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# Potomac **ALMANAC**



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# NEWS

POTOMAC ALMANAC EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN  
703-778-9415 OR ALMANAC@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM  
SEE WWW.POTOMACALMANAC.COM



The Arts Fair at the Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo.

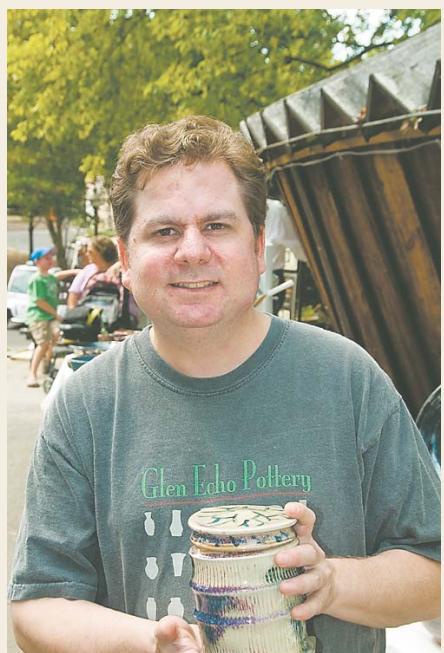


Gino Parisi of Potomac shows one of his Raku "Egg Shells."

## Weekend Of Arts And Dance

Glen Echo Park hosted its 39<sup>th</sup> annual Labor Day Art Show last weekend in the park's historic Spanish Ballroom. A variety of Irish performers also entertained at the Irish Inn at Glen Echo.

PHOTOS BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE ALMANAC



Pete Vanderburgh of Kensington with one of his wood-fired copper-red glaze pieces.



Katey Boerner stand in front of one of the more colorful sets of art works displayed. Boerner is the executive director of the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture.



Adults perform the traditional Irish Step-dance.

## Adoptable Animals 'On-Demand'

Comcast programming features MCHS pets.

BY ANSLEY LABARRE  
THE ALMANAC

With the camera rolling, all eyes were on Abbey. The lens zoomed to capture a close-up of the black and brown furry face as the young beagle-mix made her claim to fame.

Abbey was one of 15 animals participating in the Montgomery County Humane Society's "Pet Adoptions on Demand," last Thursday Sept. 3. Working through a partnership with Comcast, MCHS selected seven cats, seven dogs, and one rabbit for a taping that will broadcast clips of these adoptable kennel animals. The broadcast is a part of Comcast's "Get Local" content, which highlights organizations like MCHS and

SEE ADOPTABLE ANIMALS, PAGE 11

## Rocky Start

Moments after accepting a marriage proposal from her boyfriend, a woman fell more than five feet on the Billy Goat Trail. The hike ended with an airlift removing the bride-to-be from the trail.

Rescuers from the Cabin John Volunteer Fire Department responded to the call and arrived by boat, but chose to remove the woman by helicopter rather than scaling nearly 100 feet of rocky cliff to reach her.

Cabin John Master Fire Fighter Clark Oliver said the rough terrain from three million years of erosion on the Billy Goat Trail forces their rescuers to use boat and air removal as their primary approach, as it is rare for responders to carry an injured person off the trail. Oliver said the trail only has three markers, and it is easier to spot individuals from the air.

"You really do have to be a Billy goat to walk that trail," Oliver said.

While Oliver did not know the extent of the woman's injuries, he said an air rescue reduces the amount of pain and jostling that comes with removing an injured person from the trail.

Oliver said Cabin John rescuers are called to the Billy Goat Trail an average of two to three times each week during the summer season. He said the call was not unusual for the rescue squad.

"With the exception of the wedding proposal," said Oliver.

— ANSLEY LABARRE

## NEWS

# Churchill Senior Knows the ‘Grass Is Greener’

## Kohler Brafford means business.

BY ANSLEY LABARRE  
THE ALMANAC

**K**ohler Brafford hasn't felt the waves of the economic recession, saying the past year was the best to-date for his independent business. Brafford watched his landscaping company expand from one large contributing factor — he finally got his driver's license.

At 17, the Churchill senior has established a name in the Potomac community that extends beyond his high school achievements. Brafford is the founder and owner of “Grass is Greener,” a private landscaping company the young entrepreneur began after recognizing the profit from mowing lawns for neighbors.



**Churchill senior Kohler Brafford runs “Grass is Greener,” an independent landscaping business he has seen expand over the past year under his ownership.**

“I've always enjoyed working with my hands,” said Brafford, who remembers telling his parents he was ready to find a job at the age of 14. Brafford says he owes

much of his success to his father, who raised him with the “do-it-yourself” mentality.

Brafford got his start as a grounds master assistant at the

Norwood School, where his former teacher John Currie immediately recognized his passion for the outdoors. With the help of Currie, and his new license, Brafford breached the fences of his neighborhood on Edison Road this year to work on a larger scale. Aside from his residential jobs, the young business owner has contracts with three local pools to manage their landscaping.

**“Running a business is fun for me.”**

— Kohler Brafford

labor that only gets harder in the August heat.

“He hired some guys that are older than him, which can be a challenge to manage,” said Currie. “But he leads by example.”

Much of Brafford’s work is comprised of need-based jobs specific to the property owner, on any given day he may be trimming trees or laying mulch. Spring is his busiest season, when customers are looking for pruning in the aftermath of winter. During summer vacations when the grass keeps growing, Brafford refuses to leave the area for any longer than a week. The red-haired and freckly teenager lathers on sunscreen for his long hours outside, acknowledging he has become much more than a kid with a lawn mower.

“Initially, it was hard getting the equipment,” said Brafford, who estimates between leaf-blowers and ride-on mowers he has about \$10,000 invested in machines. He pays careful attention to local gas

**IN EXPANDING** his geography, Brafford also expanded his knowledge. He says he acquired the mindset to manage others as he reached the stage where he could no longer complete jobs alone. Brafford hired two full-time employees, and contracts other specialized workers based on the needs of a job. He knows he must employ reliable and diligent workers for the physically demanding



**Joshua Barnacle gallops through the water jump on Victor on the cross country course in last weekend’s Seneca Valley Pony Club horse trials.**

## ‘Bittersweet’ Jumping

**N**early 400 horses were entered in Seneca Valley Pony Club’s fall horse trials, held Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 5-6. Horses and riders from beginning eventers through Olympic level competed in three disciplines, dressage, stadium jumping and cross country jumping, at various levels of difficulty, depending on the experience of horse and rider.

The United States Pony Clubs, Inc (USPC) was founded in 1954 as a nonprofit national youth organization to teach riding and horsemanship through a formal

educational program. Many of the nation’s top equestrians, including most Olympic Equestrian team members, have Pony Club roots. Members range in age from as young as 4 through age 25.

There are approximately 12,500 members of USPC in 625 clubs throughout the country. Seneca Valley Pony Club is a local club that offers many lesson programs including eventing, dressage, stadium jumping, and mounted games as well as clinics in horse care and health.

See [www.senecavalleyponyclub.org](http://www.senecavalleyponyclub.org) for more.

PHOTOS BY MARY KMM/THE ALMANAC



**Melissa Hunsberger on Out of Jazz after her round of stadium jumping.**



**Olympian Phyllis Dawson jumps Drifter around the cross country course in last weekend’s Seneca Valley Pony Club horse trials. Dawson competed on the U.S. three-day equestrian team in the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea.**

## Seavey Named Volunteer Chief of Year

Cabin John Volunteer Fire Chief Jim Seavey Sr. was named “Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year” this month. Seavey received the annual award following his selection from a national pool of candidates by the Editorial Review Board for Fire Chief Magazine.

“I’m very humbled,” said Seavey on receiving the national recognition.

Seavey is the longest-serving volunteer chief at the Cabin John station, and 2009 marks his 18th consecutive year in the position. In addition to his service at Cabin John, Seavey is a career firefighter in Washington D.C. The Glen Echo native describes the job as “very enjoyable,” and is happy to provide service to the metropolitan area.

The chief caught a flight to Dallas last week to accept his award. He was presented with a ring and a statue for his service, and received a standing ovation following his acceptance speech for an honor he says occurs once in a lifetime. He arrived home to find the fire station’s sign broadcasting his recognition in a display of support from his fellow firefighters.

“It’s not an award for me, but the entire department,” said Seavey. “It’s a tribute to everyone.”

— Ansley LaBarre

## CRIME

The following incidents were reported by the Montgomery County Department of Police:

❖ A **theft of a vehicle** occurred in the 8100 block of Inverness Ridge Road in Potomac on Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 9:42 p.m. An off-duty MCPD officer saw the vehicle driving with no lights on Route 270 and attempted to make a vehicle stop. After a short pursuit, the suspect bailed out at Montrose Parkway near Executive Boulevard. The suspect was arrested nearby.

❖ A **residential burglary** occurred in the 13300 block of Manor Stone Drive in North Potomac on Monday, Aug. 17 between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Forced entry and property taken.

❖ A **burglary** occurred at the Westleigh Pool, 14900 Dufief Mill Road in North Potomac between Sunday, Aug. 23 and Monday, 8/24. Forced entry into the office and property taken.

❖ A **garage burglary** occurred in the 11500 block of Ridge Mist Terrace in North Potomac on Tuesday, Aug. 25. Property taken from the open garage.

❖ A **garage burglary** occurred in the 11900 block of Canfield Road in North Potomac on Tuesday, Aug. 25. Property taken from the open garage.

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## CALENDAR

To have community events listed free in The Potomac Almanac, send e-mail to [almanac@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:almanac@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Call 703-778-9412.

### ONGOING

The **Bethesda Farmers Market** will be open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Veterans Park, corner of Norfold and Woodmont Avenues, through Oct. 31. Visit [www.bethesda.org](http://www.bethesda.org) or 301-215-6660.

### THURSDAY/SEPT. 10

**Blues Dance.** 8:15-11:30 p.m. \$8 admission. At The Ballroom Annex of Glen Echo Park. Beginner workshop from 8:15-9 p.m.

**Todd Rundgren in Concert.** 8 p.m. Performs from his album, "A Wizard, A True Star." At the Music Center at Strathmore, North Bethesda. Tickets on sale now at [www.Strathmore.org](http://www.Strathmore.org) or call 301-581-5100

### FRIDAY/SEPT. 11

**Bethesda Art Walk.** 6-9 p.m. The Bethesda Art Walk features 13 galleries and studios that open their doors on the second Friday of every month. Downtown Bethesda galleries showcase artwork created locally, nationally and internationally including painting, photography, sculpture and mixed media.

**Super Fiesta Latina Party.** 8:15 p.m.-Midnight. At the Ballroom Annex of Glen Echo Park. Admission: \$15. The dance is hosted by Fabio and Jennifer Bonini. The evening will include a lesson from 8:15-9 p.m. for Salsa beginners and up. The lesson is

### WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 9

#### **Hot Soup, a Vocal Trio.** 8 p.m.

Band featuring Christina Muir, Sue Trainor and Jennie Avila. At Branded '72 (formerly O'Brien's BBQ), 387 E. Gude Dr. in Rockville, Md. \$18 general, \$15 members or in advance. Contact: David at [focusrockville@earthlink.net](mailto:focusrockville@earthlink.net), 301-275-7459 or log onto [www.focusmusic.org](http://www.focusmusic.org).



followed by dancing from 9 PM-Midnight with teacher and DJ Fabio Bonini playing the best of Salsa, Bachata, Merengue, Cha-Cha, Reggaeton and more! The \$15 admission includes the lesson, dancing and complimentary drinks and sweets.

Contact Email: [Jennifer@ForeverDancing.com](mailto:Jennifer@ForeverDancing.com)  
**Contra Dance.** 7:30-11:30 p.m. \$9 admission. At the Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo Park. Beginner lesson from 7:30-8:15 p.m. Featuring the fabulous Glen Echo Open Band. Email: [fdcontra@yahoo.com](mailto:fdcontra@yahoo.com)

#### **Glen Echo Fire Department Bingo Night.** 6:30-10 p.m. The fire department has held its fund-raiser at Glen Echo Park since the 1930s. Silent Auction from 6:30-10:20 p.m. Food and drinks available. At the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park. Call 301-634-2222 or visit [www.glenechopark.org](http://www.glenechopark.org).

### SATURDAY/SEPT. 12

**Used Book Sale.** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Most hardback books and large paperbacks (trades) are \$1 and regular paperbacks are only \$.50. At Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive Potomac.

**Swing Dance.** 8 p.m.-Midnight. \$15 admission. Join American Swing for their annual Groovie Movie weekend featuring Jean Veloz, star of MGM swing movies of the 1940s. Band to be announced. Beginning swing lesson with Tom and Debra at 8 p.m. is followed by the band from 9 p.m. to midnight. At the Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo Park. Contact Email: [info@AmericanSwing.org](mailto:info@AmericanSwing.org)

**Wine, Women and Song Fund-Raiser.** 6:30 p.m. An evening of martinis, wine, fine cuisine, jazz music and live and silent auctions to benefit Strathmore arts education and community programs. Tickets are \$125/person, \$500 for guests who wish to contribute at the patron level. Visit [www.strathmore.org](http://www.strathmore.org); to receive a formal invitation, call 301-581-5139 or e-mail [bcarey@strathmore.org](mailto:bcarey@strathmore.org). The Music Center at Strathmore is at 5301 Tuckerman Lane in North Bethesda.

**Jacquard Hand Loom: History, Operation and Restoration.** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Richard Jeryan will give a presentation on the restoration of the Jacquard loom that is located in the Henry Ford Museum. Sponsored by

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 7

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 6

Potomac Fiber Arts Guild. At the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac. Free. Go to [www.potomaccraftsmenguild.org](http://www.potomaccraftsmenguild.org)

#### Children's Clothing & Equipment Sale.

9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Clothing (Premie to Size 7+, outerwear, shoes and boots, Halloween costumes), childproofing, strollers, high chairs, playpens, bathtubs, cribs and furniture, toys, supplies and more. Cash and checks accepted. \$2/person admission charge at door. Sponsored by Montgomery County Parents of Multiples. Most items half price 11:30-12:30 p.m. At Julius West Middle School, 651 Great Falls Road, Rockville (1 block east of 270 at Falls Road). Go to [www.mcpom.org/](http://www.mcpom.org/) saleinstructions.php. Call 301-419-8008 or send an email to [sale@mcpom.org](mailto:sale@mcpom.org).

**Open House.** 12 noon - 3 p.m. Meet Writer's Center workshop leaders, staff, and board members at the Open House. Free and open to the public. Call 301-654-8664 or visit [www.writer.org](http://www.writer.org).

**Bethesda Artist's Market.** Enjoy the original fine art and craft of 25 local and regional artists. Shop for painting, jewelry, photography, fiber, turned wood, pottery, blown glass and more. At the Bethesda Place Plaza, corner of Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont.

#### SUNDAY/SEPT. 13

##### Used Electronics Drop-Off Event.

Noon to 4 p.m. Accepted Items: Small electronic appliances, calculators, camcorders, CDs and floppy disks, CD players, cell phones, computers & computer-related items, consumer electronics, copiers, cords & cables (including chargers), digital cameras, electronic typewriters, fax machines, microwave ovens, personal digital assistant equipment, printers,

projection equipment, scanners, telephones, small electronic toys, televisions and VCRs. At Northwest High School, 13501 Richter Farm Road, Germantown. Go to [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hazardouswaste](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hazardouswaste) or call 301-417-1433

**Open Door Reading Series.** Poetry With Elizabeth Rees, Jamie Brown, and Neva Herrington. 2-4 p.m. Elizabeth Rees reads from Now That We're Here. She is joined by Jamie Brown, author of Conventional Heresies, and Neva Herrington, author of Her BMW and Other Poems. Free and Open to the public. Call 301-654-8664 or visit [www.writer.org](http://www.writer.org).

**Contra and Square Dance.** 7 - 10:30 p.m. \$12 admission. Focus on New England style contra dances, and including square dances, country mixers, waltzes and other couple dances. Lesson is at 7 p.m. followed by dances called by Robert Cromartie to Contrazz from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. At the Bumper Car Pavilion. Go to [www.fsgw.org](http://www.fsgw.org)

**Cajun/Zydeco Dance.** 3 - 6 p.m. \$20. At the Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo Park. Dancing by the Bayou presents a Cajun/Zydeco dance with live music by Lil' Malcolm and the House Rockers. A beginner lesson at 3:00 p.m. is followed by dancing from 3:30 - 6 p.m. Cost of admission includes the lesson. Contact Email: [information@DancingbytheBayou.com](mailto:information@DancingbytheBayou.com). 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo, Md.

**Argentine Tango/Milonga.** 3-6 p.m. \$10 admission. Tango lesson at 3 p.m. About the workshops: Sharna Fabiano and Issac Oboka will be teaching three workshops in a day-long Tango Boot Camp: 12 p.m.: Tango Basics, 1 p.m.: Bells & Whistles, 2 p.m.: Milonga Basics. Contact Email: [dance@flyingfeet.org](mailto:dance@flyingfeet.org). At the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park.

# LET'S TALK Real Estate



by  
**Michael Matese**

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Purchasing an exceptional piece of real estate requires a well-considered approach to the process of locating the property. Here are some tips for bringing that process to a successful resolution. Ask your friends and colleagues for references to real estate professionals with a proven history of selling high-end properties. The ideal agent will be well educated, highly experienced in the field and completely informed about the local luxury market. Communicate your list of "must-have" home features and preferred locations to your realtor. Ask your agent to show you properties priced reasonably above and below as well as at your target price range. This allows you to evaluate the range of options and perhaps fall in love with a home that costs more or less than what you expected to spend. Find out what amenities are standard in your target location, and look for a home that includes features that are appealing to you and will attract future upscale buyers.

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Yellow Barn Studio instructor and artist Glen Kessler presents the work of his 'High School Scholarship Class' at The Yellow Barn Gallery, Saturday, Sept. 19 through Sunday, Sept. 20. The Gallery is open from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. daily. A reception for the artists is scheduled for 3 to 5 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 20, in the gallery. Visit [www.yellowbarnstudio.com](http://www.yellowbarnstudio.com). Call 301-371-5593 or the National Park Service, Glen Echo, at 301-492-6229. Yellow Barn Gallery, Glen Echo Park 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Glen Echo. Call 301-371-5593



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# SPORTS

# Mason Earns Roster Spot with Redskins

Potomac native and former Georgetown Prep running back looks to impact special teams.

By JON ROETMAN  
THE ALMANAC

**M**arcus Mason was in the Washington Redskins locker room Saturday awaiting the news.

Having completed his third NFL pre-season, the running back and Potomac native had not received word of his football fate. Did he make the team? Experience from his first two seasons left him with little in the way of certainty.

He earned a roster spot with the Redskins in 2007 as an undrafted rookie free agent. He was cut shortly after, but making the team had to count for something, right?

Then again, he led the NFL in rushing yards during the 2008 pre-season but failed to make the Redskins' final 53. Mason spent some of the regular season with the Baltimore Ravens and the New York Jets, but the former Georgetown Prep standout was taught nothing is certain in football.

With three running backs — Clinton



**Potomac native Marcus Mason, with ball, is seen during Redskins training camp. Mason earned a roster spot with the team.**

Portis, Ladell Betts, Rock Cartwright — entrenched on the 2009 Redskins roster, Mason worked hard on special teams to better his chances of making this year's team. He also led Washington in pre-season rushing yards (88), attempts (28) and tied for the touchdown lead (1).

On Saturday, the day NFL teams had to trim their rosters to 53 players, Vinny Cerrato approached Mason to let the 25-year-old know if his efforts were sufficient

of a roster spot.

"He came down with a serious face on," Mason said of Washington's executive vice president of football operations.

"I need to talk to you," Cerrato told Mason — an ominous sign regarding the ball carrier's future with the Redskins.

"Are you serious?" Mason wondered.

Luckily for Mason, Cerrato's job title that day included practical joker.

Mason made the team, and for now,

doesn't have to worry about being a practice squad member — he was signed to the Redskins practice squad in 2007 — or trying to sign elsewhere.

Don't worry, Cerrato said, "You won't have to go through that this time."

**NOW THAT** Mason earned a roster spot, he must fight to keep it. As Mason learned in 2007, a fourth-string running back is a prime candidate to lose his job amid roster shuffling due to injuries or depth concerns at other positions. While injuries are out of his control, showing improvement and a willingness to work could help Mason keep his spot.

If making the team was the first step and holding on to his roster spot would be the second, getting on the field would be No. 3 for Mason. Of the 53 players on an NFL roster, only 45 are active or allowed to play on game days. Special teams are Mason's best chance to see the field and continuing to show improvement could help his chances of remaining active each week.

Consistently staying on the active roster would improve Mason's chances of getting to carry the football. While a heavy workload — or any workload, for that matter — is a long shot for a running back buried on the depth chart, giving good looks in practice could help Mason's chances of receiving offensive playing time.

SEE MASON, PAGE 10

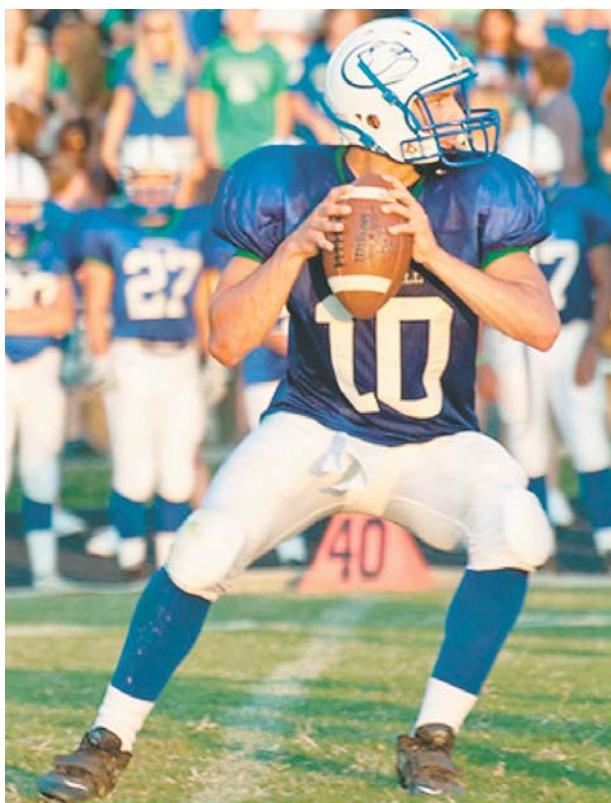


PHOTO BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE ALMANAC

**Churchill quarterback Alex Kantor rushed for 67 yards and a touchdown and completed 2 of 6 passes for 13 yards in the Bulldogs' win over Gaithersburg.**

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## SPORTS BRIEFS

### Churchill Football Beats Gaithersburg

Churchill running back Ryan Quinn rushed 20 times for 194 yards and one touchdown and the Bulldogs defeated Gaithersburg 17-7 on Friday at CHS.

Churchill quarterback Alex Kantor added 67 yards and a touchdown on eight carries. He completed 2 of 6 passes for 13 yards and was intercepted once.

Matt Cole and Bobby Hirsch led the Bulldog defense with 15 tackles apiece. Matt Risk finished with 11 tackles.

Churchill (1-0) led 10-0 entering the fourth quarter. The Bulldogs travel to Seneca Valley on Friday.

### Whitman Football Opens with Win

The Whitman football team wasted no time jumping on Northwest during both teams' season opener Friday.

Whitman opened the game with an onside kick attempt, which it recovered. The Vikings scored a touchdown on their ensuing drive, setting the tone for a successful evening. Whitman built a 26-0 halftime lead and cruised to a 29-16 win at WHS.

Whitman coach Jim Kuhn said the onside kick was planned and the execution excited Viking players.

"It was a huge emotional lift," Kuhn said of recovering the onside kick. It gave our players "confidence that we

prepared to be successful."

Whitman running back Kevin Cecala rushed for 150-plus yards and three touchdowns. The Vikings travel to Walter Johnson on Friday.

### Churchill Field Hockey Overcomes Clarksburg

The Churchill field hockey team opened its season with a 5-2 victory over Clarksburg on Saturday at CHS.

Churchill coach Monica Malanoski said seniors Jojo Goldman and Jaymi Solomon were standouts for the Bulldogs. Goldman finished with one goal and one assist, and Solomon was solid as the team's goalkeeper.

The Bulldogs travel today to take on Holy Cross.

### Wootton Football Drops Opener

The Wootton football team lost to Sherwood, 56-14 on Friday at SHS.

Coach Greg Malling said not much went right for the Patriots on defense, including allowing a touchdown on Sherwood's first play from scrimmage.

"We didn't respond," Malling said of Sherwood's fast start. "... It didn't seem like we were prepared."

SEE SPORTS BRIEFS, PAGE 10

POTOMAC ALMANAC ♦ SEPTEMBER 9-15, 2009 ♦ 9

# Forever Ain't What It Used To Be



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Certainly it was an innocent enough question, one that anyone who's been to the post office of late has been asked dozens of times: "Would you like any forever stamps?" But this time, maybe because I had chemotherapy earlier in the day, the question elicited a laugh, so much so that I almost explained myself to the postal clerk. However, rather than get into my particular health situation, I simply backed away from the counter and exited stage right, chuckling to myself how once again my life-expectancy nerve had been plucked.

This exchange reminded me of one of the standard/regular/recurring questions I ask of my oncologist to assess my condition: "Should I buy in bulk?" To date, he's always answered in the affirmative and has always laughed at the question. Although, I have to tell you, getting an oncologist to laugh is no easy task. Theirs is a serious business. But it has become my goal to get him to laugh at least once every three weeks, the frequency of our face-to-face appointments/examinations. My other ongoing attempt at humoring my oncologist has come during these same physical examinations (to date there have been no mental examinations). After he has completed his medical touching and feeling (of me) and asked me about muscle weakness, nausea, headaches, tingling, discomfort, etc., he'll ask if I'm experiencing any other pain. My two stock answers have been, "You mean other than her," pointing to my wife, Dina, who accompanies me on these examination appointments whenever possible and who is sitting in the examination room with us or I'll point to me rear end (which initially required a brief explanation), but since Dina is always present when I make this gesture, its meaning has become self explanatory.

Humor is the best medicine, or so I've been told, and so, to make my parents proud (both of whom are deceased), and to follow in their brave and unselfish footsteps, I try to find humor in even the most difficult of circumstances. And as much as this cancer thing is about me, and as good an excuse as it is to explain behavior, decisions, priorities, etc., I seem to get more pleasure not using it as an excuse and using it more as a prop, if you will (you'll note, I didn't say crutch) to put others at ease, especially considering that, in whatever room you occupy, you are the figurative elephant. Moreover, the sooner I can acknowledge its presence and diffuse whatever tension and discomfort may exist, the sooner people treat me normally. And the sooner people treat you normally, the more normal you'll feel. And given cancer patients' circumstances – and difficulties and challenges, feeling normal (however it happens) is as good as it can unrealistically be.

However, maybe this is simply "rational self interest," to quote one of my brother Richard's favorite descriptions of necessary behavior. Or maybe it's my mind playing tricks on my mouth (chemo brain, it's called). I don't know which, nor do I care. But for now, it feels normal and it seems to be working. And in my present semi precarious condition, as with many other conditions/ situations/circumstances, some not nearly as serious, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for  
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## SPORTS

# Mason Earns Redskin Roster Spot

FROM PAGE 9

"I've got to make the coaches want to play me in a game," he said. "You've got to make it hard for those coaches to sit you."

**MASON'S MOTHER**, Patricia Mason, said she was relieved when Marcus told her he made the team. She also said her son has matured during his NFL experience.

Mason, who grew up in Potomac's Scotland neighborhood off Seven Locks Road, was a record-setting running back in high school and college. He became the leading rusher in Maryland high school history while at Georgetown Prep, amassing 5,700 yards for the Bethesda school.

He attended the University of Illinois for two years, but didn't find success at the college level until transferring to Youngstown State University in Ohio. He gained 2,739 yards on 478 carries and scored 31 touchdowns during two seasons at YSU. As a senior, Mason set single-season school records for rushing yards (1,847), rushing yards per game (153.9), 100-yard rushing games (10) and consecutive 100-yard rushing games (6). He also set records for most rushing yards in consecutive games (462) and longest run from scrimmage (95 yards).

After going undrafted, he earned a roster spot with the Redskins in 2007 but was cut and signed to the practice squad.

Mason said the transition from the spotlight to special teams has been a humbling experience. Patricia Mason sees the situation as a chance for her son to continue earning a paycheck.

"His gift is running the ball, but right now I'm looking at it from the employment standpoint," Patricia said. "This is a job and from this point you have to do what you have to do to keep your job."

Mason has a tough road ahead. He must work hard enough to prove he belongs on an NFL roster while remaining lucky enough not to lose his job due to circumstances beyond his control. Washington opens its season Sunday at the New York Giants.

At least Mason has taken care of the first step. He made the team.

"We still have to keep the job," Patricia Mason said. "We all know how that works from [his] first year."

## SPORTS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 9

Malling also said the Patriots aren't overly concerned about the lopsided loss. Wootton will have a chance to rebound Friday when it hosts Gaithersburg.

"We've lost our first game of the year before," Malling said. "... Our team understands this obviously was a very ugly start, but it's [one] game. ... There's a sense of urgency, but not panic at this point."

# Adoptable Animals ‘On-Demand’

FROM PAGE 3

their causes in smaller communities.

The selected animals were seated on a wooden bench in the kennel yard next to B J Altschul, director of MCHS Community and Educational Relations. Altschul was taped for two-minute individual clips as she relayed the traits of each featured pet, like Abbey, who was described as attentive but somewhat lazy. The objective was to show the interaction of the animals with a human and capture the personality traits of each pet, encouraging their adoption.

“This adds to the range of ways we can showcase the animals to perspective adopters,” said Altschul.

Last Thursday’s session marked the second time MCHS filmed pets for Comcast. Following the first broadcast, Altschul said several adopters who came to kennel mentioned seeing the programming on their adoption applications. While MCHS has not established a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the broadcasts and adoption numbers, they say the benefit of On-Demand programming comes from viewer selectivity — as the audience makes the conscious choice to watch the pet profiles.

“Comcast Digital customers in the Washington D.C. Metro region will be able to watch video profiles of animals at the shelter in need of a home, at any time of the day or night, from the convenience of their own homes, with the click of their remote controls,” said Comcast Senior Manager of Pub-



PHOTO BY ANSLEY LABARRE/THE ALMANAC

**Director of Community and Educational Relations B J Altschul sits with a volunteer coordinator while filming the two-minute clip for “Bobo,” one of the animals featured in Comcast’s Pet Adoptions On-Demand. Bobo and 14 other pets were taped for their broadcast at the Montgomery County Humane Society last Thursday.**

lic Relations Alisha Martin in a description of the programming. Martin says pet adoption profiles continuously rank among the top five most-viewed programs within the “Get Local” content.

MCHS says the only drawback to the programming arises from the delay period between taping and broadcast. The profiles are aired 10 to 14 days after filming, and in some cases the featured pets may have been adopted by the time they make their television debut.

Altschul says even with the delay, the programming allows

MCHS to broadcast educational information about animal care to potential pet-owners. MCHS plans to continue the monthly taping sessions, which are refreshed to offer new opportunities for adoption.

Comcast producer Michael Libertini has worked on multiple pet adoption broadcasts, leading last Thursday’s filming of the animals. Libertini says he generally hears positive feedback about the programming, noting viewers are impressed with the professional appearance of the profiles and interested in offering their help.

As an “open-admission” shelter, MCHS is required to take any animal brought to their facility. President and CEO Cris Bombaugh says their organization is constantly looking for alternative venues that may increase the animals’ chances of adoption. MCHS has a history of working with rescue teams and foster families, and the Comcast programming offers another outlet to promote adoptable pets.

“It’s one more opportunity to have our wonderful animals shown to a very large audience,” said Bombaugh.

## Churchill Senior Knows ‘Grass Is Greener’

FROM PAGE 4

prices as he pulls a trailer behind his scarlet red Tacoma, recognizing the additional expenses that come with the job. Brafford’s company has taught him benefits of money management, and he has set up a retirement account as he continues to work toward his high school diploma.

**BRAFFORD’S PRICES** are based on a per-cut standard, catered to the needs of an individual job. Currie and customers acknowledge his rates are comparable to any other landscaping business in the area. While Brafford enjoys the perks of a renewable income and financial independence from his parents, he says money is not the driving force behind “Grass is Greener.”

“Running a business is fun for me,” said Brafford, who took pride in learning how to

present himself as a businessman and create a lasting impression with his customers. He knows there is a high level of competition in the area, but does no advertising. Instead, he finds his customers are willing to pass his name along by word of mouth.

“I wasn’t looking for price,” said repeat customer Jamie Schwarz. “I was looking for someone I could rely on to be courteous, dependable and do a good job.”

Brafford will continue to run his business over the course of the upcoming year, while finding time to finish homework, practice as a defender for Churchill’s ice hockey team and play drums in the jazz band. The Eagle Scout says he is not a procrastinator and benefits from the discipline of a full schedule. But in applying to colleges, Brafford sees a potential obstacle where most see opportunity.

“I know I need to go to school, but I have

such a good business going now,” he said.

Brafford intends on applying early to the University of Georgia, which offers a landscaping degree combining the tools of business with studies in botany. As a mentor, Currie knows Brafford should continue his education to expand his current success.

“It was apparent from when I first met Kohler that he has a maturity beyond his years. He has a sense of responsibility in his work ethic and takes pride in what he does,” said Currie. “He should feel free to continue on.”

While customers like Schwarz say she hates to see Brafford leave, she would use his company even after four years at college. He is working on establishing various outlets to continue his contracts following his departure. For now, Brafford is eager to keep progressing with his self-made business.

“There’s so much work to be done,” he said.

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**POTOMAC, MARYLAND**  
NEW PRICE! POTOMAC VILLAGE - Wonderful Contemporary with high ceilings, hardwood floors, living room with fireplace, dining room with wet bar, beautiful updated kitchen, family room with fireplace and french doors to private deck. \$1,249,000

Michael Matese 301-806-6829

We are Proud to Announce

# Susie Maguire

has joined our firm

[susie.maguire@wfp.com](mailto:susie.maguire@wfp.com)

202-841-2006



**DARNESTOWN, MARYLAND**  
This southern style colonial is located on five private acres and has over 9,000 sq ft of finished space. High ceilings, custom moldings and built-ins, designer finishes and much more. Fantastic value! \$1,450,000

Marsha Schuman 301-299-9598



**POTOMAC, MARYLAND**  
UNDER CONTRACT! Fall in love with this home with state-of-the-art kitchen and stunning master bath. Renovated in 2004/2005. On quiet cul-de-sac minutes to C&O Canal, easy commute to DC, VA.

Traudel Lange 240-463-6918



**POTOMAC, MARYLAND**  
UNDER CONTRACT! POTOMAC CREST - Beautiful Colonial with hardwood and limestone floors, high ceilings, exquisite moldings and detailing throughout and so much more. Great location and easy commute to DC. \$1,175,000

Michael Matese 301-806-6829



**BETHESDA, MARYLAND**  
This traditional home offers convenient neighborhood living, with a versatile floorplan including a library on the first level, 4BR, 3FBA upstairs and a finished basement with additional BR and BA. Private fenced yard and 2 car garage. \$1,169,000

Marsha Schuman 301-299-9598



**NORTH BETHESDA, MARYLAND**  
LUXMANOR - Fantastic home in quiet cul-de-sac. Original owners have painstakingly maintained and updated. Renovated kitchen & baths, walk-out lower level & garden oasis with pool! \$1,119,000

Marsha Schuman 301-299-9598



**POTOMAC, MARYLAND**  
Ideal location in the heart of Potomac Village close to shopping and restaurants. Rarely available home in sought after enclave. 4 finished levels, 4BR, 3FBA & 2 car garage. \$1,095,000

Marsha Schuman 301-299-9598

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