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Students At PAInT

NEWS, PAGE 3

Chloe Zucker gets her picture taken with her untitled ceramic work at Saturday's gallery opening at Behnke's. For most of the students it was the first time they've had their work shown outside of school, and the first gallery opening event where their work was on display.

Opposing Views On War in Gaza

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Honoring Rescue Teams

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From Baron to Bulldog

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CALENDAR, PAGE 9 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 15

PHOTO BY AARON STERN / THE ALMANAC

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PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett thanked the rescuers involved in the Dec. 23, 2008 water main break on River Road last week at Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department Station 10.

One War, Two Views

Divergent views of Israeli military actions in the Gaza Strip seen in gatherings of local Jews and Palestinians.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

Attendance at Congregation B'nai Tzedek's weekly Saturday morning Shabbat service tends to be about 150 members, but last Saturday Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt looked out on an audience nearly twice that size. They came because long before Israel's military operations in the Gaza Strip began last month, Sallai Meridor, the Israeli ambassador to the United States was scheduled to speak. And even though Weinblatt emailed his congregation during the week to tell them that an embassy attaché would be coming in Meridor's place, the members still turned out in atypically high numbers. Weinblatt joked Saturday morning that he would start telling his congregation every week to expect the Israeli ambassador.

"In order to have peace you have to have two parties that want peace ... There has to be a change in ideology."

— Mark Dorf, Congregation B'nai Tzedek member

The audience listened to Lt. Col. Eyal Bar-Or who spoke about the ongoing operations, though he asked that his comments not be published for this article. When he was done speaking, he fielded questions from congregation members before joining the members for the traditional Kiddush meal that follows the Shabbat service.

The event was one of several that Weinblatt helped organize in recent days. He pulled together a support rally that drew nearly 200 people in front of the Israeli embassy on Tuesday, Jan. 7 and the following day he spoke at another support rally at the Sixth and I Historic Synagogue in Washington, D.C. that featured U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) and several other members of Congress and drew

SEE LOCAL REACTION, PAGE 4

'Brave and Unselfish Acts' Recognized

County Executive thanks rescuers who saved the lives of nine during water main break on River Road.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

Nearly three weeks after their rescue of nine commuters stuck in the deluge created by a ruptured 66-inch diameter water main on River Road, the emergency responders whose efforts made national headlines continue to be recognized.

On Wednesday, Jan. 7 Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett came to Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department Station 10 on River Road — less than a mile from where the rescue took place — to thank many of the men involved in the unique operation.

"These are the people that get in the water and actually put hands on people," Leggett said in the crowded Station 10 garage — roughly 70 personnel from Cabin John stations 10 and 30, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue, the U.S. Park Police, and the Maryland State Police, and swift water backup from the Fairfax County (Va.) Fire and Rescue.

"These are the people that get in the water and actually put hands on people."

— County Executive Ike Leggett

THE RESCUE necessitated that the Cabin John swift water rescue teams accustomed to working on the Potomac River adapt their skills to water that ranged in depth from three feet to three inches, beneath which was an asphalt road. It also meant that other personnel like Maryland State Police Aviation Pilot Jim MacKay adapt their skills to the challenge. MacKay and his crew typically carry patients from the scenes of traffic accidents, and while they have experience making some rescues on the Chesapeake Bay, the Dec. 23 water main break brought something new.

"This is something that never entered my

SEE RESCUE TEAMS, PAGE 4

In Art, 'Sky's the Limit'

Churchill art students display their work at Behnke's Nurseries to kick off 6th annual PAInT exhibition.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

Photographers and reporters, reviewers and supporters — it was a new experience for a young artist and when asked about her work at an opening exhibition last weekend Chloe Zucker

sought a lifeline in friend and fellow artist Clarissa Beloff.

"Ask Clarissa, she's really good. She really helped me," Zucker said. Beloff and Zucker are seniors at Winston Churchill High School and are among the dozens of Churchill art students whose works went on display at Behnke's Nurseries on River Road beginning with an opening night of Saturday, Jan. 10. Beloff and Zucker said that they frequently bounce ideas off one another when they are at work in the studio.

"I just like creating things," said Beloff, who added that when working in three dimensions with ceramics, "sky's the limit."

The same might be said of all of

SEE PAINT EXHIBITION, PAGE 6



PHOTOS BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

Rebecca Salzman with her ceramic sculpture, "Journey to Israel," representing her recent trip to Israel.

Zero-Dollar Inauguration Rental

When Linda Rieger heard about an Illinois second-grader, Stas Gunkel, who had started his own blog about president-elect Barack Obama, she was intrigued and contacted his family. The two families became friends, and Rieger had hoped to host them during Obama's inauguration, but when they realized that the Gunkels were allergic to cats the plans were scrapped — the Riegers have two cats.

"It just wasn't in the cards," Rieger said.

Now Rieger hopes to land another family in her home for inauguration and instead of charging top-dollar as many in the area have attempted to do by renting out their homes for the historic event, Rieger is trying to land a military family from Ft. Meade.

"We felt that that would be a nice thing for a family who maybe one of the spouses is in Iraq," Rieger said.

Rieger is author of a series of science books for young children and their parents, and her book, "A Good Heart," about healthy lifestyles is being given out at the Children's Inauguration on Sunday, Jan. 18. As a



Linda Rieger with her children's book "A Good Heart," which will be given out at the Children's Inauguration on Sunday, Jan. 18.

result, Rieger has two tickets to the children's celebration that she wants to share with her potential guests.

Rieger hasn't found a family yet, however, and is open to taking in other families with a single parent and children, military or otherwise. To contact her about that potential email The Almanac at potomacalmanac@hotmail.com.

Rescue Teams Recognized

FROM PAGE 3

mind and I've been flying rescue for 15 years," MacKay said. "It was a little surprising. They told us it was a water main break. I mean a water main break? We just didn't expect that kind of chaos from a water main break."

MacKay's Trooper 2 crew pulled out three of the stranded drivers, landed at the Norwood School to secure the helicopter's ice-coated rescue basket, then flew to Suburban hospital where their patients were checked out and released.

The stranded commuters were fortunate that their predicament occurred as it did squarely between Cabin John station 10 on River Road and station 30 on Falls Road, the two stations in the County with the personnel, training, and equipment to conduct swift water rescues.

"The training [was] absolutely huge, and certainly the courage these men and women displayed," said Richard Bowers, the interim chief of Montgomery County Fire and Rescue.

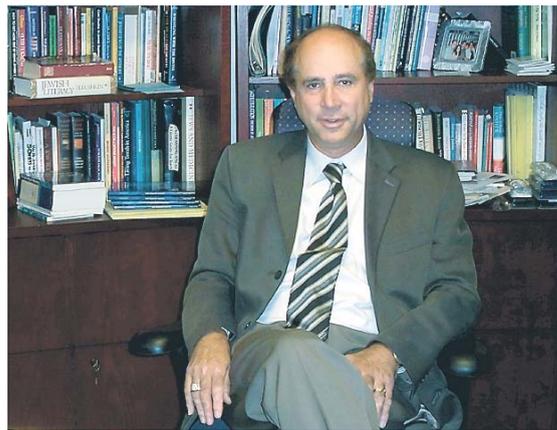
Those officially charged with saving lives weren't the only ones who came to the assis-

tance of those in need that day. Alvina Long, a nearby resident, was watching television when she saw breaking news on the water main break. She watched as a woman pulled herself through the water onto the side of River Road, which had become the bank to the raging, temporary river. Long rushed out to help the woman, gave her a hug, and helped get her to where other rescued drivers had been gathered. "I was just glad I was there," Long said.

Leggett called the efforts of the rescue crews "brave and unselfish acts" carried out by sheer determination made possible through their rigorous training. "It's what we train for, it's what we meet for, it's what we practice for, it's why we're professionals," said Battalion Chief Jim Resnick.

The Montgomery County Council was scheduled to hold another ceremony to recognize the rescuers on Tuesday, Jan. 13 after The Almanac's deadline.

For complete details of the rescue and the names and departments of those involved, see http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Apps/News/pr_details.asp?PrID=5170



Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt helped organize two rallies last week and brought an Israeli military attache to Congregation B'nai Tzedek last Saturday to speak to the members about the ongoing military operation in the Gaza Strip.



Quratal-Ann Malik holds a flag and a candle during a candlelight vigil at the intersection of 355 and Clopper Road in Gaithersburg during the evening rush hour on Friday, Jan. 9.

Local Reaction to Fighting in Gaza

FROM PAGE 3

roughly 1,000 people, according to Weinblatt.

"I think [that] as an American and as a Jewish community leader it is important to express, to help people understand why Israel had to take on the faction. Part of that entails helping to get beyond the headlines and the sound bites, Weinblatt said. "I think it's very important to galvanize support for Israel." Weinblatt blamed Hamas and the Palestinian citizens of Gaza for voting Hamas into power and thereby choosing war over peace. He said that during the last two years Israel has withdrawn its presence from Gaza while Hamas lobbed more and more rockets into Israel, eventually provoking Israel's current military response.

"The conflict began when the Palestinians in Gaza chose, instead of building their infrastructure, to try to tear down and take lives on the other side," said Weinblatt. Weinblatt said that his congregants tend to share his feelings on the issue, and on Saturday morning that appeared to be the case.

"I want to see the IDF reduce Hamas' ability to attack my brothers and sisters," said N.I. Silver, a B'nai Tzedek member, of the Israeli Defense Forces. He said he also hopes that Palestinians will realize that Hamas is responsible for the death and destruction in Gaza, echoing Weinstein's sentiments about the further decline of society in Gaza since Hamas was voted into power.

"Ever since Hamas has taken over the Gaza Strip things have gotten worse," Silver said.

Silver said he is also tired of what he viewed as the negative portrayal of Israel's operations in the media.

"Without question. The New York Times, The Washington Post, and what's called the mainstream media ... have very lopsided coverage of the issue," Silver said.

STANDING ON AN ISLAND at the intersection of Route 355 and Clopper Road in Gaithersburg during the evening rush hour on Friday, Jan. 9, roughly two dozen people of Palestinian origin and descent held a candlelight vigil and rally of their own. With candles, signs, and a Palestinian flag, they did their best to garner attention from the drivers who passed

them.

Wrapped in a coat, scarf, and winter hat against the cold, Mervin Adwan said that Israel's actions were unwarranted and were creating death and destruction that could have been avoided. She said that the Palestinian rocket attacks over recent months weren't intended to kill Israelis as much as they were to protest what she said was severe control and restrictions that Israel keeps over Gaza.

"If you have your rights, you will never think to fight," Adwan said. She said that the notion that Hamas didn't do enough to turn the country around

in the last two years is unrealistic. Adwan pointed to the vast wealth of the United States and the current economic troubles that have cost jobs and cancelled construction projects across the country, then pointed to Gaza and Hamas, which was already in far worse financial shape when Hamas took over.

"Imagine, Hamas, it's coming from nowhere, from the blue," Adwan said. To expect them to have radically improved the state's infrastructure, "it's not reasonable."

Aref Ramadan of Germantown attended the vigil and expressed the opposite of Silver's opinion of

the media's coverage.

"I'm really blaming the media here," Ramadan said. "They are [called] free media but they only show one side." Ramadan said as an example that a few days prior he had heard a radio report of the fighting that estimated a total death toll over 400 that failed to mention that virtually all of the 400-plus deaths were Palestinians, potentially leaving listeners to believe that Israeli and Palestinian casualties were in the same vicinity.

"They think the victim is always the Israelis," said Ramadan of the media.

Ramadan has lived in the United States for 25 years, but said that most of his family still lives in Gaza and that he had not heard from them in four days since the main cell phone tower in Gaza was knocked out.

"It is really hard to live here in the land of peace and freedom, the land of opportunity ... and have my family there," Ramadan said. "What we can do for them is just to pray."

SEE VIEWS, PAGE 7

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CRIME

Criminal activities reported by the Montgomery County Police Department through Jan. 7.

An **attempted burglary** was reported at The Amazing Art Studio, 10066 Darnestown Road in North Potomac between Wednesday, Dec. 24 and Friday, Dec. 26. Force used but no entry made.

A **burglary** occurred at Cabin John Middle School, 10701 Gainsborough Road in Potomac sometime between Tuesday, Dec. 23 and Friday, Dec. 26. Forced entry, property taken.

An **attempted residential burglary** occurred in the 13500 block of Maidstone Lane in Potomac on Wednesday, Dec. 24 between 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Force used but no entry made.

BULLETIN BOARD

To submit an item for the Civic Calendar, e-mail almanac@connectionnewspapers.com or fax the submission to 703-917-0991. Deadline is Thursday at noon two weeks prior to the event. For questions, call 703-917-6407.

SATURDAY/JAN. 17

Registration Begins. Register for classes at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave. All ages. Visit www.imaginationtheatre.org or 301-961-6060 for class schedule.

SATURDAY/JAN. 24

Free SAT, ACT Practice Tests. 9:30-11 a.m. at Winston Churchill High School can take practice tests while parents attend free "Navigating College Admissions" presentation. Visit www.mytutor.com or 1-800-698-8867.

TUESDAY/JAN. 27

Afternoon Grief Support Group. For anyone grieving the death of a loved one, a six-week group led by Montgomery Hospice counselors. 1-2:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 11200 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville. Registration required: 301-921-4400.

Support Group. 1:30 p.m. at Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring. "Healthy and Economical Convenience Foods." Free. 301-622-1650.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 4

Support Group. 7:30 p.m. at St. Raphael's Church, 1513 Dunster Road, Rockville. Meeting for families and friends of people who have been diagnosed with depression or bipolar illness. Free. Visit www.dbsanca-family.org or 301-299-4255.

ONGOING

Montgomery County has launched a new **Web site feature** called "My Montgomery," which helps residents locate a variety of County facilities and services. "My Montgomery" can be found at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mymontgomery.

Volunteers are needed to assist sexual assault victims and their families through the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vasap or 240-777-1355.

JSSA (Jewish Social Service Agency), a non-sectarian community agency, is seeking volunteers to help individuals and families facing life-threatening or terminal illness. Call 301-816-2650.

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LET'S TALK Real Estate



by
Michael Matese

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During the home buying process it is safe to assume that you will find a home you like, make an offer, and purchase it. Because no home is perfect, inspections by structural engineers may discover something wrong with the property you want to buy. Some sales have been halted or delayed because asbestos, lead, or radon was found on the property. Pest inspections may reveal mold, fungus, or termites. A general home inspection may reveal other issues such as code problems or functional obsolescence.

If a problem is found with the property you want to buy, ask yourself two questions:
1) Can the problem be fixed?
2) If it can, what will it cost to repair it? House inspections exist to tell buyers what is right and wrong with a house, not necessarily to renegotiate the price. If, however, there is a major problem, such as the roof leaking or the air conditioning not working, then it might be possible to work with the seller to resolve these issues.

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ART



Churchill senior Thomas Laprade with "I Can Hear the Hearts Breathing as One," and "Sunday with Sholanda," two of his oil paintings on display at Behnke's.



Churchill sophomores Jasmine Siudzinski, Daniela Baeza, Mary Albrecht and Chloe Constantinides examine ceramic sculptures on display at Saturday's collaborative opening between Churchill art students and Potomac Artists In Touch at Behnke's Nurseries on River Road.

Students Display Work at PAInT Exhibition

FROM PAGE 3

Churchill's art students, whose works now open to public viewing range from works of photography, painting, sculpture, and multimedia pieces. Zucker and Beloff were just two of dozens of Churchill art students whose art went on display at the gallery they hung themselves.

The show is the prelude to the sixth annual Potomac Artists in Touch (PAInT) show at Behnke's, but this year the local group and Behnke's manager Gary Ingram wanted to include and to feature young, local artists. The artists' work will hang for two weeks, during which time it will be juried by PAInT and evaluated by the public. PAInT will then award cash prizes to first, second, third and honorable mentions recipients and through two weeks of balloting, the public will decide who wins an additional people's choice award.

AT SATURDAY'S opening, PAInT artist Cherry Dearie was impressed.

"It's absolutely amazing. Walking around, the scope of work is unbelievable," Dearie said.

Alexandra Michaels has been teaching art for 23 years; now in her first year at Churchill the talent and devotion of her new students has made an impression on her.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Make a Difference

To the Editor:

For months I have been observing the articles written concerning the Montgomery County Humane Society. I appreciate the comments from former board members; their letters really reflect their ongoing commitment to animal welfare.

I am no mathematician, nor do I have a Harvard education or a highly recognized last name, as do most of the MCHS board members do. I can't offer numerical figures explaining MCHS finances, but I do have an idea as to why MCHS has had some recent troubles.

As a former volunteer and employee, I have been able to observe from a very different point of view.

I was a kennel staff, pretty much the bottom of the totem poll. I also had the most involvement handling and caring for the animals, and interacted with the public on a daily basis. I have witnessed many confrontations from all ends of the spectrum, outside the system and from within. MCHS is too disorganized to run properly. There is little communication amongst the staff, and the animals suffer because of this major flaw, sometimes with their lives.

I have no doubt personal issues and "bad days" were the catalyst behind many decisions, which is deplorable yet routine. Some, not all, of the staff are standoffish and have major attitude problems toward visitors, leaving the public with a bad taste in their mouth. I was also a recipient of their hos-

tility, so I get it. I bit my lip as animals were needlessly euthanized, animals that could have been adopted out and would have made wonderful family companions. If lack of space was truly the issue, then what have done as a community to rectify the situation?

Some animals have been adopted into families that should not even own a fish, much less a cat or a dog. The interviewers themselves are fabulous and experienced, but even they can't foresee every manipulation tactic. Some folks are very sly with the whole song and dance routine. A somewhat relevant example, a Rottweiler/Doberman mix came to the rescue, and I fell in love with his calm and affectionate manner instantly. A potential family came in and I supervised a visit. I liked

the couple, but red flags were a flyin' as our conversation progressed. No ma'am, he is not a guard dog. He will deter people from coming your way due to his size and outer appearance, but that is a coincidence. (I walk my spirited pit bull in my suburban Potomac neighborhood, and most fellow dog walkers and joggers move to the other side of the street.)

Well, the dog went home with the family, allegedly bit some visitors, and was taken back to the shelter no more than five days later. He was put down. No, we can't save them all. I've heard that statement a million times. Ironically, most of those who use that statement have little to zero involvement with any type of ani-

SEE LETTER, PAGE 13

Divergent Views on War

FROM PAGE 4

Though the two gatherings showed divergent opinions on the causes, validity, and international perception of the fighting in Gaza, many expressed a shared vision of a peaceful future that must arise from a two-state solution.

"At one point it has to be. I'm really hoping that Obama realizes that ... it should be a two-state solution. There is no other way," Ramadan said.

Having peace in Israel and Gaza would "be wonderful, it hasn't happened in my time," said Mark Dorf, a B'nai Tzedek member. "That's utopia." But Dorf expressed skepticism that that utopian vision can be achieved under the current circumstances.

"In order to have peace you have to have two parties that want peace," said Dorf. Dorf said the decline in Islamic fundamentalism would be key, and that other Middle Eastern, Muslim entities — namely Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria and Iran — accept Israel's right to exist and support the concept of a two-state solution.

"There has to be a change in ideology," Dorf said.

Amin Ezzedine of Germantown said that the United States government must reassume its role as a broker of peace in the region and must recognize validity of the elected Hamas government.

"They have to talk to the government that has been elected whether they like it or not ... it is the elected representative of the people," Ezzedine said.

One man at Friday's rally who wished not to be identified said that when he was growing up in Palestine his best friend was Jewish, and they learned to speak each other's languages the way teenage boys often do — by sharing with each other the curse words of their native tongues. That was a time long ago, before the United Nations voted to create the state of Israel in 1947 and the subsequent wars, bombings, and tensions, a time when Muslims, Christians and Jews all called themselves Palestinians and lived side by side in peace.

"I hope it can be that way again," the man said.

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101 Ways to Have Fun in Potomac

Potomac may lack the nightlife of downtown Washington, D.C., but there's no shortage of ways for all ages to have fun, both in Potomac proper and the surrounding area. Outdoor recreation abounds, as do cultural opportunities, whether somebody wants to experience the fine arts or become a fine artist. Read on for the second part in a four-part series.

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14125 Seneca Road, Darnestown (Adrian's Market)
16315 Old River Road, Poolesville (Poole's General Store)
There are lots of great fishing spots along the Potomac River that can be accessed from the C&O Canal — Violet's Lock and Riley's Lock are popular spots to catch smallmouth bass and sunfish. Maryland requires a fishing permit for all fishermen 16 and older in non-tidal waters. An annual recreational fishing permit costs \$10.50. Buy a permit online or at any of the above local businesses.

Go Rock Climbing

www.adventureschool.com
Carderock Recreation Area is one of the region's hottest rock climbing spots. It can be accessed by bicycle from the

Great Falls or Old Angler's Inn entrances to the C&O Canal National Historical Park. On foot, it's about an hour's hike from Great Falls. By car, take the Clara Barton Parkway and follow the signs, exiting at the Naval Surface Warfare Center's access gate. The Carderock area has restrooms and picnic tables and non-climbers can enjoy walks along the towpath and great views of the river, as well as views of the climbers from both above and below. (The tops of the climbing walls can be reached on trails without actually climbing.) The climbing includes a wide range of difficulty levels, but no one should climb without the necessary training and safety equipment. Novices should climb with an instructor, school, or reputable climbing organization.

Go Horseback Riding

Potomac Horse Center
14211 Quince Orchard Road, Gaithersburg, 301-208-0200
www.potomachorse.com
or
Tulip Pond Farm
14901 Partnership Road, Poolesville, 301-977-6767
www.tulippondfarm.org
Horses are a huge part of Potomac's history. Before it was a wealthy Washington suburb, Potomac was home to scores of horse farms and historic hunts and horse organizations. These days, much of the horse activity has been pushed to Poolesville, Darnestown and other areas upcounty, in the 90,000-acre Agricultural Reserve, where development is severely restricted. Horse stables include the Potomac Horse Center and

Tulip Pond Farm. They host clinics and lessons.

Go Ice Skating Indoors

Cabin John Center
10610 Westlake Drive, 301-365-2246
www.mc-mncppc.org/parks/enterprise/ice/gen_info
The Cabin John Center is operated by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. It has changing facilities, a snack bar and three ice rinks and offers public skating sessions, skating lessons, and use for hockey and other ice sports. General admission is \$3 for children 4 and under, \$5 for seniors and children 5-10, \$6 for adults, and \$6 for all ages on public holidays. Skate rental is \$3.

Go Ice Skating Outdoors (Cautiously)

301-767-3707 for a recorded message about ice skating in the C&O Canal National Historical Park, updated by park rangers
During cold winters, the C&O Canal freezes and becomes a huge outdoor skating rink for enthusiasts, children, and families. Even walkers enjoy the view of the often snow-dusted ice — and the ability to cross the canal wherever they want.
But attempting to skate on outdoor ice poses serious safety risks. The National Park Service monitors the thickness of the ice, which should be at least four

inches for safe skating. When the ice is thick enough, park rangers post signs reading "Ice Skating at Your Own Risk." If the signs read "Unsafe Ice," if there is no sign, or if you are unsure, stay off the ice.

Go Camping

Obtain a permit (The Marsden Tract): 301-767-3731
www.nps.gov/choh/Recreation/Camping
Obtain a permit (The Robert C. McDonnell Campground): 7701 Tuckerman Lane
www.mc-mncppc.org/permits/facility/camp/cabin_john
The C&O Canal National Historical Park offers several free and fee-charging campsites in the Potomac region. There are "hiker-biker" campgrounds — which are free and available on a first-come, first-served basis with a limit of one night — at Swains Lock. The sites have picnic tables and outhouses. The Marsden Tract, located at C&O Canal mile 11 near Old Angler's Inn, is a group campsite, available by reservation only for \$20 per night.
The Robert C. McDonnell Campground at Cabin John Regional Park offers 7 walk-in primitive sites, accommodating up to 10 campers each. Campsites feature grills, tables, a campfire circle and pit toilets. There are two tent pads on each site. Campsites are available year-round with no running water between Nov. 1 and March 31. An \$18 per site, per night permit is required. The Marsden Tract is available only to scout groups, civic organizations, and groups on organized camping trips. A permit can be obtained by calling the Great Falls fee office.



Birds can be found year round. The Audubon Naturalist Society can teach beginners how to look for birds. Go to events and meet other bird lovers.

philosophies and approaches taken by the faculty. The Yellow Barn Gallery hosts individual and group art exhibits year-round and is open to the public on Saturday and Sundays from 12-5 p.m. Summer classes include Summer Landscape on Location Painting Class, Introduction to Watercolor, Figure Painting Studio, Intermediate Watercolor, Principles of Drawing and Figure Drawing.

Learn about Birds With the Experts

8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, 301-652-1088
www.audubonnaturalist.org (Click "Birding")
www.mc-mncppc.org/parks/nature_centers/locust
www.mdinc.com/mcncbird
The Audubon Naturalist Society conducts free bird walks, bird counts for research and bird watching events for charity. It also oversees three local nature sanctuaries, including the Woodend Sanctuary in Chevy Chase. Locust Grove Nature Center in Cabin John Regional Park has naturalists who lead bird watches in the area. The Montgomery Bird Club is a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society that sponsors bird field trips and holds monthly meetings. The club holds meetings on the third Wednesday of every month at the Potomac Presbyterian Church from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Take a Nature Hike, Ask a Naturalist

Locust Grove Nature Center, Cabin John Park, 7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda, 301-299-1990,
www.mcparkandplanning.org/parks/nature_centers/locust/
Locust Grove Nature Center in Cabin John Park is stop number one for any local nature enthusiast. The center's naturalists are experts on local flora and fauna and the center hosts an array of activities throughout the year, from bird watching to nature hikes and more. A great place to visit for anyone of any age with a passion for the outdoors.

Build a Bat House

Locust Grove Nature Center
7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda, 301-299-1990
www.mc-mncppc.org/parks
Don't believe the media's portrayal of bats — they may not fight crime, but they do gobble up pest insects on summer nights, require less electricity than a bug zapper, and smell better than insect repellent. Leslie Sturges, park naturalist at Locust Grove Nature Center, leads bat-watching activities for all ages on spring and summer evenings.

Become an Artist

Yellow Barn Studio and Gallery
7300 MacArthur Blvd, Glen Echo, 1-301-371-5593
www.yellowbarnstudio.com
www.glenechopark.org
The Yellow Barn Studio and Gallery is the painting residency at Glen Echo Park. Resident painter and instructor Walt Bartman's goal is to provide a place where those interested in painting can have the opportunity to meet, collaborate and display their work. The Yellow Barn Studio provides a variety of classes in watercolor, oil and acrylic for students at all levels representing a diversity of

different writing styles, such as travel writing, screenwriting, personal essays, short fiction and many more.

Read the Potomac Almanac

703-917-6465 (for a free mailed subscription)
www.potomacalmanac.com
From politics to leisure to business to sports, the Almanac strives to feature stories and items of interest to its readers. The Almanac was named Newspaper of the Year by the Maryland Delaware D.C. Press Association in 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2003, and has won multiple awards for public service.

Submit to the Almanac

703-917-6431
potomacalmanac@hotmail.com
Is there something we're not covering? Would you like to see yourself published? Submit to the Potomac Almanac. The paper accepts all types of submissions from engagement, marriage, and birth announcements to letters to the editor to calendar notes, health notes and faith notes, to promotions.

Go to School

www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/whitmanhs
www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/woottonhs
www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/churchills
www.bullis.org
www.mcleanschool.org
www.holychild.org
www.landon.net
www.gprep.org
www.heights.edu
www.holton-arms.edu
www.stoneridge.org
www.saes.org (St. Andrew's Episcopal School)

See a High-School Performance

Potomac's high-school students put on dozens of high-quality and often award-winning plays, musicals, revues, and dance performances every year. Seeing high school theater is inexpensive and close to home and supports school art programs. The Almanac previews many of these shows, but keeping in touch with local schools through their Web sites and listservs is the best way to make sure you won't miss a curtain call. Most school Web sites provide information on how to sign up to receive regular e-mails about school events.

Have a Blast at 'Blast from the Past'

Winston Churchill High School
11300 Gainsborough Road, Potomac, 301-469-1200
Devo's "Whip It," Neil Diamond's "America," Lenny Kravitz's "Lady" and Otis Redding's "(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay" all in one show? It can only be Winston Churchill High School's annual "Blast From the Past" music and dance revue. Every year, more than 200 Churchill student signers, dancers and musicians perform costumed song-and-dance routines to a range of tunes that offers something for everybody.

Next week will continue with Part 3.

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Learn Tae Kwon Do
East West Tae Kwon Do
10620 River Road, Potomac, 301-869-7072
http://www.eastwesttkd.com
Literally translated as the art of punching and kicking, tae kwon do is a martial art with origins in Korea that aims to build positive attributes of an individual's personality. As a college student, Parshotam Sharma founded the University of Maryland's tae kwon do program. These days, he instructs students in the Potomac area at East West Tae Kwon Do. In recent years, East West Tae Kwon Do students have qualified for the national tae kwon do tournament. Many students are school-aged, but not all — some entire families train at East West.

Learn Yoga
Potomac Community Center
11315 Falls Road, Potomac, 240-777-6960
The Potomac Community Center offers yoga lessons at varying times throughout the week. An array of other lessons are also available.

Become an Artist
Yellow Barn Studio and Gallery
7300 MacArthur Blvd, Glen Echo, 1-301-371-5593
www.yellowbarnstudio.com
www.glenechopark.org
The Yellow Barn Studio and Gallery is the painting residency at Glen Echo Park. Resident painter and instructor Walt Bartman's goal is to provide a place where those interested in painting can have the opportunity to meet, collaborate and display their work. The Yellow Barn Studio provides a variety of classes in watercolor, oil and acrylic for students at all levels representing a diversity of

GET IT WRITE Become a Better Writer

Writer's Center
4508 Walsh Street, Bethesda, 301-654-8664
www.writer.org
Looking for guidance in writing the Great American Novel? Interested in composing poetry? Hoping to get travel writing published? The Writer's Center in Bethesda offers workshops to learn



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CALENDAR

For the full calendar, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com

To have community events listed free in *The Potomac Almanac*, send e-mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Unless otherwise noted, all events are in Potomac. For more information, call 703-917-6407.

FRIDAY/JAN. 16

Contra Dance. 7:30-11:30 p.m. in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$9/person. Beginners welcome. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 17

Choral Reading. Learn how to read choral music at 1 p.m. in the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Tickets: \$30; call 301-581-5100.

Performance Workshop. Violinist Ivan Stefanovic coaches select students from the Levine School at 3 p.m. in the Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Free. Reservations required; call 202-686-8000, ext. 1599.

La Valse. The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra performs "La Valse" at 8 p.m. in the Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Visit www.BSOmusic.org for tickets.

A Way to Help Fearful Dogs. 2-4 p.m. at Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road. Free, but register at www.yourdogsfriend.info or 301-983-5913.

Park Movie. 4 p.m. at Arcade Building at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Watch a movie documenting the park's 115-year history. Free. Visit www.nps.gov/glec or 301-320-1400.

Carousel Tours. Noon at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See how it was made, how it works and more. Free. Visit www.nps.gov/glec or 301-320-1400.

Nature Programs. Enjoy activities, stories, animals, hikes and more from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Free for members and children under 2, \$5/non member. Visit www.discoverycreek.org or 202-488-0627.

Swing Dance. 8 p.m.-midnight in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Admission to be determined. Beginners welcome. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Art Class. Noon-2 p.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. His-Mei Yates will present a watercolor painting workshop for all above age 10. Free. Registration required, 240-777-0690.

Art Exhibit. Noon-6 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See "Common Ground: Robert Bilek & Colin Campbell." Free. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Basketball Tournament. Twenty-two teams will perform at Holy Child, 9029 Bradley Blvd. For schedule and price, visit www.holychild.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 18

Guitar Quartet. The Potomac Guitar Quartet performs at 3 p.m. in the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Tickets: \$25; call 301-581-5100.

Park Movie. 4 p.m. at Arcade Building at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Watch a movie documenting the park's 115-year history. Free. Visit www.nps.gov/glec or 301-320-1400.

Carousel Tours. Noon at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See how it was made, how it works and more. Free. Visit www.nps.gov/glec or 301-320-1400.

Nature Programs. Enjoy activities, stories, animals, hikes and more from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Free for members and children under 2, \$5/non member. Visit www.discoverycreek.org or 202-488-0627.

Music Performance. Pianist Jeffery Watson and Potomac Guitar Quartet will perform at 3 p.m. at Mansion at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. \$25/person. Visit www.strathmore.org or 301-581-5100.

Art Exhibit. Noon-6 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See "Common Ground: Robert Bilek & Colin Campbell." Free. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Basketball Tournament. Twenty-two teams will perform at Holy Child, 9029 Bradley Blvd. For schedule and price, visit www.holychild.org.

MONDAY/JAN. 19

Mondays at the Mansion. Listen to Renaissance and Baroque music with Aniko Debreceeny 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Tickets: \$15; call 301-581-5100.

Musical Celebration. 4 p.m. at Music Center at Strathmore, 5703 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Visit the box office for tickets.

Tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. Visit www.strathmore.org for more.

Basketball Tournament. Twenty-two teams will perform at Holy Child, 9029 Bradley Blvd. For schedule and price, visit www.holychild.org.

TUESDAY/JAN. 20

Afternoon Tea. Harpist Sally Nystrom is performing at 1 p.m. at the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Prepaid reservations required; \$21 plus tax. Call 301-581-5108.

Tiny Tot Tuesday. 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Children up to age 4 will enjoy "Winter Wonderland." \$5/person. Reservations recommended. Visit www.thepuppetco.org or 301-320-6668.

Glen Echo Park Inaugural Ball. 7:30-11 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. All ages encouraged. Hear music by two bands. \$20/person. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 21

Afternoon Tea. Pianist Alan Krupnick and Bassist Roger Cooke are performing at 1 p.m. at the Mansion at Strathmore, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Reservations required; \$21. Call 301-581-5108.

Storytime. 10:30 a.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. Children ages 2 and under enjoy stories, fingerplays and more. Register at the library or 240-777-0690.

Book Club. 1 p.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. Adults can discuss a book, ask for it at circulation desk. Free. 240-777-0690.

Meeting. Noon at Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road. Learn about history of the Marines. Visit www.rotaryclubofpotomac.org or 301-251-4942.

THURSDAY/JAN 22

Slavonic Dances. The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra performs Slavonic dances at 8 p.m. in the Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Visit www.BSOmusic.org for tickets.

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

SPECTACULAR OPEN HOUSES

January 17 & 18



When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in the Almanac. For more real estate listings and open houses visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com, click the Real Estate links on the right side.

Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times.

POTOMAC

10820 Gainsborough Rd.	\$685,000	Sun. 1-4	Dale Gold	Weichert	301-437-3253
8816 Harness Tr.	\$749,000	Sun. 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-4506
13 Lawngate Ct.	\$549,900	Sun. 1-4	Caryn Gardiner	Long & Foster	240-497-1700
12204 Seline Way	\$949,000	Sun. 1-4	Lanny Newman	Long & Foster	240-497-1700
9800 Tibron Ct.	\$1,649,000	Sun. 1-4	Leslie Friedson	Long & Foster	301-455-4506

NORTH POTOMAC

23 Arch Pl. #378	\$365,000	Sun. 11-4	Alma Brito	Long & Foster	240-497-1700
1026 Main St.	\$599,900	Sun. 1-4	Michael Aubrey	RE/MAX	301-873-9807
10714 Outpost Dr.	\$795,000	Sun. 1-4	Jill Aharon	Weichert	240-328-2640

BETHESDA

5115 Cape Cod Ct.	\$2,500,000	Sun. 2-5	Hans Wydler	Long & Foster	301-986-6405
9707 Cedar Ln.	\$765,000	Sun. 1-4	Gary Ditto	Long & Foster	301-215-6834
8110 Custer Rd.	\$895,000	Sun. 1-4	Hans Wydler	Long & Foster	301-986-6405
4801 Hampden Ln #103	\$899,900	Sun. 1-3	Allan Chaudhuri	WC & AN Miller	301-765-6110
5520 Hoover St.	\$825,000	Sun. 1-4	Jane Fairweather	Coldwell Banker	240-223-4663
5712 Massachusetts Ave.	\$849,000	Sun. 1-4	Paula Zurkowski	Ready Real Estate	301-252-5731
7806 Orchard Gate Ct.	\$1,295,000	Sun. 2-4	Wendy Banner	Long & Foster	301-356-9090
6214 Swords Way	\$839,000	Sun. 1-4	Annabel Burch	Coldwell Banker	301-718-0010
6105 Walhonding Rd.	\$1,850,000	Sun. 1-4	Hans Wydler	Long & Foster	301-986-6405

CHEVY CHASE

6009 Brookside Dr.	\$2,565,000	Sun. 1-3	Charles Beverly	Evers & Co.	301-728-4338
7203 Delfield St.	\$1,595,000	Sun. 1-4	Damian Buckley	Long & Foster	202-438-6080

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 Monday at 3 pm.

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8804 Postoak Road
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Thurs 6:30pm
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For more information please contact:

Nancy Steinberg 240-994-5092 nancy@kulayogaclass.com www.Kulayogaclass.com	Shanthi Subramanian 301-320-9334 shanthi@hamsayoga@yahoo.com www.hamsa-yoga.com
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THIS WEEK

Tennis Bubble Hearing Postponed

A hearing originally scheduled for Jan. 9 before the Montgomery County Hearing Examiner regarding a proposal from the Potomac Swim and Tennis Club on Oaklyn Drive in Potomac to add a seasonal tennis bubble to its facility was postponed to March 6.

The postponement was made after a neighbor claimed they were not notified of

the hearing, prompting the County to re-schedule.

At the March 6 hearing, the hearing examiner will determine how long the record on the case will stay open.

Once the record closes the hearing examiner will make a recommendation to the Board of Appeals, which will then schedule a date to hear the case and will ultimately approve or deny the proposal.

For more information on the tennis bubble proposal visit potomacalmanac.com, click on "news."

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From Baron to Bulldog

After a surprising resignation, how did Churchill hire its next football coach?

BY MARK GIANNOTTO
THE ALMANAC

Judging from the relaxed look on his face, the hard part was over for new Churchill coach Joe Allen as he sat down in a folding chair within the school's auditorium following an hour and a half worth of questions from curious parents last week on Thursday night.

“Our goal was to try and have somebody in place before the holidays.”

— Churchill athletic director David Kelley

In addition to the friendly fire from his new players' families, Allen, who prior to taking the job at Churchill was the head football coach for two seasons at Bethesda-Chevy Chase, had to go through a far more exhaustive hiring process than many realize.

There were resumes to be looked over, interviews with seven candidates, and unbeknownst to many within the community, a 10-person panel charged with picking the next leader of Bulldog football.

“At B-CC, I basically met with two people and it was OK ... we're going to give you the job,” said Allen. “Here, it was a lot different. It was a much

more intensive process.”

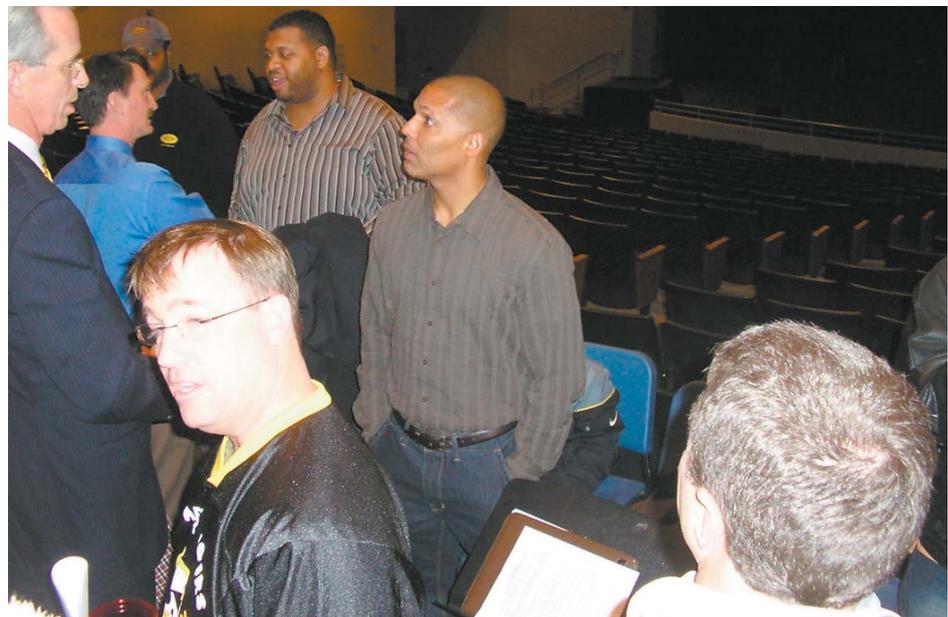
IN HIS FIRST year as Churchill athletic director, David Kelley wasn't expecting to replace arguably the school's most high profile coaching position so quickly. In fact, the fall season was something of a renaissance for the football program, which narrowly missed out on a regional playoff berth, finishing with a 6-4 record.

But immediately following Churchill's season-ending loss to rival Wootton on Nov. 7, coach Greg Neuendorf walked into Kelley's office and announced his resignation, saying he planned to move to North Carolina where his wife had accepted a job offer.

That put Kelley in a precarious position. He wanted to fill the job as quickly as possible so the returning members of the team could have a full and rigorous offseason workout regimen, an aspect of the program that many credited for the team's recent resurgence. But he didn't want his first big decision as athletic director to come in haste.

“We decided to let the dust settle for a couple of weeks,” said Kelley, who waited three weeks before posting a job listing at Churchill and over Montgomery County's internet network. “Our goal was to try and have somebody in place before the holidays.”

Kelley ended up with seven resumes in his inbox thanks to his listings, all of whom were county employees. County rules stipulated Kelley must give preference to candi-



New Churchill coach Joe Allen (right) and his lead assistant Daryl Hodge (left) talk with parents at last Thursday's question-and-answer session. Allen was one of seven candidates interviewed by a 10-person panel for the head coaching position.

dates who work for the county school system, and he ended up giving interviews to all those that applied.

ALLEN SAID he was approached by Neuendorf during the early part of the hiring search, and the former Bulldog coach encouraged Allen to think about leaving his B-CC Baron program. Through their conversation, Allen got a sense of the direction of the program — knowledge that would help him out later.

But there was no way Allen would have interviewed for the job or even put his name in the mix had some of his coaches from B-

CC not promised to follow him should he become coach at Churchill. Last Thursday, Allen introduced his lead assistant and defensive coordinator Daryl Hodge and his former JV coach at B-CC, Chad Mack, both of whom followed Allen to Churchill.

No amount of assistants could help Allen once the interview process began the week before the holiday break in December. The school put together a 10-person panel that included Kelley, principal Joan Benz, several current Churchill coaches of both genders, a current Churchill student, as well as several parents of both genders who are

SEE NEW COACH, PAGE 13

Patriots Go Baby Booming

With baby on the way, coach leads streaking Patriots into clash with rival Churchill.

BY MIKE WEINER
THE ALMANAC

Wootton girls' basketball coach Maggie Dyer has achieved the kind of success any high school girl's basketball coach dreams about during her first six seasons with the Patriots. She has seen a once-moribund program win two-straight division championships, with four girls moving on from her program to play college basketball, not including a Division-I signee in her 2009 senior class, the first-ever in Wootton girl's basketball history.

This season, her Patriots are 10-1, leading the Montgomery County 4A West divi-

sion once again heading into Friday night's pivotal showdown against rival Churchill, and appear poised to make a serious run at a regional championship. But this time around Dyer is expecting to add a new member to the Wootton family right in the middle of the season.

What sets Dyer and her team apart from every other coach roaming the sidelines in the area this season is the fact that the coach happens to be eight months pregnant, due to give birth to her second child on Feb. 9.

DYER'S MATERNITY LEAVE officially started on Jan. 8, but her absence on the sidelines will only be for two weeks. Though she won't return to teaching until April 14, Dyer plans to keep coaching up until the birth of her daughter. She is scheduled to have a Caesarian section, after which she will be required to spend two weeks recovering in the hospital. Her plan is to miss just four games and return before the playoffs begin, during which time the team will be led by assistant coach Rob Healy.

Match-up To Watch

Wootton and Churchill will put experienced squads on the court Friday, but a match-up worth paying close attention to will be the one in the paint. Wootton, which boasts a front court of two six-footers, senior Chelsea Craig and sophomore Gabby Flinchum, will see a front court of equal size for the first time this season. Churchill's front court of Marlena Phillips (nine points, nine rebounds per game) and Alex Vasilla (11 points, seven rebounds per game) will offer a strong challenge for Craig and Flinchum, who have averaged 14 and 12.5 rebounds a game, respectively, against smaller front court foes.

Dyer has yet to miss a practice or game this season, and she won't do so until after the arrival of her first girl. Despite the limitations that pregnancy puts on mind and body, her condition has not changed her coaching style, at least mentally.

Laughing, Dyer said, “I don't stomp quite as much, but I'm still up and coaching.”

The fact that she is still coaching, as if
SEE PLAYOFFS FOR BABY, PAGE 13



Wootton girls' basketball coach Maggie Dyer is due to give birth to her second child in less than a month. In the meantime, though, she has helped the Patriot girls get off to a 10-1 start this season heading into a much-anticipated match-up against Churchill Friday night.

Deciding on a New Coach

FROM PAGE 12

actively involved with the football team. The panel had a list of pre-arranged questions and each person had input on every candidate's answers. Although no one interviewed for this story would go into the specifics of what was asked, it's clear the number one priority was to make sure what Neuendorf had accomplished would not be lost in the shuffle of a coaching change. "When Greg stepped down, a lot of people were unsure of the future of the program," said Kelley. "Our goal was to take the program from where Greg brought it and continue to take it forward. We didn't want to totally revamp and go in different direction."

ALLEN WAS the overwhelming choice after all seven candidates had been interviewed. Because he had been the head coach at B-CC for two seasons, he had a template for how he envisioned his version of the Churchill program. As Kelley puts it, "He just seemed like a head football coach." Allen was told of the panel's decision a few days later and after a couple hours of de-

liberation, decided to take the job. "What stood out for me was that his heart was with the kids," said principal Joan Benz. And in the interview, he was so incredibly organized with his portfolios and player handbooks. It was a tough panel, and we had a good number of candidates, but I'm just thrilled with Joe."

"It was a much more intensive process [than at B-CC]."

— **New Churchill coach Joe Allen**

However, the whole process wasn't met without some resistance. One parent at last week's meeting who asked not to be identified, said he was pleased with Allen after meeting him, but "felt left in the dark about the whole thing. It seemed like all of sudden [Neuendorf] was gone and then all of a sudden, one day, we had a new coach." It doesn't help that in Allen's two years as head coach at B-CC, he amassed a disappointing 4-16 record. But both Benz and Kelley said Allen's record at previous stops was taken into consideration, but played little role in their decision-making.

Another potential issue is that none of Allen's staff actually work at Churchill. Allen is an IT technician for the county, working mostly in Wheaton. Kelley said no current

SEE NEW COACH, PAGE 14

LETTER

FROM PAGE 6

mal rescue. I am very confident when I say dogs do not leave the shelter stable and return hostile unless something very non kosher has been bestowed upon them. What exactly, I can't say. But he was not the same dog when he returned. Had my supervisor heeded my warning, (Yes, I stepped out side the nine dots and expressed my concern), that dog might have had a better life with a different family.

I applaud the very few people at MCHS who work tirelessly to save lives, and treat each day as an angel with a mission attitude. Most of those people have been at MCHS for years, and are tired and worn out. They take the jobs that make our stomachs turn, and for little pay at that. One could ask, why work there if the conditions are so intolerable? A question that the current staff needs to ask themselves. I can't answer for everyone, but I worked at MCHS because I really love animals. Plain and simple.

In the end, I too chose to leave; the reality was too much for me. I am still involved with animal rescue, and love every minute of it. I encourage anyone who is lucky enough to have the means,

give your time, a little money or open your home to a deserving animal. One of my three dogs was terribly abused, and will never master the art of potty training at the age of 8. I wake up each day knowing that my rugs will be drenched in urine or excrement, but, with a steam cleaner and some Lysol, I too shall overcome. A small price to pay in the grand scheme of things. I made a crucial difference in her life, as she has made in mine. Literally.

What have you done today? My wish is that the new board of directors stops looking at just numbers, picks up a pooper scooper, and pitches in. The whole point of MCHS is to house and facilitate animal welfare and safety. Go give Linda B a smoke break, and wipe down the new litter of abandoned puppies. Go seek out one dog or cat, and make it a personal goal to help get them adopted. Make some phone calls and find them a foster home. Even the so-called scary pit bulls. Interact with one and you will wind up with a new friend, not a puncture wound. I do not count on other people to do the dirty work. If you want to make a difference, you'll need to get your hands dirty.

Aly Cohen

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By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Forty one years ago, on Oct. 21, 1967, I was Bar Mitzvah'd and became a man, or so the Jewish tradition claims. Five weeks ago, on Dec. 6, 2008, when my mother, Celia Blacker Lourie died, one day after her 86th birthday, my manhood became official. Up until her death, nearly two years to the day of my father's death, I was still my parents' son. Now, with my mother's passing, I am no longer anyone's son. I am still a brother, still a husband (unfortunately not a father, though), still a cousin, still an uncle, etc., but most definitely, I am not a son. And given the finality and reality of being an orphan (as I have been characterized by a number of family and friends since my widowed mother died), whatever delusions I had concerning my familial future, specifically relating to my mother's life expectancy, are officially over. I am not exactly on my own, but neither am I on my parents' own, anymore.

Luckily for me, it's been a long trip, only parts of which (the insignificant parts) have been strange. My parents were alive in my life for 52 and 54 years respectively. As a result of their longevity, and my good fortune, I had ample opportunity to observe and to listen, to live and hopefully learn, and to speak when spoken to. I was not simply raised by my parents, I was nurtured, and of course, I was loved (I was liked, too). In addition, I was made to feel that we (my brother, Richard and I) were the center of my parents' universe and that we were most important in their lives. Rarely did anything — or anyone — else seem to matter, even during their dying days when, with what little time they had left, they still were more concerned with our welfare than their own. It really was quite amazing to see.

If my parents' goal was to create an environment where their children could thrive and grow and exceed their accomplishments (both professionally and personally), they succeeded. And it is only because of the trust, faith and confidence that they placed in us that we have become who we are proud to say we are: sons who were there for their parents when they died just as they had been there for us all of those years when they were still alive.

At the burial site, it's the Jewish tradition that before the service ends, the casket is to be lowered into the ground and dirt be tossed on to the plain, pine box by the individual mourners as they leave the internment site, a heart-wrenching finish to an extremely emotional good-bye. Often words are spoken at this moment. I told my mother that I loved her and told her to say "Hello" to Beez (my father).

Now my parents are together in heaven just like they were together for nearly 70 years on Earth. My brother and I miss them both, terribly; they were great parents. And it is because of their greatness that Richard and I will persevere. They wouldn't want us — or expect us — to act any differently. We'll never forget all that they did for us. We owe them everything.

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

SPORTS

Hiring a Coach

FROM PAGE 13

staff members at Churchill applied for the job, but if they had the "whole dynamic of the interview process would have changed."

THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE wasn't without any hiccups. Kelley, who had been involved with coaching searches before but never as an athletic director, admits the whole process was "nerve wracking."

"You have to look into a crystal ball and take that one little opportunity of a resume and an interview and make a character decision based off that," said Kelley. "But when you do an interview of this sort, it's not just the athletic director's decision. A lot of people have input."

Still, when all was said and done, the Churchill administration had accomplished its goal of having a coach in place by the holidays and one that is already implementing an offseason workout program.

"You're in a good place now," one parent told Allen at the conclusion of Thursday's meeting.

The coach just smiled and laughed, "I'm finding that out more and more."

Playoffs for the Baby

FROM PAGE 12

there is no situation, scares her players at times.

"In practice she'll try to come up and bump you and everyone backs away," joked senior center and Delaware signee Chelsea Craig.

Wootton is currently enjoying one of its best starts (10-1) in recent memory. Coincidentally, Wootton's best season in program history, a 20-4 record in 2006-2007, also came in a season in which Dyer was pregnant. That year, the team was led by a number of seniors, namely Carolyn Weis, Lindsay Weiner, and Katelyn Godstrey.

THAT TRIO, along with a senior-laden supporting cast, rallied around Dyer and won the Patriots first division championship in program history. It set the foundation for a Wootton program that has shaken off its losing reputation and become a perennial threat to win the 4A West. This year's lineup includes four players from the 2006-2007 squad that are now seniors — Craig, forward Sarah Bolmer, and guards Kara Vetrano and Katie Kobylski — who have assumed the same leadership roles as the players they looked up to two years ago. Along with Healy, they are the supports that Dyer leans on in this surprisingly familiar situation.

"We have great team chemistry and a great group of senior leaders like last time I was pregnant," Dyer said. "We're a very cohesive, family-like team and it's been a very positive experience."

The Patriots' togetherness will be tested Friday night at Churchill when they take on the Bulldogs as part of a boy/girl doubleheader. The boy's game will take place at 5:15 p.m. with the girl's game to follow afterwards. Last season, the Lady Bulldogs upset bitter rival Wootton twice in the regular season in close games, but Wootton eliminated the Bulldogs from the playoffs in a 58-55 overtime thriller.

With a baby on the way, Dyer can't help but think about the ramifications this Friday's match-up could have on her and her team down the line.

"I keep telling the girls to win the division so we'll have a bye and I have more time to come back [for the playoffs]," she said.

SCHOOL NOTES

The Montgomery County Board of Education designated **Inauguration Day**, Jan. 20, as a holiday in Montgomery County Public Schools. All schools and offices will be closed. The board also noted that Inauguration Day will be designated as a school system holiday in all future years when Inauguration Day occurs.

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