics. In six separate stages, fires were lit in different parts of the house, then put out by crews of firefighters on a sunny day where temperatures hovered around 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Fighting fires is clearly a hot job — so hot sometimes that sweat can turn to scalding steam, said eight-year veteran Tony Roman — but on a mid afternoon in late June it can be particularly so. Coolers loaded with bottles of water and Gatorade awaited firefighters as they finished their practice runs, as did Sarah Whalen, an EMT who ran the rehab center at the controlled

burn the same way she would for an actual fire, monitoring them for signs of heat stroke and heat-related fatigue and stress.

As the firefighters came out, Whalen took their blood pressure and pulse and made sure they got plenty of water — anyone with a pulse over 140 took a 15-minute rest period, she said. Despite the temperature only one firefighter who came close to fainting needed assistance, Whalen said.

The key to battling fires on hot days in particular is to concentrate, said five-year veteran Robert James.

“You’ve got to keep your composure, your focus,” James said.

Responding to a fire takes coordination and the completion of specific roles for each truck and each member of the truck, said Roman.

“That’s what makes it work as a team,” Roman said.

The main focus of Sunday’s drills was to help rising unit officers practice their coordination techniques. Unit chiefs are “the guys who ride in front [in the fire trucks] and make the decisions,” said Jim Vagonis, a deputy chief with the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department. “That was our big objective today ... [was] giving these guys the chance to make decisions.”



The structure fire could be seen from all around the Potomac area and drew interested bystanders to watch the house burn. The Potomac residence was offered to area fire departments as a way to safely train firefighters in fighting a structure fire.

SEE BURNING,
PAGE 10

PHOTOS BY
ROBBIE HAMMER/
THE ALMANAC



A Rockville volunteer firefighter walks around the perimeter of a structure fire that was intentionally set after being used as a training exercise for area volunteer fire departments in Potomac.



Volunteer firefighters from the Rockville and Laytonsville Volunteer Fire Department and firefighters from the Montgomery County Fire Department honed their skills while participating in a controlled burn of a house on Sunday.

C&O Canal Celebrates Birthday

President John Quincy Adams turned the first spade of earth for the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal on July 4, 1828. The C&O Canal National Historical Park will celebrate this 180th birthday of the canal with special programs in the Washington D.C. area.

A special mule-pulled canal boat ride will start from the park's Georgetown Visitor Center and run to Fletchers Cove. The boat leaves at 11 a.m. and returns by 3:30 p.m. Bring a lunch or buy food at the snack bar at Fletchers Cove. The cost for the canal boat trip is \$5 per person, reservations are encouraged. The C&O Canal Georgetown Visitor Center is located at 1057 Thomas Jefferson St. NW Washington DC. For information or to make reservations call 202-653-5190.

At Fletchers Cove, bring the family out for old fashioned games and speeches marking the canal's birthday. 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Fletchers Cove is located on the corner of Canal Road and Reservoir Road N.W. Washington D.C. For information call 202-653-5190.

At Great Falls, take a one-hour canal boat ride, meet the mules that pull the boats, make a corn husk doll or play a variety of popular 1870s games. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Canal boats run at 11 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. The cost for the canal boat ride is \$5 per person. The C&O Canal Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center is located at 11710 MacArthur Blvd. Potomac, Maryland. For information call 301-767-3714

County Recycling Expanded

The Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services is expanding the types of items it will accept in its blue recycling bins starting this week, Tuesday, July 1. The increase in acceptable items will help the county move closer to a goal endorsed by the County Council of recycling 50 percent of all waste generated in the county.

For more information about the County's expanded recycling program, contact the Division of Solid Waste at 240-777-6400.

New Planning Members Selected

The Montgomery County Council has named Joseph Alfandre and Amy Presley to seats on the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Alfandre, a Democrat from Potomac, was named to fill the remainder of the term of Eugene Lynch, who was appointed to the board in 2007, but died on Jan. 31. Alfandre will fill the term that expires on June 14, 2011. He will be eligible to serve two additional full terms.

Presley of Clarksburg was named to fill the expired term of Allison Bryant. His term ended on June 14. Presley, a Republican, will serve a four-year term. Their appointments must be confirmed by County Executive Isiah Leggett within 30 days of receiving a resolution naming the appointments. He will receive the appointments on Friday.

Presley was nominated and elected unanimously. Benjamin Ross of Potomac and Marye Wells-Harley of Silver Spring were also nominated to fill Lynch's term. Alfandre was elected on the second ballot.

The Planning Board has five members. No more than three members of the Planning Board may be from the same political party, and all members must be residents and registered voters of Montgomery County when appointed. Members serve four-year terms and are limited to two full terms. The positions can be filled by a Democrat; a Republican; a voter who declines to affiliate with a party; or by a member of another party officially recognized by the Montgomery County Board of Elections.

Advisory Board Meeting

The Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board's Transportation Committee will meet at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 8, at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Bethesda.

Michael Madden, project manager from the Maryland Transit Administration, will be discussing the Purple Line study.

For more information, call Leslie Hamm at 240-777-8207.

NEWS

Lonely at the Top

Potomac representatives divided over new millionaires' tax.

BY JAMES GISCHE
THE ALMANAC

On April 8, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley approved a new tax surcharge of 6.25 percent on income in excess of \$1 million. The act, effective July 1, will expire in 2011.

The law's sponsors, State Senators Jennie Forehand and Verna Jones, intended to raise revenues and balance Maryland's budget, as the state's constitution requires every year. The so-called "millionaires' tax" replaced an unpopular toll on computer services that was passed during the General Assembly's special session last year and later repealed.

Ten of Montgomery County's 24 delegates — all Democrats — and two of its eight senators opposed the new levy, including half of Potomac's eight representatives. From District 15, covering about two-thirds of Potomac and much of the upcounty area, Delegates Craig Rice, Kathleen Dumais, and Brian Feldman voted against the bill while Sen. Rob Garagiola supported it. From District 16, which includes the rest of Potomac as well as Bethesda, Delegates William Bronrott and Susan Lee and Sen. Brian Frosh backed the tax, while Delegate William Frick opposed it.

Some Potomac representatives voted against the surcharge because they felt it does not spread the tax burden evenly. "I thought it was not good tax policy to balance the state's deficit on any particular class of people, millionaires or otherwise," said Rice.

Liz Rubin, the president of the Montgomery County Federation of Republican Women and a resident of North Potomac, opposed the law for similar reasons: "I think taxes should be fair across the board." She stressed that many of the people that the surcharge affects work hard for their money and described it as "anti-capitalist."

OTHERS NOTED the law's regional impact. "I think the tax disproportionately hurts Montgomery County," said Dumais. The state's analysis indicates that about 2,600, or 41 percent, of the people that the surcharge affects live in the county, a statistic that Feldman said influenced his decision to oppose the tax.

Feldman also recognized that Potomac would be relatively hard hit by the tax. Potomac resident and chair of the District 15 Democratic Caucus Daphne Bloomberg said she supported the Montgomery County delegates and senators who opposed the new law.

Local representatives had other concerns about the tax, as well. Feldman fears that the surcharge "puts Montgomery County at a competitive disadvantage to Northern Virginia." The law pushes the county's highest-earning residents' combined state and local tax rate to 9.45 percent, the third-highest in the nation and significantly greater than rates in Virginia.

Feldman sees this gap as a long-term problem be-

cause these citizens may choose to leave the county to escape the tax. Frosh disagreed, noting that the difference in tax rates on each side of the Potomac would only pose a temporary concern since the state surcharge is set to expire in three years.

MANY REPRESENTATIVES disliked the General Assembly's rushed passing of the law. Dumais lamented that the legislature was "anxious to fix the hole" in the state's revenues that the repeal of the computer services levy caused and added that she would not have necessarily been opposed to the law had it been more carefully studied.

Rice, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, shared these concerns. "The restructuring of our tax policy with the wave of a brush instead of allowing my committee to evaluate a high income earner tax bracket and its repercussions was ill-fated and ill-conceived," he

said. Frosh acknowledged that the law was not the best option for balancing the budget, but rather the most likely to garner enough votes to pass quickly.

Potomac's legislators disagreed over the three-year

lifespan of the new tax bracket. Frosh supports the idea because it makes the law less burdensome. Rice, on the other hand, advocates longer-term, expanding sources of revenue rather than temporary solutions. "The sheer fact that defenders of this proposal say it 'only will last for three years' is testimony to its problems," he said.

The effect of the law on area businesses was also a consideration. The repeal of the computer services tax was a boon to local technology enterprises. However, some small sole proprietorships and partnerships, such as law firms, will have to pay higher taxes.

One state analyst noted that companies may pass on the cost of the tax by raising prices or lowering employees' wages. Frosh dismissed these concerns, emphasizing that the new levy would "by definition" apply to individuals and not businesses.

"I think taxes should be fair across the board."

— Liz Rubin,
President, Montgomery County
Federation of Republican Women

Area representatives have proposed alternative ways to raise revenues. Dumais and Feldman support an expanded sales tax on consumer services. Frosh suggests that a half-percent toll on businesses' gross receipts would bring in \$500 million for the state while not being too much of a burden. Both plans' advocates claim their solutions would be more equitable than the millionaires' tax. But for now, Maryland's wealthiest citizens will be footing the bill.

CIVIC CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY/JULY 2

DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance National Capital Area) Family Support Group, will hold its only July meeting at 7:30 p.m., at the Parish Hall of St. Raphael's Church at 1513 Dunster Road, Rockville. The meeting is for the families and friends of people who have been diagnosed with depression or bipolar illness. Free. Call 301-299-4255 or 301-570-9065.

THURSDAY/JULY 3

Pain Connection. This chronic pain support group will meet from 1:30-3 p.m. at the Davis Library, 6400 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda, for anyone with chronic pain, family members and interested community residents. Feel free to bring your ice/heat packs, pillows and mats to make yourself comfortable. Contact: 301-309-2444.

SUNDAY/JULY 8

Li-Ming Toastmaster will have meeting from 10:20 to 11:45 a.m. at County Council building (2nd floor conference room 2F, behind cafeteria) at 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville. Contact 301-765-1090.

Community Support Sale. 5% Community Support Day at Whole Foods Market, 5269 River Rd Bethesda, for The Montgomery Countryside Alliance. Contact lauren@ruralmontgomery.org or 202-244-4408 ext. 125.

WEDNESDAY/JULY, 9

Nutrition Workshop. The Wellness Community - Greater Washington, D.C. will present a free nutrition

workshop for people with cancer and their loved ones, 7-8 p.m. Led by cancer nutrition specialist, Lynda McIntyre, R.D., L.D., this workshop will provide updates on nutrition from the American Institute for Cancer Research. Location: The Wellness Community- Greater Washington, D.C., 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda. For reservations call 301-493-5002.

MONDAY/JULY 14

College Admissions Workshop.

Free one-hour workshop conducted by a staff member from Kaplan, Inc. at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 7 p.m. Topics covered include factors in college admissions, key terms in the admissions process and the application, essay and interview. Call 240-777-0690.

Adoption Workshop.

International and domestic adoption information at The Barker Foundation, 7979 Old Georgetown Road, 1st floor, Bethesda. 6:30-9 p.m. Ages 21 and up. Free. Call 301-664-9664.

THURSDAY/JULY 17

Montgomery Hospice Workshop:

"When Bad Things Happen to Good People," discussion of ways people can support themselves and the good people in their lives who are facing struggles and challenges. 2 - 3:30 p.m., Montgomery Hospice, 1355 Piccard Drive, Suite 100, Rockville. Free. Register at 301-921-4400.

Child Safety Seat Inspection.

A free check of the condition and proper installation of child safety seats, Fitzgerald's Auto Mall, 5501 Nicholson Lane, Rockville, 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

HEALTH NOTES

Children of Divorce. Through four interactive group sessions, children (ages 11-14) will learn that they are not alone in the divorce process. Art, role-playing, letter-writing, self-esteem exercises and verbalization of feelings provide the tools for them to remain hopeful and positive. Parents will meet separately for two sessions to learn how to identify distress signals and better help their children through this process. Group meets on Mondays, **July 7, 14, 21, 28;** 5-6 p.m. at JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Road, Rockville. Call 301-816-2633 to register.

Handling Angry Feelings. Anger is a normal emotion, but it can be overwhelming for many children. In this three-session workshop, children examine their "boiling points," practice ways to keep self-control, use "power talk" and "positive self-talk" instead of acting out and complete an "anger contract" (with input from parents) for real-life application. Two groups will be offered. Group meets on Tuesdays, **July 8-22,** 4-5 p.m. and Thursdays, **July 10-24;** 4-5 p.m. at JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Road, Rockville. Call 301-816-2633.

Family Support Group. In this ongoing monthly group, parents and family members of children with disabilities share their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, coping mechanisms and strategies. Group meets on Tuesdays, **July 15** and **Aug. 19;** 7:30-8:45 p.m. at JSSA, 6123 Montrose Road, Rockville. Call 301-610-8371.

PETS OF THE WEEK



Petey

Petey is a male, 7-year-old, neutered, 20 pound JRT/Fox Terrier mix. Petey is an active terrier dog that loves tennis balls and walks well on a leash. He is friendly with people but wants to be an only dog. Petey needs a special adopter to help him with his special needs.



Ariel

Ariel is a female, 5-year-old, 70 pound, spayed Aussie mix. Ariel has had a rough patch in her life but thanks to PAW things are looking up. She likes belly rubs, play with other dogs and adores children and adults. Ariel is now looking for a good home with no cats.

Partnership for Animal Welfare (PAW) is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit group. To adopt an animal, volunteer or make a tax-deductible donation, visit www.paw-rescue.org, call 301-572-4PAW or write to PAW, P.O. Box 1074, Greenbelt, MD 20768.

Have pet notes? Send an e-mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com or call Matthew Razak at 703-917-6457. Photos encouraged.

Come to **Dogtopia**, 4920 Wyaconda Road, North Bethesda, for fun, food, games and a wash for your pooch in exchange for a donation to the K9 Support Charity, Sunday **July 13** from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. All proceeds will go towards creating care packages for canine troops and their handlers serving overseas. Call 240-514-0210.

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June 30th - July 3rd (no class July 4th)

July 7th - 11th

July 14th - 18th

July 21st - 25th

July 28th - August 1st

August 4th - 8th

August 11th - 15th

MEMBER:

\$256 1/2 day class per week

\$204 1/2 day (July 4th week)

\$461 full day class per week

\$367 full day (July 4th week)

NON-MEMBER:

\$323 1/2 day class per week

\$258 1/2 day (July 4th week)

\$582 full day class per week

\$464 full day (July 4th week)

For Information Call (301) 983-1450

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www.potomactennis.com

PEOPLE

Getting To Know ...

Gabe Feldman

Gabe Feldman is a Cabin John resident and recent Walt Whitman High School graduate. He is currently playing baseball with the Bethesda Big Train baseball team. The team plays at Povich Field, 10600 Westlake Drive in Cabin John Regional Park, Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 adults and \$3 for children. Call 301-983-1006 or visit www.bigtrain.org.

Tell us about your family.

I have an older brother and older sister. My brother Josh is 22 and graduated from St. Mary's College of Maryland. My sister Dani is 23 and graduated from the University of Texas.

Favorite school subject:

My favorite school subject is math. It is my best subject and comes the easiest to me.

What do you want to do in life?

I want to play professional baseball, but if that does not work out then I am not sure.

Awards and achievements:

- ❖ 2007 and 2008 Under Armor Preseason All-American
- ❖ Was selected to the Perfect Game National Showcase in 2006 and 2007
- ❖ Ranked as one of the top 100 right handed pitchers in the nation by Perfect Game
- ❖ Ranked the sixth-best prospect in Maryland by Perfect Game
- ❖ Was named to the 2007 and 2008 Rawlings/Perfect Game Preseason Atlantic Region All-High School Team
- ❖ 2007 Virginia Division 1 State Champions at Notre Dame Academy
- ❖ Named All Gazette and Washington Post Honorable Mention All-Met in 2005

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy listening to music, bowling, fishing, and hanging out with my family and friends.

Favorite place to hang out in the community?

My favorite place to hang out in the community is Montgomery Mall. It has everything you would need; a movie theater, food court, and stores.

What are some ideas you have on ways to improve your community?

There are countless ways to improve a community, but some ideas I have would be to donate goods to local charities, volunteer with groups that work with issues and causes important to your neighborhood, start using car pools or mass transportation, and to work with schools to help educate the younger members on community responsibilities.

What is the last book you read, favorite television show and last

movie you saw?

The last book I read was "Into Thin Air" by Jon Krakauer, my favorite television show is "Family Guy," and the last movie I saw was "The Happening."

What are you most looking forward to about college?

I am most looking forward to taking the next step in my baseball career. At Wake Forest I am going to be receiving a great education while playing in one of the best baseball conferences in the nation. It will be challenging but it is something I am excited for.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Hopefully playing professional baseball.

Who is a historical figure you would like to meet?

I would like to meet Babe Ruth because he was one of the greatest baseball players and he helped save the national pastime in the wake of the Black Sox scandal.

Describe how you would most enjoy spending a single day?

I would most enjoy spending time hanging out with my friends during the day and then pitching in a game later that night.

If you could be anyone else, who would you be and why?

I would be Roy Oswalt because he is my favorite pitcher and player in the MLB.

Do you have a favorite quotation?

"Every day is a new opportunity. You can build on yesterday's success or put its failures behind and start over again. That's the way life is, with a new game every day, and that's the way baseball is." — Bob Feller

Why did you start playing baseball?

I always enjoyed watching MLB games and playing wiffle ball as a kid, so I thought it would be fun to start a BCC rec team with my friends and classmates from school.



Feldman

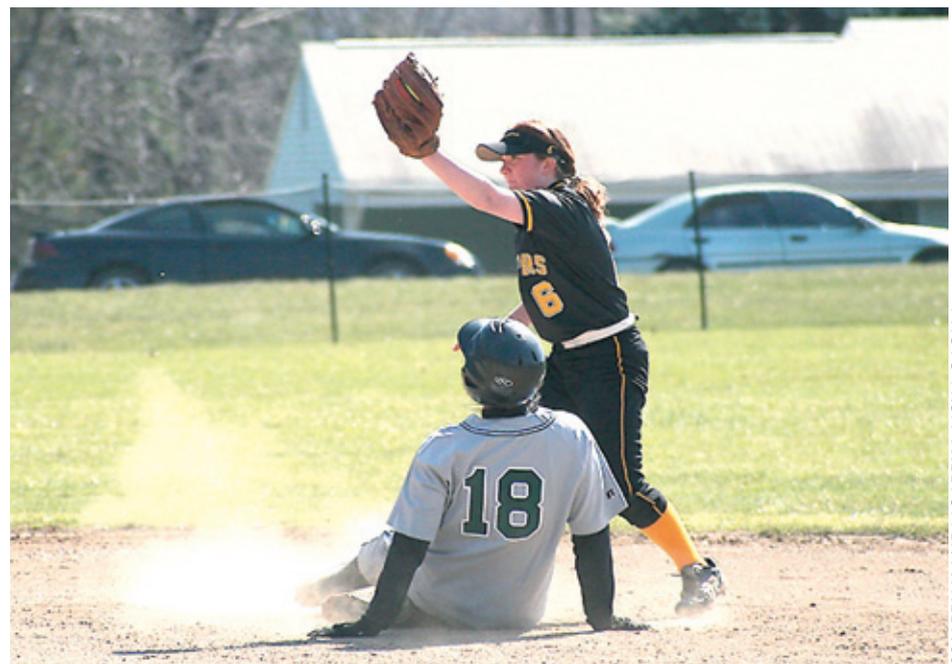


PHOTO FROM HILLTOPPER ATHLETICS

Katelyn Kumm holds up her glove after getting the tag out at second base.

A Bulldog on the Pivot

Former Bulldog Katelyn Kumm has strong season for West Liberty State Hilltoppers.

BY CHANDOS CULLEEN
THE ALMANAC

Normally learning a new position would take some time. Not for Katelyn Kumm. After learning a third position for a third team, Katelyn has become a softball jack-of-all-trades.

A four year varsity starter on the softball team at Winston Churchill High School, Katelyn now plays fast-pitch softball for West Liberty State, a NCAA Division II team, located in West Virginia. A shortstop in high school and an outfielder for her select travel team, Katelyn was recruited as an outfielder for the Hilltoppers. However, when she arrived at school, her coaches quickly realized the talent she had and asked her to switch positions to second base so that she could start and get more playing time to help the team.

IT WORKED. Now she has taken her award-winning skills to the next level. At West Liberty State, Katelyn is in the top five in slugging percentage, runs scored, runs batted in, doubles, triples, total bases, walks, and stolen base percentage. An impressive start for a freshman, but Katelyn is taking it all in stride. This past season was "a blast. The competition is pretty good, its definitely more competitive than high school or my select team," she said.

It is not just raw talent that has carried Katelyn to this position. She has been a serious athlete and hard worker since the age of 5 when she first took up T-ball. As time went on Katelyn played baseball and softball for a series of highly competitive baseball and softball teams.

For the last four years, in addition to playing softball at Churchill, she also played for

the Montgomery Village Sports Association (MVSA) Storm. Not only did she practice daily during the spring for Churchill, but also she had bi-weekly practices year round for her select team, the Storm, and weekend tournaments.

That hard work led to recognition. Katelyn earned five MVP awards in qualification tournaments for the Pony Nationals and the USSA World Series with the Storm. She also received three team MVP awards in her four years at Churchill.

WORKING HARD in high school and before helped to prepare Katelyn for the competitive world of college softball. Describing the year she had, Katelyn said, "In the fall we had softball practice Monday through Friday around 5. When it got cold, we had 6:30 a.m. lifting practice. You lifted to 7:45 a.m. if you had a 8 a.m. class or you stayed to 8:30 to run if you did not have class. During the winter we had clinics to teach little girls how to hit on Sundays. Then around February we had batting practice in the morning instead of lifting. We had batting in the morning and sometimes practices at night. We started our season in March. The games were double headers. When we did not have a game, we had practice."

Despite her devotion to softball and the success of her team, Katelyn recognizes her primary focus at West Liberty. "Education comes first," she says. She has maintained a strong grade point average at West Liberty, while double majoring in accounting and computers.

And she hasn't let all of her success go to her head, remaining firmly focused on what she still wants to accomplish. Next year's team goal? "Less injuries, more wins," she said.

Communication Breakdown Criticized

County Council blasts failure of county's emergency notification system.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

George Leventhal couldn't believe what he was hearing. As the At-large Councilmember listened to the explanation of why the county's subscription-based emergency alert system failed to notify 14,000 residents about a boil water advisory that was issued after a major water main broke in Derwood, he visibly seethed.

"This does not inspire a lot of confidence," Leventhal told Gordon Aoyagi, the county's Homeland Security director. Aoyagi was forthcoming during a meeting of the council's Public Safety Committee on Thursday, June 26, taking responsibility for the department's failures and assuring Council members that the mistakes that led to the breakdown would not occur again.

The system that is designed to send emergency notifications via cell phone text messages and email sent no notices on Monday, June 15 after the advisory was issued by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission in the early morning hours because the two county employees who were responsible for the system were both out of town. A third employee in line to send the messages was

untrained to use the system.

The county's emergency response system was otherwise on the mark, Aoyagi said, as volunteer phone banks went into action and the media helped to get the word out.

BUT COUNCIL MEMBERS criticized the breakdown of the emergency notification system and questioned why a reverse-911 system wasn't used. Aoyagi said that using the reverse-911 system is extremely expensive and typically reserved for more severe emergencies.

"Yes, we did fail at a critical time," Aoyagi said. "We should have trained more people. We didn't, but that issue has been addressed. I take full responsibility for not having the assurance that people were trained to use [the notification system]."

Leventhal said that Aoyagi's willingness to put the blame on his shoulders would have been more reassuring were Aoyagi not retiring from his post on July 1, and the council members expressed displeasure that Darlene Flynn, Aoyagi's interim replacement, was at a Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's meeting and not theirs.

"That's a problem," said Nancy Floreen (D-At large).

Marc Elrich (D-At large) suggested that simple strategies like utilizing message boards in front of fire departments be explored for future emergency notifications in addition to

a properly functioning text and email alert system.

"It's very, very low-tech but I was stunned by the number of hi-tech people that didn't get the information from anything with electricity plugged into it," Elrich said.

THE COUNCIL'S newest member, Don Praisner (D-4), said that the breakdown was understandable and reminded those present that the public has a role to play in keeping itself informed.

"Maybe we do need to wake up in the morning and turn our radios on, turn our televisions on," said Praisner.

Phil Andrews (D-3), chair of the Public Safety committee, said that it was the county's responsibility, however, that was not met during the crisis.

"When we [promote] something that people should sign up

for to be notified of emergencies we need to deliver," he said. "The county did not do that in this case."

"This is the basic stuff. This is getting word out to our residents, 'Is this a big deal? Is this not a big deal?'" said Council President Mike Knapp (D-2). "We didn't do it."

Aoyagi said that with the increased training in his now former department, such failures won't happen in the future.

"Don't presume that because we didn't use all the tools available in this emergency that [we won't] in future emergencies," said Aoyagi.

"This is getting word out to our residents, 'Is this a big deal? Is this not a big deal?'"

— Council President Mike Knapp

PEOPLE NOTES

American Dance Institute announced the winners of the annual "Dance is Art in Motion" Photography Contest, which was held in honor of National Dance Week, celebrated April 25 through May 4. The winners are: in first place, 17-year-old Alexandra J. Lutz, a senior at Montgomery High School; 16-year-old Christi Santini, a junior at Blake High School, took second place; third place went to 15-year-old Carly Jane Loman, a sophomore at Bethesda Chevy Chase; and 14-year-old Julia Cline, a freshman at Walt Whitman High School won an honorable mention. The winning photos are on display at American Dance Institute and on the Web site. ADI awarded Lutz a \$250 Penn Camera gift certificate for her first place photo. Santini won a \$100 for second place and Blake was rewarded a \$50 gift certificate for her third place win.

Potomac resident **Marji Epstein** was recently invited to join nearly 200 of her peers at a national conference in Santa Fe, N.M., hosted by Cultural Care Au Pair. Epstein, a Cultural Care Au Pair local childcare coordinator (LCC), has been with the organization for 17 years. Epstein is currently interviewing area parents who are interested in hosting an au pair. She can be contacted at 301-424-0040 or email her



Winners of American Dance Institute's 2008 "Dance is Art in Motion" Photography Contest are, from left, Alexandra J. Lutz, Christi Santini, Carly Jane Loman and Julia Cline.

with any question relating to hosting an au pair at Marji.Epstein@lcc.culturalcare.com.

The Literacy Council of Montgomery

County presented awards to students, volunteers, and community members at its 45th annual meeting on April 17. **David Taylor**, a Potomac resident, was named "Tutor of the Year." Taylor has

worked with a student for six years, helping him progress through all literacy program levels and supporting his efforts to attain other personal goals.

LET'S TALK Real Estate



by
Michael Matese

REMODELING: COST VS. RESALE VALUE

Data provided by Remodeling Magazine's latest Remodeling Cost Vs. Value Report shows four projects that return the greatest profit at resale nationwide. This year, your home's curb appeal is at the top of the most profitable remodeling projects. A new wooden deck will give you an 81.2 percent return on your money outlay. Replacing your old siding with fiber cement siding will provide an 83.2 percent return, while installing new wooden windows throughout will get you 81.2 percent back from your expenses.

This is not the year for big indoor remodeling projects. With construction costs still high and home sales slowing down, it's better to put off that luxury bath remodel if you are planning to sell your home this year. The one project that still holds value is the minor kitchen remodel. Replacing cabinet doors, flooring, sink and faucet, and upgrading your stove will bring you back 83 percent of your outlay.

In a market where property values are readjusting, remodeling can potentially help your home stand out among the crowd. To make sure your project will be cost effective, be sure to consult a real estate professional about your remodeling plans.

For professional advice on all aspects of buying and selling real estate, call:

MICHAEL MATESE
Washington Fine Properties
301-806-6829

Michael.Matese@wfp.com



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CALENDAR

To have community events listed free in *The Potomac Almanac*, send mail to 7913 Westpark Drive, McLean, Va. 22102, e-mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com, or fax to 703-917-0991. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Unless otherwise noted, all events are in Potomac. If you have any questions, call Matthew Razak at 703-917-6457.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 2

Meet Yardley. Learn about the Guiding Eye Dog program and meet a dog-in-training at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 7 p.m. Pre-register at 240-777-0690.

THURSDAY/JULY 3

Evening Concert. Thursday Night concerts will take place from 6-8 p.m. in Veterans Park located at the corner of Woodmont and Norfolk Avenues in Bethesda. This week's performer will be Talawa (Reggae). Call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

Baseball. Watch the Bethesda Big Trains take on the Redbirds at Povich Field, 10600 Westlake Drive in Cabin John Regional Park, Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 adults and \$3 for children. Call 301-983-1006 or visit www.bigtrain.org.



FRIDAY/JULY 4

Contra Dances. The Friday Night Dancers presents Contra dancing as well as some square dances and waltzes in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. There is a Contra dance lesson from 7:30 to 8:15 p.m. followed by the called dance from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m. Beginners are always welcome. This week Cis Hinkle calls to Hotpoint. Admission: \$9. Contact Email: info@fridaynightdance.org.

5K Run/1 Mile Walk. Autism Speaks' Potomac 5K Run/1 mile walk will take place at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac at the intersection of River and Falls Road starting at 7:30 a.m. Professional and novice runners, families and children, are all welcome to participate in this annual event and show support for the autism community. Entry fee for 5K run or 1 mile walk is \$25 (until June 15) and \$30 (June 16-July 1). On site registration is \$35 on July 3 and \$40 on July 4. Fee for children ages 14 and under: \$15. Visit www.autismspeaks.org/potomac5k to register.

SATURDAY/JULY 5

Storytime. Kat Tales featuring Kat Aerobics will be at Barnes and Noble Booksealers, Bethesda, 4801 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda, 11 a.m. Call 301-986-1761.

Laugh Riot. Enjoy five local comics and have a chance to tell jokes yourself at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda, 7400 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, 8-10 p.m. Cost \$10. Call 301-657-1234.

Baseball. Watch the Bethesda Big Trains take on the A's at Povich Field, 10600 Westlake Drive in Cabin John Regional Park, Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 adults and \$3 for children. Call 301-983-1006 or visit www.bigtrain.org.

English Conversation Club. Join in practicing and improving one's spoken English with the help of volunteers leading discussions at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 3 p.m. Call 240-777-0690.

Carousel Tours. Carousel tours start at 12 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, and give visitors a closer look at the 1921 Dentzel carousel. Find out how it was made, how it works, and about the rest of the amusement park attractions that were built around it. Visit www.nps.gov/glec.

Park Tour. Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd, Glen Echo, tours begin at 2 p.m. and lead visitors through a walking tour of the Park to learn about its history and the current programs in arts, dance and children's activities. Admission is free. Tours begin at the visitor's desk in the Arcade Building. Visit www.nps.gov/glec.

Nature Program. Come visit Discovery Creek Children's Museum Forest Tales exhibition at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Spend time with the entire family while participating in engaging science and nature activities. In the former Glen Echo Park stable building, near the park entrance. Open 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Admission is free for members and children under 2, \$5 for nonmembers. Call 202-337-5111 to make arrangements or visit www.discoverycreek.org.

Climb Wall Weekend. Step into the harness, stretch out those limbs and get ready to climb at Discovery Creek Children's Museum. Put your skills to the test as you scale the Museum's Climb Wall at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Open 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Ages 4-9. Members and children under 2 are free, \$5 for nonmembers. In the former Glen Echo Park stable building, near the park entrance. Call 202-488-0627 or visit www.discoverycreek.org.

Swing Dance. The Washington Swing

Dance Committee will present The Nighthawks at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Beginning swing lesson from 8 - 9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. - midnight. Admission includes the lesson. Admission: \$12. Contact Phone: 301-340-9732.

SUNDAY/JULY 6

Voices of the River. The Irish Inn Mates will give a taste of Ireland, play tunes, sing some songs and answer questions about the music, the instruments and their passion for it all at the River Center at Lockhouse 8, C&O Canal National Historical Park, Cabin John, 2-3 p.m. Visit www.potomac.org.

Carousel Tours. Carousel tours start at 12 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, and give visitors a closer look at the 1921 Dentzel carousel. Find out how it was made, how it works, and about the rest of the amusement park attractions that were built around it. Visit www.nps.gov/glec.

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Contra and Square Dance. The Folklore Society of Greater Washington presents traditional American dancing with a focus on New England style contra dances, including square dances, country mixers, waltzes and other couple dances in the Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. All dances are

THE FOURTH



Here is where to find the county's fireworks displays for Independence Day.

Montgomery County this year will again host two **Independence Day fireworks** displays Friday, **July 4**. Germantown Glory will be held at the SoccerPlex in the South Germantown Recreational Park, 18041 Central Park Circle. A concert by Bobby and the Believers will begin at 7 p.m., with fireworks at approximately 9:30 p.m. Blankets, chairs and picnics are welcome. No alcohol is permitted. Food vendors will be on site. Call the Recreation Department at 240-777-6820.

Mid-County Sparkles will be

held at Albert Einstein High School, 11135 Newport Road, Kensington. Pre-fireworks activities will include children's games and a musical concert with Superfly Disco beginning at 7:30 p.m. The fireworks will begin at 9:15 p.m. The viewing areas will be at the front of the school on the ball field and at the Newport Mill Middle School, 11311 Newport Mill Road. Call the events line at 240-777-8115.

Rockville's fireworks will be hosted at Montgomery College, Rockville Campus, 51 Mannakee Street, Rockville, Maryland. Additional parking will be available at Rockville Town Center. Live entertainment begins at 7 p.m. Fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

taught, and no partner is necessary. The newcomers' welcome lesson is at 7 p.m., followed by called dances from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Admission: \$12 nonmembers/\$9 FSGW members. Contact Phone: 202-518-1299.

MONDAY/JULY 7

Storytime. Monday morning storytime at Barnes and Noble Booksellers, 4801 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda, 11 a.m. Call 301-986-1761.

TUESDAY/JULY 8

5 Percent Day. Learn about economic, recreational and health benefits of the Agricultural Reserve, hosted by the Montgomery Countryside Alliance at Whole Foods Market, 5269 River Road, Bethesda, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Call 202-244-4408, Ext.114.

Deserts Alive. A reptile encounter with creatures from arid climates at

the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 7 p.m. Pre-register at 240-777-0690.

Book Club. Join Bethesda Reads! for their monthly meeting to discuss contemporary literature in the Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, 10:30 a.m. This month read the "Virgin of Bennington" by Kathleen Norris.

Little Bugs Story Hours. Summer story times on the Summer Reading Club theme: Catch the Reading Bug at Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, 10:30 a.m. Stories, music, and DVDs. Call 240-777-0970.

Afternoon Tea. Enjoy the sounds of local musicians while enjoying afternoon tea in the Shapiro Music Room at the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda, 1 p.m. Tea is \$21. Call 301-581-5108.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9

THEATER

This summer, Montgomery College will bring two musicals to the stage — "Evita" and "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" — for its Summer Dinner Theatre performances. "Evita" performances will take place **July 5-6**. "Disney's Beauty and the Beast" will run **July 18-19, 25-27 and Aug. 1-3**. Tickets for Summer Dinner Theatre are \$37 for adults and \$27 for children ages 12 and under. Prices include the performance and a full dinner buffet. At Friday and Saturday night performances, the doors will open at 6:30 p.m., with a show time of 8:15 p.m. On Sunday, the buffet will open at 12:30 p.m., with a 2:15 p.m. show time. All performances are held in

the Theatre Arts Arena on the College's Rockville Campus, located at 51 Mannakee Street, Rockville. To purchase tickets, visit www.montgomerycollege.edu/sdt or call 240-567-7676.

Once a staple in Olney's season, the summer mystery play makes a comeback after a 25-year hiatus with Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap." The show plays on the New Mainstage at Olney Theater, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney, **through July 6**. Tickets are \$25 - \$48 with discounts available to groups, seniors, and students. Call the Box Office at 301-924-3400 or visit olneytheatre.org for tickets.

Defending the Caveman returns to the Washington area for a limited engagement at the Bethesda Theatre, 7719 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, **July 9-27**. Tickets are \$37.50 and \$50 and are on sale now at the Bethesda Theatre box office, all Ticketmaster outlets, online at www.bethesdatheatre.com, and by phone at 301-657-STAR, 202-397-SEAT, 703-573-SEAT, 410-547-SEAT, and 800-551-SEAT.

A brand new version of L. Frank Baum's "Wizard of Oz" will be presented by Adventure Theatre in Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, **through July 20**. Performances Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 10 and 11:30 a.m. and Saturdays and

Sundays at 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Recommended for K - Grade 6. Tickets \$8; group rates available.

Call 301-320-6668 or visit www.thepuppetco.org.

"**Big River**" will be presented by Olney's National Players on the Historic Stage at Olney Theater Center, 2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Olney, **through July 27**.

Tickets are \$25 with discounts available to groups. Call the Box Office at 301-924-3400 or visit olneytheatre.org for tickets.

"**Babe, the Sheep Pig**" will run **through Aug. 3** at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Per-

formances on Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Playing time is approximately 1 hour. Recommended for ages 3 and up. Tickets \$12. Call 301-634-2270 or visit www.adventuretheatre.org.

Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Avenue, Bethesda, will present "**The Neverending Story**" from **through Aug. 10**. Enjoyed by ages 6 and up. Performance times are Saturdays 12:30, 3:30 and 7 p.m. and Sundays 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. Single ticket prices range from \$10-\$20, with group rates available.

The Box Office phone is 301-280-1660 or visit www.ImaginationStage.org.

FINE ARTS

Coming

"Flight Fantasy" will be at The Dennis and Philip Ratner Museum, 10001 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, **July 2-30**. Gallery hours are Sunday, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Monday-Thursday, 12-4:30 p.m. Reception: **July 13**, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Call 301-897-1518.

The Foundry Gallery, 1314 18th



St., N.W. Washington, DC, will present recent paintings and prints by its only husband/wife members, Ann and Philip Bennet of Bethesda, **July 2-27**. An opening reception will be **July 11** from 6-8 p.m. Gallery hours are Wednesday - Sunday, 12-6 p.m. Call 202-463-0203.

Self-taught artist John Yim will host his first show at Glen Echo Park's Yellow Barn Gallery, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo Park, featuring his full range of "Landscapes & Figuratives," **July 4-6**.

Puppetry Exhibition. The Popcorn Gallery and the Puppet Co. at Glen Echo Park, 7400 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, present an exhibition of puppets, **July**

5-27. Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 6 p.m. Call 301-634-2222 or visit www.glenechopark.org.

Waverly Street Gallery, 4600 East-West Highway, Bethesda, welcomes experimental fiber artist Deb Jansen from **July 8 - Aug. 2**. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 12-6 p.m. An opening reception will be Friday, **July 11** from 6-9 p.m. Call 301-951-9441.

An exhibition by members of the **Advanced Master Printing** class taught by Frank "Tico" Herrera will be at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, **July 9-Aug. 29**. Look for images covering a variety of approaches to photography. In the Photoworks Studio. Wednesdays and

Sundays, 1-8 p.m., and at all times during day and evening classes. Admission is free. Call 301-229-7930 or visit www.glenechophotoworks.org.

"Dancing in Thin Places" a collection of painted works by Blair Davenport-Anderson will be on display at Framer McGee's Gallery for the **July 11** Bethesda Art Walk. A "meet the artist" wine and cheese reception will be from 6-9 p.m. at 4936 Hampden Lane, Bethesda. Call 301-656-4090.

"Tropics to Tundra," solo show by Barbara French Pace at the Yellow Barn Gallery, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, **July 25, 26, 27**. Gallery hours are Friday-Sunday, 12-5 p.m.

Reception: **Saturday, July 26**, 5-8 p.m. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com.

Last Chance

Bethesda Painting Awards finalists will be displayed at the **Fraser Gallery**, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E., Bethesda **through July 5**. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Waverly Street Gallery, 4600 East-West Highway, Bethesda, presents "On the Road Again," a collection of dynamic figurative and automotive oil paintings by Chip Cecil, **through July 5**. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday 12-6 p.m. Call 301-951-9441 or visit www.waverlystreetgallery.com.

Ongoing

The exhibit "Good Advice" will survey almost 200 years of American advice books, aimed at helping people to improve their lives from top to bottom. The exhibit will be on display **through Sept. 21**, at the Beall-Dawson House, 103 W. Montgomery Ave., Rockville. Museum hours are 12-4 p.m., Tuesday to Sunday. Included with museum admission (\$3 adults/\$2 seniors & students).

The exhibit "Breakfast" is a vignette-style exhibit, on display throughout the Beall-Dawson House, 103 W. Montgomery Ave., Rockville, in conjunction with the exhibit "Good Advice." The vignettes include a family breakfast, formal breakfast, breakfast in bed, breakfast preparation, and even George Washington's breakfast and will be on display **through Sept. 21**. Included with museum admission (\$3 adults/\$2 seniors & students). Call 301-762-1492 or www.montgomeryhistory.org.

By Lynn Richard from Brookside Garden will demonstrate ideas for creating butterfly gardens, share stories and butterfly crafts at the Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, 1 p.m. Call 240-777-0970.

Afternoon Tea. Enjoy the sounds of local musicians while enjoying afternoon tea in the Shapiro Music Room at the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda, 1 p.m. Tea is \$21. Call 301-581-5108.

THURSDAY/JULY 10

Evening Concert. Thursday Night concerts will take place from 6-8 p.m. in Veterans Park located at the corner of Woodmont and Norfolk Avenues in Bethesda. This week's performer will be The Nighthawks (Blues). Contact 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

Hot Squares. Join Hot Squares in the Olde Towne Tonight for an evening of traditional American square dancing at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, 8-10:30 p.m. No dance experience, lessons, or partner required. All dances are taught. This week features Laura Brown, Ann Fallon, Eva Murray, Janine Smith, Susan Taylor calling hot squares to the music of the Saddlehorn String Band. Admission: \$8. Call 301-651-8971 or 410-268-0231.

FRIDAY/JULY 11

Bethesda Art Walk. 12 galleries and studios open late in Downtown Bethesda from 6-9 p.m. Guided tours: 6:30 p.m. starting at the Bethesda

Metro Center. Call 301-215-6660.

Dance Concert. Dance away Friday nights with live bands at 3 Bethesda Metro Center, Bethesda from 6-9 p.m. Free. Call 301-652-4988.

Baseball. Watch the Bethesda Big Trains take on the Orioles at Povich Field, 10600 Westlake Drive in Cabin John Regional Park, Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 adults and \$3 for children. Call 301-983-1006 or visit www.bigtrain.org for more information.

Contra Dances. The Friday Night Dancers presents Contra dancing as well as some square dances and waltzes in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. There is a Contra dance lesson from 7:30 to 8:15 p.m. followed by the called dance from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m. Beginners are always welcome. Admission: \$9. Contact Email: info@fridaynightdance.org.

Swing Dance. The Glen Echo Park Partnership presents a Swing Dance with the Boilermaker Jazz Band from Pennsylvania at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. An introductory Swing lesson with Donna Barker and Mike Marcotte from 8 - 9 p.m. is followed by dancing until midnight. No partner necessary; admission includes the lesson at 8 pm. Admission: \$13. Contact Email: dbarker@glenechopark.org.

SATURDAY/JULY 12

Book Sale. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library, Potomac Chapter at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 9 a.m. Most hardbacks \$1 and paperbacks \$.50.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

WEDNESDAY/JULY 9

Book Group. A fiction book group meets at Barnes and Noble Booksellers, 4801 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Call 301-986-1761.

Focus Music. Allison Downey and John Austin will perform along with Sense of Wonder at O'Brien's BBQ, 387 East Gude Drive, Rockville at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$15, \$12 members. Visit www.focusmusic.org.

Lunchtime Concert. Wednesday lunchtime concerts will take place from 12 - 2 p.m. at the Bethesda Place Plaza located at 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda. This week's performer is Laura Baron (Folk and Jazz). Free. Contact 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

Baseball. Watch the Bethesda Big Trains take on the Bombers at Povich Field, 10600 Westlake Drive in Cabin John Regional Park, Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 adults and \$3 for children. Call 301-983-1006 or visit www.bigtrain.org.

DDR. Dance, Dance Revolution: A Video Competition for Teens presented by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Try to win the \$25 prize at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 1-3 p.m. Call 301-765-4083.

Butterflies Flutter



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MC1107 Log • 436

Burning Exercise

FROM PAGE 3

That decision-making process starts with assessing the type of structure and fire, then establishing a mode of attack and readying backup crews and resources if necessary. Firefighters can work their way up to the rank of unit chief in four to five years, said Vagonis.

Vagonis himself was instrumental in making Sunday's controlled burn a reality: Vagonis runs his own home improvement company and previously worked with Debbie Driesman on another property she owns. Driesman bought the property on Norton Road last year with the intention of doing a teardown/rebuild. Vagonis told her that by donating the structure to the fire department she could then use its value as a tax writeoff before building her new home.

"I'd always considered the idea because it should reduce the amount that will go into the landfill," Driesman said as she watched the home burn. Driesman said that she hopes to have her building permits filed by the end of July so that work on her site can begin by the end of the year.

When the last exercise was complete Sunday afternoon, the house was lit and



PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE ALMANAC

Volunteer firefighters participate in a controlled burn of a house. The landowner offered the house to the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department to be used as a training exercise.

firefighters kicked back to watch it burn. Traffic backed up along Norton Road as cars parked on the grass to watch the spectacle.

The day was a success, Vagonis said. Firefighters got practice battling blazes, new unit chiefs got experience assessing situa-

tions and directing crews, and Driesman paved the way to her dream home.

"We got everything burned down," Vagonis said. "There's just some brick walls left standing."



After completing several smaller fire trainings in different rooms of the house, the building was fully set on fire and burnt to the ground.



A Rockville volunteer firefighter walks around the perimeter of a structure fire and throws in trash and debris into the fire that was intentionally set after being used as a training exercise for area volunteer fire departments in Potomac.



Volunteer firefighters from the Rockville and Laytonsville Volunteer Fire Department and firefighters from the Montgomery County Fire Department watch the house burning during the training exercise.

SCHOOLS

To have an item listed mail to 7913 Westpark Drive, McLean VA 22102, e-mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com, or fax to 703-917-0991. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Unless otherwise noted, all events are in Potomac. Questions? Call Matthew Razak at 703-917-6457.

The Board of Education met Monday, June 23 and, among other items, gave final approval of Policy EEA, Student Transportation, and discussed suspensions and interventions. The Board made six administrative appointments, approved an increase in tuition rates for nonresident students and made appointments to two advisory committees. In addition, the board recognized college/university partners and congratulated the recipients of this year's Maryland Vietnamese Mutual Association academic awards and scholarships.

Montgomery College offers an array of new, non-credit courses that were formerly offered by Montgomery County Public Schools. These courses, offered primarily during evenings or weekends in public schools and other convenient community locations, are in addition to hundreds of other non-credit courses available through the College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education unit. A complete schedule of course offerings can be found online at www.montgomerycollege.edu/wdce. Also, printed copies of the fall non-credit course schedule can be found at libraries, community centers and other such locations around the county. For questions about continuing education courses or to request a copy call 301-279-5188, visit www.montgomerycollege.edu/wdce/mcps/mcps.html.

COLLEGE NOTES

To have an item listed mail to 7913 Westpark Drive, McLean VA 22102, e-mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com, or fax to 703-917-0991. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Unless otherwise noted, all events are in Potomac. If you have any questions, call Matthew Razak at 703-917-6457.

Anisha Crystal Jindia, a rising junior mathematics major at Dickinson College in Carlisle, has been named to the dean's list for the spring 2008 semester. A graduate of Holton-Arms High School, she is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Girish Jindia of Potomac.



Graduates Listen

Guest speaker **Scot Anthony Robinson** (actor and "Vision Warrior" www.visionwarrior.com) addressed the graduating class at the McLean School of Maryland on Friday, June 6. Robinson is best known for his performances on television and in films such as "Malcolm X," "Clockers," "New York Undercover" and "All My Children."



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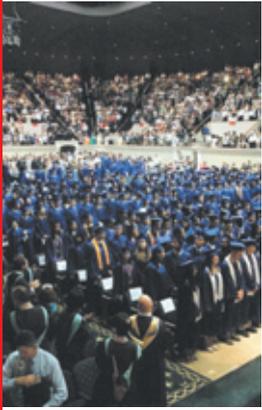
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NEWS

Neighbors Review Revised Plan

FROM PAGE 2

used a portion of the property as an illegal waste dump for years. The result was an unnaturally graded slope near a stream that produced increased runoff into the stream and was also unsuitable for construction because of its instability. Koh would be required to remove that waste, and to regrade and restabilize the slope, said Callum Murray, the Potomac team leader for the Planning Board's staff. Stormwater management would be handled by several bio-retention areas and underground filtration systems, Koh said

"It's beneficial for the community to have a thriving business there rather than one that is going down the tubes"

"It's beneficial for the community to have a thriving business there rather than one that is going down the tubes," said Koh. This is a family operation and we plan to build it from our own resources. We don't plan on selling it."

Were his business venture to fail down the road, the Country Inn Zoning distinction would transfer to whoever bought the property, said Murray, though any new purchaser would have to go back to the Planning Board for site plan review and approval before another business operation could start up.

Towards the end of the meeting Koh asked the audience if they would be more supportive of the plans if the lodging accommodations were scrapped, a question that was met with almost unanimous approval.

Yet even with that possible concession on the table residents remained skeptical.

"We all pay top dollar for our homes and this is going to ruin it in every way you can imagine," said Izadi.

Koh has yet to resubmit his revised plan to the Planning Board but indicated that he wants to do so sooner rather than later.

— **Francis Koh**

SOME AT LAST WEEK'S

meeting expressed concerns over the project's financial viability and worried what would become of the property and the proposed facilities should the endeavor fail. When pressed for figures of how many clients the restaurant and lodging facilities would require on a weekly basis for the business to be successful, Koh was vague, saying only that, as a small, four to five star restaurant, they would focus on quality and not quantity, and added that he and his family have every intention of being successful.

REAL ESTATE NOTES

Gordon Harris, branch manager of **Weichert, Realtors' Potomac Village Office**, announced that Mahin Ghadiri was recognized for achievements in May. Chairman of the Board member Ghadiri led the region in resale dollar volume.

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North Potomac					
14004 Parsippany Pl.	\$734,900	Sun 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-4506

To add your Realtor-represented Open House to these weekly listings, please call Kenneth Lourie

703-821-5050 or E-Mail the info to Klourie@connectionnewspapers.com
All listings due by Tues at 10 am.

SPORTS



Stephen Sakaris of the Potomac Falls Demons competes in the 200 Meter Freestyle Relay.



Ali Benjamin of the Potomac Falls Demons competes in the 200 Meter Medley Relay.



Alana Pechold of the Potomac Falls Demons competes in the 200 Meter Freestyle Relay.

River Falls Relay

PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/
THE CONNECTION

More than 300 'A' swimmers from five area clubs took to the water at River Falls Tennis & Swim club on Sunday, June 29 during an A Carnival Relay.



Stephen Sakaris of the Potomac Falls Demons competes in the 200 Meter Medley Relay on Sunday morning during the MCSL "E" Division Relay Carnival in Potomac.



Shoshana Swell of the River Falls Dolphins competes in the Girls Open Age 200 Meter Medley Relay.

Tommy Keane of the River Falls Dolphins competes in the 100 Meter Freestyle Relay.



Possible Sewer Extension: What Kind of Precedent?

FROM PAGE 2

maintain, at least to an extent, the rural, quiet nature of much of Potomac through the years and is key to continuing to do so, said Barnes, who has studied local zoning and land use issues for years.

Extending sewer service outside of what is commonly called the sewer envelope to make way for a larger Travilah Oak shopping center could set a new precedent. If approved, private residents, businesses and residential developers in Potomac, North Potomac, Gaithersburg and Darnestown would need only to cite Semmes and Denker's project as justification for why their requests should be approved, and the council would have a hard time disagreeing, Barnes said.

"Some other commercial interest or people in Darnestown are going to say, 'What do you mean? What's the problem with doing it for us? You did it for them,'" said Barnes. "That's just always going to be the basic problem. Once you allow something like that you have essentially broken the Master Plan."

ON FRIDAY, June 27 Semmes and Denker stood behind a makeshift podium with a portable microphone-speaker setup beneath the Travilah Oak, the roughly 300-year-old tree that sits in front of their shopping center and is a source of local pride. In front of them sat at least 40 local residents on folding chairs, who listened to Semmes and Denker as they outlined their plans and hopes for the future of the Travilah Oak shopping center.

The meeting was the fourth and final in a series of such meetings that the pair held each Friday in June to inform their neighbors of their plans and to get their feedback. Postcards went out to all residents within a one-mile radius of the center, and each Friday attendance grew a little larger, Semmes said. As Guy Semmes' wife Dana restocked a table of hors' d'oeuvre and filled plastic cups with wine — food and drink



Guy Semmes displays a mockup of what the future of the Potomac Oak Center could look like with sewer service. On Friday, June 27 Semmes and his business partner and brother-in-law Michael Denker held the final of four June meetings with residents to explain their proposal.

compliments of Semmes and Denker to all in attendance — Denker explained the plan.

"I don't want to see something sprawling," one woman told Denker as he spoke. "Neither do we," he said.

Typically sewer lines are run parallel to stream beds, but Semmes said that he would seek to have theirs run along the Travilah Road right-of-way to minimize any environmental impact. They would also seek to have their proposal approved under very narrow conditions that would make such extensions possible in only highly specific instances — like small community shopping centers using hookups that do need to be run beside streams, for instance, said Semmes.

The pipe as proposed would be a pressurized commercial line that could not be tapped into for residential use, would run only to the center, and whose cost would be borne completely by Semmes and Denker. They hope to present their plan with the support of the community to the Council again this fall.

LONGTIME POTOMAC resident Richard Moran said that he fully supports the idea.

"If they can build two nice, little buildings, let them do it," Moran said.

Moran has known and been involved in the area for years: he started the Potomac Polo Club across Glen Road from the center in 1956 and six years ago raised money for the lightning rod that currently protects the Travilah Oak.

Renovating the center into a small nexus of community activity would be a throwback to the days when the intersection was defined by Herman Hinton's General Store and the Travilah town hall, Moran said.

"Love it. All for it," said Glen Road resident Nancy Walsh of the idea. "I've been here 15 years, this place is a dump."

Retired U.S. Navy Admiral Frank L. Bowman of Query Mill Road agreed, albeit a bit more cautiously. He said he would support the idea "as long as there's no encroachment," on surrounding residential areas and if the pipeline were permanently and solely dedicated to the shopping center.

"Some other commercial interest or people in Darnestown are going to say, 'What do you mean? What's the problem with doing it for us? You did it for them.' That's just always going to be the basic problem. Once you allow something like that you have essentially broken the Master Plan."

— George Barnes, WMCCA

It is that part of the plan that Bonne Dale Drive resident Tom Wellington said concerns him the most. Wellington has a hard time believing that such a pipe could be laid without others wanting sewer lines extended to their homes or potential businesses that currently lay outside of the county's sewer envelope.

"I think a precedent could be set here that would be bad news county-wide," said Wellington. It would only be a matter of time, Wellington said, before residents currently living on septic — or their neighbors — are all connected to sewer lines and paying front foot benefit charges for hookups that many don't want in the first place.

"Then we'll walk over our no-longer-used septic fields to put the check in the mail," Wellington said.

HEALTH NOTES

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The Wellness Community - Greater Washington, DC is offering a new, weekly, free **exercise program for people with cancer** and their loved ones Tuesdays from 10-10:55 a.m. beginning **July 15**. Led by certified personal trainer Debbie Miller, "Wellness Workout" will focus on low impact aerobic exercises, gentle resistance training, and stretching. Location: The Wellness Community- Greater Washington, DC, 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda. Call 301-493-5002 or twcdc@thewellnesscommunity.org.

Teen Therapy Group. In this interactive therapy group, adolescent boys (ages 14-17) will use didactic and process-oriented strategies to develop and enhance skills for making and keeping

friends, increasing self-esteem, improving social interactions, and managing negative feelings. Group meets on Mondays, **through Aug. 25**; 4:30-5:30 p.m. at JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Road, Rockville. Call 301-816-2633 to register.

Parents of Children with Asperger's, Autism, PDD-NOS. Share coping strategies and community resources, develop networks, and gain support. Two groups will be offered. No charge. Group meets on Mondays, **July 7 and Aug. 11**, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. and Tuesdays, **June 3, July 1 and Aug. 5**; 7-8:15 p.m. at JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Road, Rockville (both groups). Register monthly: 301-610-8361.

Family Support Group. In this ongoing monthly group, parents and family members of children with disabilities share their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, coping mechanisms and strategies for living for today and planning for the future. No charge. Group meets on Tuesdays, **July 15 and Aug. 19**; 7:30-8:45 p.m. at JSSA, 6123 Montrose Road, Rockville. Pre-registration required: 301-610-8371.

The Wellness Community - Greater Washington, D.C. offers free, regularly scheduled support groups for people with cancer and their caregivers. Location: The Wellness Community- Greater Washington, D.C., 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda. Call 301-493-5002 or twcdc@thewellnesscommunity.org.

In recognition of Home Safety Month, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services is offering county residents **free reminder cards** with information on how to prevent falls in their homes.

To request a free "12 Ways to Prevent Falls," call the Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services at 240-777-3000; TTY 240-777-4575.

The Greater Chesapeake and Potomac (GC & P) Region asks all eligible whole blood donors to "Be the One We Count On" by calling 1-800-GIVE-LIFE to schedule a donation appointment right away. For more information, visit www.my-redcross.org.

FAITH NOTES

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Congregation B'nai Tzedek, 10621 South Glen Road, Potomac presents a Musical Shabbat Under the Stars, Friday, **July 11**, 6:30 p.m. Family, friends and prospective members are invited to an informal outdoor Shabbat service in the courtyard. Cantor Kapell will lead the group in an evening of special Shabbat melodies and child-friendly songs. 301-299-0225.

Shalem Institute offers a guided mid-day **Prayer Peace Circle**, on Wednesdays from noon-12:45 p.m. in the Shalem Meditation Room & Library, 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 140, Bethesda. For more

information, contact 301-897-7334 or visit www.shalem.org.

Rockville Presbyterian Church, 215 West Montgomery Avenue, is searching for volunteers to be on call to assist in the nursery. Call Charlene Janes at 301-251-6682 or e-mail ckjanes@patriot.net.

Friendly Family Services meet at St. Dunstan's Church, 5450 Massachusetts Ave. at Fort Sumner Drive, Bethesda at 9:15 a.m. Sundays, with fun songs, a children's Bible lesson, and Holy Eucharist in a 40-minute service geared to small children. Young families are invited to try this "easy entry" service. Call 301-229-2960 or e-mail stdunstans@verizon.net.

The Seven Locks Baptist Church, 11845 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, holds **weekly prayer meetings**, Wednesday in the sanctuary at 6:45 p.m. Call 301-279-9388.

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