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Jesse Dinkin of Boy Scout Troop 439 out of Kensington, Md. holds up a bag of trash collected during the 21st annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup on Saturday, April 4. Among the trash that Troop 439 collected at the Old Angler's Inn portion of the C&O Canal National Historical Park was a dog collar, two footballs, a diaper, an air mattress and air pump, numerous beer bottles and soda cans, and a length of phone wire.

11-Year-Old Girl on 'Jeopardy! Kids Week'

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PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

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NEWS

Hauling Trash

Volunteers collect more than 100 tons of trash from the Potomac River.

BY AARON STERN
THE ALMANAC

As volunteers stood beside the Potomac River filling large plastic bags with trash and litter, a steady breeze rose to a strong gust of wind. A sharp, hollow cracking sound split through the air and the volunteers looked up. Fifty feet or so away a large limb on a tree splintered from the

took part in the Alice Ferguson Foundation's 21st annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup on Saturday, April 4.

"Chicken liver lids seem to be the order of the day," said C&O Canal National Historical Park deputy superintendent Brian Carlstrom as he strode through the Swain's Lock campground moments after the volunteers there had paused to watch the snapped tree limb fall. Commonly used as bait, fishermen had left the discarded cans and lids about the campground, said Carlstrom. Beer bottles and cans, cigarette butts, paper cups, Styrofoam floats, a small rug and a muddy, water-logged backpack were among the debris that the Swain's Lock volunteers picked up Saturday morning.

"This isn't as bad as some of the other places I've been to" in past years, said Wallace.

MORE THAN 102 tons of trash was pulled from the river over the weekend at more than 400 cleanup sites throughout Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. during the annual cleanup that is sponsored



PHOTO BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

Eleven-year-old Tomasc Cunha-Benjamin and his friend Jacob Mullin, both of Bethesda, collect trash on Saturday, April 4 during the 21st annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup.

by the Alice Ferguson Foundation, a Maryland-based non-profit whose mission is to foster a connection between people and the environment.

Jim Heins, a Kensington resident and a member of the C&O Canal Association, organized nine sites in the Canal on Saturday and — perhaps because of the high winds — said that roughly two-thirds of the 179 registered volunteers showed up that morning. Many of those volunteers were children, said Heins.

"They're the most important group to get involved — when we're gone they're the ones that are going to be doing all this" said Heins. "To me it's the kids that it's all about. They're the answer. If you can get them committed and interested that's what it's all about."

Students can get Student Service Learning hour credits for participating in the cleanup, but Heins said that he makes sure they aren't just punching a clock by putting

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"To me it's the kids that it's all about. They're the answer. If you can get them committed and interested that's what it's all about."

— Jim Heins, a member of the C&O Canal Association

trunk, crashing against other limbs and showering smaller branches into the river.

"Good thing we weren't over there," said volunteer Bill Wallace.

The winds died down as the morning went along, and volunteers at several cleanup sites throughout Potomac

What Is ... An Amazing West Coast Vacation?

11-year-old girl competes on "Jeopardy."

Michelle Schrier spent three days in Los Angeles last week. She took a bus tour of the city and saw Grauman's Chinese Theatre, the Walk of Fame, the Kodak Theater, the farmers market, and the famous La Brea Tar Pits. She also saw Alex Trebek, up close and personal. That's because the 11-year-old Schrier's trip to Los Angeles with her family was for her to compete on "Jeopardy! Kids Week."

"He's not as intimidating as he seems on TV," said Michelle of the show's host.

"She was watching "Jeopardy!" on TV [one day] and there must have been an announcement or a tagline ... she was like, 'Mommy, I want to do that,'" said her mother Leslie Schrier of how the saga began.

Michelle took an online test, and from that was selected for New York City for an on-site test, then in mid-March she got the call that she would be heading to Los Angeles.

"It's very exciting, I've never been off the east coast so this will be quite an adventure," Michelle said as she prepared to head out for the taping on Monday, March 30. Unlike the regular version of the show where winners advance to the following day's competition, "Jeopardy! Kids Week" competitors compete in just one show, said Leslie Schrier; winners can get up to \$10,000.

A trivia magnet, Michelle reads various Almanacs and has always absorbed that type of knowledge very easily, said her mother.

"Geography is one of my niches,

you could say, as well as Broadway musicals and Greek mythology, and also literature as well," said Michelle.

Michelle's favorite subjects at Eastern Middle School, where she is in the magnet program, include math, social studies, and a media production curriculum through which she learns about — radio, film, TV, and advertising. She said she wants to be a news reporter or

a journalist while waiting her big break on Broadway.

For now Michelle and the Jeopardy people are keeping a tight lid on the results — Michelle couldn't comment on the types of questions that were presented — but she did say that she was pleased with her performance.

"I thought that I did pretty well," she said. "We all did amazing, we

"It's very exciting, I've never been off the east coast so this will be quite an adventure."

— Michelle Schrier



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEOPARDY! PRODUCTIONS, INC.

Michelle Schrier of Potomac with Alex Trebek during a taping last week of "Jeopardy! Kids Week."

were all winners for making it this far."

Michelle Schrier's appearance

on "Jeopardy! Kids Week" will air on ABC on July 15.

— AARON STERN



Sean Claxton and Constantine Bourdeaux square off in a game of pool at the Potomac Community Center on Friday, April 3. That evening the Potomac Community Center hosted the last Club Friday of the school year. The popular weekly social event just wrapped up its 19th school year and is set to return in the fall.



At right, Wayside third-graders Ryan Lewis and Caroline Altman and Beverly Farms fourth-grader Isabel Rayner were among a room full of students who watched the Disney channel.

PHOTOS BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

Food, Young Folks and Fun

Local students pack the Potomac Community Center for final Club Friday of the year.

Watching hundreds of elementary and middle school students run through the Potomac Community Center — bouncing from dodgeball in the gym to ice cream sundaes in the rec room, to music and dancing in the social hall, then hurtling on towards television, snacks, ping pong, pool, video games, bingo, movies — can be a lot for those charged with supervising the frenetic activity.

“It’s wild,” said Sarah Ross, a recreation assistant at the Potomac Community Center. “They have a lot of fun.”

Roughly 300 local students showed up for the last Club Friday of the season, significantly fewer than the 500 or so that attend the busiest nights, said Ross. Since its inception in 1990, Club Friday has become



Cold Spring Elementary fifth-graders Josh Parker and Andrew Cho share a chair and eat taffy at the last Club Friday of the year at the Potomac Community Center on Friday, April 3.

the model youth entertainment activity in the county’s Recreation Department and is popular enough that it has a waiting list. Each Friday night hundreds of children pack the community center to play games, sports, dance, watch movies, eat at the snack bar and socialize in a safe environment supervised by the community center’s staff and parent volunteers.

“Because its fun to get your energy out and dance,” said Cold Spring Elementary School third-grader Christina Maffeo when asked why she goes to Club Friday.

“I just like to hang out with friends,” said Cold Spring Elementary fifth-grader Andrew Cho as he and friend Josh Parker ate taffy.

The weekly event is over for the school year, but signups are available for next school year. For more information call the Potomac Community Center at 240-777-6960.

— AARON STERN



Cabin John Middle School sixth-graders Kelly Ervin and Sedef Berk enjoy their free do-it-yourself ice cream sundaes at the last Club Friday of the year.



Sodas galore were on hand in the snack room.



A Nerds exchange and impromptu gossip session broke out briefly in between two ping pong tables.

Thwarted Invasion May Have Been Prank

An incident that occurred on Rock Run Drive last month that residents believed to be a foiled home invasion attempt may have just been teenage pranks, police said in a letter to members of the affected communities on Monday, April 6.

On Friday, March 20, a Rock Run family was at home when the doorbell rang shortly after 9 p.m. When the occupants opened the door no one appeared, but upon looking through their windows saw three men dressed in dark clothes and ski masks in their yard watching the doorway. Police were called but no suspects were apprehended in relation to that incident. The residents told The Almanac then that the behavior of the masked individuals coupled with last year's string of home invasions in the area made them fear they were about to have their home invaded.

Two separate groups of teenagers were found by 1st District officers of the Montgom-

ery County Police Department on Friday, April 4 between 9 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. after police responded to calls of anonymous doorbell rings and masked individuals in different locations in Potomac. In the first incident three 14-15 year-olds were found near the 10500 block of Bridle Lane after police responded to a call about an anonymous doorbell ring, and the teens admitted to pulling the prank. The second incident occurred around 12:30 when police responded to a call on Gainsborough Road of individuals in ski masks.

"Within a short time span, officers located all four individuals near the intersection of Tuckerman Lane and Willowbrook Drive," wrote Capt. Darryl McSwain, 1st District Commander in the community letter. "Each subject was wearing a ski mask at the time and all were identified as juveniles (16-17 years)," McSwain continued. "They too mentioned their purpose for being out that late was to conduct

pranks. Officers made contact with parents regarding the actions of the juveniles. Two of the four in this group live near Brickyard Road, while the other two are from the Gainsborough area."

"Although we do not have direct evidence that ties any of the juveniles to the previously reported Rock Run incident, there is good circumstantial evidence to suggest the same," McSwain wrote.

Police did not immediately respond before The Almanac's deadline to queries regarding possible connections between these similar incidents or to car break-ins in the River Falls neighborhood that have taken place over the last year.

McSwain urged community members to continue common home safety practices and to contact police regarding any suspicious activity in their neighborhoods.

— AARON STERN

CRIME REPORT

Criminal activities reported by the Montgomery County Police Department through March 24.

An **attempted burglary** from a construction site occurred in the 10400 block of Willowbrook Drive in Potomac between Friday, March 20 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, March 21 9 a.m.⁹ Entry unsuccessful, nothing taken.

An **attempted burglary** occurred in the 10600 block of Rock Run Drive in Potomac on Friday, March 20 between 9 p.m. and 9:20 p.m. The victim was home when the suspects rang the doorbell. The victim did not answer the door but looked outside and saw the three suspects wearing ski masks. Victim notified the police and the suspects fled.

A **garage burglary** occurred in the 13900 block

of Grey Colt Drive in North Potomac overnight between Monday, March 23 and Tuesday, March 24. Garage door left open, wallet taken from unlocked vehicle.

A **theft from a vehicle** occurred in the unit block of Apricot Court in North Potomac between Thursday, March 19 at 9:30 p.m. and Friday, March 20 at 6:30 a.m. Unlocked vehicle, GPS unit taken.



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PHOTOS BY AARON STERN/THE ALMANAC

A volunteer hauls a bag of trash during the cleanup at Pennyfield Lockhouse.



Danny Filer, the volunteer coordinator for the C&O Canal National Historical Park, reviews his list of volunteers at Pennyfield Lock along the C&O Canal on Saturday, April 4 during the 21st annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup.



Representatives of Boy Scout Troop 439 from Kensington, who cleaned up at Old Angler's Inn on the C&O Canal: Jim Morris, Jesse Dinkin, Troop leader Jay Diskie, Reed Diskie, Laura Diskie, and Joe Shuler.

Volunteers Collect Tons of Trash from River

FROM PAGE 3

meaningful responses in the student reflection portion of their service forms.

"If they're doing community service they ought to know why and get something out of it," he said.

Eleven-year-old Tomasc Cunha-Benjamin and his friend Jacob Mullin, both of Bethesda, said they were helping out because it was important to them to keep the environment clean.

"I'm doing this because I'm kind of a kid environmentalist," said Cunha-Benjamin.

THE HEAVY RAINS of the days leading up to the cleanup had the Potomac river and the streams that feed it running high and also made getting to some trash more difficult. As he carried a box full of snacks and drinks to the volunteers, Dan LaFrance of the National Park Service noted that a small sandbar normally accessible by foot

couldn't be reached that morning.

"There's a tire and things out there but you can't get there," he said.

Among the stranger items that were pulled from the river over the weekend at cleanup sites throughout the region were a safe filled with concrete, skate

"I'm doing this because I'm kind of a kid environmentalist."

— Tomasc Cunha-Benjamin

board ramps, a soccer trophy, and a gas mask made into a bong, according to the Alice Ferguson Web site. For more information on the annual cleanup, including updated statistics and information about the Alice Ferguson Foundation visit potomaccleanup.org.

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.

MONDAY/APRIL 13

Voice Matters. 6:30 p.m. at the Wellness Community, 5430 Gosvenor Lane, Bethesda. Victoria Wells, D.C. State Government Relations Director, American Cancer Society, will explain how to effectively communicate with elected officials about the legislative needs of people impacted by cancer. Reservations, 301-493-5002.

SATURDAY/APRIL 18

Humane Society Adoption. Noon-3 p.m. at MCHS Foster Office, 603 S. Stonestreet Ave., Rockville. Visit www.mchumane.org for more.

SATURDAY/APRIL 25

Scholar. 11 a.m. at Beth Shalom, 11825 Seven Locks Road. Rabbi Ronen Neuwirth will talk. Free. 301-279-7010.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 29

Autism Resource Fair. 3-7 p.m. at Universities at Shady Grove, 9630

Gudelsky Drive, Rockville. Free. Learn about recreation, employment, behavior services for individuals with autism and their families. 240-777-1216.

ONGOING

The **C&O Canal Trust**, in partnership with the C&O Canal National Historical Park, seeks energetic and community-minded individuals and organizations to complete maintenance and conservation projects throughout the park during the upcoming C&O Canal Pride Days. Locations and dates are as follows: April 18 at Great Falls, April 25 at Brunswick and Lander, and May 2 at Williamsport and Hancock. For more

information or to get involved, visit www.canaltrust.org, e-mail peggie_gaul@partner.nps.gov or 301-714-2233.

To become a volunteer Bike Patrol on the C & O Canal, send an e-mail to Norman Liebow at Liebow@comcast.net or 301-714-2218.

Writers from the community are encouraged to participate in downtown Bethesda's annual literary festival. Young adults in grades 9-12 and adults age 18 and over can write a 500-word short story or essay about what is the one thing in their life they would change if they had the opportunity to do it all

over again, for the Bethesda Literary Festival's Writing Contest. Additionally, young writers grades K-8 can share their insight in the youth writing contest featuring the topic, "What Would You do to Make the World a Better Place." Entries for both contests must be received by Friday, March 20 by 5 p.m. Completed entry forms must be submitted with each essay. For entry forms, call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

The Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Blood Services Region of the **American Red Cross** is seeking **volunteers** to assist its blood collections staff at blood

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LET'S TALK Real Estate

by
Michael Matese

PICKING A WINNER

It is a well-known axiom that location is one of the most important elements in the value of a property. Let's take that one step further. A good investment would be a sound property in an area that is expected to increase in value in the future. Buying into an underdeveloped area where properties are being upgraded is one way of transacting a successful real estate investment.

Trend is everything. The trick is not to get in so early that you are one of the pioneers, but early enough that there is still plenty of room for the area to appreciate. Being a pioneer is fine if you are a gambler who can afford to be patient. It is safer, though, to buy into an area after the restoration trend is unmistakably established.

A neighborhood that is a good candidate for restoration must have an intrinsic location advantage, such as being in a school district with high test scores, or in a walk-to-work business district. It must also have homes that meet basic standards of quality.

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CALENDAR

To have community events listed free in *The Potomac Almanac*, send e-mail with the items 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.

THURSDAY/APRIL 9

Blues Dance. 8:30 p.m. at Ballroom Annex at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Learn the dances and then enjoy music from a DJ. \$8/person.

Basket Making for Children. 1 p.m. at Locust Grove, 7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda. Children 7-12 can learn to weave a paper basket out of grocery bags. \$6/child. Visit www.parkpass.org or 301-299-1990.

Bunnyland. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. Families can enjoy rides, egg hunts, see live chicks and bunnies and more. \$7/child, \$5/adult. Bring own basket. Visit www.butlersorchard.com or 301-428-0444.

FRIDAY/APRIL 10

Contra and Square Dance. 7:30-11:30 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom in Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Enjoy live music to dance. \$9. Visit www.fsgw.org for more.

Family Splash. 1 p.m. at Locust Grove, 7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda. Learn about some underwater animals. Children 6 and up. Registration required. Visit www.parkpass.org or 301-299-1990.

Bethesda Art Walk. 6-9 p.m., meet at Bethesda Metro Center. Free. Browse paintings, sculpture, photography and more. Visit www.bethesda.org or 301-215-6660.

Bunnyland. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. Families can enjoy



Audubon String Quartet will perform Saturday, April 18 at 8 p.m. at Westmoreland Congregational UCC Church. Free, donations accepted. Visit www.washingtonconservatory.org for more.

rides, egg hunts, see live chicks and bunnies and more. \$7/child, \$5/adult. Bring own basket. Visit www.butlersorchard.com or 301-428-0444.

SATURDAY/APRIL 11

Music Performance. 8 p.m. at Music Center at Strathmore. Violinist Nicolas Kendall will perform with the National Philharmonic. \$29-\$79/person. Visit www.strathmore.org or 301-581-5100.

Art Exhibit. Noon-5 p.m. at Yellow Barn Gallery in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See paintings by Jessica Rush. Free. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com or 301-371-5593.

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 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 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 at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$18/person. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Music Performance. 8 p.m. at Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Hear the National Philharmonic and Nicholas Kendall. \$29/adult; child free. Visit www.strathmore.org or 301-581-5100.

Bunnyland. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. Families can enjoy rides, egg hunts, see live chicks and bunnies and more. \$7/child, \$5/adult. Bring own basket. Visit www.butlersorchard.com or 301-428-0444.



Heidi, played by Tara Giordano, and Peter, played by Chris Wilson, enjoy the view as she tends goats. "Heidi" is playing at Imagination Stage through May 17. Visit www.imaginationstage.org for more.

0444.

SUNDAY/APRIL 12

Art Exhibit. Noon-5 p.m. at Yellow Barn Gallery in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See paintings by Jessica Rush. Free. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com or 301-371-5593.

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 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 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.

Contra and Square Dance. 7-10:30 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom in Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Enjoy live music to dance. \$12/nonmember; \$9 to member. Visit www.fsgw.org for more.

Champagne Sunday Brunch. 11 a.m. at Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Hear music by the artist in residence while enjoying brunch. \$42/person; \$15/child. Reservations required, 301-581-5253.

Easter Egg Hunt. 11:45 a.m. at Geneva Presbyterian Church, 11931 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, on the playground behind the church immediately following the 10:30 morning service. There will be three different kinds of Easter Egg hunts in three different areas of the playground for three different age groups of children, from toddlers to teenagers. 301-424-4346.

MONDAY/APRIL 13

Brownie Try-it: Earth and Sky. 10:30 a.m. at Locust Grove, 7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda. Brownies can explore the watershed. \$7.50/person. Visit www.parkpass.org or 301-299-1990.

Bunnyland. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. Families can enjoy rides, egg hunts, see live chicks and bunnies and more. \$7/child, \$5/adult. Bring own basket. Visit www.butlersorchard.com or 301-428-0444.

Tuesday, April 14. 10 a.m. at Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road. Learn about what dogs are saying. Free. Registration required, www.yourdogfriend.info or 301-983-5913.

Bug Walk. 1 p.m. at River Center at Lockhouse 8, 7906 Riverside Ave., Cabin John. Discover the animals that people can find along the Potomac River. Visit www.potomac.org.

Reception. 6-8 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. "Iconic Glen Echo Park" features Daniel Schreiber's photographs of historic Glen Echo Park. 301-634-2222 or visit www.glenechopark.org.

Art Exhibit. Noon-5 p.m. at Yellow Barn Gallery in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See paintings by Pat Liebowitz. Free. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com or 301-371-5593.

Critiques and Coffee. 10 a.m. at Photoworks studio in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Bring a photo and get some critique from peers. Free. Visit www.glenechophotoworks.org or 301-229-7930.

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 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 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.

Tiny Tot. 10 a.m. at Puppet Co. in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$5/person. Watch "Clowning Around." Visit www.thepuppetco.org or 301-634-5380.

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

Blast From the Past. 7:30 p.m. at Winston Churchill High School, 11300 Gainsborough Road. Enjoy a rock and roll revue. \$20/adult; \$14/student. Visit www.churchhills.org or 301-469-1243 for matinee times.

StoryTheatre Series. 10:15 a.m. at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Watch "Magpie." \$7/person. Visit www.imaginationstage.org or 301-280-1660.

Monday, April 13. 10:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Watch "Magpie." \$7/person. Visit www.imaginationstage.org or 301-280-1660.

MONDAY/APRIL 13

Brownie Try-it: Earth and Sky. 10:30 a.m. at Locust Grove, 7777 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda. Brownies can explore the watershed. \$7.50/person. Visit www.parkpass.org or 301-299-1990.

Bunnyland. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. Families can enjoy rides, egg hunts, see live chicks and bunnies and more. \$7/child, \$5/adult. Bring own basket. Visit www.butlersorchard.com or 301-428-0444.

Tuesday, April 14. 10 a.m. at Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road. Learn about what dogs are saying. Free. Registration required, www.yourdogfriend.info or 301-983-5913.

Bug Walk. 1 p.m. at River Center at Lockhouse 8, 7906 Riverside Ave., Cabin John. Discover the animals that people can find along the Potomac River. Visit www.potomac.org.

Reception. 6-8 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. "Iconic Glen Echo Park" features Daniel Schreiber's photographs of historic Glen Echo Park. 301-634-2222 or visit www.glenechopark.org.

Art Exhibit. Noon-5 p.m. at Yellow Barn Gallery in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See paintings by Pat Liebowitz. Free. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com or 301-371-5593.

Critiques and Coffee. 10 a.m. at Photoworks studio in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Bring a photo and get some critique from peers. Free. Visit www.glenechophotoworks.org or 301-229-7930.

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 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 or 301-320-1400.

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Swing Dance. 8 p.m.-midnight at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$18/person. Visit www.glenechopark.org for more.

Music Performance. 8 p.m. at Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Hear the National Philharmonic and Nicholas Kendall. \$29/adult; child free. Visit www.strathmore.org or 301-581-5100.

Bunnyland. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Butler's Orchard, 22200 Davis Mill Road, Germantown. Families can enjoy rides, egg hunts, see live chicks and bunnies and more. \$7/child, \$5/adult. Bring own basket. Visit www.butlersorchard.com or 301-428-0444.

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SUNDAY/APRIL 15

The Language of Dogs. 3-5 p.m. at Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road. Learn about what dogs are saying. Free. Registration required, www.yourdogfriend.info or 301-983-5913.

Bug Walk. 1 p.m. at River Center at Lockhouse 8, 7906 Riverside Ave., Cabin John. Discover the animals that people can find along the Potomac River. Visit www.potomac.org.

Reception. 6-8 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. "Iconic Glen Echo Park" features Daniel Schreiber's photographs of historic Glen Echo Park. 301-634-2222 or visit www.glenechopark.org.

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Tiny Tot. 10 a.m. at Puppet Co. in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$5/person. Watch "Clowning Around." Visit www.thepuppetco.org or 301-634-5380.

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

Blast From the Past. 7:30 p.m. at Winston Churchill High School, 11300 Gainsborough Road. Enjoy a rock and roll revue. \$20/adult; \$14/student. Visit www.churchhills.org or 301-469-1243 for matinee times.

StoryTheatre Series. 10:15 a.m. at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Watch "Magpie." \$7/person. Visit www.imaginationstage.org or 301-280-1660.

Monday, April 13. 10:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Watch "Magpie." \$7/person. Visit www.imaginationstage.org or 301-280-1660.

Heidi, played by Tara Giordano, and Peter, played by Chris Wilson, enjoy the view as she tends goats. "Heidi" is playing at Imagination Stage through May 17. Visit www.imaginationstage.org for more.

0444.

SUNDAY/APRIL 12

Art Exhibit. Noon-5 p.m. at Yellow Barn Gallery in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. See paintings by Jessica Rush. Free. Visit www.yellowbarnstudio.com or 301-371-5593.

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 or 301-320-1400.

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WEDNESDAY/APRIL 22

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Hear John Kour, the artist in residence. \$10/person. Visit www.strathmore.org or 301-581-5100.

THURSDAY/APRIL 23

Literary Luncheon Series. Literary Luncheon Series continues with Elizabeth Noble at 11:30 a.m. at Strathmore Hall Arts Center in the Mansion, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Luncheon to follow. \$25/lecture and lunch, \$20 lecture only. FOLMC members: \$22/lunch, \$18 lecture only.

Blues Dance. 8:30 p.m. at Ballroom Annex at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Learn the dances and then enjoy music from a DJ. \$8/person.

FRIDAY/APRIL 24

Contra and Square Dance. 7:30-11:30 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom in Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Enjoy live music to dance. \$9. Visit www.fsgw.org for more.

Cajun/Zydeco Dance. 8 p.m. at Bumper Car Pavilion in Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Price to be determined.

Blast From the Past. 7:30 p.m. at Winston Churchill High School, 11300 Gainsborough Road. Enjoy a rock and roll revue. \$20/adult; \$14/student. Visit www.churchhills.org or 301-469-1243 for matinee times.

SATURDAY/APRIL 25

Living With an Out Of Control Dog. 2-4 p.m. at Potomac



Bernadette Peters will be at Strathmore's Spring Gala on Saturday, April 18. Visit www.strathmore.org for more on the event.

YOGA CLASSES IN POTOMAC

For Daytime Classes

Kula Yoga
St. James Episcopal Church
11815 Seven Locks Road
Monday - Friday
9:30am



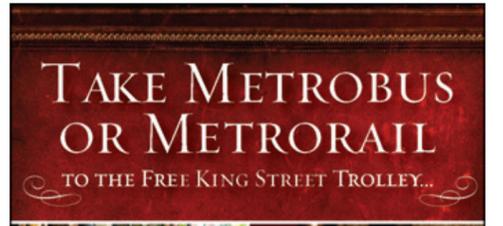
For Weekend & Evening Classes

Hamsa Yoga
St. Andrews Episcopal School
8804 Postoak Road
Mon & Wed 6:30 & 8:00pm
Thurs 6:30pm
Sat 9:00am

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



SHOP,

THIS WEEK IN POTOMAC

Spring Fling at PCC

Minds in Motions Childcare will host a Spring Fling for area children at the Potomac Community Center on Friday, April 10 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Potomac Community Center. Friday is during spring break for Montgomery County Public Schools.

There will be a moon bounce, face painting, arts and crafts, dance contest, food to eat and everything is free. All are invited. For more details call 240-429-2813.

'Get Golf Ready in 5 Days'

The Montgomery County Revenue Authority (MCRA) has started a new program called "Get Golf Ready in 5 Days." The program targets adults, who have little or no experience with the game of golf, to learn the game through five small group introductory lessons from PGA Professionals for \$99 per person. The MCRA golf courses are the only courses in the county to offer this program.

During the lessons, adults will be given basic skills instruction as well as information regarding the background of the game's rules, etiquette, and values. The program is currently offered at the Falls Road, Hampshire Greens, Laytonsville, Little Bennett, Needwood, Northwest, Poolesville, and Rattlewood courses.

Berliner's Plan for Small Business

Following a meeting he convened of Montgomery County economic development leaders in an attempt to find relief for the county's small businesses, County Council Vice President Roger Berliner (D-Potomac, Chevy Chase, Bethesda) has suggested to the county's Executive Branch to deposit county money in local banks, who in turn would use the increased liquidity to help small

SEE THIS WEEK IN POTOMAC. PAGE 12

NEWS



Cleaning-up

PHOTOS BY MARY KIMM/THE ALMANAC
Black vultures feast last week on a deer carcass by MacArthur Boulevard.



YMCA Youth & Family Services
www.ymcawashdc.org

Suburban Hospital
www.suburbanhospital.org

Mastering the Art of Encouragement

with Dr. Lew Losoncy

en•cour•age, vt., 1. to inspire with courage, spirit or confidence, 2. to stimulate by guidance, approval.

This workshop will help parents develop positive strategies for building cooperation and setting limits with respect.

- > "The process of encouraging others is usually very subtle and unintentional"
- > "You can't pick someone up, by putting them down"
- > "It is harmful for people to evaluate themselves in terms of performance"

Dr. Lew Losoncy, a psychologist, has conducted Encouragement Programs in all 50 US states, most of the Canadian provinces and throughout Australia and New Zealand. He has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Psychology Today* and *Working Woman*, and has appeared on CBS *This Morning* and CNN. "Dr. Lew" co-authored *The Skills of Encouragement* with the late Dr. Don Dinkmeyer (founder of the **Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP)**), an Adlerian parenting education model offered through YMCA Youth & Family Services.

Thursday,
April 30, 2009

Suburban Hospital Auditorium

6:30 pm Registration
(Please allow time for parking)
7 - 9 pm Seminar

8600 Old Georgetown Rd., Bethesda, MD

Registration Recommended

301.896.3939 option 2

\$15/person, \$25/couple.
Fee waivers available.

Contact hours available (2 hours, \$10 fee): Maryland State Office of Child Care: Core of Knowledge areas of Child Development and Community.

All proceeds fund the prevention services of YMCA Youth & Family Services. Traducción al Español disponible. Se tiene que registrar con anticipación. Reasonable disability accommodations available on request. Please contact Pam Mintz at 301.229.1347 by April 24.

♿ ♻

ALMANAC
The Gazette
Washington Parent
SPECTRUM PRINTING & GRAPHICS

WASHINGTON KNOWS...

For over 50 years, McLean School has been the only school that **CELEBRATES** each student's individual learning style.

WE'VE DONE IT LONGER. WE DO IT BEST.

ADMISSION OPEN HOUSE

Classroom Tour and
SUMMEREDGE COFFEE

Fun-Paced Summer Learning Exhibits
9:30 am Wednesday, April 15

ADMISSION OPEN HOUSE

9:00 am Wednesday, May 13

McLEAN SCHOOL of MARYLAND 8224 LOCHINVER LANE POTOMAC, MARYLAND 20854

240.395.0698 admission@mcleanschool.org www.mcleanschool.org

McLEAN SCHOOL MAKES EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE FOR A BROAD RANGE OF LEARNERS IN K-12

PETS



Binky is a two-year-old, 7 pound, neutered Chihuahua. He is a great dog and could be a goodwill ambassador for his breed. He's happy, friendly towards people and other dogs and absolutely loves cuddling. Binky will bring a little ray of sunshine into his adopter's life.

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 301-572-4729 or write to PAW, P.O. Box 1074, Greenbelt, MD 20768.



Max is a two-year-old, neutered DSH cat. Max was abandoned by his former owner and found his way into rescue. He's healthy, social and loves human attention. Max will shower a kind adopter with affection and be a great addition to any cat lover's home.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

drives and blood donor centers. To register for training, or for more information, please call the American Red Cross Volunteer Office at 1-800-272-0094, ext. 1, or e-mail karlofft@usa.redcross.org.

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 and visitors to the site need only type in their address and zip code.

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. To schedule an interview visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vasap or 240-777-1355.

JSSA (Jewish Social Service Agency), a non-sectarian community agency, is seeking volunteers over the age of 18 to help enhance the quality of life of individuals and families facing life-threatening or terminal illness. The next training course is scheduled for Mondays, Feb. 23, March 2, March 9, March 23, and March 30, from 5:30-9 p.m. at JSSA's Montrose Road office, 6123 Montrose Road, Rockville. For more information, contact Amy Kaufman Goott, Volunteer Coordinator for JSSA Hospice and Transitions at 301-816-2650, agoott@jssa.org or visit JSSA on the web at www.jssa.org.

SCHOOL NOTES

To have an item listed mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com.

Susan Gleasen, a freshman majoring in nursing (BSN) and a resident of Potomac, was named to the dean's list at Marymount University.

Monique Marie Roebuck, Potomac resident, has earned a bachelor of science from Excelsior College.

Kindergarten orientation is taking place this year now through May 22.

Orientation is open to parents and their children who will be starting kindergarten in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in the 2009-10 school year. Children who will be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1, can enroll in kindergarten. Parents who are not certain which elementary school serves their area should call the MCPS Boundaries Office at 240-314-4710 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information about the kindergar-

ten program, call the Division of Early Childhood Programs and Services at 301-230-0691. The **MCPS Parent Academy** is offering a free parent workshop on getting your child ready for kindergarten. It will be held May 4 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Rosemont Middle School. Rosemont is located at 16400 Alden Ave. in Gaithersburg. Register online at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy/>

FAITH NOTES

Geneva Presbyterian Church, 11931 Seven Locks Road, Potomac, will hold a Maundy Thursday service on April 9 at 7 p.m. This will be a Communion service in which the story of the Lord's supper will be retold. Cellist Jenna Dalby will be a guest soloist. Child care will be provided. 301-424-4346.

The church will hold a Good Friday service on April 10 at 7 p.m. featuring the Lenten Drama, "For Such a One as

This," involving actors, soloists, choir and instrumentalists.

The church will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ with a Sunrise service at 6:15 a.m. Easter morning, April 12 in the garden sanctuary on the north lawn and at 10:30 a.m. with music featuring the Geneva Choir, the Bells of Geneva, the Pint-Size Praise Children's Chorus, the Children's Chimes, a trumpeter and a timpanist. 301-424-4346.



Canoeing, Swimming, Archery, the Zip Wire ... AND Confidence, Empathy, Trust, Friendship, Resilience. Learn them all plus a lot more during a Camp Greenway Summer.

Register now at http://www.madeira.org/today_at_madeira/campgreenway.aspx.



The Madeira School

8328 Georgetown Pike • McLean, Virginia 22102
703-556-8273 • www.madeira.org

THIS WEEK IN POTOMAC

FROM PAGE 10

businesses suffering due to the region's economic downturn.

Berliner convened the meeting in response to the increasing number of empty store fronts and retail holes in strip centers and malls that are appearing around Montgomery County.

For more information, contact Councilmember Berliner's office at 240-777-7828.

River Docents Needed

This summer, Potomac Conservancy seeks volunteer docents at the River Center at Lockhouse 8. Docents are representatives for the Conservancy on weekends from May through October at the River Center, and share their knowledge about the C&O Canal and the Potomac River with visitors. Potomac Conservancy will be happy to work with college students to receive internship or other class credit for volunteering. Expected commitment is one weekend a month. Docents must be at least 18 years old.

A docent meeting will be held on Sunday, April 19. New docents will be trained from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.; all current and past docents are invited to attend from 3:30 to 4 p.m. for a meet-and-greet.

For more information about being a docent or events at the River Center at Lockhouse 8, visit www.potomac.org or contact Bridget Chapin, River Center Coordinator, at chapin@potomac.org or 301-608-1188, 211.

Test Pet Ownership Knowledge

Do Montgomery County children and teens know what it means to be a responsible pet owner? That's the question being addressed by the Montgomery County Humane Society with the launch of two contests geared toward Montgomery County students in grades 2-12.

The first is an art contest for students in grades 2-5, who are being asked to illustrate one of the "Rules to Love By: 10 Commandments of Responsible Pet Ownership."

The "Rules to Love By" can be found on the Montgomery County Humane Society's Web site at: <http://www.mchumane.org/RulestoLoveby.shtml>.

All entries must be submitted between April 8-15.

A video contest for students in grades 6-12 asks participants to create a 60-second public service announcement that also illustrates the "Rules to Love By." Videos must be uploaded to YouTube by April 15. A sample public service announcement has been uploaded to the MCHS YouTube channel at: <http://www.youtube.com/MCHumane>.

Two \$50 gift certificates will be awarded to the winning videographers: one "Viewer's Choice" award and "Professional's Choice" award. Complete rules for both contests can be found at: <http://www.mchumane.org/PosterVideoContest09.shtml>.

Planning Board Needs Applicants

The Montgomery County Council is seeking applicants to fill one vacancy on the Montgomery County Planning Board. The term of John Robinson (Democrat) will expire on June 14. Robinson has served two terms and is not eligible for reappointment.

Applications must be received no later than 5 p.m., on Wednesday, April 22.

No more than three members of the Planning Board may be from the same political party, and all members must be residents and registered voters of Montgomery County when appointed. Members serve four-year terms and are limited to two full terms.

In addition to Robinson, the current board members are Chairman Royce Hanson, a Democrat; Joseph Alfandre, a Democrat; Jean B. Cryor, a Republican; and Amy Presley, a Republican. Annual compensation for board members currently is \$30,000.

The Planning Board serves as the Council's principal adviser on land use planning and community planning. Planning Board members also serve as commissioners of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

The Montgomery County Planning Board meets all day every Thursday and often meets on one other evening a week. The en

SEE THIS WEEK IN POTOMAC, PAGE 13

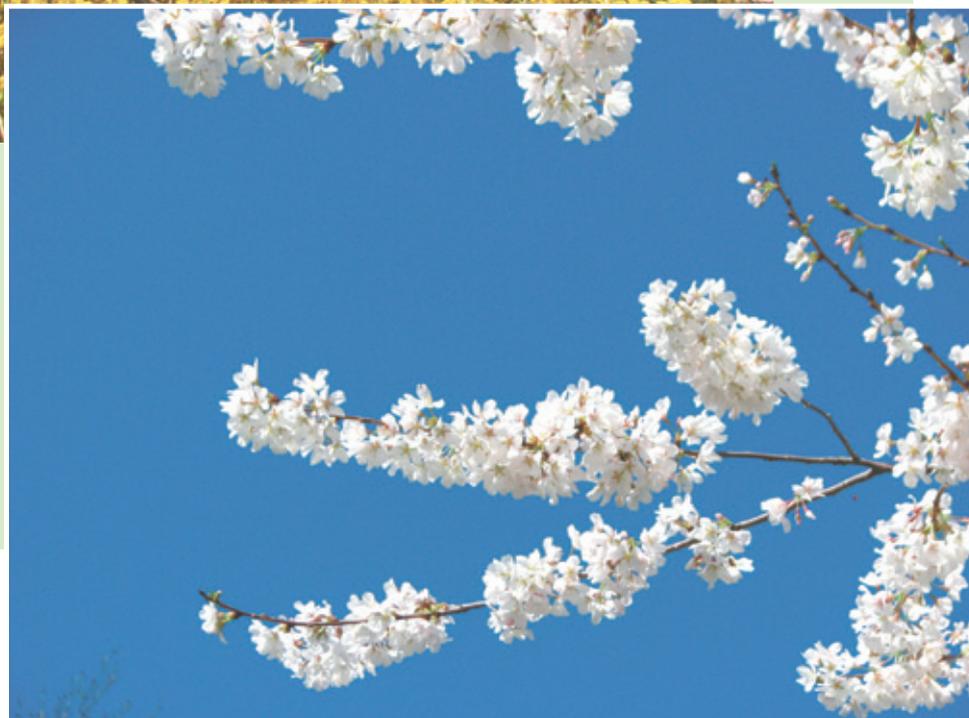
OUT & ABOUT



It's Spring

PHOTOS BY MARY KIMM/THE ALMANAC

Daffodils and lenten roses are among the few spring flowers that deer do not devour. Forsythia and cherry blossoms are out all over Potomac.



THIS WEEK

FROM PAGE 12

the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission meets the third Wednesday of every month. On average, a Planning Board member can expect to spend at least two full days a week in scheduled and informal meetings. Additionally, substantial time is required for preparatory work and other activities related to Planning Board responsibilities.

Letters expressing interest, including a resume listing professional and civic experience, should be addressed to: Council President Phil Andrews, County Council Office, Stella B. Werner Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850. Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 22. It is the Council's policy not to consider applications received after the deadline. After the April 22 closing date, Councilmembers will review the letters of application and select applicants for interviews to be held in June.

Letters of application are made public as part of the appointment process. The names of all applicants are published and available for public review and interviews are conducted in public. A resume of professional and civic experience should be included with letters of application. A financial statement of assets, debts, income and family property interests will be required of all applicants. Only the candidates appointed will be required to make their financial statements available to the public.

20 Years of Blast

Instant Replay will take place at Winston Churchill High School on April 17-18 and April 24-25 at 7:30 p.m. with Saturday matinees at 2:30 p.m. Visit the Web site: www.churchillhs.org for Ticket Order Forms

and Box Office Hours beginning in mid-March.

Canal Pride Days Coming

The C&O Canal Trust, in partnership with the C&O Canal National Historical Park, seeks community-minded individuals and organizations to complete over 35 revitalization and stewardship projects throughout the park during the upcoming C&O Canal Pride Days. Locations and dates are as follows: April 18 at Great Falls, April 25 at Brunswick and Lander, and May 2 at Williamsport and Hancock. All interested groups and individuals must pre-register so volunteers can be matched to jobs in advance. Sign up at <http://www.canaltrust.org/canalpride-app-2009.php> or by calling the C&O Canal Trust at 301-714-2233. Visit <http://www.canaltrust.org/canalpridedays-2009.php>

Celebrate Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day on Saturday, April 25, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., rain or shine at 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, Maryland (on the parking lot at the intersection of Hungerford Drive and Mannakee Street). Events and activities include: Taking a tour of the award-winning Recycling Center (Tour buses arrive/depart 850 Hungerford Drive every 15 minutes), Leafgro and compost bins available while supplies last, Make earth-friendly crafts and special drop-offs (for Montgomery County residents only) bring confidential paper for on-site shredding at no charge. For more information and to volunteer, go to: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/swstmpl.asp?url=/content/dep/solidwaste/education/earthday.asp>

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Athletic Renaissance

Resurgence of Wootton's athletic program has been far reaching.

BY MIKE WEINER
THE ALMANAC

Leaving a legacy is always on the mind of high school seniors as graduation approaches. Over at Wootton, those aspirations are already being realized.

The class of 2009 has established a number of new records and accomplishments throughout the course of its four years. At 660 students, they are the largest graduating class in Montgomery County and one of the largest in the nation, and they have been a part of many historic events in Wootton history.

They have set new academic landmarks, but one of its most influential accomplishments has been the return of Wootton athletics to the Montgomery County forefront. When this class entered the school three years ago in 2006, Wootton was considered to be just another in a series of intelligent but athletically disinclined Montgomery County schools.

In 2003-2004, the Patriot athletic program won only two division titles. Now, Wootton is one of the more well-rounded schools in academics and athletics that the county has to offer. Boasting a top-50 academic rating among public schools in the country, Wootton also fielded 11 division champions, eight regional champions, and one state champion in the 2007-2008 school year.

How did it happen?

SIX YEARS AGO, Wootton introduced its new principal, Dr. Michael Doran. Along with keeping up with Wootton's strong academic reputation, he placed a top priority on restoring the school to athletic prominence. When he arrived, Doran noticed that unlike Whitman and Churchill — whose



Next fall, senior Chelsea Craig will be the first girls' basketball player from Wootton to ever compete at the Division-I level when she takes the floor at Delaware.



Events like its Community Lacrosse Day have helped raise school spirit at Wootton, where the athletic program is in the midst of some unprecedented success.

student bodies are of similar demographics to Wootton — the Patriots did not field good teams across the board. An athlete himself, Doran wanted to see immediate improvement.

"We wanted the athletes to feel that they were cared about," Doran said. "We didn't want them to just go out and play in crappy uniforms on a crappy field."

The transformation started with the coaches. When Doran arrived, Wootton had a higher percentage of coaches that weren't teachers at the school than any other in the county. Doran set out to hire coaches that would also teach at the school so they could establish better lines of communication with their student-athletes.

"The first thing I wanted to do was to get as many people in the building that I could that are also coaches," he said. "I wanted people that are here all the time and really cared about Wootton because they also teach here, instead of having people that are here just because they want to coach."

Girls' basketball coach Maggie Dyer was one of those hires, and her program is one of many that has seen significant improvement. In Dyer's first season in 2003-2004, the girls' varsity team went 3-22. Five years later, the Lady Patriots are the three-time defending division champions. This season, the Lady Patriots won at least 18 games for the third-straight season, an unheard of achievement for the program en route to locking up that third-consecutive crown. Dyer, also a physical education teacher, has also helped guide multiple players into college basketball, a feat very new for the girls' basketball program. Now the main cog on this year's team, senior center Chelsea Craig has already signed a letter of intent to play basketball for the University of Delaware. Craig is the first player in the program's history to sign for a Division-I team.

"I think it really started with Dr. Doran," said Dyer. "When he came to the school, he really stressed athletic excellence and hired some great coaches."

GREG MALLING, the head coach of Wootton's varsity football team, was another coach thrown into a horrendous situation in 2005. He inherited a team that had finished 2-8 in the previous season.

In three years, Mallings has guided the

Patriots to their first non-losing season since 1991 (2007, 5-5) and their first winning season (2008, 7-3) since that same year. The mere mention of Wootton in the same sentence as playoffs is breathtaking for a school that had become accustomed to losing, and losing big. This year, though, a cast of 27 seniors got that elusive playoff berth — its first in 17 years.

At the outset of his tenure at Wootton, Mallings instituted the "B11" mindset, one that focuses on being the consummate teammate and giving up oneself for the betterment of the team. It is an approach that has rubbed off on the entire athletic department, and the results have shown. Cumulatively, Wootton athletics had a 76 percent winning percentage in 2007-2008, highest in the county.

"I think our student-athletes and fans have some swagger again and they should," Wootton Booster Club President Pete Rampp said. "Now, we expect to win and are surprised when we don't."

The upswing of the Wootton athletic program has not only affected the school, but the rest of the Wootton community as well. At a Friday night football game this past fall, it was customary to see a full house on



Behind talented senior quarterback Mike Mooney, the Wootton football program completed its dramatic turnaround by making the regional playoffs for the first time since 1991.

the new home team bleachers, recently installed with profits gained by the athletic department and put back into the program by the Wootton Booster Club. The community participation in Wootton athletics has given the school more opportunity to put an even bigger emphasis on athletics. Over the past few years, Wootton has redone the girls' locker room, added new lockers to the boys' locker room, redone the football field, and added new uniforms for almost every sport.

"Our entire community has been revitalized by the turnaround in our athletic department," Rampp said.

Many sports have taken the opportunity to give back to the community as well. Football, for example, has a Community Night, a barbecue right before the start of two-a-day practices that can be attended by anyone in the Wootton community. Boys' and girls' lacrosse also has a Community Lacrosse Day during which the varsity and junior varsity teams interact with students in the Wootton cluster. Each player takes a group of youngsters and teaches them a number of facets of the game, including shooting, passing, and stick-handling. It's events like these that get young students coming up in the Wootton cluster excited about coming to Wootton and being a Patriot, particularly at Cabin John Middle School, which sends a little over half of its students to Wootton and the rest to rival Churchill High School.

"More than half of CJMS matriculates to Wootton, but because of its close proximity to Churchill, and probably also due to Wootton's lack of athletic success [a while ago], support and spirit really tilted towards Churchill," Rampp said. "Walk through those same halls today and you see as much Wootton apparel worn as you do Churchill."

The seniors of Wootton High School have been at the center of this transformation. Unlike any class before them, they have seen not only the valleys of athletics at Wootton, but also the peaks. Doran, the commander of this turnaround, has seen his school transform from laughingstock to perennial all-around contender.

"We've gone from mediocre to very, very good," Doran said. "When kids walk around with their head held a little higher, there's nothing wrong with that."

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Remote, Universally



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I'm at a funny age, somewhere between accomplishment and retirement/entitlement. And though I truly believe I have plenty of good years ahead, it's the years I've left behind that concern me more. It seems like the tools I've used to reach this point in my life might not be the tools I'll need to reach the next points in my life. Specifically, I'm referring to technology, past and present versus future. As a few examples: utilizing a solar-powered calculator instead of pencil and paper and one's actual brain; replacing an eight-track tape player with a CD player and then replacing the CD with the upgraded benefits of a DVD; scrapping the VCR for the enhancements offered through TIVO/DVR; communicating via cell phone rather than with a cordless land line (and not having to be within 500 feet of its base); and switching to cable/digital/HD television and saying good-bye to antennas/rabbit ears (with or without the aluminum foil), among many others too numerous to mention but familiar to most.

These sorts of improvements, this kind of progress, I could handle; it seemed to follow in some sort of line with what had preceded it. Mentally, conceptually, even literally, I was able to connect the dots, so to speak and follow the progression of change. Things sort of built upon the hands-on experiences and instincts I had accumulated over time, those formative Wonder Bread-years where one sort of understands and appreciates a bit of what's going on and much of what has already gone on.

But now, the technology changes so quickly that some of the improvements seem not to be grounded in, or even based upon, the previously accepted technology of the day. It's like having to learn a new language/verbal means of communication when the previous language offered few familiar elements that were compatible; like going from English to Chinese to Navajo to Bushmen to signing for the hearing impaired. Other than them all being means of communication, it's not as if knowing something about one will help too much with the other. Your experiences will only clarify all that you don't know rather than some of what you might know. This is exactly how I feel about the technological revolution that is likely passing me by.

All my learning instincts (and many of my life's experiences) seem unsuitable for the environment in which I must now thrive in order to survive - or else. It sometimes feels like an episode of "Star Trek, Next Generation," where I'm stuck in a recurring time loop and can only succeed up to the point where I've already succeeded (something to do with the time-space continuum). It's sort of an upgraded "Peter Principle" of the 21st century. I feel like I've reached a point in my life where I've become successful but unfortunately for me, the kind of success I've had (and am having) does not make for a successful transition to the next level. It's as if I'm a victim of my own successful circumstances.

I can only do what I know how to do. But continuing to do that might not get me to the promised-to-no-one land. To succeed more, going forward, is going to require doing things with which I've had little success doing. I suppose I don't have to totally undue, I just have to find a way to redo, and redo in a way in which I've never done before; specifically using/embracing technological tools of the future trade, tools with which I have few instincts, limited experience, minimal aptitude and zero patience. And yet, if I don't embrace this new math, you can count me out, literally and figuratively. But I'm too young to be counted out. So either I change for the better or not change for the worse.

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

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