

Potomac ALMANAC

Claire and her father
Doug Throckmorton
dance to Elvis's "Jail-
house Rock" at the
father-daughter dance
inside the Potomac
Community Center on
Saturday, Feb. 27.

Dancing Partners

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Recession's
Impact
On Schools

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His Mission in Haiti

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Savage's 3-Pointer
Sparks Offense

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MARCH 3-9, 2010 ♦ VOLUME LIV, NUMBER 9

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THE ALMANAC

Dancing Partners

Fathers and daughters participate in the limbo contest inside Potomac Community Center.



Brianna Saulter does the limbo at the father-daughter dance.



D.J. Alex Schmidt dances with all of the girls at the father-daughter dance.

Beyond Statistics

Cuts to Schools could have major impact on Churchill Cluster.

BY ANSLEY LABARRE
THE ALMANAC

“Everybody wants their piece of the pie.” Laura Siegel sighed as she finished her abrupt statement, frustrated with its reality. Siegel is tired of hearing the word “recession.” She is well aware of the unprecedented problems it has presented and the looming budget cuts it will continue to bring.

Despite her economic exhaustion, Siegel is fighting hard for her own sliver of the pie. As one of three Churchill cluster coordinators, she has testified to the Montgomery County Board of Education and stood in support before the county council and state legislature with the hopes of securing school funds. Understanding the complicated school fiscal system and the domino effect of the recession, Siegel knows the money is just not available — cuts will inevitably be made. She foresees the adverse effects that could directly impact Potomac’s public schools. Yet, she is troubled that most parents do not.

“They won’t realize the consequences until it’s too late,” Siegel said.

THREATS TO INCREASE class sizes and the reduction of bus transportation and staff are serious proposals that have cluster

coordinators around the county protesting further cuts to the operating budget. But the growing concern for the Churchill cluster is the potential cuts will cause the local schools to lose their independent programs that have distinguished their reputation in the county.

The signature program at Winston Churchill High School has already become dependent on private donations and parent volunteers for survival, and further cuts to accelerated enrichment programs targeting above-average students could, in turn, physically displace those students to other county and magnet schools. Sports teams and extra curriculars are also at stake, threatening the programs that are

critical to social development outside the classroom. The cluster coordinators agree in-class education is the priority when it comes to budget cuts, but the sense of community that comes from school-related activities will also be lost along the way.

“There’s no statistic to measure those benefits,” said Siegel, and her concerns have not gone unnoticed.

Laura Barthiaume, the District 2 elected official on the Montgomery County Board of Education, says cuts are affecting students on both ends of the spectrum. She believes the system as a whole is

SEE CUTS, PAGE 6

“We have lost our vision of what a good education is.”

— Laura Barthiaume,
Board of Education
member, District 2

Local Man Finds His Mission in Haiti

Potomac Rotary member fights for his dream.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

Mark Dreibelius felt panic, anguish and terrifying fear as he listened to news reports about the 7.0 magnitude earthquake which had hit Haiti. He desperately searched for air transportation to Port-au-Prince but to no avail. The airport was barely open and most planes were not cleared to land.

Finally, a week later, he found a flight to

the Dominican Republic and, upon arrival, drove eight hours across the country on narrow windy roads to the city. He had to reach the Mission Ranch compound that he had so carefully built — or what was left of it — as soon as possible to help the staff take care of the Haitians pouring into the facility.

He had to make certain the children in his orphanage were emotionally and physically surviving the aftermaths of the earthquake. He desperately wanted to be on hand

to help the medical center treat the victims who were arriving by hundreds. Everything in Mission Ranch except the medical clinic had been destroyed — but the children and the staff were all alive.

They were in Port-au-Prince for the 6.5 magnitude aftershock. Dreibelius shared what the experience was like: “The sound of the earth shaking is like a freight train. It is a remarkable sound. It’s a loud rumble that comes from the center of the earth. After these tremors, everyone refused to stay or sleep in their homes. They were afraid they would collapse on them. Being poor can be a blessing because the tin

shacks shook, but they did not fall down.”

HOW DID DREIBELIUS become so involved in Haiti? In 2004, he traveled to Haiti to visit a child he was sponsoring. The 10-day visit changed his life. He returned home to Gaithersburg vowing to start a non-profit to provide feeding programs, medical care and an orphanage for the children.

After researching the many rules and regulations of a 501C3., Dreibelius founded the Famine Relief Foundation to raise the funds for his dream. A member of the Potomac Rotary, Dreibelius received

SEE ROTARY, PAGE 6

Body Found in Parking Lot

Detectives from the Montgomery County Police Major Crimes Division - Homicide/Sex Section are investigating the death of an adult male whose body was found Tuesday, Feb. 9 in Potomac at approximately 3:30 p.m. No foul play is suspected.

On Tuesday, Feb. 9, at approximately 3:30 p.m., police officers from the 1st District and Fire/Rescue personnel responded to a call for an unresponsive person in a vehicle in the Cabin John Shopping Center parking lot in front of the liquor store. Upon arrival, they found a deceased adult male in the driver's seat of a silver 1998 two-door Mitsubishi. The ignition was in the "on" position but the engine was not running. The vehicle had been parked front-end first with the rear of the vehicle facing the traffic aisle.

Further investigation revealed that a citizen had observed that vehicle in the same parking space on Monday, Feb. 8, with the engine running. The vehicle was occupied but the citizen believed the occupant was sleeping. When this same citizen observed the vehicle on Tuesday, Fire/Rescue personnel were summonsed.

The male victim has been identified as Yusef Nazemi, 53 years old. Nazemi is described as being homeless over the last two to three months and had been living in his car in the shopping center. His last address is not known at this time. His body has been transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore where an autopsy will be conducted.

Anyone who has any information about this event is asked to call the Major Crimes Division at 240-773-5070.

Applicants Sought for Advisory Board

County Executive Isiah Leggett is seeking applicants to fill nine vacancies on the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board, comprising three business representatives, one of whom should be from a non-profit business in the regional services area, and six residential representatives, two of whom should be residents of the City of Rockville.

The 19-member board represents the residential and business communities of Potomac, Bethesda, Cabin John, Chevy Chase, Friendship Heights, Garrett Park, Glen Echo, North Bethesda, and Rockville. The board advises the director of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center, the County Executive and the County Council on community needs and priorities such as transportation, human services, environmental, public safety, and other local issues.

Members serve three-year terms without compensation, but are eligible for reimbursement for travel and dependent care for meetings attended.

Board meetings are held the third Monday of the month, and begin at 7 p.m. Committee meetings may be held in the morning or evening depending on the issues to be discussed. Members are expected to contribute approximately six hours each month, and to attend both board and committee meetings.

An application, consisting of a brief cover letter and resume, should be sent by mail to County Executive Isiah Leggett, 101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor, Rockville, MD 20850, or by email to countyexecutive.boards@montgomerycountymd.gov. Home and employment addresses, as well as contact phone numbers and email addresses should be included. The deadline for application is March 2.

County Donates to Haiti

Montgomery County's Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and Department of Correction and Rehabilitation have donated 1,700 pounds of food and water to relief efforts in Haiti. The county's Volunteer Center provided volunteers, who transported the provisions to Save the Children in Washington, D.C. Save the Children is transporting the donations to Haiti.

Anyone interested in making a donation can find information on the Montgomery County Volunteer Center's Web site at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer.

NEWS



Machu Picchu

Rescue from Machu Picchu

Sudden flooding forces evacuation by helicopter.

BY ELLIOT WILLNER
SPECIAL TO THE ALMANAC

In late January, while on an escorted tour in Peru, my wife and I and the rest of our group, together with at least 3,000 other tourists, became marooned near Machu Picchu when the Urubamba River overflowed its banks. The floods in the Urubamba River Valley (the "Sacred Valley" of the Peruvian highlands) have not received a great deal of attention in the U.S. media, likely because our attention has been riveted on the catastrophic tragedy in Haiti, but it bears mentioning that the devastation in Peru has been considerable and that tourism in that country will be affected for some time to come.

It is of course no secret that summer is the rainy season in the highlands of Peru; but the rains this summer have been heavier than anyone there can remember, probably the heaviest in 40 years or more. When we reached our first destination in the Urubamba River Valley on Jan. 22, the river was already beginning to overflow its banks. Tellingly, a raft trip on the river the next day, which ordinarily would require two hours to complete, was completed in less than 20 minutes — the current was so swift that we seldom needed to dip our paddles into the water.

On Jan. 24 we boarded a train in Ollantaytambo for the 26-mile ride to the town of Aguas Calientes, the gateway to Machu Picchu where almost all tourists book overnight accommodations. Train service had been interrupted during the previous day, owing to mudslides on the tracks, but the tracks had been cleared by the morning of Jan. 24 and several trainloads of tourists arrived that day in Aguas Calientes. The route of the rail line is in the valley, never more than a few yards from the river bank, and we passed a number of gorges where the river

was tumbling ferociously over boulders and fallen trees. We also passed a hydroelectric dam, about four miles upstream from Aguas Calientes, which seemed to be nearly bursting its concrete seams. After arriving in the town we deposited our overnight bags in the lobby of our hotel (which was situated, ominously, only about 100 feet from the river bank), and we boarded a bus for the four-mile trip up the switchback road to Machu Picchu.

I WON'T DWELL on the natural and archeological wonders of Machu Picchu, which are familiar to the millions of people (close to a half-million yearly) who have visited the site; it will suffice to say that a visit is worth considerable inconvenience and discomfort, perhaps even a natural disaster such as the flood that we encountered after dinner that night. As it so happens, my wife became ill that night, suffering a fever, nausea and vomiting, probably because of some contaminated lettuce that she had eaten, but she did manage to fall asleep soon after midnight. At about 4 a.m. we heard a strange rumbling noise that echoed through the hotel. Many guests suspected an earthquake, but in fact the noise was caused by floodwaters that had buckled the road in front of the hotel and were now undermining the foundation of the building. We soon discovered that electrical power and water and sewage lines to the hotel had been interrupted, and at 6:30 a.m. we were instructed to evacuate the hotel immediately.

Our group of 28 American tourists, ranging in age from late 50s to mid-80s, was escorted by our tour manager and local guides to the town square of Aguas Calientes, where we were joined by the 3,000 or more other tourists — mostly young people, lugging enormous backpacks — who had visited Machu Picchu the previous day or who were hoping (vainly) to visit later that day.

We all knew that the rail line had been washed out, and the Inca Trail, the only other route into or out of Machu Picchu, was also deemed to be impassable. Many of the hotels in Aguas Calientes were no longer inhabitable, and stocks of water and food in

SEE RESIDENTS, PAGE 15
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LETTERS

Differing View On Snowstorm

To the Editor:

I noted that you had lengthy stories in your papers in the past two weeks about "survival" in the snow. Indeed, one of the stories took up two pages of space in your paper. I would like to report my story, although it is not as dramatic as the two stories that you previously reported. It will not take up much space, perhaps a paragraph or so.

My husband is in his 70s and I am in my 60s. Knowing the snow was coming, I got

my cross country skis ready. During the first night of the snow, we lost power. When I got up in the morning, I went cross country skiing, without interruption of snow plows, cars etc. It was wonderful! I had three days of great skiing. We shoveled and shoveled and kept warm shoveling (and also got plenty of exercise). On the second day of life without power, the temperature in our house was 41 degrees. But we did not even think that we might freeze — or starve to death. We have a son and family in Oakton, Va., who had power, but it did not even occur to us to go there. After all, we did not want to get in the way of plows, and our common sense told us that it was safer to

stay put, and enjoy the quiet. Then on Sunday afternoon, our power was restored, and the next day, the plow came and plowed our court. That is the end of our story, but I have the following comments.

We had plenty of food, even though we had not gone to Giant to buy out the store. Matter of fact, we did not lose any weight. I weigh 103 lbs and my husband is over 6 feet and weighs 170 lbs.

It would not have occurred to my son in Virginia to become alarmed and insist that we should come to his house because "elderly people do not make wise decisions" as printed in one of your articles. What an insult! Both of us are retired and still hold

important jobs. I am a triathlete, and a marathoner. My husband swims and runs. For us, this snow storm was not a question of "survival." We enjoyed the snow. The power outage was an inconvenience, but we could not help but think of the people in Haiti, and many other places in the world where this is daily living. And at around the time of your articles, there was a picture on the front page of the Washington Post of a 21-year-old man in Afghanistan spending his night in the mud waiting for the next day's battle and ready to put his life on the line. Now, his story is dramatic!

Linda S. Carter
Potomac



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LET'S TALK Real Estate



by
Michael Matese

A BREAK FOR HIGH-END HOME BUYERS

A recent action by the federal government has raised conforming loan limits for high end properties. This is good news for buyers in areas where median priced homes are selling above Fannie Mae's previous \$417,000 loan limit. This will also help homeowners of high end properties to refinance their present mortgage, get a better interest rate, and significantly reduce their monthly payments.

The legislation permits Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to raise their conforming loan limits in those high priced areas. It's part of the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 and will be in effect until December 31 of this year. The new jumbo loan limits are a function of median home prices as estimated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The maximum for temporary jumbo conforming loan limits are as high as \$729,750 for one-unit homes in the continental U.S. Two, three and four-unit properties have higher limits.

Seventy-one local areas are affected by the ruling, including metro areas and 245 counties outside of metro areas that show increases in property values. If you are looking for a higher end home in one of these areas, consult your local Realtor or mortgage lender for the local lending limit.

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NEWS

Rotary Member Fights for His Dream

FROM PAGE 3

funding from that organization.

After he raised enough money, he traveled to Leilet, Haiti, a rural community near the Dominican Republic border and started a feeding program.

"All you need is a willing servant's heart and a passion to succeed," said Dreibelius when asked how he learned to manage such a program. "Haiti is the most impoverished country in the western hemisphere. I felt a calling to return there."

AFTER TWO YEARS in the rural area, he felt a calling to Cite Soleil, the poorest ghetto in Port au Prince. This slum is infested with gangs, crime, homeless children and drugs. He found some abandoned buildings that had been owned by a gangster named Evans. Evans ran Cite Soleil — he was the warlord of the city. Most of the gangster activity included kidnapping, ransoms and assassinations. When Evans went to prison in 2007, people were afraid to touch the property, for fear of repercussions from the gangs. However, the city government trusted Dreibelius and turned over Evans' complex to the Famine Relief Foundation to build a medical center, feeding center, religious center and orphanage.

After, these were built, they introduced programs for delivering medical care, vitamins, dental care, clothing, and food. GNC sent them 60,000 vitamins to distribute to the children and they partnered with the Haiti Clinic, a nonprofit from Florida to get help and support to run the medical clinic.

"After the earthquake, the Haiti Clinic provided two doctors and many bags of antibiotics and supplies." Dreibelius said. "They were very instrumental in helping the



Mark Dreibelius attends to victims of the earthquake.

number and the volume of patients we saw. We saw roughly 1,500 to 2,000 patients in the first two and a half weeks."

Since he is not able to be in Haiti most of the time, a Haitian named Robinson manages the day-to-day activities of the orphanage and the complex. Robinson, along with a staff of 10, has built a family atmosphere for 15 children.

Dreibelius explained: "We must rely on one another. The children are expected to get along, to be respectful and to help. Most of the children are schooled within the complex.

They are taught academics as well as skills related to their career interests.

If one of the children thinks she or he wants to grow up and work in the market, we will teach them the necessary skills and then we plan to build them the store in the

market to start their business. Many of the children come to us with no schooling at all, so we must start with the basics. One of our children was a child slave and severely beaten — we saved her from that life. The children have horrendous life stories, and we are giving them a chance to be children again."

DREIBELIUS IS a professional photographer who owns Fine Art Photography and Hot Shots Photography, but his true calling is his missionary work. Now he is busy fund-raising. The Famine Relief Foundation needs at least \$105,000 to rebuild the orphanage, religious center and feeding center. After the earthquake, the only building standing is the newly built Medical Center, built to withstand Category 4 hurricanes.

The Famine Relief Foundation

also needs additional money for food, medical supplies, and vitamins and to meet the basic needs of the earthquake victims. Dreibelius donates a portion of each photography event check to his cause.

"One hundred percent of the funds go to help the people of Haiti and the Mission Ranch facility," he said. "To sponsor a child is only \$30 per month."

To learn more about the Famine Relief Foundation, see the Web site at www.Faminierelief.com. Dreibelius' email is frf@faminierelief.com and his telephone is 301-990-0976. Videos are also available on his Web site, and at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f30duaOxM>. They do contain graphic and disturbing images.

Cuts to Schools To Affect Churchill Cluster

FROM PAGE 3

pushing towards mediocrity, running on classroom measures that do not accommodate the non-average student or take non-testable benefits like that sense of community into account.

"We have lost our vision of what a good education is," said Barthiaume.

BUT THE STATISTICS for determining money allocation, often derived from the standards of No Child Left Behind, have not been reassuring either. In her testimony to the Board of Education, Siegel compared the increasing growth of the student body to "bare-bones" staffing and says the projected class size of 25.7

students is a misleading number that does not take into account all students, including special education, that will be in a classroom at one time.

She says nearly 80 percent of the classes at WCHS will have more than the average 26 students next semester.

"I found the Churchill cluster's testimony to be very informative, in particular, the exponential growth of administration versus student body," said Barthiaume, whose district representation includes the Churchill cluster. And while Barthiaume made it clear she does not speak for the board, she believes there is much more to be examined.

"Any responsible board member would need

to take a look at that [testimony] and what we should be sending back to the classroom," said Barthiaume. Getting that money back to the classrooms is exactly what cluster coordinators across the county are advocating.

"They're spending money on things that aren't in the classroom and we need to get back to the basics," said Siegel, who acknowledges cuts could be made in central offices before coming down on classrooms and teachers. "Cuts are most likely going to be made, but we want minimal adverse effect on the students."

But how to secure those funds for classrooms, and is already it too late? The cluster

SEE RECESSION, PAGE 15

A+ Education Learning Fun



Different Kind of 'Young Professional'

Photo courtesy of the Shakespeare Theatre

Kent Jenkins was the Duke of York in the Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of "Richard III" three years ago.

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Local children and teenagers launch their show business careers early in life.

By **Julia O'Donoghue**
The Connection

Think of the Helen Hayes Awards as the Washington D.C. professional theater community's local version of the Tony Awards. To be nominated for the honor means an actor gave one of the best performances or was part of one of the best shows of the year in this region.

So the fact that Rachel Boyd was part of the Signature Theatre "Les Miserables" cast that won the Helen Hayes Award for outstanding musical ensemble last year is a big deal. And Rachel is now part of the "Show Boat" ensemble at Signature, nominated for the same award again.

The Fairfax resident has had the type of critical and professional success that many actors have to wait years to accumulate. But at only eight years old, she hasn't exactly been toiling away at her craft as a starving artist for years.

While another child might talk about joining the local soccer game, Rachel said she participates in professional shows because it is "cool." She doesn't get nervous when she is, for example, singing "Castle on a Cloud" as Cosette in "Les Miserables," despite the fact that it is one of the most recognizable musical theater moments of all time.

"It is fun to pretend you are the actual person and not just playing the character. It is fun to get emotional because it is an emotional part," said Rachel, who has logged almost enough hours on stage to qualify for her union card with the American Equity Association, not that she is that concerned about pay scale and benefits at this point.

"I like doing big shows, like that a lot. You have fun backstage experiences," she said in an interview.

LOCAL THEATRES have a need for talented children and young adults to play age appropriate roles. And the region is home to many families who invest time and money on talent agents, dance classes and voice coaches so their children stand a better chance of landing a role in a produc

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POTOMAC ALMANAC ♦ MARCH 3-9, 2010 ♦ 7

Showing Their Talents



Al Nie and Shira Litman in the Wayside Elementary School Talent Show at Churchill High School on Thursday, Feb. 4.



Isabelle Zhou in the Wayside Elementary School Talent Show at Churchill High School on Thursday, Feb. 4.



Colin Davies and Andrew Sidawy in the Wayside Elementary School Talent Show.



Sarah Rizzo and Madeline Bell.



Photos by Harvey Levine/The Almanac

Jennifer Dalrymple, Kamryn Testa, and Alexis Weinstein.



Nadav Shterenboim, Sam Altschuler, Noah Smith, and Robert Wachen in the Wayside Elementary School Talent Show at Churchill High School on Thursday, Feb. 4.

'Young Professional'

From Page 7

tion at the likes of Arena Stage or The Kennedy Center.

If a child is lucky enough to be cast in a role, it can devour hours of both the child's and the parents' time, going to and from rehearsals and performances that can run four hours on a week night and up to 12 hours on the weekend. It can be exhausting for everyone involved.

"This is all new to me. I was in athletics growing up and I don't remember it taking up this much time. My daughter spends three or four times as many hours on a production than I ever did at sports practice," said Tom Weichbrodt, whose teenage daughter Angela is in "That Face" currently running at the Studio Theatre downtown. The family lives in Belle Haven.

Most families said it is the child who is the driving force behind devoting so much time and energy trying out and performing in professional productions.

"She goes to bed after a rehearsal or a show at midnight and gets up at 6 a.m. for school. I can't remember the last time she hung out with her friends. I don't know that many high school students who would be willing to give up time with their friends to do anything," said Weichbrodt.

STILL, some parents, particularly those with younger children, said they had a few reservations about getting their child involved in professional productions, which require being out late on several school nights.

When Kent Jenkins III, now 13 years old, was part of The Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of "Richard III" a few years ago, he had to perform in 72 shows in 74 days.

The demanding schedule caused Kent, who also plays sports, to drop off his ice hockey team for a good portion of the season. When the show was running that winter, Kent, as fourth grader, didn't step off stage until 10:30 p.m. and usually got home around midnight on school nights.

"It is a real, significant commitment of time and energy and you do worry if it is simply just too much. But what we have found is that he really enjoys doing the shows. It is a lot of fun for him and he handles all the work just fine," said Kent Jenkins Jr., whose son also starred as Tiny Tim for two



Photo courtesy of Ford's Theatre

Kent Jenkins played Tiny Tim for two years in the Ford's Theatre production of "A Christmas Carol."

seasons in Ford Theater's "A Christmas Carol."

IN SOME CASES, children also have more flexibility in their schedule because their families have chosen to home school them. "I actually enjoy teaching her myself and it helps with the scheduling. If she on stage until 11, she doesn't have to turn around and get up at 7 a.m. the next morning. We can also accommodate the other actors in the show because we can do daytime rehearsals and stuff like that," said Lori Boyd, mother of Rachel Boyd.

Brian Reimer, now a sophomore at Georgetown Day School in Washington D.C., was also home schooled earlier and said the flexibility benefited his interest in acting. Reimer also played Tiny Tim in Ford's "A Christmas Carol" and had a part in a Kennedy Center production of "Hecuba." The McLean resident has worked on commercials and as an extra in several movies, including "Night At The Museum II" and "National Treasure II."

"Because I was homeschooled I could go to extra rehearsals or early rehearsals and just watch the other actors, who were really really good at what they did, work," said Reimer.

JUGGLING SCHOOL during the day time and performances at night can be a good lesson for young actors, said Fairfax Academy teacher Mike Replogle, who worked as a professional actor for 22 years. Most actors, even those who work regularly as professionals, have to hold down a day job to pay the bills, even if they perform in productions regularly.

"Frankly, if this is the life you are going to choose, it never gets

easier. Most professional actors are working five days a week nine to five p.m. and then performing every night," he said.

APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD of Replogle's students, mostly juniors and seniors in high school, have been paid to perform already. Approximately 90 percent of them have been on a professional audition, the teacher said.

Replogle encourages students to audition for professional productions not only to improve their presentation and performance but also so they have a better understanding of how much rejection is involved in the performing arts world.

"If you are going to work in this business, you have to be in the top 25 percent in your age group and sex in terms of talent. And even then, you will only get called back once for every 25 auditions you go on. If you are Harrison Ford, maybe you get called back once every seven times," said Replogle.

When Kent first started auditioning for professional shows, Jenkins said he was extremely concerned about the amount of rejection his son would receive and the toll that might take on his self esteem as a child.

"It was a big, big concern of mine. But happily, he figured out early on that he shouldn't take those things too personally and so he just kind of shrugs it off," said Jenkins.

Kent said he tries not to think about shows where he doesn't get call backs or gets a call back but ultimately doesn't get the part.

"The best way to handle it is not to think about it. Rejection doesn't mean you were bad. It just means that you weren't necessarily what they were looking for," said Kent.

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

NOW THROUGH MARCH 24

“Connecting With God: An Exploration of Prayer.” St James' five-week Lenten prayer study program. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Feb. 21-March 24. Sunday mornings, 10:15 a.m.: a 45-minute session with special sessions/breakouts for young children through high school age. Sessions take place in the church undercroft (lower level) Tuesday mornings, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., church undercroft Wednesday evenings, 7:30 – 9 p.m., St. James' Parish Hall. At St. James' Episcopal Church, 11815 Seven Locks Road, Potomac. Call 301-762-8040 or visit office@stjamespotomac.org.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 3

Joshua Bell and Jeremy Denk. 8 p.m. Tickets that were purchased for the Feb. 9 performance will be honored. At The Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Go to www.strathmore.org or call 301-581-5100.

Storyteller Li Min Mo. 7 p.m. Experienced storyteller Li Min Mo presents imaginative tales from Asian folklore. At Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Dr., Potomac. Call 240-777-0690.

THURSDAY/MARCH 4

Blues Dance. 8:15 to 11:30 p.m. Cost is \$8. With rotating DJs and instructors. Beginner workshop from 8:15 to 9 p.m. Dancing from 9 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. At the Ballroom Annex of Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Contact: info@capitalblues.org.

Loving Your Kid Without Losing Your Mind. Presentation for parents of tweens and teens by author Dr. Michael Bradley. Sponsored by the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP). 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Walter Johnson High School, 6400 Rock Spring Dr., Bethesda. \$25/person. Tickets available by visiting www.PEPparent.org or by calling PEP at 301-929-8824.

Blood Drive. 3-8 p.m. Sponsored by the Montgomery County Police and the Citizen Academy Alumni Association. At the Public Safety Training Academy, 9710 Great Seneca Highway, Rockville. Appointments for donation can be made by e-mailing: Michele.Smith@montgomerycountymd.gov.



TUESDAY/MARCH 9

Musician Dave Nachmanoff. 8 p.m. Folk singer-songwriter. At the Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville. Tickets are \$18/door, \$15/advance at FocusMusic.org.



SUNDAY/MARCH 14

Frog and Toad. 1 p.m. At the Music Center at Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda.

MARCH 4-5

“Celebrate Earth.” An environment-themed variety show featuring 30 acts, including songs, dances, music solos from students in grades 2-5. Thursday from 7-9 p.m.; Friday from 7-9 p.m. Tickets are \$7/person; children under 2 are free. At Cold Spring Elementary, 9201 Falls Chapel Way, Potomac. Contact Cold Spring parent Caroline Hendrie at 301-758-3210.

FRIDAY/MARCH 5

Contra Dance. 7:30-11:30 p.m. Cost is \$9. Contra dancing, square dances and waltzes. Contra dance lesson from 7:30-8:15 p.m. followed by the called dance to live music by Contratopia from 8:30-11:30 p.m. At the Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Contact: fndcontra@yahoo.com.

Parenting Today's Teen: Surviving Disrespect, Defiance and Risky Behavior. Workshop led by Dr. Michael Bradley, author of “Yes, Your Teen is Crazy!” Will offer insights and advice on the problems most common to contemporary adolescents, including raging anger, sex, drinking, drugs and other antisocial behaviors. Sponsored by the Parent Encouragement Program. 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Temple Emanuel, 10101 Connecticut Ave., Kensington. \$40/person. Tickets available by visiting www.PEPparent.org or by calling PEP at 301-929-8824.

MARCH 5-6

Herbert Lieberman Memorial Shabbaton. 8:30 p.m. Dr. Tamar Ross will discuss “The Role of Doubt in Religious Belief.” On Shabbat morning, she will discuss “The Implications of Feminism for Orthodox Jewish Theology: at 11:15 a.m. On Shabbat afternoon she will lecture on “Who (or What) is G-d” All of the lectures are free and open to all. For dinner reservations on March 5, call the office at 301-279-7010 or email amarmon@bethsholom.org. At Beth Sholom Congregation, 11825 Seven Locks Road, Potomac.

SATURDAY/MARCH 6

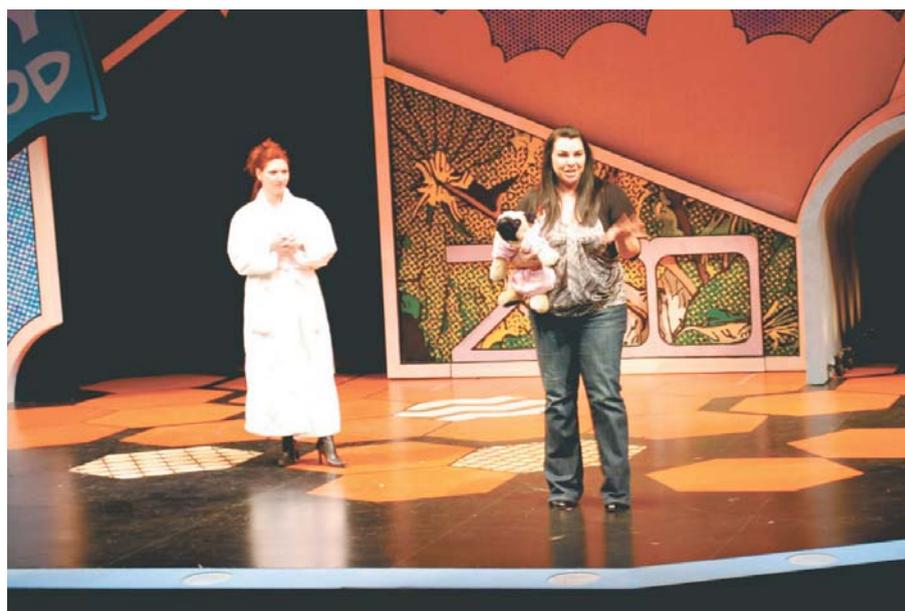
Swing Dance. 8 p.m. to midnight. Cost is \$14. Live music by Augie Swing. Beginner swing dance lesson from 8-9 p.m. Dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. At the Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Contact: wsdevolunteer@hotmail.com.

Subtracting Color: Discharge Explored with Elin Noble. 10 a.m. to noon. Free. This presentation includes instruction on removing color using a variety of patterning techniques through resist discharge baths and print processes. The reward is a rich visual cloth, with infinite layers of pattern, color and texture. Sponsored by the Potomac Fiber Arts Guild. At St. James Episcopal Church, 11815 Seven Locks Road, Potomac. Visit www.potomacraftsmenguild.org.

Spring Open House. 9 a.m. to noon. Visitors will explore over 60 undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered at USG. At The Universities at Shady Grove, Camille Kendall Academic Center, First Floor, 9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville. Preregister for the open house by going to www.shadygrove.umd.edu/pre-registration. For details and directions, visit www.shadygrove.umd.edu or call 301-738-6000.

SUNDAY/MARCH 7

Waltz Dance. 3-6 p.m. Cost is \$8. Beginner waltz lesson from 3-3:30 p.m. Dancing from 3:30-6 p.m. to the music of Contratopia with Patrice Pakiz, Pat O'Loughlin, John Goodin, Erik Sessions. At the Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo.



Adventure Theatre in Glen Echo.

Six Theatre Companies Perform Plays in 24 Hrs.

Six professional Washington, D.C., area theatre companies will write, direct, rehearse and perform original plays based on similar themes in only 24 hours. The plays will be presented at the sixth annual Play In A Day, a one-of-a-kind event produced by the Bethesda Arts & Entertainment District, on Saturday, March 20 at 8 p.m. at Imagination Stage's Lerner Theater.

Participating theatre companies include: Adventure Theatre (Glen Echo); Ganymede Arts (Washington, D.C.); Imagination Stage (Bethesda); Olney Theatre Center (Olney); Round House Theatre (Bethesda) and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (Washington, D.C.).

General admission tickets are \$15 and can be purchased by credit card online at www.bethesda.org. Remaining tickets will be sold at the door beginning at 7 p.m. Imagination Stage is located at 4908 Auburn Avenue. Free parking is available next door in the Auburn Avenue/Del Ray Avenue public garage.

Contact: info@waltztimedances.org.

Contra and Square Dance. 7-10:30 p.m. Cost is \$12/nonmembers, \$9 members. Traditional American dancing with a focus on New England style contra dances, including square dances, country mixers, waltzes and other couple dances. Welcome lesson at 7 p.m. Called dances by Ted Hodapp to Contratopia from 7:30-10:30 p.m. At the Spanish Ballroom of Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Contact: www.fsgw.org.

Jewish Choral Festival. 4 p.m. Synagogue choirs from the greater Washington area will come together to share voices, with songs based on the theme “We Stand As One.” Reception to follow. At Temple Beth Ami 14330 Travilah Rd, Rockville. Concert is free, but donations will be accepted to go to the Union for Reformed Judaism's Haiti Relief Fund. Call 301-340-6818.

B-CC Rescue Squad Fund-Raiser. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bertucci's will donate proceeds to the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Resque Squad, 5020 Battery Lane, Bethesda. Adults: \$9, kids 2-10: \$5. Visit www.bccrs.org or call 301-526-3193.

Play In A Day kicks off on Friday, March 19, where playwrights and directors will come together to receive their assigned themes and props. Playwrights then work through the night creating their 10-minute masterpieces. As the sun comes up, rehearsals begin as teams of directors and actors prepare anxiously to make the 8 p.m. performance deadline on Saturday, March 20. Accredited judges will award \$1,000 in total cash prizes.

Accredited judges will award \$1,000 in total cash prizes for Best Direction (\$250), Best Writing (\$250), Best Ensemble/Acting (\$250), Best Overall Play (\$250) and additional prizes will be awarded for audience favorite.

The judging panel includes: Jessica Burgess, artistic director at The Inkwell; Jennifer Nelson, director of special projects at Ford's Theatre; and Dr. Maya Roth, assistant professor of Theater and Performance Studies at Georgetown University.

For more information, call 301-215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

“A Secret.” 10 a.m. Cinema Art Bethesda will show “A Secret,” a look at the French national shame of the 1940s. In French with English subtitles. At Landmark Bethesda Row Cinema, 7235 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda. Visit <http://CinemaArtBethesda.org> or call 301-365-3679.

MONDAY/MARCH 8

Le Vent du Nord. 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20/advance, \$25/door. At IMT at Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, 10701 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville. Call 301-754-3611, visit www.imtfolk.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 11

Mission to Haiti Talk. 8:15 p.m. Free. Dr. Mitchell J. Schwaber, director of the National Center for Infection Control of the Israel Ministry of Health, will talk about his experiences as a member of the IDF medical mission to Haiti. At Beth Sholom Congregation, 11825 Seven Locks Road. Call 301-279-7010.

THEATER



PHOTO BY SCOTT SELMAN

Act Two Performing Arts presents **"The Producers"** featuring **Matt Miller (Max Bialystock), Kristi Oristian (Ulla Inga Hansen Benson Yonsen Tallen Hallen), and Alex Greenberg (Leo Bloom).**

MARCH 4-7

"The Producers." March 4 and 5 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Reserved tickets are \$19/adults; \$17/students and seniors; unreserved balcony seating is \$12. Groups of 10 or more \$15/person. Presented by Act Two Performing Arts Inc. Directed by Kevin Kuchar; musical direction by Taylor Williams; and choreography by Nancy Newell. At the Figge Theater of Georgetown Preparatory School, 10900 Rockville Pike, N. Bethesda. Visit <http://boxoffice.acttwo.org> or call 1-888-402-2282, ext. 1.

MARCH 20, 21, 27, 28

"Snow White and the Seven Sillies." By Marilyn Shockey, a musical with tuneful comic twists to enchant all ages. At 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Presented by the Potomac Theatre Company and directed by Stephanie Offutt. At Bullis School, Blair Family Center for the Arts, 10601 Falls Road, Potomac. Tickets are \$12; 20 percent off prepaid groups of 10. Call 301-299-8571.



"Beauty and the Beast"

NOW THROUGH APRIL 11

"Beauty and the Beast."

Performances are Thursdays and Fridays at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Recommended for grades K-6. Tickets are \$10. Running time: 45 minutes. Presented by the Puppet Co. Playhouse, in the North Arcade Building of Glen Echo Park, Glen Echo, Md. Call 301-634-5380 or go to www.thepuppetco.org.

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Adventure Theatre continues its literary series with seven popular children's book adaptations. Experience the journey from reading the books at home to seeing the plays unfold before your eyes. Book Club performances are always on **Sundays at 1:30 p.m.** at the theatre in Glen Echo Park. Recommended for children ages 4 and up. \$10/family. Call 301-634-2270 or visit www.adventuretheatre.org.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 21

"Peter and the Wolf." Price: \$10-\$21. For ages 5 and up. A contemporary take on the Prokofiev classic. Show times are Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 and 4 p.m., with some additional Saturday 11 a.m. performances. At Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Call 301-280-1660 or visit www.imaginationstage.org.

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Savage's 3 Sparks Offensive Outburst for Whitman

Russell ties career high with six 3-pointers, scores 30 points in win over Magruder.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE ALMANAC

Less than 10 seconds into Monday's playoff game against Magruder, Whitman senior Emily Savage opened scoring with a 3-pointer from the left wing. The triple was Savage's first of the season.

Yes, it was going to be that kind of night for the Vikings.

Savage's 3-pointer was one of 10 Whitman knocked down in the first half as the No. 2 Vikings defeated No. 10 Magruder 83-25 during the quarterfinals of the 4A West bracket at Walter Johnson High School. Whitman will face No. 3 Churchill tonight.

The Magruder defense allowed the Vikings (18-4) open looks around the perimeter and Whitman capitalized. The Vikings not only buried 3-pointers in volume, there was variety in their methods.

Whitman knocked down 3-pointers from the top of the arc and from the corner. Sophomore Rachel Sisco showed off her range, drilling a 25-footer from the right wing. Senior Susan Russell banked in her first 3-pointer of the evening — and proceeded to make five more on her way to 30 points. And, of

course, there was Savage's inaugural three-ball of the campaign.

The Vikings seemingly couldn't miss on their way to season highs for points scored (83) and margin of victory (58).

"To make 10 3s in one half," Whitman coach Pete Kenah said, "... you dream about having a night like that."

SIX OF WHITMAN'S 10 3-pointers belonged to Russell, matching her career high. She went on a personal 10-0 run stretching between the first and second quarters, giving the Vikings a 30-8 lead. Included in the 10-point stretch was a nifty spin move and a pair of 3-pointers.

Three-pointers five and six for Russell gave Whitman a 35-point advantage and the Vikings entered halftime with a 47-14 lead.

"Susan was really patient, waiting for her spots," Kenah said. "... Susan really took over. There was one stretch she just couldn't miss."

Russell scored eight points in the third quarter but did not make another 3-point shot. She did not play during the fourth quarter as the Vikings entered the period with a 53-point lead (71-18).

"It gives me a lot of confidence, especially in a playoff game," Russell said of her performance. "Even if we're up 20, it's pushing us forward ... to that next step."

Russell's 30 points paced four Vikings in double figures. Sophomore Angelica Cecone scored 12 points for Whitman, Sisco finished with 11 and Savage added 10.

SEE WHITMAN, PAGE 13



PHOTO BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE ALMANAC

Whitman senior Susan Russell tied a career high with six 3-pointers — all in the first half — on her way to 30 points during Monday's playoff win over Magruder.

Welty Leads Wootton to Opening-Round Victory over B-CC

Senior scores 25 points as Barons focus on Weis.

BY JARED WASSERMAN
THE ALMANAC

In the opening round of the boys' basketball state playoffs on Saturday, the No. 12 Wootton Patriots (14-8) defeated the No. 5 Bethesda-Chevy Chase Barons (4-18) 56-40, behind a 25-point clinic put on by

rim and going strong to the basket."

"Casey's contributions were huge," head coach Christopher Bohlen said. "He certainly picked the best time of year to have his best game. He created a lot of scoring opportunities, but more importantly he rebounded and defended really well."

The top four seeds are based on records, with the rest of the teams seeded randomly.

The Barons successfully slowed down Wootton's leading scorer — senior guard Jack Weis (10 points) — but at a high price. B-CC consistently face-guarded Weis wherever he went on the court, leaving their help defense vulnerable and opening numerous driving lanes for the rest of the Patriots' scoring threats.

"At first I was frustrated that they were keying in on me defensively,

but it really opened things up for other people," Weis said. "I don't know why they keyed in on me with all the weapons we have, but they did and we took advantage."

"Jack has been our catalyst all year and having him take up so much of the other team's defensive focus certainly opens up things for other players," Bohlen said. "It's nice to have guys like Casey, [junior forward] James [Wallerstedt], and [senior guard]

Freddy [Vance] who have been able to capitalize on that."

The Patriots' length and athleticism defensively stifled the B-CC attack throughout the contest, as the Barons' highest scorer finished with just seven points. Welty nearly outscored the B-CC team in the first half, with the Barons holding a 13-11 advantage over the Patriots' top scorer.

"Defensively, the main thing we knew was the personnel on the other team," Weis said. "We played

them twice this year in the regular season, so we knew what each player liked to do and took that away."

The win set up a second round matchup with the Paint Branch Panthers on Tuesday. Wootton beat Paint Branch to open the season, 57-51, behind a 27-point performance from Weis.

"We've won six in a row and I see no reason why we can't continue that streak deep into the playoffs," Weis said.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Whitman Girls First, Churchill Second at Metro Swim Meet

The Whitman girls swim and dive team won the Metro championship meet on Feb. 24 at the Germantown Indoor Swim Center. The Vikings scored 447 points, 126 more than second-place Churchill (321). Wootton finished ninth with 151 points.

Whitman won four events: the 100 butterfly (Danielle Schulkin, 55.07 seconds), 200 medley relay (Victoria Kuhn, Reia Tong, Schulkin, Charlotte Meyer, 1:46.74), 200 freestyle relay (Katie Mahaffie, Lauren Poore, Kuhn, Audrey Gould,

1:38.37) and 400 free relay (Tong, Poore, Meyer, Schulkin, 3:29.95).

For the boys, Churchill finished third (247), Wootton sixth (217) and Whitman seventh (202). Georgetown Prep won the meet with 456 points.

Churchill's Christopher Verboncoeur won the 100 fly (50.23).

Bullis Boys Win IAC Basketball Tourney

The No. 5 Bullis boys basketball team defeated No. 2 Landon 51-49 on Feb. 24 to win the IAC

SEE SPORTS BRIEFS, PAGE 13

"Casey's contributions were huge. He certainly picked the best time of year to have his best game."

— Wootton head boys basketball coach Christopher Bohlen

senior forward Casey Welty. "Before the game I knew I had to come out with a lot of energy knowing my team needed me to contribute a lot offensively," Welty said. "[I was] always attacking the

Whitman

FROM PAGE 12

Sisco connected on a trio of 3-pointers, highlighted by her first-quarter trey attempted well behind the line.

Does Kenah encourage the Vikings to keep shooting when they're knocking down perimeter shots?

"Not quite as deep as that one Rachel took that she made — that was probably NBA range," the coach said. "We want to give the players a lot of freedom. They work really hard on their shots."

THE VIKINGS' offensive outburst was due in part to ball movement. Senior Kat Barth dished out nine assists and senior Caroline Kahlenberg added five as Whitman played unselfish basketball.

"The passing was great," Barth said. "I think we made a commitment to come out strong and play hard and we did it."

Six-foot -3 center Whitney Kolakowski scored seven points for Whitman, but left the game early after an injury to her right elbow required stitches.

The victory came six days after Whitman had its eight-game winning streak snapped with a 41-37 loss to undefeated Seneca Valley. The Vikings appeared poised to start a new streak.

The win "brings us so much more confidence," Sisco said. "At Seneca Valley, our energy was so low, we realized we need to start off well and [maintain] it all through the game. We have to be playing good the whole game, we can't just play half of it, even if we're ahead [by a large margin]."

Tonight, Whitman looks to advance to the 4A West



PHOTO BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE ALMANAC

Whitman senior Emily Savage, right, scored 10 points and set the tone for the Vikings' perimeter success with the game's first field goal — her first 3-pointer of the season.

final. Another performance like Monday's wouldn't hurt the Vikings' chances.

"It makes you look like a pretty good coach," Kenah joked. "You don't overcoach them; [you] let them do their thing. You just really try to sit back and enjoy."

SPORTS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 12

tournament title. The Bulldogs defeated No. 4 St. Stephen's/St. Agnes 55-50 during the opening round and No. 1 Georgetown Prep 60-58 during the semifinals.

Churchill Girls Advance to 4A West Final Four

The No. 3 Churchill girls basketball team defeated No. 6 Northwest 55-52 on Monday at Churchill during the quarterfinals of the 4A West playoff bracket. The Bulldogs will travel to face No. 2 Whitman at 7 p.m. today at Walter Johnson High School.

Sarafina Arthur-Williams led Churchill with 13 points and 20 rebounds.

"Sarafina was working the ball well in and out," Churchill coach Kate McMahon said, "and she was dominating the boards."

Ashley Nelson scored 12 points for the Bulldogs and Leeda Jewayni added 10.

Churchill faced Northwest twice during the regular season, losing both games. The Bulldogs also faced tonight's opponent, Whitman, twice, splitting with the Vikings. Churchill won 55-50 in overtime on Jan. 15 and Whitman won 56-47 on Feb. 22.

"We should do well," McMahon said of Churchill's matchup with Whitman. "We know them by now."

Churchill Boys Win Playoff Opener

The No. 6 Churchill boys basketball team defeated No. 11 Walter Johnson 59-49 at Churchill on Friday during the opening round of the state playoffs. Jake Eskin scored 29 points.

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Pills' A Poppin'

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Not that I ingest an inordinate amount of pills daily (less now that I've completed the six-month oral chemotherapy protocol of the 12-month study in which I'm enrolled), but I do swallow my share (it wouldn't make any sense if I were swallowing somebody else's share): some prescription, some not, some related to the cancer, others not. Regardless, I seem to gain a perverse pleasure in stacking/organizing the many bottles I have, filing up the current bottles in rotation (to their respective brims no less) with inventory from the bottles in reserve, discarding the empties as soon as possible and then rearranging my reserve stacks in a decreasing and more manageable/viewable array.

If I had to say (and I don't, really), I guess I would characterize this behavior as somewhere between obsessive-compulsive and anal-retentive (the determination of which comes from years of anecdotal and non-specific experiences/observations). Behaviors I would further characterize as completely normal given the severity of my underlying stage IV lung cancer diagnosis. Meaning, whatever a cancer patient has to do, is willing and/or able to do to get through the days and nights of symptoms, treatments, side effects (some expected and prepared for, others not), deficits; lifestyle choices, changes and challenges; and most difficult for me, emotional and mental pressure, in an attempt to live a semi normal and productive and rewarding life is absolutely understandable. Just as there's no rest for the weary, likewise should there be no misunderstanding of the terminally ill: we deserve a wide berth and we've earned your inexhaustible tolerance and patience, like it or not.

Not that any of us should (or would) abuse the privilege (some privilege?), but it ain't easy being us. There are good days and bad days and everything in between, and before and afters, too. Sometimes the feelings come from conversations with your health care providers/professionals (results of lab work, X-Rays, miscellaneous scans, physical exams, etc.); other times, from your friends, family members or co-workers. Every day is a roller coaster of thoughts, fears and anxieties; some you can control (and compartmentalize) and others you cannot. There's no handbook, there's no owner's manual, and there's certainly no road map (nor do I think a GPS device would help).

Oh sure, there's plenty of medical material, opinions and resources readily available online (merely a keystroke away), but in my experience, diagnosis-to-date, it's too impersonal. Nevertheless, I need it, but I want it to be about me, not someone like me. And of course, it never can/will be because of privacy and confidentiality protections. So why bother searching for it? Accepting certain facts, some in evidence, some not, and then assimilating and embracing them accordingly, has been my M.O.R. (Method of Rationalization).

At this juncture, I can't change the diagnosis (don't you know I would if I could; duh!). But I can certainly try to not let it change me. Therefore, whatever I do that helps me maintain my lifestyle and sunny disposition, and am able to do so without going completely crazy (I realize that's a judgement call), is beyond any one's reproach. If I'm going to fight this battle, I have to fight it my way. If and when I go down, I'm going down exactly as I went up: with humor and good intentions.

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

NEWS

Resident Describes Evacuation in Peru

FROM PAGE 4

the town would inevitably become depleted. It would be necessary to depart the town, and there could be only one option for departure — helicopter transport.

AFTER A COUPLE of hours of sitting in the town square, all the tourists were instructed to assemble in the train station; and from there a select number would be directed to the soccer stadium where, later in the day, they would board a police helicopter and be flown to Ollantaytambo.

Who would be the select few designated for the helicopter transport? Priority would be given, we were told by the local authorities, to persons who were ill, persons who were elderly, and persons who were accompanied by young children. We were not told — although it was widely assumed — that the highest priority would be given to persons who were able and willing to bribe the authorities. Our tour manager quietly informed us that he had already contacted company headquarters in the U.S. and that the necessary bribes would be paid; we were not to disclose this information to anyone else. There were to be three helicopter flights that afternoon, and each helicopter would evacuate 21 or 22 passengers, together with the minimal personal property of each passenger.

The original plan, to move one select group at a time from the rail station to the soccer stadium, where the group would board a helicopter, was soon aborted because of rising flood waters which accelerated after collapse of the hydroelectric dam upriver from Aguas Calientes. An announcement was made that everyone was to move to the higher ground of the stadium.

SO THERE WAS a surge of more than 3,000 people out of the rail station and up the path to the stadium; and the dirt-and-mud soccer field was soon filled with people — old people, young people, children and even a few infants — all seeking shade from the sun that was now directly overhead on a cloudless day, while shade was practically non-existent within the stadium.

Our guides did manage to supply us with bottled water and with plastic sheets that we could spread on the muddy field, and we all covered our heads and shared whatever sunscreen we had, but the sun was relentless.

It was obvious that no helicopter could land within the stadium since the field was packed with people. The young tourists became increasingly restless and vocal as rumors spread that some of the more affluent tourists had bribed the authorities to obtain places on the helicopters. Small children and infants were crying in their parents' arms. Did the parents even have sufficient formula and diapers for the babies? Bathroom facilities were scarce in the cafes and restaurants that were in the vicinity of the soccer stadium. Everyone was frustrated and miserable.

It was about 4 p.m. when our tour manager directed us to follow him to a nearby restaurant where he had secured some

space for us to rest, and where he would provide us with some "breaking news." There was little food to be had and not a sufficient number of chairs for all of us to be seated in the simple restaurant. The "breaking news" was that 10 places on the helicopters would be available for our group (of 28) that day; we ourselves were to decide which 10 persons of the group should be selected; and the remaining 18 persons would be lodged in a half-star hotel where the manager had reserved a bloc of rooms. The group quickly decided that the eldest members of the group should be given priority, along with my wife, who was still experiencing the effects of her illness, and myself as the caretaker for my wife. I don't recall having been ever before so grateful for an illness.

We were directed to walk along a path through some dense semitropical vegetation to a location near the river, about a mile upstream from the town, where we were to board the helicopter.

ALONGSIDE THE PATH were collections of tourists who were shouting and jeering at those who had been selected for evacuation. Several tourists and natives attempted to join the procession of evacuees but were turned back. Soon a helicopter appeared high above us, descending into the valley between two mountain peaks and landing on a grassy field next to the river. My wife and I did not "make the cut" for the first helicopter flight but, a half hour later, we did get on board for the next flight; and 20 minutes later we landed on a soccer field in Ollantaytambo, where we boarded a bus for the two and-a-half drive to Cuzco.

Grateful though we were for our evacuation, we did experience a measure of "survivor guilt" during the following days, especially with regard to the 18 members of our group whom we had left behind. They were evacuated during the course of the next two days, and when we were re-united

they told us fairly harrowing stories about their experiences. Many of the young tourists who were stranded had become belliscose, as their supplies of food and other necessities became depleted, and as the ATM machines no longer dispensed cash, and as their own prospects for evacuation appeared remote. Most of the young people camped in tents that were pitched in the town square, and torrential rains flooded their tents every night.

There was hardly any police presence in Aguas Calientes during the first two days, as the crowds became increasingly unruly, but on the third day the Peruvian army took control of the town and restored order. A week passed before the last of the tourists and natives could be evacuated.

Of our experience in Peru it could be said, "It was the best of trips, it was the worst of trips." Being marooned in Aguas Calientes was a very unpleasant experience, even though we were fortunate enough to have been evacuated during the first day after the flood waters inundated the town. But our visit to Machu Picchu and our visits to other sites in the Peruvian highlands were very rewarding.

Learning the history of the Inca civilization, and becoming acquainted with the stoic and gracious Andean people (who are the Incas' cultural descendants), has deepened our understanding of the world. But it will be difficult — at least during the next few months — for tourists to experience what we experienced. It will be a challenging job to rebuild the rail line to Machu Picchu and the tourist facilities in the town of Aguas Calientes. It may be necessary to build levees on the river banks to prevent flooding in the valley; or it may be necessary to build an alternative route to Machu Picchu, whether a rail line or a highway, in order to avert another disaster should the river flood its banks again. It will be a good while before the tourists return to Machu Picchu.

Recession's Impact on Schools

FROM PAGE 6

coordinators don't think so. Last Wednesday, Feb. 24 they traveled to Annapolis to campaign for their slice of the budget before state delegates and invited any local parents to join them. While only two extra were in attendance, the cluster coordinators still believe the trip was a valiant effort.

"Because of shortfall in state and county, we want to make sure they know state funds are really important for us," said Laurie Halverson, who works alongside Siegel to represent the Churchill Cluster. "When they see us there, it shows that we really care and [representatives] are seeing that their constituents are concerned about education."

Halverson believes more parents are beginning to understand the possible implications of the cuts, and how seri-

ous the effects may be. The hope is that the message will continue to spread before it's too late.

"Will we change the way we view our schools in the future, and can we switch it back again?" Halverson asked.

The answer remains unknown. The numbers for the school's budget in FY 2011 will not be determined until May, at the earliest. Only an estimated 25 percent of taxpayers have students in the public school system, and so the cluster coordinators must continue to fight for a piece of the pie so their eight local schools receive manageable funding. But with the \$600 million county budget gap, is it possible for everyone to get a slice?

"That is the question," said Barthiaume. "I wish I had the magic answer."

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