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This Isn't What Stinks

The C&O Canal has long been plagued by the smell of raw sewage. Many incorrectly associate the smell with the Canal itself, but the real culprit is the Potomac Interceptor, a sewer line that originates in Virginia, runs through Maryland and into Washington, D.C. Plans to build odor-reducing facilities along the Canal were drawn up in 2000 but have yet to be implemented. The current estimate is for construction to begin in 2010.

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Singing Her Own Tune

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Get Out of Town

REAL ESTATE, PAGE 13

PHOTO BY ANDREW DODSON/THE ALMANAC

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Back-To-School Fair

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) will kick off the school year with a Back-to-School Fair at the school system's central office location in Rockville. The event for Montgomery County Public Schools families will take place on Saturday, Aug. 16, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., on the grounds of Carver Educational Services Center, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville.

Coordinated by the Department of Communications' Division of Family and Community Partnerships (DFCP), the fair will feature information and resources for parents and activities and entertainment for children.

Some of the highlights include student and community performance groups, local celebrities, international food, and health screenings provided by Kaiser Permanente. MCPS staff members will be available to answer questions and provide information. Among the offices represented will be curriculum, special education, food and nutrition, early childhood, consortia and application programs, and transportation. A number of county organizations also will be present, including health and human services, public libraries, Montgomery College, College Savings Plans of Maryland, Montgomery County Council of PTAs, NAACP, and the City of Rockville.

Items available for attendees to take home include books, school supplies, and school system resources. More than 50 donated prizes will be raffled, including an iPod, bicycles, and fitness classes.

Parking will be available on the Montgomery College campus, across Mannakee Street from the fair site. Shuttle buses will run to the fair site throughout the day from Northwest and Montgomery Blair

high schools.

For more information, call the Division of Family and Community Partnerships at 301-279-3100.

Burglary Suspect Arrested

A man suspected of breaking into Potomac Pizza and Fortune Garden restaurant in Potomac Village in late July was arrested last week. Frank Stephen Zadory Jr. was arrested by Montgomery County Police detectives from the 1st and 3rd districts and charged him with several commercial burglaries that occurred in Burtonsville and Potomac.

Detectives developed Zadory as a suspect through video surveillance obtained from some of the stores involved.

On July 22 at approximately 3:21 a.m., officers from the 1st District were dispatched to the Potomac Pizza and Sub Shop located at 9812 Falls Road in Potomac, for an alarm call. When officers arrived they found the front door glass had been smashed out. Officers also discovered the front door glass smashed out of the Fortune Garden restaurant. Fortune Garden is located adjacent to the sub shop, and shares the same address.

On July 23 at approximately 2:18 a.m., officers from the 3rd District were dispatched to a burglary call at the Cuba de Ayer restaurant located at 15446 Old Columbia Pike in Burtonsville. Officers found the front door glass had been smashed out.

On August 7 at approximately 5:30 p.m., detectives from the Montgomery County Police Repeat Offenders Section located Zadory in Langley Park operating a stolen car. It was determined that the

SEE THIS WEEK, PAGE 4

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A Summer Celebration

20th Annual Scotland Community Day celebrates the bonds of community and family.

BY DANIEL LIN
THE ALMANAC

Against a clear blue afternoon sky a little boy tossed a basketball towards a hoop. The hoop connected not to a pole stuck in concrete, but to a massive multi-colored moon bounce. Across the street, parents and grandparents lounged in the shade, watching him and other children play.

On Saturday, Aug. 9, young and old, people from the Scotland community and beyond gathered to celebrate the 20th annual Scotland Community Day. The annual celebration featured food and music, clowns and even a horse.

"It's a family event," said Odelia Cooper, longtime Scotland resident.

Family can stretch beyond the nuclear or extended.

"You get the people who live here, their children, their grandchildren. People who've moved come back and bring their kids," said Alan Heard, who grew up in Scotland and still lives there. "People from other communities come as well."

Lining the entrance to the cul-de-sac where most of the day's attractions will take



PHOTO BY DANIEL LIN/THE ALMANAC

New Scotland Community Director Kimberly Bryant standing in front of the refreshment table at the 20th annual Scotland Community Day.

place, a series of stands hawked vital wares like education and career opportunities for residents.

Suburban Hospital has a longstanding relationship with the Scotland Community, said Monique Sanfuentes, the hospital's director for community outreach. In 1993, the two established the Scotland Partnership, in which the hospital works together with community leaders to provide better medical services. Throughout the year Sanfuentes and others visit Scotland to pro-

vide various health services and Sanfuentes has attended Community Days in the past, but this year marked the first that the hospital has its own recruitment booth at the festivities.

"We're here to welcome high school kids, speak to them about healthy living, introduce them to potential careers down the road," she said. Suburban Hospital recruitment director Charmaine Williams added, "Health care is the largest growing industry at the moment. There are a variety of

options and many different areas for people to get involved."

As they spoke, soldiers in full military garb, camouflaged suits, boots and all, sat nearby prepared to answer questions about volunteering for the Army.

Beside them, Winston Churchill High School had a booth to provide educational information. Standing behind the booth adjacent, Montgomery College coordinator

SEE CELEBRATION, PAGE 12

Fourth Presbyterian Prepares to Break Ground

Renovation of private school on South Glen Road could start early September.

The Fourth Presbyterian School on South Glen Road has obtained the permits necessary to begin construction on their new 66,000 square-foot facility and could break ground as early as the first week of September.

"We do have all our permits and the only thing we're waiting for right now is our bond financing," said Tim Horst, the president of the school's board of directors. The new facility would roughly quadruple the current facility and will allow the school to

expand from a K-5 facility to include grades 6-8. According to an online search of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services, the only permits still being processed are those pertaining to demolition of existing buildings.

Plans for the expansion have been in the works for several years but most neighbors were not aware of them until this spring, and many in the surrounding neighborhoods said were dismayed by the lack of outreach by the school.

School officials said then that they had sent out a notice to the neighbors a year ago but when they heard no feedback from the community they proceeded without making any further overtures or attempts to garner community feedback. School officials have since apologized for not involv-

SEE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN, PAGE 10

Missing Man

Robert Paul Murphy of Stable Lane was reported missing by his family on Monday, Aug. 11.



Robert Paul Murphy

Robert Paul Murphy, a resident of the 10700 block of Stable Lane was reported missing Monday night, Aug. 11.

Detectives from the Montgomery County Police 1st District Investigative Section are asking the public's help in locating him. Murphy was last seen at 10 a.m. Monday at his home.

He is described as a 62-year-old white male. He is 6'1" tall, weighs 180 pounds, and is balding with gray hair. He was wearing a dark suit with an unknown color shirt and tie when he left home Monday morning for work.

Murphy works at the Congressional Budget Office on E. Street SW in Washington DC. He also teaches at George Washington University in Washington. He drives a green Toyota Sienna van with Maryland tags.

There is no evidence to suspect foul play but his family is concerned for his welfare, according to police.

Anyone who has information regarding the whereabouts of Robert Paul Murphy is asked to call the Montgomery County Police non-emergency number at 301-279-8000.

THIS WEEK IN POTOMAC

FROM PAGE 2

car, a 2002 Saturn L200, had been stolen during a residential burglary in the 3rd District. Detectives stopped the car and arrested Zadory without incident.

Zadory was charged with three counts of burglary in the second degree, burglary in the fourth degree, theft over \$500, and three counts of malicious destruction of property over \$500. Zadory is currently being held in the Montgomery County Detention Center on a \$150,000 bond.

Zadory may be responsible for several other commercial and residential burglaries throughout Montgomery County, according to police, and further charges are anticipated. Anyone with information about these crimes is asked to call the Montgomery County Police 3rd District Investigative Section at 301-565-5835. Callers may remain anonymous.

Strathmore Film Festival

The 11th Annual Comcast Outdoor Film Festival benefiting NIH Children's Charities, kicks off Friday, Aug. 15. The festival runs from Aug. 15-24. Restaurants and grounds open at 6:30 p.m. Showtime starts at 8:30 p.m. at the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike. Admission is free though donations are requested. For more information go to: <http://www.strathmore.org/eventstickets/calendar/view.asp?id=1943>

Tiger's Benefit

Montgomery County announced last week that the 2008 AT&T National Golf Tournament – the signature event of Tiger Woods – held last month at Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, generated an estimated \$16.8 million in total direct and indirect, positive economic impact to Maryland, including \$5.5 million in employee income and nearly 200 jobs. The bulk of that impact was concentrated in Montgomery County.

The tournament is a huge spectator draw and one of the region's anticipated professional sporting events, according to a newsletter from County Executive Ike Leggett's office, but what this economic impact analysis also demonstrates is that it is an economic boon for the local economy.

"We are very proud to have this impressive event hosted by the world's greatest golfer, Tiger Woods, take place in Montgomery County and we will do all we can to ensure that it stays here for many, many years to come," the letter read.

In an interview with *The Almanac* last month Leggett said he hoped the Congressional Country Club membership would approve a recommendation by the club's board of directors to hold it there from 2012 through 2017. The tournament is scheduled to be held there in 2009 then find a new home in 2010 as the course is renovated for the U.S. Open, which comes to Congressional in 2011. Leggett said that he would work with the PGA and TPC Potomac at Avenel Farm – formerly TPC Avenel – to bring a high-caliber tournament when that course completes a \$25 million renovation this fall.

Some 107,120 spectators attended the AT&T National over six days in July, with an average daily attendance of more than 25,800. An estimated 10,712 of these spectators stayed overnight in the County. Additionally, the tournament brought sponsors, suppliers, players, caddies, families and media from outside the region who accounted for an additional 3,000 overnight visits.



PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

This capped vent behind the River Center at Lockhouse 8 along the C&O Canal is one of dozens of vents along the Potomac Interceptor that emits the smell of raw sewage. Six charcoal filter facilities are slated to be built in 2010 along the 50-mile line that are intended to eliminate the stench that often plagues the C&O Canal and surrounding communities such as Cabin John and the Palisades.

Stopping the Stench

After years of inaction, a solution to the stench of sewage along the C&O Canal may finally be on the horizon.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

When Mac Thornton first moved to Cabin John in 1996, he traveled for business a lot and spent many a late night driving back from Dulles Airport in the dark. He would take the GW Parkway to I-495, then quickly get off the American Legion Bridge onto the Clara Barton Parkway, and it was there, in the middle of the night, that the smell would hit him.

"I'd say 'Oh, I must be home,'" Thornton recalled. "It was a mixed blessing to come home."

That smell is one that Cabin John residents and C&O Canal frequenters know well. It is hydrogen sulfide and to most it conjures up images better left in a restroom or a gross-out movie. It is also a smell that many people identify – incorrectly – with the Canal itself. That was what people first told Thornton when he asked about it – that the foul stench that frequently plagues the Canal was the water in the Canal, but Thornton wasn't convinced and it didn't take him long to find the real culprit.

The real culprit is a 50-mile sewer line that runs from the Dulles Airport area in Virginia, under the Potomac River and into Maryland, and through the C&O Canal National Historical Park and into the Blue Plains water treatment facility in Washington, D.C. On its Maryland sojourn the line, known as the Potomac Interceptor, runs along the Canal, and air vents along its path emit the foul stench into the air above. The scent is exactly what it smells like – raw sewage – and it is particularly bad during the humid summer months.

"At some times the system smells as bad as it ever has and at other times it doesn't," said Thornton. "I think if you talk to people who are out on the Canal a lot there is still an unacceptable level of stink a lot of the time."

It is a situation that residents of Cabin John long ago grew

tired of, and in the late 1990s several local civic associations banded together to urge officials from the Washington, D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) to do something about it. The Potomac Conservancy, the American Canoe Association, and the Canoe Cruisers Association filed suit against WASA in federal court in 2003. The lawsuit was ultimately unsuccessful, but in its aftermath WASA officials devised a plan to permanently solve the stench problem.

"We lost the battle but won the war, we think," said Thornton.

WASA OFFICIALS agreed to build six permanent charcoal-filter stations along roughly 30 miles of the Interceptor – three in Montgomery County, one in Washington, D.C. and two in Virginia – to treat the smell and to cap most of the other 50 or so air vents that emit the odor. The three sites in Montgomery County are near Old Angler's Inn, the I-495 overpass, and an old pumping station along the Canal. The stations would also reduce the pressure of the line allowing the other uncapped vents to serve as air intakes rather than discharge points, according to WASA officials.

Five years on, and three years after the original target date, however, those structures are still waiting to be built. Part of the reason for the delay is the fact that WASA has to obtain 46 permits from 17 different county, state and federal agencies to build the structures, but turnover within the staffs of WASA, the National Park Service, and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission hasn't helped anything either, said Dave Lake, a Montgomery County representative to the WASA board of directors. Those changes in personnel mean design reviews have gone through different staffs, essentially restarting the process several times, Lake said.

A lack of coordination between the various agencies and some good old-fashioned foot-dragging on behalf of WASA hasn't helped anything either, said Thornton.

"I think the will at WASA has been lacking. That is the major cause of the situation in my opinion," Thornton said. Meanwhile the smell hasn't gotten any better, and a consistent pattern of action and inaction has emerged.

"They make progress and then they get a little bogged down, we put their feet to the fire, they make some more

PETS



Stella

Stella is a female, 2-year-old, 50 lbs., spayed Siberian Husky. Stella is an intelligent, ice blue-eyed young beauty, typical of her active breed. She has great house manners and is friendly with other dogs. Stella needs an active family with a well-fenced yard since her breed was born to run and exercise.

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.



Sparkle

Sparkle is a female, 2-year-old, 30 lb., spayed Lab-mix. Sparkle has had a tough life prior to PAW rescue but her wonderful personality, hence her name, shines through. She's a sweet dog, a nice size and a lovely mix. Sparkle will do best with a nice family in a cat-free home.

WORKSHOPS

Your Dog's Friend, a non-profit organization that educates and supports dog owners, has set its schedule for this fall. Free workshops will be held at Potomac and Wheaton community centers from Sept. 7 through Nov. 16.

Dog training classes, using positive, rewards-based methods, will be run, for a fee, at the National Lutheran Home in Rockville. These include Puppy Kindergarten, Basic Manners, and Dog Training for Kids. The fee for these classes helps support Your Dog's Friend's other free services. Dog owners can find more information and register for the workshops and dog training classes by going to www.yourdogsfriend.info or calling 301-983-5913.

This fall's workshops will include:

- ❖ Three Lessons That Every Dog Should Know, Sunday, Sept. 7, 2-4 p.m., at the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road.

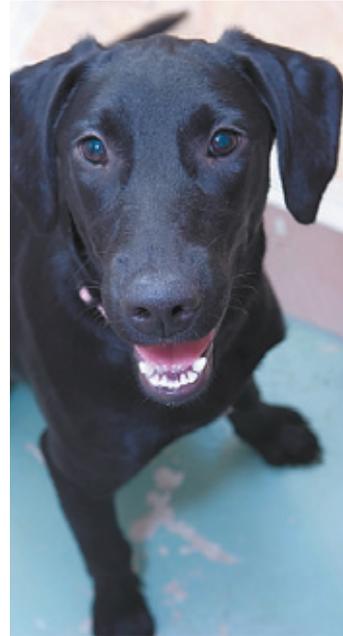
- ❖ Could My Dog Be a Therapy Dog? Sunday, Sept. 21, 3-5 p.m. at the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road.

- ❖ The Emotional Life of Dogs, Saturday, Oct. 4; 2-4 p.m. at the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road.

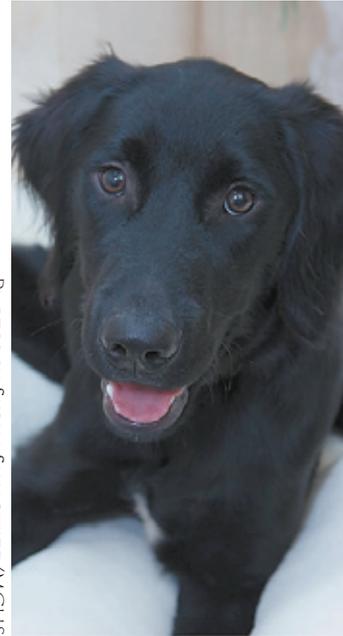
- ❖ What if My Dog Bites Santa?, Saturday, Nov. 15; 2-4 p.m. at the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road.

- ❖ Bring on the Doggy Police (when neighbors just can't seem to get along), Saturday, Oct. 18, 2-4 p.m. at the Wheaton Community Center, 11711 Georgia Ave.

- ❖ How Dogs Can Help Individuals with Autism and other Developmental Disabilities, Saturday, Oct. 25, 2-4 p.m. at the Wheaton Community Center, 11711 Georgia Ave.



Annie



Zachary

PHOTOS BY SUSAN SHALOWITZ/MCHS

Annie and Zachary are 6 month-old Black Lab mix puppies. They are very energetic and active puppies who love to play and run. They would do best in a home with another dog and adults or older children. They are both altered, current on shots, and microchipped. Annie and Zachary are currently up for adoption through the Montgomery County Humane Society. If interested in meeting them, contact their foster mom Meg at luthemdogs@yahoo.com or call 240-483-2846.

Both of these pets are currently residing at the Montgomery County Humane Society county shelter at 14645 Rothgeb Drive, Rockville. Call 301-279-9677 or e-mail mchs@mchumane.org.

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OPINION

Get Involved in Council Decision-making

BY ROGER BERLINER
COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 1

Arguably the Council's most important responsibility is to fund County programs and services while maintaining a balanced budget. In good years, when revenues are ample, as they were in 2006-2007, that is not a particularly difficult task. In a rising tide, floated by revenues from a strong economy, we could fund the programs and services our community has come to expect in Montgomery County and keep our commitment to you not to exceed the "Charter Limit" on property taxes (for those of you who do not follow the County's budget process closely, the Charter Limit was passed by the citizens to essentially limit increases in property taxes to the rate of inflation, unless a supermajority of the Council, seven members, votes to override it).

In bad economic years, like this one, when the national economy is tottering on the edge and revenues from development and real estate transactions have fallen off the chart, it is a horse of a different color. We entered the last stage of the budget process staring at a \$300 million projected deficit, the largest projected deficit in the County's history. The options at that stage are not good ones.

The County Executive proposed to the Council that we achieve a balance by increasing property taxes by \$138 million over the Charter Limit, increasing the property tax rate, and reducing the rate of growth in government spending. I, for one, found that particular combination to be unacceptable. I felt that it put too much of the burden on our taxpayers, and did not achieve enough savings. For that reason, I initially voted against the budget, a vote that forced the Council to consider other options.

COUNCIL UPDATE

Most importantly, I felt that it was essential that our employees, generally slated to earn 8 percent more this year than last year, and whose compensation represents approximately 80 percent of the County's budget, should be part of the solution. I felt that it was not right to ask our taxpayers to pay this much over the Charter Limit without a sense of "shared sacrifice." I was not seeking to "balance the budget on the backs of our workers," but I was hoping that there would be a meaningful recognition that in an economy in which our taxpayers are really struggling, some modest voluntary concession on their part, particularly given the size of the increase they were otherwise entitled to, would demonstrate that we must all be in this together.

A number of our county employee unions — the police, firefighters, and government employees — indicated their willingness to engage in a constructive dialogue to explore such a result, and I was gratified by that response. However, the Board of Education President testified publicly that the school system would fully fund their contracts regardless of what the County Council did and claimed the legal right to do so. This same message was conveyed privately in no uncertain terms. In the absence of a comprehensive understanding with all County employees, there could not be a deal at all.

Given that we needed seven votes to pass this budget (since it would exceed the charter limit), it became clear that this was as good an outcome as I was going to be able to accomplish. It did not please me, and I stated publicly that this was "not a budget to celebrate."

The bottom line is that we passed a budget that had greater savings than the County Executive proposed, lower property taxes than he proposed, and held the line on the prop-

erty tax rate, which limited the increases on commercial properties and many District 1 residences. While directionally better, I take no pleasure in sharing this result.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT REFORM

As you may know, I have been working for more than a year to find a better balance between individual property rights and neighborhood compatibility when it comes to infill development issues. The goal is to achieve a more graceful transformation of our older communities, one that still allows for a natural economic evolution, but an evolution that honors the character of the community.

I am cautiously optimistic that we will achieve this goal by the fall of this year.

I am continuing to work to improve the legislation based on the public comments that were provided. For example, the current version of the legislation requires homes to be smaller even if they sit on lots that are a half acre or larger. In my view, homes on half an acre do not raise the concerns common to "McMansions" on small lots, and therefore should not be included within the scope of the legislation.

If you have views on this legislation, either pro or con, you should feel free to share them with the full Council by sending an e-mail to county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov, which will then be distributed to all members on the Council.

"THE GREENING OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY"

I am very pleased to report that the Council met the goal I set in my last newsletter by passing all seven of my global warming bills on April 22 – Earth Day. It was a very nice Earth Day celebration indeed! Thank you to all the

SEE GET INVOLVED, PAGE 15



American Legion Bridge, Monday, Aug. 11, 11:45 a.m.

Snapshot

Traffic on the American Legion Bridge heading into Virginia from Potomac could be heavy and slow at times over the next five years as the Commonwealth of Virginia moves forward with a Beltway widening project. Construction started this month and will add two "high occupancy toll" (HOT) lanes in each direction from Georgetown Pike to the Springfield Mixing Bowl. When complete, the separate lanes will be free for vehicles with three or more occupants, and will be open to vehicles with a one or two occupants for a fee. The toll will vary based on the amount of congestion, with the designers promising to keep the HOT Lanes moving at least 45 miles per hour.

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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CIVIC CALENDAR

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SATURDAY/AUG. 16

The Healing Power Of Grief

workshop led by Montgomery Hospice staff. 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Robert A. Pumphrey Funeral Homes, inc., 300 W. Montgomery Ave, Rockville. Free. To register for this workshop call Pumphrey Funeral Homes at 301-652-2200.

Back-to-School Fair. For the first time ever, Montgomery County Public

Schools will kick off the school year with a Back-to-School Fair at the school system's central office location in Rockville. The event for Montgomery County Public Schools families will run from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., on the grounds of Carver Educational Services Center, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville. Call 301-279-3100.

TUESDAY/AUG. 19

Book-A-Librarian. Drop into the Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, any Tuesday morning between 10 and 11 a.m. for individualized help with aspects of the library. Call 240-777-0970.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 20

S.O.S. Sounds of Souljahs will be a benefit concert for United Nations Refugee Agency at the Cabin John Picnic Area, 7701 Tuckerman Lane, Potomac. The event will raise money for UNHCR and to give local bands a venue.

THURSDAY/AUG. 21

Montgomery County Green Democrats will meet from 7:30-9 p.m. at Azteca Restaurant, 15855 Redland Road, Rockville. The speaker will be Delegate Jeff Waldstreicher, Dist. 18, Maryland Assembly. Contact greendemocrats@gmail.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@connectionnewsletters.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 703-917-6451.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 13

Focus Music. Big Wide Grin will perform at O'Brien's BBQ, 387 East Gude Drive Rockville, 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15/general and \$12/members. Visit www.focusmusic.org.

Potluck Supper. Join The Wellness Community - Greater Washington, D.C. for a celebration of summer for people with cancer and their loved ones, 5:30 - 8 p.m. Enjoy a potluck supper, music and companionship. Attendees are encouraged to bring salad, side dish or dessert. Location: The Wellness Community - Greater Washington, DC, 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda. For reservations call 301-493-5002 or twcd@thewellnesscommunity.org.

Fiction Book Group. Discuss fiction books with other readers at Barnes and Noble, 4801 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda, 7:30 p.m. Call 301-986-1761.

Shadow Puppets. Puppeteer David Barash brings international folk tales to life as he demonstrates the ancient art of shadow puppetry at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, 7 p.m. Call 240-777-0690.

Concert. Taylor Carson (Alternative/Pop) will perform at Bethesda Lane from 6-8 p.m. Located where Bethesda Avenue, Woodmont Avenue and Elm Street meet in Bethesda. Visit www.bethesda.com.

THURSDAY/AUG. 14

Summer Reading Club Grand Finale at the Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, 1 p.m. Daniel Barash Shadow Puppets will share an Insect-themed show and the Friends of the Library will provide ice cream for an ice cream social. Call 240-777-0970.

FRIDAY/AUG. 15

Six String Sing-a-Long. A musical performance and sing-a-long of children's favorites with Ellis Woodward at the Cabin John Mall Atrium, 11325 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, 9:30 a.m.

Contra Dance. Contra dance is a type of folk dance for all ages. All dances feature top quality live music. Contra dances are held every Friday night at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, with a lesson at 7:30 p.m. and the dance from 8:30 - 11:30 p.m. Beginners are always welcome. Admission: \$9. Contact Email: info@fridaynightdance.org.

Swingin' the Blues. The Glen Echo Park Partnership presents another Friday night Swingin' the Blues for a soothing end-of-the-work-week dance in the Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd.,



Big Wide Grin will perform for Focus Music, Aug. 13.

Glen Echo. This night offers dancers a choice of two different lessons: West Coast Swing or a Slow Blues lesson, with Mike and Donna from 8 - 9 p.m. The lesson is followed by music from BG & the Mojo Hands. Lesson from 8 to 9 p.m., dance from 9 p.m. to midnight. The \$13 admission includes the lesson. No partner required. Contact Email: dbarker@glenechopark.org.

Moths. Come discover why moths constitute about 90 percent of all the Lepidoptera on the planet from 7:30-11 p.m. Join Dr. David Adamski in reviewing the most common moth families found in the Capitol Region. After sunset, he'll help participants identify the moths that are attracted to his blacklight set-up on the Woodend grounds. Audubon members: \$19; Nonmembers \$26.50. Visit www.audubonnaturalist.org.

SATURDAY/AUG. 16

Back to School Fair. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) will kick off the 2008-2009 school year with a Back-to-School Fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., on the grounds of the Carver Educational Services Center, 850 Hungerford Drive in Rockville. The fair will feature information and resources for parents to activities and entertainment for children. Families are invited to enjoy food from different countries, live music, storytelling, a moon bounce, and more. Contact DFCP at 301-279-3100.

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

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

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

begin at the visitor's desk in the Arcade Building. Visit www.nps.gov/glec.

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.

Swing Dance. Gottaswing.com presents a swing dance with SingCo Rhythm Orchestra in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Eco Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Beginner swing lesson with Tom & Debra, 8 to 9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. Admission: \$15. Contact Web site: www.gottaswing.com.

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

Canoe and Camping Trip. Come enjoy the great outdoors with a canoe trip lead by Byron Bradley on Saturday afternoon that will start at Carderock Picnic Area and end on Minnie's Island for a night of camping under the stars and waking up on Sunday morning at the River Center at Lockhouse 8. Starts at 4 p.m. RSVP at www.potomac.org.

SUNDAY/AUG. 17

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

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Waltz Dance. Waltz Time presents a beginning waltz lesson from 3 to 3:30 p.m., followed by an afternoon of waltzes and other couples dances in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Dancing from 3:30 to 6 p.m. to the music of Cabaret Sauvignon. As always, no partner is required for this dance in the Spanish Ballroom, and the cost is \$8, including lesson. Contact Email: info@waltzimedances.org.

Blues Dance. The Glen Echo Park Partnership presents a Blues Dance with ACME Blues Company in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. For dancers who want to learn more about slow blues dancing, Mike Marcotte and Donna Barker offer a blues lesson from 7 to 8:30 p.m. No partner required. Doors open for "dance only" at 8:15 p.m. Admission: \$12 dance only/\$17 lesson & dance. Contact Email: dbarker@glenechopark.org.

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 at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo in the Bumper Car Pavilion. All dances are taught, and no partner is necessary. The newcomers' welcome lesson is at 7 p.m., followed by called dances with caller David Millstone calls to Anna Patton & Friends from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Admission: \$12 nonmembers/\$9 FSGW members. Web site: www.fsgw.org.

Storytime. Kat Tales featuring Kat

presents afternoon concerts at Bethesda Gateway Building, 7201 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, 12-2 p.m. Free. Call 301-352-5387.

Concert. Meritxell Project (Jazz) will perform at Bethesda Lane from 6-8 p.m. Located where Bethesda Avenue, Woodmont Avenue and Elm Street meet in Bethesda. Visit www.bethesda.com.

FRIDAY/AUG. 22

Contra Dance. Contra dance is a type of folk dance for all ages. All dances feature top quality live music. Contra dances are held every Friday night at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, with a lesson at 7:30 p.m. and the dance from 8:30 - 11:30 p.m. Beginners are always welcome. Admission: \$9. Contact Email: info@fridaynightdance.org.

Cajun/Zydeco Dance. Dancing by the Bayou presents a Cajun/Zydeco dance with live music in the Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Admission includes an introductory dance lesson with Michael and Sharon at 8 p.m. followed by dancing until midnight to music by the Pine Leaf Boys. Admission: \$18. Contact Website: www.dancingbythebayou.com.

SATURDAY/AUG. 23

English Conversation Club. Join in practicing and improving spoken English with the help of volunteers leading discussions at 3 p.m. at 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac. 2 hours. Call 240-777-0690.

Storytime. Kat Tales featuring Kat

THEATER

"Little Red Riding Hood & The Three Little Pigs" will be presented by The Puppet Co., Glen Echo Park, Playhouse, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo through **Aug. 31.** Show times are Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.; Saturday-Sunday, 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Ages 3-15. Cost is \$8. Call 301-320-6668.

The Puppet Co. presents **"Tiny Tot Tussays,"** a program designed for our youngest theater patrons (ages 0 - 4). The shows are shorter, the lights stay on, the doors stay open and the show is set up on the floor. Performances on two Tuesdays each month (except December and January, which have just one) at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. \$5 for children (including babies) and adults. Reservations are

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

Elementary school students in grades 4, 5 and 6 can now enjoy an educational and entertaining 45-minute play called **"Clara Barton, the Courage Within"** at Adventure Theatre at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Glen Echo. After the play, students visit nearby Clara Barton National Historic Site where Miss Barton lived and conducted the American Red Cross for 15 years. Tuesdays at 10 a.m. during the school year for school groups and other large groups of age-appropriate children. Tickets are \$8. Minimum 50-person audience. No charge for visiting the historic home. Contact Adventure Theatre at 301-320-5331.

participate, parents or guardians should contact DEP at 240-777-7700 or email askdep@montgomerycountymd.gov with the name of the participant, the parent or guardian's name, address and home phone number.

SUNDAY/AUG. 24

Geology of the C&O Canal. Callan Bentley will use rock evidence to deduce geologic history of the region at River Center at Lockhouse 8, C&O Canal National Historical Park, Cabin John, 10-11 a.m. See www.potomac.org.

Contra and Square Dance. The Folklore Society of Greater Washington presents traditional American dancing with a focus on New England style contra dances in the Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. All dances are 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. Orrin Star calls to the Love Mongrels. Admission: \$12 nonmembers/\$9 FSGW members.

Family Fun Day Carnival. 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Congregation B'nai Tzedek, 10621 South Glen Road, Potomac. Family, friends and prospective members are invited to help kick off their 20th anniversary. Lots of adult and child friendly activities, inflatables, games and great food. Admission free; charge for food only. Call 301-299-0225.

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.

2008 Solar Car Derby. For children ages eight through 14, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center located at 3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring. At the derby, children will assemble and keep a working, solar-powered model car and race their cars, weather permitting. Students will also learn about clean energy. To

visit www.discoverycreek.org.

MONDAY/AUG. 25
Storytime. Monday morning storytime at Barnes and Noble Booksellers, 4801 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda, 11 a.m. Call 301-986-1761.

TUESDAY/AUG. 26
Open House. FAES Graduate School open house for fall 2008, FAES, 9101 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, 4-7 p.m. Free. Call 301-496-7976.

Book-A-Librarian. Drop into the Bethesda Library any Tuesday morning between 10 and 11 a.m. for individualized help at the Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda. Call 240-777-0970.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 27

Focus Music. Enjoy music at O'Brien's BBQ, 387 East Gude Drive, Rockville, 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 general, \$12 members. Visit www.focusmusic.org.

Concert. Ewabo (Steel Drums) will perform at Bethesda Lane from 6-8 p.m. Located where Bethesda Avenue, Woodmont Avenue and Elm Street meet in Bethesda. Visit www.bethesda.com.

Concert. Willow Garden Theater presents afternoon concerts at Bethesda Gateway Building, 7201 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, 12-2 p.m. Free. Call 301-352-5387.

FRIDAY/AUG. 29
Contra and Square Dance. The Friday Night Dancers presents Contra dancing as well as some square dances and waltzes in the Bumper Car Pavilion 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 evening features the band Some Assembly. Admission: \$9. Contact Email: fdncontra@yahoo.com.

SUNDAY/AUG. 24
Geology of the C&O Canal. Callan Bentley will use rock evidence to deduce geologic history of the region at River Center at Lockhouse 8, C&O Canal National Historical Park, Cabin John, 10-11 a.m. See www.potomac.org.

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The Dennis and Phillip Ratner Museum, 10001 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda will present "Creative Expressions" from **Sept. 3-28.** A meet the artists recep-

tion will be from 10 a.m. -4:30 p.m., **Sept. 7.** Museum hours are 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Sundays and 12-4 p.m. Mondays - Thursdays. Call 301-897-1518.

The Popcorn Gallery at Glen Echo Park presents an exhibition of artwork by students of all ages, created in classes at Glen Echo Park, **through Sept. 1.** Includes painting, drawing, photography, ceramics, glass, sculpture, jewelry and more. Saturdays and Sundays from 12-6 p.m.

Ongoing
The Metropolitan Center for the Visual Arts (VisArts at Rockville), 155 Gibbs St., Rockville, presents **"From Farm to Market," through Aug. 17.** This exhibit explores the impact food has on people's lives, revealing ways in which it influences relationships in how it is produced and how it is portrayed through a variety of art mediums. This summertime exhibition features work by local area artists who look to food as their sources and inspirations for their work. Visit www.VisArtsCenter.org.

Osuna Art, 7200 Wisconsin Ave., Artery Plaza Lobby, Bethesda, will present "James Hilleary, Painting from the '60s" and pieces from the Washington Color School through **Aug. 20.** Gallery hours are Wednesday to Saturday, 12-5 p.m. Call 301-654-4500 or visit www.osunaart.com.

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, **through 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.

"Sumi-E Society of America," East Asian brush paintings and calligraphy will be on display from **through Aug. 23** at the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike. Gallery hours are Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Free. Call 301-581-5200.

The Art Glass Center at Glen Echo exhibits continually in the Art Glass Center Gallery. These exhibits feature the work of resident artists Diane Cab, Christine Hekimian, Bev and Zayde Slep, and Bobbi Vischi. Sculpture, vessels, functional art, and jewelry are also for sale. All exhibited work is made at the Art Glass Center Studio. The Art Glass Center also produces other exhibits featuring resident artists, faculty, students and invited artists. The gallery and studio are open to the public on the weekends and by appointment. Contact Bobbi Vischi at BBVischi@comcast.net.

Glen Echo Pottery. Glen Echo Pottery maintains ongoing exhibits in the Glen Echo Pottery Gallery in Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. These feature a special selection of work by resident artists, instructors and students. Every Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Call 301-229-5585 or visit www.glenechopottery.com.

Yellow Barn Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, Free exhibits of emerging artist work and art sales. Each weekend features the work of a different artist. Every Saturday and Sunday from 12 - 5 p.m. Call 301-371-5593 or visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com.

The Dennis and Phillip Ratner Museum, 10001 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda will present "Creative Expressions" from **Sept. 3-28.** A meet the artists recep-

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LET'S TALK Real Estate



by **Michael Matese**

STORAGE STRATEGY

Most buyers put storage space high on their list of priorities for a new home. No matter how much storage space a home offers, most people want more.

Sellers often face the minor indignity of having prospective buyers open all of their closets to determine the capacity of each one. Even an enormous closet looks small if it is cluttered. Straightening and organizing your closets will help sell your home. Also, if you get rid of your excess belongings ahead of time, your move will be less stressful when the time comes!

Have a yard sale or rent a storage unit temporarily or donate extra stuff to a charitable thrift organization. Uncle Sam currently gives you up to \$5,000 in itemized deductions if you donate household items to such non-profit organizations. When all of your closets are in order, move on to the attic, basement, pantry, and wine cellar. Your storage areas will look much more spacious and attractive if they are neat and well organized.

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PEOPLE

Mimi Williams Finds Her Voice

Potomac woman follows her dream to share music with her community.

BY DANIEL LIN
THE ALMANAC

There's a little pocket in Potomac, nestled in a bend of lush green, where thick trees drown the noise of nearby River Road, where a woman, a wife, a mother of 2, has begun to see a childhood dream come into bloom, now, in adulthood, here in Maryland. Recently, on July 13, a Sunday afternoon, for family and friends gathered at her home, she performed her first pubic recital as a debut soprano soloist. She admits to nerves — “Soon as I heard my introduction, as I was walking in, oh boy, I felt very nervous!” — but she swallowed her butterflies and delivered what her son Julien calls “perfection.”



Mimi Williams

Mimi Williams is no stranger to the performing life. She's felt the tremble of the arena, rocked by the roar of the crowd, the nervous excitement that rushes through both spectators and participants. Her husband played on basketball's largest stage.

Buck Williams starred in the NBA for seventeen seasons, playing for the New Jersey Nets, the Portland Trailblazers, and finally the New York Knicks. At each stop the sounds of the basketball court reigned, but beneath the court's loud clamor, a little voice sang. She loved the traveling, the seeing new places and faces, all the fresh cultures in which to dip and learn, but she knew “all along, through it all” that she wanted to sing.

BORN IN PHILADELPHIA, raised in Washington, D.C., Williams sang in church choirs all through childhood. Under the guidance of Grammy Award winning gos-



Mimi Williams and, from left, son Malek, husband Buck, and son Julien, taken on a recent family vacation this summer.

pel singer Richard Smallwood, Williams nursed her love in college,

as a member of the University of Maryland's University Choir.

Then, the dream lay prone for a while. “It just wasn't the right time,” Williams recalls. There was family, first the globetrotting with her husband, then the neighborhood navigating, not just the grocery shopping at Potomac Village but the frequent back and forth, from nearby basketball courts to those in D.C. or Virginia or further; wherever her sons' games led, she followed.

This past season Julien performed well as a freshman at Emory University and Malek as a freshman at Gonzaga High School. As she watched her sons chase their dreams, her own began its nibbling once more, at the tails of her imagination.

At the suggestions of her mother, Williams enrolled in Washington, D.C.'s Levine School of Music. As her sons hit the gym, honing their jumpshots and perfecting their

footwork, Williams made her trips to the sound booth, warming up her chords, tuning her power and range.

The sessions were exhausting — “It's a workout!” — but exhilarating. Her persistence and dedication impressed her husband. “Most people have dreams but they might not have the patience to work towards them. She puts in the time and the heart. It's beautiful,” said Buck Williams.

It's not for money. It's not for fame. “It's just something I enjoy, something that I've always loved. If I can help others as I'm doing it, make someone's day easier through my singing, then that just makes everything worth the while.”

She's planning on holding more recitals, thinking about how to more involve her community. “I would love to tie it to a charity, make it an annual event, maybe, with local singers and everything, to bring in money and awareness to causes that deserve attention.”

SHE'S SINGING ALONE NOW, without the comforting crutch of company, but her family's providing plenty of support. She moved to Potomac primarily because “our

“Julien, Malek, my husband, they believe in what I do. I think that for me is what makes this so very special.”

— Mimi Williams

families were close. This was a great place for us to settle in and be closer to our family.” So from a literal stance, they were already close, but this experience has certainly brought the family closer, from a figurative glance.

“I've played in every sport you can think of,” says Julien. “I've played in state, out of state, in the morning, at night, every time and place imaginable. And she's always been there. She's up in the stands, in the bleachers, on the sideline, always there, always supporting me. With this, I have the opportunity now to show her some of the support she's always given me.”

Julien's played in over 500 games, at cramped community centers and sprawling college gymnasiums, for crowds large and small, raucous and quiet. He has had his name called over the loudspeakers so many times “It doesn't really faze me anymore.”

But on July 13, when he heard his mother's name announced, he got shivers. Mom, as always, took note. “He was sweating! I kept saying, gosh, what's wrong with him. He was very nervous.” But it touched her. “He really wanted me to do well. Julien, Malek, my husband, they believe in what I do. I think that for me is what makes this so very special.”

She sings opera and classical, often in Italian, music whose style and language translates foreign to her sons, children of generation hip hop, but a woman chasing her dreams — that needs no interpretation. So they cheer on.

“Sometimes we take baby steps in life,” said Williams. “We don't want to step all the way out there.” Now Williams has taken the leap and, whether she falls or flies, her family's there to catch her.

WILLIAMS WILL PERFORM next for the Levine School in Washington, D.C. and at Bethesda's Strathmore Hall. She is currently taking Music Theory at the Levine School and plans to take Italian Language in the near future so that she can “make sure I give my presentations the integrity they need.” Recording and further touring might become realities down the road but for now she is focused on starting a local annual fund raiser where she and other performers will sing for the benefit of various charities.

Fourth Presbyterian Prepares to Break Ground

FROM PAGE 3

ing their neighbors in the process more and have held a series of community meetings over the summer to address concerns ranging from the noise of construction to the added traffic the school's increased enrollment could produce.

Deborah Bradford, who owns a home adjoining the school's property, said that that while she still isn't excited about the

construction process she has softened her stance.

“Quite honestly I don't think there's a whole lot you can do about construction and demolishing,” Bradford said. “I think the fact that they started dialogue with the neighbors and they continue to have meetings... I think its clear to me that they have the neighbors' interests at heart.”

— AARON STERN

Silt fencing and signs marking stands of protected forest areas have gone up around the Fourth Presbyterian School's property in preparation for construction on a new facility that could begin the first week of September.



PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

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.

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.

Jewish Social Service Agency offers **"Educational Consultation and**

Support" for parents of children who have been identified with a learning, attention, or other disability that impacts academic performance. This program helps parents identify and implement the services a child needs to achieve academic success. Available to families in Montgomery County. Adjustable fees based on family income. Other services to children with learning, attention or other disabilities include social skills therapy groups, workshops on parenting challenging children, individual and family counseling, and support groups. JSSA is located at 6123 Montrose Road, Rockville. Call 301-816-2633 or 703-204-9100 for more.

CLASSES

To have an item 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 encouraged. If you have any questions, call Matthew Razak at 703-917-6457.

Pottery Classes for Teens. A basic introduction to the potter's wheel. These classes allow students to throw at their own skill level. Classes meet for six weeks from 4 - 6 p.m. on Tuesdays (**Sept. 2 - Oct 7**) or Thursdays (**Sept. 4 - Oct. 9**). Tuition (\$108) includes tools and supplies. For students attending middle and high school (age range: 11 - 16). At Glen Echo Pottery, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Call 301-229-5585 or visit www.glenechopottery.com.

Joy of Dance Class. Fall semester begins new dance classes at Joy of Motion Dance Center, 7315 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 180 E, Bethesda. Call for more information 301-986-0016.

Children's Movement Classes. Creative Movement fall session starts at Kids Moving Company, 7475 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda. Classes held on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Times vary by ages. 9 months-9 years. \$25/class or \$375/session. 301-656-1543.

Dance Music. There is dancing every week from 3:30-6 p.m. at Glen Echo Spanish Ballroom, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Blend together swing, waltz, tango, foxtrot and others for \$8/person. Free dance lesson at 3 p.m. 703-425-7926.

PEP Parenting Classes. Parenting classes for parents of children from birth through age 18. Learn vital skills that will bring out the best in children and par-

ents. Classes are offered both during daytime and evening throughout the area. Call 301-929-8824 or visit www.parentencouragement.org.

The Montgomery County Commission for Women Counseling & Career Center, 401 N. Washington St., Suite 100, Rockville, provides personal, career, and couples counseling for women. Counseling sessions are available in 50-minute sessions for \$40. Call 240-777-8300.

City Dance Center, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, is now enrolling all ages and abilities for classes. Call 301-581-5204 or visit www.citydance.net.

Master Greg Maye, owner, director and head instructor of the Jhoon Rhee Institute in Potomac Village, 11815 Seven Locks Road, is a 6th-degree black belt and certified master instructor by Grandmaster Jhoon Rhee. He is the senior instructor for the Jhoon Rhee Institute of Tae Kwon Do's Washington, D.C.-metropolitan area, with 10 studios locally. He offers private lessons, personal training and seminars. Visit www.jhoonrheeinstitute.com/contact_us.html for more.

The Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, in conjunction with the African Immigrant and Refugee Foundation, has added a series of **daytime ESOL** (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes for adults. The classes will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m., and will run for 20 consecutive weeks. The center is located at 3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring. Child care will be provided at no charge. The classes are free, but a \$10 refundable deposit and \$16 book fee are required.

Registration and placement testing will take place on the first day of class. To sign up for a class or for more information, call 240-777-8400.

The Youth Programs division of **Montgomery College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education** offers both full and half-day courses. The summer programs allow youth to explore new areas of interest or receive in-depth instruction in their favorite subjects. Courses are taught at each of the College's three campuses - Germantown, Rockville and Takoma Park/Silver Spring. A complete listing of offerings can be found online at <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/youth>.

Art classes for toddlers, karate, dance and magic-trick lessons for children, fencing lessons for teens and yoga for adults are a few of the courses offered by the Montgomery County Recreation Department at Potomac Community Center. Elsewhere in the county, the Rec Department offers courses from skateboarding to yoga to cooking to youth art. Pick up the Montgomery County Recreation Department Guide a Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac, call 240-777-6840 or visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov, then click "Departments," then "Recreation," then "RECORD" for course information.

Dance Class. Learn ballet, jazz, hip-hop, yoga and more in a variety of classes held daily from 10 a.m.-7:30 p.m. at Dansez! Dansez!, 4920 St. Elmo Ave., Bethesda. All ages. Call for prices and times. 301-652-2551.

Yoga Classes. Sample Iyengar method of Hatha Yoga, Unity Woods Yoga Center, 4853 Cordell Ave., Suite PH#7, Bethesda. Free. Call for schedule. 301-656-8992.

basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. He is the son of Wellmon and Ranjana Ross of Tuckerman Lane, Potomac. Ross is a 2007 graduate of Walt Whitman High School, Bethesda.

Benjamin D. Barlow has graduated from the Uniformed Services University, F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine in Bethesda, Md. The graduate was promoted to the rank of captain commissioned to serve in the Medical Corps of the Air Force. He is the son of Douglas N. and Diana K. Barlow of Windling Oaks Drive, Colorado Springs, Colo. His wife, Stephanie, is the daughter of Steve and Maria Luginbill of Wall St., Rockville. The captain graduated in the year 2000 from Air Academy High School, Colorado Springs, and received a bachelor's degree in 2004 from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Awards Seminar at Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Va. The cadet received the George C. Marshall ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) Award at the seminar. The award is presented annually to the most outstanding senior Army ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) cadets in military science studies and leadership values in each battalion at host universities or colleges.

Upon graduation from the host college or university and completion of the ROTC program, the cadet will receive a bachelor's degree and a commission of second lieutenant in the Army. The senior cadet is a student at Wheaton College, Ill. He is the son of Phillip C. and Victoria M. Ellsworth of Garden Court, Potomac. Ellsworth is a 2004 graduate of St. Andrews Episcopal School, Potomac.

Air Force Reserve Airman Moses A. Ross has graduated from

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SPORTS

Changing of the Guard at Bullis

Prominent Virginia tennis program coming to Bullis.

BY JAMES GISCHE
THE ALMANAC

On Sept. 15, the 4 Star Tennis Academy's new location at the Bullis School in Potomac will open. The program's founder and executive director, Bob Pass, is a familiar face at Bullis, having coached the girls' varsity team since 2001.

4 Star, based at the Four Seasons Tennis Club in Merrifield, Va. for 35 years, will run clinics and summer camps at Bullis for players of all skill levels. These programs will be similar to those from the departing Jack Schore Tennis Training Center at Bullis. However, "I predict the total number of students involved will be smaller," said Pass. The size reduction is due to Pass's plans to have only about 16 students for each tournament-level class and to dedicate more courts to private lessons.

Bullis has long been a tennis powerhouse. Under Schore's direction, the boys' varsity team was consistently one of the best squads in the nation, with nine wins and two losses this spring. The unit went undefeated from 2005 to 2007. Starting in the spring of 2009,

"My philosophy is to teach the kids to be as good as they want to be."

— Bob Pass

the team's coach will be Steve Miguel, a former tennis star at Ohio State University. "I'd love to keep the [team's] tradition" of excellence, said Miguel, who will also be Director of Tennis for 4 Star at Bullis.

The Jack Schore Tennis Training Center groomed numerous tennis stars during its time at Bullis, but Pass is confident his program will uphold this legacy. "I don't feel any pressure," he said. "I've produced hundreds of nationally ranked players." One of Pass's strengths as a coach, according to Miguel, is that he can adapt his style to each student.

AT THE SAME time, though, Pass stresses that he does not give any special treatment to his most accomplished players. "We're trying to do a good job for everybody, not just the one or two superstars," he said. "My philosophy is to teach the kids to be as good as they want to be." In the book "Coaching Tennis," Chuck Kriese quotes Pass: "I think the biggest thing is caring about the person, and not just what the player is accomplishing, caring for them and not just for yourself as the coach."

Pass says he strives to create a "family atmosphere" and ensure that his students enjoy tennis. Darien Sears, who has trained with Pass since the beginning of the summer and will start her first year at Bullis as a junior this fall, described Pass as "very calm" but persistent. She also praised the way 4 Star operates: "We have



PHOTO BY JAMES GISCHE/THE ALMANAC

Sign of the times: this sign along Bullis's main entrance informs students and parents about the arrival of the 4 Star Tennis Academy.

a lot of fun on the court," she said.

Much of Pass's confidence in 4 Star's expansion to Bullis comes from his colleagues. "I'm bringing in a high-quality staff," he noted. Besides Miguel, Pass is bringing in Raul Iriate, the former captain of Bolivia's Davis Cup team, as the director of 4 Star's Young Tournament Players Program. University of Maryland product Masha Senic will also work for Pass at Bullis. Pass added that he is looking to add one more trainer to his staff.

Schore recognized the importance of his

assistants to the success of the program he operated at Bullis: "The fact that we have been able to serve over 40,000 families in the Montgomery County area is a testament to the hard work and excellence that my staff has always attempted to achieve."

During their respective teams' seasons, Pass and Miguel plan to be at Bullis full-time. As for the rest of the year, they will split their time between Bullis and 4 Star's Virginia location. "We're really looking forward to helping the kids at Bullis," said Miguel.

Scotland Celebrates a Day of Community

FROM PAGE 3

of admissions Cathy Kwolek readied brochures and pamphlets.

She called the event a "great opportunity for us to meet students firsthand and for them to have a face to connect with." This was her first time attending Scotland Community Day but she sees great potential in such celebrations, not just for families to reconnect, but also for the people in neighborhoods to forge fresh connections with nearby institutions.

"The more [members of] the community interact with each other, the better off everyone is," she said.

FRESHLY MINTED Director of Scotland Community Center Kimberly Bryant was busy Saturday making sure everything ran smoothly. She is dedicated to "getting new programs, getting the community more of a voice." She said, "My goal is to be able to collaborate with community services, such as [Montgomery County Public Schools], the Literary Council, and the Department of Social Services, and various private ser-

vices, like SCORE tutoring, and bringing those services right here."

For now, she points to the people and the events, the face painting, the game booths, all the food and refreshments. "[Community Day] really bonds the community together. Everybody has work Monday through Friday, and this is the culminating event."

More arrive as the day went on. The soldier shakes a young man's hand. Kwolek begins her pitch to prospective students. In the moon bounce, children leap and bound, and laughing and cheering. Mothers carry babies, wrapped in their arms, to pet the horse. People generally stayed away from the clown.

"It's intergenerational," said Bryant, "and it's beautiful, just watching young and old able to work together for a common cause. Everybody accepts one another. There's great cultural diversity in this neighborhood. Everything and everyone just meshes together."

Cooper leaned in her chair and nodded. "Each year it's getting better and better," she said.



The moon bounce is a great hit. The clown seems to have an aching back.

REAL ESTATE

Seller Be Smart

Reality and presentation are key to selling homes in today's real estate market.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

Forget what your neighbors sold their house for in 2005 or 2006 and, for that matter, forget what your neighbors might have sold for just last year. Think more along the lines of last month and no earlier than last winter.

Assessing the current reality of the real estate market is the key to buying and selling a home in Potomac these days, and that's not necessarily a bad thing, according to several local real estate professionals.

"We were sitting down with people in '03, '04 telling them this is how much your place is worth and they were high-fiving. ... That's not the market anymore," said Michael Matese, a Realtor with Washington Fine Properties.

Yes, the housing market has cooled off and yes, the days of getting astronomical returns on a home in just a few years are gone, but unlike the housing slump of the mid-1990s there are buyers to be had if a house is priced realistically and presented well, he said.

"In this market people are out there, [but] they have to feel like they're getting a good deal and a nice house," Matese said. "There are prospective buyers."

ACCORDING TO FIGURES from Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, average and median sale prices of homes in Potomac in July were down slightly from a year before. The average sales price in Potomac last month was \$1,154,484 compared to \$1,217,394 last July and \$1,139,823 the year before; last month's median price was \$890,126 compared to \$947,500 in July of 2007 and \$1,025,000 the year before. But the number of days the average home spent on the market also decreased slightly from a year before – 76 days in July 2008 versus 80 in July of 2007. Those numbers don't compare to the same time in 2005 where the average home spent just 30 days on the market, but that was also a time when the final sales price averaged more than 98 percent of the list price. Last month that figure was at just over 93 percent.

"We have a lot of sellers still quoting prices from '05, '06 and we have tell them 'No, that doesn't work,'" said Anne Killeen, who is also a Realtor with Washington Fine Properties.

MAKING A HOUSE look good is key to getting it sold.

"Presentation is very important, its not like the old days when it can look anyway you want," Matese said. "The people [with homes for sale] who are sitting out there are the people who are unrealistically priced. They have no chance of selling. That's really the difference in this market."

Sellers who took that approach likely could count themselves among the 52 units that sold last month



PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

A for sale sign along MacArthur Boulevard. Potomac realtors say that presentation and reasonable pricing are the key to appealing to prospective buyers in the current market.

(compared to 64 that sold in July of 2007 and 61 in July of 2005). As of August 7 there were 87 new listings in Potomac, 24 of which were under contract and an additional 10 marked contingent contract.

The real estate market traditionally slows down in August as most prospective buyers are focusing on one last summer vacation before looking to move, said Killeen. And the Potomac market may have to deal with a trend that the rest of the country does not.

As people with jobs tied to the federal government await the outcome of November's election the real estate markets near Washington, D.C. tend to cool a bit, said Michael Seay, of W.C. & A.N. Miller. That will likely have a greater effect on places like Northwest, D.C., Chevy Chase and Bethesda, but it could also play a factor in Potomac.

"I can tell you that, this happens every four years, that the market always seems a little bit slower going into an election," Seay said. "It's been like that in the past."

Seay said he expected the market to get back to normal in November and December, and should sellers continue to be smart, and buyers patient, the market is looking up, said Matese.

"It's probably not as bad as everyone thinks it is. There are houses that are still selling but they have to be properly priced and they have to be in real good condition," he said.

"We were sitting down with people in '03, '04 telling them this is how much your place is worth and they were high-fiving. ... That's not the market anymore,"

— Michael Matese, Washington Fine Properties

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9 Darby Ct.	\$2,495,000	Sun 1-4	Jane Fairweather	Coldwell Banker	240-223-4663
9004 Ewing Dr.	\$1,299,000	Sun 1-4	Jane Fairweather	Coldwell Banker	240-223-4663
7304 Helmsdale Rd.	\$2,095,000	Sun 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-8795
6106 Kirby Rd.	\$1,650,000	Sun 1-4	Jane Fairweather	Coldwell Banker	240-223-4663
6009 Manor Oak Way	\$1,150,000	Sun 1-4	Leigh Reed	Long & Foster	240-497-1700
9940 Mayfield Dr.	\$500,000	Sun 1-4	Robert Young	Weichert	301-656-2500
4703 Monaco Cir.	\$1,049,000	Sun 1-4	Jane Fairweather	Coldwell Banker	240-223-4663
5225 Pooks Hill Rd. #404s	\$449,000	Sun 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-8795
8308 Whitman Dr.	\$829,000	Sun 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-8795
Chevy Chase					
4940 Bradley Blvd. #247	\$495,000	Sun 1-4	Steve Gasque	RE/MAX	301-652-0400
6902 Maple Ave.	\$2,199,000	Sun 2-5	Andrea Alderdice	WC & AN Miller	301-229-4000
Potomac					
10716 Barn Wood Lane	\$1,795,000	Sun 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-8795
1405 Fallswood Dr.	\$699,999	Sun 1-4	Judith Casey	Long & Foster	240-497-1700
8002 Postoak Rd.	\$669,900	Sun 1-4	Minka Goldstein	Long & Foster	301-564-4900
9800 Tibron Ct.	\$1,675,000	Sun 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-8795
North Potomac					
456 Clayhall St.	\$599,000	Sun 1-4	Jai Kim	Keller Williams	301-515-1155
15616 Fellowship Way	\$625,000	Sun 2-5	Ying Zhi Zhang	Tian & Tian	301-540-8960
870 Flagler Dr.	\$359,900	Sun 1-5	Diane Leitner	Weichert	301-540-1330

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

703-917-6475 or E-Mail the info to Klourie@connectionnewspapers.com

All listings due by Tues at 10 am.

A Friend, Indeed



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Sometimes it takes visits from old friends to show you that who you thought you were, you actually are. The kinds of friends who were there for you — and with you — at the beginning. The kinds of friends who know where you came from and now, in person, and after years of multiple long distance phone calls, can see where you've gone. The kinds of friends whose opinions you respect, whose loyalty you admire and whose friendship you cherish. It's when these kinds of friends speak that you should listen. And listen I did in late June when my oldest, and best friend from High School (Newton South High School, Class of '76, Newton, Ma.), Cary and his wife, Mindy, flew into Reagan National for a two-day visit, our first face to face since February 2002, (2'02'02) the date of their youngest son, Jordon's, Bar Mitzvah, and the reason for our last trip to Boston/Needham.

Though Cary and I didn't attend any of the same schools before high school, soon after we met in 10th grade, we became instant friends. And over these last 35 years, our friendship has evolved and matured and sustained itself through our respective marriages and no divorces, deaths of family and friends, occasional disease (nothing too serious, though, thank God!), the birth of their three sons, the purchase of our first homes and many other highs and lows and successes and failures too numerous and typical to mention. Through it all, we've always been a phone call away. But due to Cary and Mindy's initiative this year (their "summer tour," as they called it), "a phone call away" was not going to suffice. And so airline reservations and hotel accommodations were made on a mutually convenient weekend for the Sneider's return trip to Washington, D.C., their first since the '90s, while attending what was then, a semi-annual Candy Show (Cary's in the candy business), held that year in the old Convention Center. And though I had been in Boston many times previously to visit (three High School reunions, two Boston Celtic basketball games, three Sneider Bar Mitzvahs), we had never just had a normal-type weekend without some kind of event dominating.

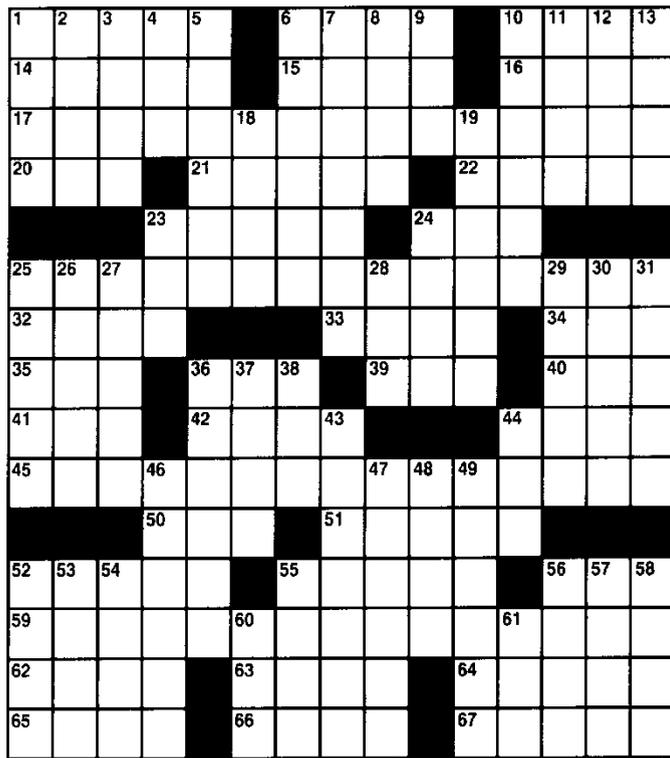
This visit, however, during the second to last weekend in June, was not dominated by anything. It was simply about two old friends, and their wives, hanging out; no agenda, no schedule, no timetable, no nothing — just time together. And believe me, it was time well spent. And though the weekend (Friday afternoon and evening) got off to a bumpy start with Cary experiencing some air travel-related nausea that had him indisposed through dinner, the rest of the weekend saw two friends reconnect, in person, and gave us an opportunity to tell our tales and walk our respective walks and find out if who we think we are is still someone with whom, after all these years and life's experiences, the other would find amusing, agreeable, acceptable and stimulating quite frankly, and we did (in my opinion, anyway; his too, he's just not in print to confirm it). In short, it was like old times, 35 years later, in the blink of an eye, and nothing had changed. Best friends then, best friends now. What a weekend!

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

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

Edited by Will Shortz

No. 0323-5



Puzzle by Nathaniel Weiss

ACROSS

- 1 Ayatollahs' predecessors
- 6 Gunslinger's command
- 10 "Oh, my!"
- 14 Hooded snake
- 15 Othello's false friend
- 16 "I'm — you!"
- 17 Start of a quip
- 20 Summer shirt, informally
- 21 Mallards' homes
- 22 Metric volume
- 23 Place for a 45
- 24 Clinch, as a deal
- 25 Part 2 of the quip
- 32 Son of Venus
- 33 Stiff denial
- 34 Old polit. cause
- 35 Dosage unit
- 36 Caribbean music
- 39 Ovine utterance
- 40 A major, maybe
- 41 Hydrocarbon suffix
- 42 Paris recreation area
- 44 Lucy's partner
- 45 Part 3 of the quip
- 50 Entanglement

- 51 Encumbrances
- 52 One who grins and bears it
- 55 Greek S
- 56 Biol., e.g.
- 59 End of the quip
- 62 Novelist Waugh
- 63 Tallow source
- 64 Words before sight and mind
- 65 Entanglement
- 66 Stumbles
- 67 Query before "Here goes!"

DOWN

- 1 "Out!"
- 2 Balderdash
- 3 Strong of body and mind
- 4 Charlemagne's realm: Abbr.
- 5 Early Greek lyric poet
- 6 1934 quintuplet
- 7 Forcefully stuff, as a throat
- 8 Turkish generals
- 9 Took the trophy
- 10 Chin beard
- 11 — and for all
- 12 Move
- 13 Place for a run
- 18 Warner Bros. creation

- 19 Resort island off Naples
- 23 Word in a price
- 24 Whit
- 25 "The Terminator" woman
- 26 Yemeni's neighbor
- 27 E-mail need
- 28 Play — with (damage)
- 29 Belgian composer Guillaume
- 30 Newspapers, with "the"
- 31 "Don't mince words!"
- 36 Oration
- 37 Henry Kissinger biographer Marvin
- 38 Canine cry
- 43 Thickness
- 44 Radio staff, for short
- 46 On/off —
- 47 Tourist attractions
- 48 Prefix with spherical
- 49 Captivate
- 52 Defraud
- 53 It may be spun
- 54 Half of binary code
- 55 Disparagement
- 56 — good example
- 57 Oaf
- 58 Conjectural
- 60 Ethnic suffix
- 61 "So — me!"

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



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Note: Due to space limitations, the crossword may not appear from time to time. In that case, you may look on our Web site: www.connectionnewspapers.com and click on the "Print Editions" button. It should appear in a newspaper from a different Classifieds zone.

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Filters to Fight Fumes

FROM PAGE 4

progress, then they bog back down," said Burr Gray, the president of the Cabin John Citizens Association.

THAT PATTERN may finally be coming to an end. Lake became chair of the Environmental Quality and Operations Committee at WASA earlier this year, and put the Potomac Interceptor back on the front burner.

"Realizing that this schedule has slipped a couple of times over a number of years I have now required that this is a monthly update item for [our board] and I have now for the last three or four months been getting monthly updates," Lake said.

WASA officials are on target to submit the necessary applications to build their charcoal stench-scrubbing structures to the National Park Service in October and November for the structures that would be built on the Maryland side of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the C&O

Canal National Historical Park by October and November, respectively, said David McLaughlin, the acting director of engineering and technical services for WASA. The two structures on the Virginia side will be dealt with once the permits for the first four structures are obtained.

"We're close to having an agreement on a technical level with the park service," said McLaughlin. "That's a major hurdle to get through."

If those permit applications are subsequently approved the design and bidding process could begin shortly thereafter with construction slated to begin in January 2010, said McLaughlin.

That won't help the stench before then, but just last week WASA officials began pouring a chemical into the interceptor upstream from the C&O Canal to neutralize the smell, something that they did last summer as well. It's a short term solution until the permanent solution can finally be achieved, which hopefully will now be sooner rather than later.



PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

The stench of raw sewage that comes from the Potomac Interceptor sewer line is often incorrectly believed to be associated with the C&O Canal.

"We're way past being tired of the smell," said Thornton. "We've got to find a way to get it done."

OPINION

Get Involved in Decision-making

FROM PAGE 6

individuals and organizations that voiced their support for this legislation.

The legislation formally adopts the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050.

SCOTLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

Early in my tenure on the Council, I, along with many of my colleagues on the Council, made a promise to the residents of the Scotland Community to support and fund the renovation of the Scotland Community Center. It was a promise to renovate the Center so that the children and residents of this historic, underserved, African-American community may enjoy access to safe, healthy, and productive activities and programs.

I am pleased to report that the Fiscal Year 2009 - 2014 Capital Budget, approved by the Council in May, includes funding for the planning and design of the Scotland Community Center as well as the Good Hope, Plum Garr, and Ross Boddy recreation facilities. Because of the strong commitment to moving these projects forward, my colleagues and I set aside \$20 million in reserve for the construction costs related to these four projects. This was not an easy task given the fiscal constraints we were facing, but demonstrates the Council's commitment to the residents of the Scotland, Good Hope, Plum Garr, and Ross Boddy communities.

The Council's actions did not take place in a vacuum. There are many individuals who have worked tirelessly to make these

renovations a reality. Though there are too many to mention here, I feel I must recognize the advocacy efforts of people like Bette Thompson, Judy Walsler, Odelia Cooper, Candy Smith, Rev. James R. Phifer, Brandi Swales, and Joyce Siegel. Action in Montgomery (AIM), a faith-based coalition of congregations throughout the county, had also made this issue one of their very top priority items. AIM's constant vigilance ensured that my colleagues and I did not waiver in our own commitment to helping our underserved African-American communities, and they deserve great credit for this victory.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TRANSPORT FEE

An issue that has generated lots of e-mail and snail mail traffic recently is the County Executive's proposal for an Emergency Medical Services Transport Fee, also known as the ambulance fee.

The proposal was in the Executive's operating budget sent to the County Council, but was not included in the budget passed by the Council in May 2008. The Council instead decided to revisit the issue this summer in order to insure that it receives adequate attention and time for public comment. Subsequently, the Executive's legislation was introduced on June 10 and was followed by a public hearing on the evening of July 8. ...

Opponents maintain that our taxes pay for this service now, and we should not be adding fees on top. On the other hand, the Executive argues that almost all of the jurisdictions surrounding us have adopted this

approach without ill effect and have collected substantial revenue from insurers without affecting insurance rates. While there is a disagreement (of course) on the amount of revenue that would be collected, it is in the \$10 million a year range. \$10 million is nothing to sneeze at.

I have not made up my mind on this issue. Feel free to share your thoughts, as always. In the meantime, I will be continuing to meet with the stakeholders and trying to sort through whether the benefits of this proposal outweigh its potential costs.

PEPCO OUTAGES

There have been an extraordinary number of power outages in the county since our last newsletter, and we have heard the frustration that many of you are experiencing. Unfortunately, for many neighborhoods in District 1, power outages don't only occur when there is a large storm - like the one we experienced in June. We have heard reports from homeowners who have had their power supply fail dozens of times per year, and we have requested that Pepco conduct reliability studies for these addresses.

As a result, as Lead on Energy and the Environment, I convened a hearing which included Pepco, and for the first time ever, the Chairman (designee) of the Maryland Public Service Commission that regulates Pepco. The Chairman promised to get better answers as to why this was so. I hope so.

Roger Berliner's column is printed here in excerpts; for the unabridged version see www.PotomacAlmanac.com.

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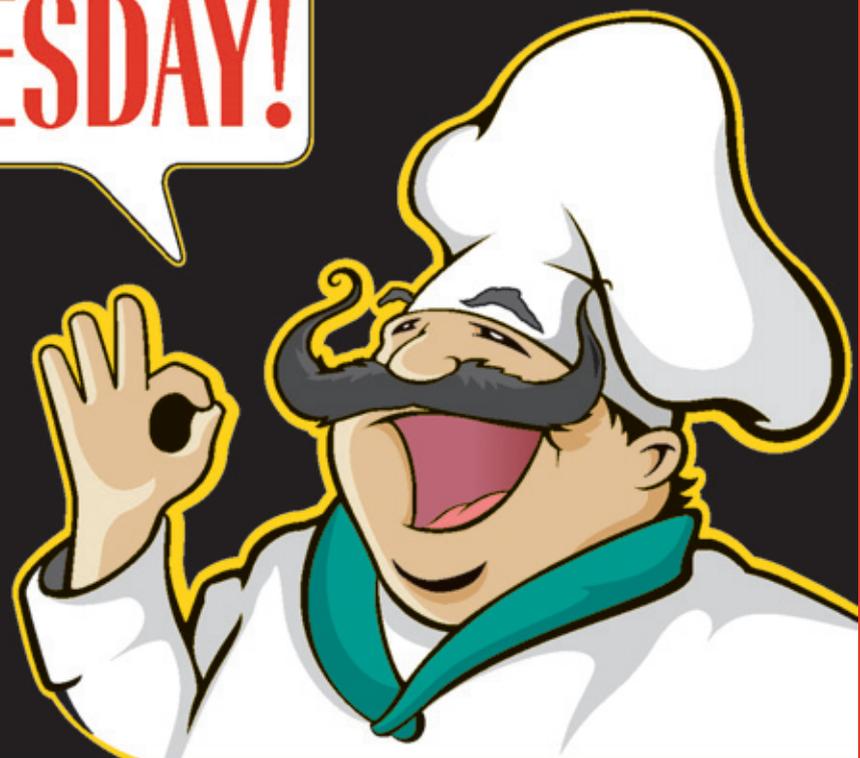
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