Santa is ready to board the fire engine at the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department's fire house that will take him into various Potomac neighborhoods.

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Oriental Rug Cleaning

Wishes You and Yours a Happy Holiday From all of Us
Potomac Almanac
December 23-29, 2009

National Trial Hits Home
Potomac resident takes on pharmaceutical company.

By Ansley LaBarre
The Almanac

Like so many women her age, Diane Wisneski reached a breaking point with her menopause symptoms. She turned red in the face during hot flashes with sweats that made her feel as if she had been sprayed with a hose while sitting at her work desk. When it all became too unbearable, Wisneski sought the help of her physician.

The solution was Prempro — a prescription drug of estrogen and progesterin hormones — to replace those that decrease during menopause and lead to symptoms like Wisneski’s. Aside from hormone therapy, Wisneski says the drug was marketed as one that would benefit her heart, bones and overall well-being.

“It was presented as a package of goodies,” said Wisneski.

But like an estimated 12,000 other women, Wisneski now has a lawsuit pending with Wyeth, a division of the Pfizer phar

Navigating ‘Unchartered Waters’
Berliner not at the helm.

By Ansley LaBarre
The Almanac

In a decision that came with the start of December, Councilman Roger Berliner (D-1) was not elected president of the Montgomery County Council. Berliner, who served as the Council’s vice president for the preceding year, lost the position in a 5-4 vote to Nancy Floreen (D – At Large).

In the minutes following the election, Berliner addressed his colleagues on the Council with disappointment for the disregard of tradition. The Potomac resident is the third vice president in 40 years of council history not to succeed into presidency, and a representative from District One —

Business

Rayvin Huger of Avenel (Potomac) picks out her tree.

Shoppers look at the trees available at the Cabin John Park Fire House.

Fire Engine Sleigh

A Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department fire engine, decked out with holiday lights, prepares to carry Santa to meet children in several Potomac neighborhoods.

Pardiss Kaviani (7 years old) and her brother, Navid (9 years old) look over the trees for sale.

Santa is ready to board the fire engine.
Farewell to the Old, Awaiting the New

Following the schedule of modernization for schools in the Churchill Cluster, Cabin John Middle School on Gainsborough Road has been demolished as construction on a new building begins. The two-year project is estimated to finish in 2011, and students will resume classes at the refurbished school as other facilities begin their own modernization process.

— Ansley Labarre

Resident Takes on Pharmaceutical Company

From Page 3

Diane Wisneski of Potomac is one of 12,000 women in the country with a lawsuit pending against Wyeth.

Jennifer says Wyeth maintains it did nothing wrong and will appeal the verdicts. “It’s important to examine all of the trial-set cases where there have been rulings by judges or juries, or decisions by plaintiffs to withdraw their cases after they were set for trial. There have been 28 such cases to date. Of these, there are only four cases where verdicts for plaintiffs are in effect today, and all are under challenge,” said Sally Beauty, a spokeswoman for Pfizer. Prempro remains on the market, but is sold in half the dose that its client and other patients once received. The pill now comes with a black box warning, noting its use over a short period of time at the lowest dose possible. Jennifer said it is a completely different use and indication for use of the drug. “The hypocrisy is comparable,” he said.

Wisneski underwent a complete mastectomy and reconstructive surgery as a part of her treatment, which resulted in two separate procedures from infection and illness. She beat her breast cancer but Wisneski says the healing process was not an easy one.

The judicial process has not been easy either. It has taken seven years and scores of women from across the nation to bring their cases against one of the largest pharmaceutical companies. Wisneski says when she began using the medicine for hormone therapy, the risks and side effects were described as no greater than the common marketplace of available treatments.

Wisneski’s attorney Robert K. Jenner of Janet, Jenner and Suggs L.L.C says the Food and Drug Administration asked Wyeth to run tests to verify the long-term effects of combination hormone therapy. That was the 1980s. Jenner says it took two decades and a tax-payer funded federal study through the National Institute of Health to re-examine the effects of Prempro and its link to breast cancer. The study — known as the Women’s Health Initiative — was eventually stopped when researchers established a link between Prempro and breast cancer. “Our evidence is clear that Wyeth did not do the tests that were necessary to determine effects,” said Jenner.

While Wisneski’s trial with the company remains pending, two plaintiffs put theirs to rest in Philadelphia at the end of November. Juries awarded the women compensatory and punitive damages, collectively reaching more than $103 million.

Wisneski is not focused on her own trial, suggesting that growth and development will be guiding principles for the 2010 agenda,” said Liza Durant, president of the West Montgomery County Citizen’s Association. “We will want to make sure the community is aware of the policies that are being worked on and should be actively weighing in and making their views known.”

As a constituent of District One, Durant says she believes the person filling the role of president is not the issue at hand.

“The council will be rebalanced according to the will of Montgomery County voters, regardless of who is president,” said Durant. “It’s just one single year and we’re keenly aware of the challenges that lie ahead.”

“The challenges will come by the dozens.” Berliner says there was little time to ponder the defeat and he quickly moved on, focusing on Montgomery County’s most difficult year-to-date that is swiftly arriving. With the price tag on the county’s budget hole nearing $600 million for fiscal 2011 beginning July 1, there is much work to be done. “We will only have bad options,” said Berliner. “These are uncharted waters.”

The focus has shifted from what could have been to what will be. The councilman plans to hold more public input meetings during the spring of 2010 and look to his constituents in defining what is “essential.” Berliner predicts among many of the departmental to be scrutinized are health and human services, and parks and recreation to name a few. “We have to redefine government and look at essential government services,” said Berliner. “Not just what are worthy and notable programs because, as great as they may be, we simply can’t afford all of them.”

Is there any good news on the horizon? Berliner, alongside others, looks to the economy to begin its rebound. “I feel we’ve seen the bottom, but it could be awhile before the economy improves significantly,” said Potomac Chamber of Commerce President Adam Greenberg, who predicts sales will no longer decrease and be

‘Uncharted Waters’

From Page 3

Potomac, Bethesda and Chevy Chase — has yet to fill the role.

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See Uncharted Waters, Page 8
Pets

Shiloh is a 3-year-old female Shih-Tsu. At 20 pounds, Shiloh is already spayed. With a sweet demeanor, one would think she has taken up an Eastern philosophy to complement her Chinese breed heritage. She is friendly, obedient and appears to like people and dogs. Shiloh won’t last long with PAW so come and see this girl soon.

Midge is a 2-year-old female Minipin mix. At 20 pounds, she is already spayed. Midge is all action and enjoys running, jumping and playing with abandon. She’s intelligent and needs a challenge — like jogging or an agility buddy. Midge would love an active home with a dog buddy and children over 8 to share her enthusiasm for life.

Bulletin Board

To submit an item for the Civic Calendar, e-mail almanac@connectionnewspapers.com.

MONDAY/DEC. 21

Lower Your Pain Level. 1-2:30 p.m. Learn how to lower your pain level using various biofeedback techniques in this Biofeedback class. At 7920 Norfolk Ave., Suite 200D, Bethesda. Call Michael Sitar, Ph.D., 301-718-3588 and/or Pain Connection, 301-231-0008, or visit www.painconnection.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 9

Why Don’t My Kids Listen to Me? Free workshop for all parents of children ages 2 1⁄2 to 18 presented by the Parent Encouragement Program. 3-4:30 p.m. at the PEP Support Group. 1:30 p.m. For anyone with chronic pain, family members and interested residents. At 12320 Parklawn Drive, Rockville (located in the Jewish Council of Aging and Nonprofit Village building. Call 301-231-0008 or www.painconnection.org.

THURSDAY/JAN. 7

Pain Connection Chronic Pain 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

For more information please contact:

Nancy Steinberg 240-894-5092 nancy@kulayogaclass.com
Kula Yoga www.Kulayogaclass.com
www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Shanthi Subramanian 301-320-9334 shanthi@hamsa-yoga.com
Hamsa Yoga www.hamsa-yoga.com
Morgan Fleming, 14, a member of Girl Scout Troop 3288, has earned the Girl Scout Silver Award. She is a freshman at Churchill High School and lives in Potomac.

For her Silver Award project, Morgan created, organized and executed a Bridging Ceremony for approximately 90 Girl Scouts of all ages in the Potomac Village community. A Bridging Ceremony is a special event which marks the transition from one level of Girl Scouting to a new level. Morgan's theme was “Light Your Own Path” and her event was the kick-off to a new Girl Scout year for nine troops. It featured tea lights for each participating girl and a wooden bridge that Morgan built for the event.

The Girl Scout Silver Award is the highest honor awarded to Cadette Girl Scouts (seventh through ninth grades). It requires girls master the leadership and planning skills necessary to execute a project which makes a positive impact in their community.
La Divina Milonga Party.
8:30 p.m.
"Disney’s Mulan."
NOW THROUGH DEC. 31
Deadline is Thursday at noon for the fol-
French Bistro
644-1100 or roundhousetheatre.org.
4545 East-West Highway. Call 240-
Round House Theatre Bethesda,
www.roundhousetheatre.org  At
at 240-644-1100, online at
Tickets may be purchased by phone
$15 with kids age 18 and under $10.
Sundays at 1 p.m. Adult tickets are
Jaster
Park. Call 703-798-1071.
the Ballroom Annex of Glen Echo
music from 9 p.m. to midnight. At
at 7:30-11:30 p.m. $9
Concert Production.
7:30-11:30 p.m. $9
admission. Beginner Swing lesson from
Jules Chernoff as Amneris, Joseph
Mereb, Alex Garretson as Pharaoh,
Sponsor by Your Dog’s Friend,
11315 Falls Road, Potomac. Register
to midnight. A Jingle Bell Swing with
5913.
Sponsored by Your Dog’s Friend,
11315 Falls Road, Potomac. Register
Ballet of Glen Echo Park. Email:
7:30 p.m. $12/members; $15/nonmembers.
Newcomers’ lesson at 7 p.m.; called
called by Ted Hodapp to The
Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo Park.
Ballroom of Glen Echo Park. Email:
7:00-9:30 p.m. Size 3-4:30 p.m. at the PEP
by the Parent Encouragement
Gan Shabbat.
Potomac United
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Navigating ‘Unchartered Waters’

From Page 4

gin the slow process of leveling out. One highly debated topic — the future budget of the county’s public schools — relies on funding from state dollars. Berliner acknowledges the distinguished quality of Montgomery County Public Schools should be preserved, but presents an unprecedented challenge.

Winston Churchill Cluster Coordinator Laurie Halverson says if budget cuts are to be implemented, four major areas of concern could impact Potomac schools: an increase in class size, the reduction of maintenance positions, a loss of county transportation to magnet programs and the reduction of signature programs at the high school level are areas of concern effecting the Churchill cluster.

“We’re not sure what’s going to happen,” said Halverson.

Even with a seemingly dim forecast, Berliner said the council will not waver on the needs of its constituents. Over the course of his three years in service, Berliner acknowledges he has been able to pass major legislation among his colleagues without the aid of institutional power.

“District One will continue to be well-served,” said its councilman.

Crime Report

A residential burglary occurred in the 8800 block of Tallyho Trail, Potomac on Thursday, Dec. 3, between 9:00 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. Entry was forced; property was taken. Multiple thefts from vehicles occurred in the Potomac area between Tuesday, Dec. 1, and Thursday, Dec. 3, during the overnight hours in the vicinity listed below.

7600 block of Hackamore Drive — Vehicle window broken. GPS taken; 10900 block of Deborah Drive — Unknown entry. Cash, 2 digital cameras & GPS were taken. A second unlocked vehicle was entered, but nothing taken; 8200 block of Inverness Hollow Terrace — Vehicle door unlocked; cash was taken; 8200 block of Inverness Hollow Terrace — Unknown entry. Unknown whether property was taken; 7900 block of Lakenheath Way — Vehicle door unlocked, searched trunk and left trunkajar; CD player, GPS, and 2 ID cards taken.

A residential burglary occurred in the 13100 block of River Road, Potomac between Tuesday, 12/1 at 11:00 p.m. and Wednesday, 12/2 at 8:30 a.m. Entry was unforced; property was taken. The incident might be domestic-related.

A residential burglary occurred in the 9300 block of Wintersett Drive, Potomac on Thursday, 12/3 between 9:00 a.m. and 12:35 p.m. Entry was forced, but nothing was taken.

A residential burglary occurred in the 8900 block of Maine Avenue, Potomac on Friday, 12/4 at approximately 12:45 p.m. Forced entry; property was taken.

Arrested: Male, age 18, from Washington, D.C.; male, age 17, from Washington, D.C.

School Notes

Benjamin F. Myers of Potomac is this year’s Rensselaer Medal winner at St. John’s College High School in Washington, D.C. The Rensselaer Medal is awarded by more than 3,900 secondary schools in the world. The award is given to students who have distinguished themselves in math and science. To be honored, a student must be a member of the junior class and the high school’s single most promising science and math student. Each medalist receives a scholarship of $50,000

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Churchill Boys Basketball Suffers First Defeat

Churchill boys basketball coach Matt Miller said he is more concerned about his young team improving than he is about winning during the early part of the 2009-10 season. Miller’s statement was put to the test Dec. 15 when the Bulldogs suffered their first loss of the season, 53-45 to Magruder.


“Obviously you are never happy when you lose a game,” Miller wrote in an e-mail. “We did some things that hurt us tonight in a close ballgame. We missed a number of chances to score, whether it was missed layups or poor perimeter shooting. We also didn’t rebound in key situations. Our guys just didn’t have it all together tonight offensively. However, we had another strong effort against what we all know to be a pretty good team. I was pleased with the way we battled and defended. We didn’t make it easy for them all night on defense and perhaps the amount of energy we expended on that end hurt us on the other end — I don’t really know — but if so, we need to find a way not to let that happen. “… Overall, I can’t be too disappointed because our guys gave us all that they had tonight and put themselves in a position to compete and possibly win the game. And right now, that’s what we have asked them to do first and foremost.”

The Bulldogs trailed 25-20 at halftime and struggled with offensive consistency in the second half. Jake Eskin led Churchill in scoring for the third straight game.

The senior finished with 21 points while no other Bulldog scored more than six. Eskin, who transferred from Northwest prior to this season, is averaging 20 points per game.

“Also, we are a better offensive team than we showed this evening,” Miller said. “Jake did his thing tonight but we also needed to get him some help. Guys like Jordan Bass, Will Lewis and Sam Edens are collectively going to shoot a lot better most nights — they know that and we know that. But they are young guys playing in their third varsity game so we expect some ups and downs early in the season. Also, our big guys are going to need to finish around the rim better if we want to be successful.”

**LEWIS SCORED** 17 points in the team’s season opener against Kennedy. Tom DiFato scored 10 against Watkins Mill.

Edens scored six points against Magruder. Bass, Kyle Edwards and Thomas Green each scored four points for Churchill, while Michael Ely and Lewis each added three.

“You are going to think I have a problem with repeating myself but I’ll say the same thing that I said after the past two games — win or lose, we need to get better in several areas so that we can be the type of team that the players, coaches, parents, students and everyone at Churchill wants,” Miller said. “So we’re going to take the same approach that we always talk about. We’re going to go watch the tape and evaluate what we as a staff could do better and also what the players can do better. Then we’re going to get back in the gym and try to get better.”

**CHURCHILL FACED** Springbrook on Dec. 18 and Northwest on Dec. 21. Results were not available before the Almanac deadline. The Bulldogs will host Bel Air on Dec. 29 and Watkins Mill on Dec. 30.

**Churchill Girls Win Third Straight**

The Churchill girls basketball team defeated Magruder, 71-39, on Dec. 15 to improve to 3-0. The Bulldogs faced Springbrook and Northwest, but results were not available before the Almanac.

![Senior guard Jake Eskin led the Churchill boys basketball team with 21 points during its loss to Magruder on Tuesday. The Northwest transfer is averaging 20 points per game with the Bulldogs.](image)

**Vikings win three of first four games to open 2009-10 season**

**By Jared Wasserman**

Aft...
It’s post-Thanksgiving Sunday and now that the food and festivities are mostly finished (and work looms tomorrow, Monday, for many), reality has once again reared its ugly head. Life goes on (for me, Thank God!) but not to be thankful every day for the “above average” relative good medical fortune I’ve experienced (since receiving my quite unexpected diagnosis last March) would be disrespectful to those very God’s who likely control my fate.

Whatever mental exercises in futility I employ to defeat these death-defying cancer demons, I do so without their expressed written consent. It is a battle royal every day (more so the nights) and no doubt it will be a battle to the end, or at least that’s my intention. And one of my unique weapons in this war against attrition is my attitude. Inherited from my parents, I guess, programmed somehow into my DNA, I can fight this fight with positive – and realistic – optimism, good humor and good sense. But “jolly” I can no longer be, regardless of the optimism, good humor and good sense. But “jolly” I can no longer be, regardless of the optimism, good humor and good sense. But (more so the nights) and no doubt it will be a battle to the end, or at least that’s my intention. And one of my unique weapons in this war against attrition is my attitude. Inherited from my parents, I guess, programmed somehow into my DNA, I can fight this fight with positive – and realistic – optimism, good humor and good sense.

And not that I think this “holiday season” will be my last. Hardly. But as a cancer patient, one of the attitudes you are encouraged to embrace is “today.” I can still remember Team Lourie’s first meeting with my oncologist (how can I forget?) when, after listening to the doctor’s reading/reviewing of all my medical reports/scans and biopsy, ending in the diagnosis with which many of you regular readers are intimately familiar, I replied, “Wow, it doesn’t sound like I should be working anymore;” to which the doctor added, “And one of my unique weapons in this war against attrition is my attitude. Inherited from my parents, I guess, programmed somehow into my DNA, I can fight this fight with positive – and realistic – optimism, good humor and good sense. But (more so the nights) and no doubt it will be a battle to the end, or at least that’s my intention. And one of my unique weapons in this war against attrition is my attitude. Inherited from my parents, I guess, programmed somehow into my DNA, I can fight this fight with positive – and realistic – optimism, good humor and good sense.”

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**Business**

**Grand Opening**
Char Rosnick, representing U.S. Rep. Chris Van Hollen, presents Rosie Ahmad, Amani’s owner, with a certificate from the congressman commemorating the opening of the Amani Wellness Spa.

**Amani’s owner Rosie Ahmad and “Mr. Amani” — the stuffed peacock.**

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**Business Notes**
To have an item listed free in The Potomac Almanac, e-mail to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week’s paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Unless otherwise noted, all events are in Potomac. If you have any questions, call Steve Hibbard at 703-917-6407.

Joan Reilly, Branch Vice President of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Potomac, recently announced the office’s Top Agents for the month of October:
- Carol Marino – Top Producing Agent
- Debra Marko – Top Listing Agent
- Rohsahn Fallah and Frank Holliday – Top Sales Team

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage is dedicated to creating exceptional real estate services for its customers and communities through the delivery of truly remarkable service.

The office’s top agents for the month of September were:
- Valerie Puddington – Top Sales Agent
- Marc Infeld – Top Listing Agent
- Rohsahn Fallah and Frank Holliday – Top Producing Team

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage is dedicated to creating exceptional real estate services for its customers and communities through the delivery of truly remarkable service.

My Gym Children’s Fitness Center of Potomac will recognize its 10th-year anniversary with a celebration on Friday, Jan. 15 from 4-7 p.m. at its 11325 Seven Locks Rd. in Cabin John Mall. During this event, all are welcome to meet the staff, see the facility and play! There will be fun and games, discounts, raffles and more.

Principals of the law firm, Paley Rothman of Bethesda, have been chosen by their peers for inclusion in the 2010 edition of The Best Lawyers in America, which has been regarded as the definitive guide to legal excellence in the United States. The Paley Rothman attorneys from Potomac selected to Best Lawyers are:
- Glenn M. Cooper, of Potomac, manager and senior member of the firm’s Litigation and Appellate practice groups, past president of both the Montgomery County, Maryland Bar Foundation and the Bar Association of Montgomery County, who has been named one of the top attorneys in the Washington, D.C. area by Washingtonian on three separate occasions.
- Steven A. Widdes, of Potomac, a co-chair of the firm’s Estate Planning and Estate/Trust Administration practice groups, who was named a Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, is a former chairman of the Maryland State Bar Association Taxation Section and previously served as chairman of the Georgetown University/D.C. Bar Association Estate Planning Program.

Alana Lasover, Branch Vice President of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Bethesda, recently announced the office’s top producers for the month of July:
- Howard Morin, Top Sales Agent and Top Producer;
- Charles Bresoler, Top Listing Agent;
- Barbara Abeille, Top Listing Group;
- and Ellen Wilner, Top Sales Group and Top Producing Group.

Derek Smith, a resident of Potomac, was recently selected to join Signature Financial Partners, LLC as a financial representative. Based in Vienna, Signature Financial Partners, LLC is a local financial services firm and member of John Hancock Financial Network (JHFN), a national network of independent career firms.

A graduate from the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland, Derek Smith is active in several community and business organizations such as the Sierra Club, The National Scholars Honor Society, Delta Tau Delta Alumni, and the Logistics, Transportation and Supply Chain Management Club.

**Imagination Stage** has been awarded a New Generations grant from the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre. The New Generations grant, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered through TCG, provides $77,500 over two years and will allow Imagination Stage to expand programming.

Fred Sommer, attorney with Shulman, Rogers, Gandal, Pordy and Ecker Law Firm, speaks with Tom Dudenhoefer of Payroll Network following a seminar entitled, “Common Employer Mistakes Under Wage & Hour Laws.” The seminar, held last month, was co-sponsored by the Potomac-based law firm and Payroll Network. See www.payrollnetwork.com.
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