

# Potomac ALMANAC

Frederieke (left) and Iona Schmidt in traditional German attire at the Oktoberfest celebration at the German School Washington D.C. in Potomac on Saturday, Sept. 28.

## Celebrating Oktoberfest

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OCTOBER 2-8, 2013

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## Shutdown: Towpath, Glen Echo Closed

Federal shutdown  
closes area  
National Parks.

BY KEN MOORE  
THE ALMANAC

**T**he federal government's shutdown has closed C&O Canal National Historical Park, Glen Echo Park, as well as use of the towpath from Washington D.C. through Potomac and to Cumberland.

"After working side-by-side with the wonderful staff of the C&O Canal National Historical Park for many years,

**"It's  
heartbreaking."  
— Mike Nardolilli,  
C&O Canal Trust**

it's heartbreaking for the Trust to see them closing the doors, given no choice but to turn away thousands

upon thousands of visitors seeking to recreate and rejuvenate along the canal's towpath," according to Mike Nardolilli, president of the C&O Canal Trust.

Even the towpath is closed.

"Visitor traffic, whether on foot, bike or horse, is strictly prohibited," according to the C&O Canal Trust's alert to the public.

Visitor centers, campgrounds, permanent or portable restroom facilities, lockhouses and access roads are all closed, and interpretive and educa-



Kayakers are left stranded on the road, with no access to public waters.

tional programming is cancelled. Handles have been removed from well pumps, volunteers have been told to cease their efforts, kayakers and other recreational boaters won't be able to use access roads or ramps along the towpath.

"While the park staff has no choice but to stand by, we as civilians can take action," said Nardolilli.

"Educate yourself and others on how the shutdown affects National Parks, be vocal on social media and use #KeepParksOpen, use any means of communication you can, letter, email, phone calls, social media, or

even a carrier pigeon to appeal to Congress," he said. He urged residents to send notes of encouragement to park staff through Facebook, Twitter, and email. "To say this is a rough time for them is an understatement."

But "respect the closure," he said. "While we don't like it one bit, we have to respect it. Disregarding the closure can create potentially unsafe and hazardous situations, damage park resources and create undue work and stress on the few staff left standing."

Glen Echo Park is also shut down on the



Great Falls Park will be closed during the federal government shutdown.

Almanac's press day, Tuesday, Oct. 1. Its website, suggests a small glimmer of hope that a resolution comes in the near future.

"Today is Tuesday, Oct. 1. Due to the federal government shutdown, Glen Echo Park is currently closed. All activities at the park are cancelled today." The National Park Service's webpage is more blunt. "Because of the federal government shutdown, all national parks are closed and the National Park Service's webpages are not operating," according to the park website that switches to the Department of Interior website after a few seconds.

## St. James Episcopal Turns 50 Potomac Church on Seven Locks Road travels the "Via Media" or Middle Way.

BY STEVE HIBBARD  
THE ALMANAC

**I**t's been a busy time at St. James Episcopal Church in Potomac; the Fall Rummage Sale takes place Friday-Saturday, Oct. 4-5, the Blessing of the Animals is on Oct. 6 at 5 p.m., and the church just celebrated its 50th anniversary on Sept. 21 and 22 with a family dinner and concert by Jason Gray.

St. James was founded in July 28, 1963, when nine families met at Green Acres School. They branched off from mother congregation, St. John's Episcopal Church – Norwood Parish in Bethesda/Chevy Chase, in southern Montgomery County. In 1966, ground was broken at 11815 Seven Locks Road, with the Rev. David C. Lord as its first rector; he stayed until 1979. The second rector was the Rev. Robert S. Creamer Jr. until 1992. The third rector was the Rev. James Rains who stayed until 1998.



**The Rev. Cindy Baskin, rector at St. James' Episcopal Church on Seven Locks Road in Potomac.**

The fourth and current rector, Cindy Baskin, joined in 1999.

Fifty years ago there weren't as many two-income families where both parents worked, said Baskin. On Sundays, stores weren't opened; there weren't sports games or band practices. "There was a time when the culture supported church stuff," said Baskin, the rector for 14 years, who guides a staff of mostly volunteers and oversees an operating budget \$700,000.

"It's a lot harder to do church now, than



PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE ALMANAC

**Ground was broken in 1966 for the St. James' Episcopal Church on Seven Locks Road in Potomac.**

it was 50 years ago," said the Minneapolis native. "Because 50 years ago everybody went to church .... Now the people who are here come to church to get a deeper relationship with God and to get a deeper sense

SEE ST. JAMES, PAGE 12

### St. James Rummage Sale

St. James Episcopal will hold a rummage sale Friday, Oct. 4 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday, Oct. 5 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will include clothing, linens, jewelry, collectibles, books, kitchenware, household items, toys, tools, baby gear, bicycles and sports equipment. Whatever is left over from the Rummage Sale will go to Interfaith Works, which supports the unemployed and homeless. Families recently collected school supplies and filled about 50 backpacks for its Backpack Project, which are also distributed to Interfaith Works.

### Children's School Turns 20

St. James is also celebrating the 20th anniversary of its Children's School on Friday, Oct. 25 from 6 to 9 p.m. with a silent auction and raffle, and catering by Ridgewells. It will include a DJ dance party for ages 7-17-plus; and The Great Zucchini for children. RSVP to 301-762-3246 or schoolstjames@comcast.net.

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## NEWS

# Saxenian Leads McLean School

**New Head of  
School is a “builder,  
not a maintainer.”**

BY SUSAN BELFORD  
THE ALMANAC

“I was profoundly drawn to the mission of the school and a dedicated faculty that has extraordinary talent and a strong commitment to the institution,” said Michael Saxenian, who became the new Head of School at the McLean School in July. “I see a lot of opportunity to build on a wonderful foundation.”

Formerly the Assistant Head and School and Chief Financial Officer at Sidwell Friends School, Saxenian’s life experiences have shaped his vision and defined his leadership skills. He was born and raised in Concord, Mass., the son of parents who were both teachers. After earning his BA in international relations and an MBA and MA in development economics, he moved to Asia where he ran the Indonesia program for Volunteers in Asia. The group was involved in education, economic development and environmental sustainability — and with this opportunity, he realized his aptitude for community leadership.

After returning to the U.S., he and his wife moved to D.C., where he worked in management for Conservation International and Discovery Communications — and commuted to work via bicycle.

Twelve years ago, he moved into education and financial management at Sidwell Friends. Here he established environmental sustainability at the school, supervising the state-of-the-art campus renovations which have become a model for other institutions. He also taught classes in economics, managed a capital campaign, community relations and more.

Saxenian is excited about the challenges of his new position. “My first month at McLean has been so much fun,” he said. “We have a terrific faculty who are very talented and dedicated. Part of the appeal of this job is that I’m really a builder, not a maintainer. I plan to spend these initial months immersing myself in the culture, and then comprehensively



**Michael Saxenian, the new Head of School at the McLean School.**

look at the program to see how we can take it from really strong to great.”

He has already formulated plans for additional professional development for the faculty and is putting together a task force to bring more technology to the classroom. Saxenian would also like to see a gardening program in the school to make the food services as environmental and sustainable as possible. “I would also like to incorporate “mindfulness” (meditation) into the classroom for the first few minutes of class as a method for settling the brain before the task of learning.”

Small classes are one of our biggest assets,” he said. “We provide a nurturing environment with caring, individual attention. We allow for the many different learning styles by being flexible and accommodating. Eighty-seven percent of our parents cited on our market study that their kids have developed higher self-esteem since attending McLean. Similarly, parents agreed that their children were more excited about school, their family life had improved and they felt a strong sense of community.

Saxenian has also built a strong leadership team at McLean. Dr. Sara Hines from Hunter College will lead the Lower School and David Roth, former Head of the Middle and High Schools at Commonwealth Academy will head the Middle School.

On Tuesday, Oct. 8, at 6:30pm, the school will present the first program in its Parent Education Series “Surviving Social Media.” This free program will help parents understand the world of social media.

To learn more about the McLean School of Maryland, so go [www.mcleanschool.org](http://www.mcleanschool.org).

## Help Cure Ocular Melanoma on Sunday

BY SUSAN BELFORD  
THE ALMANAC

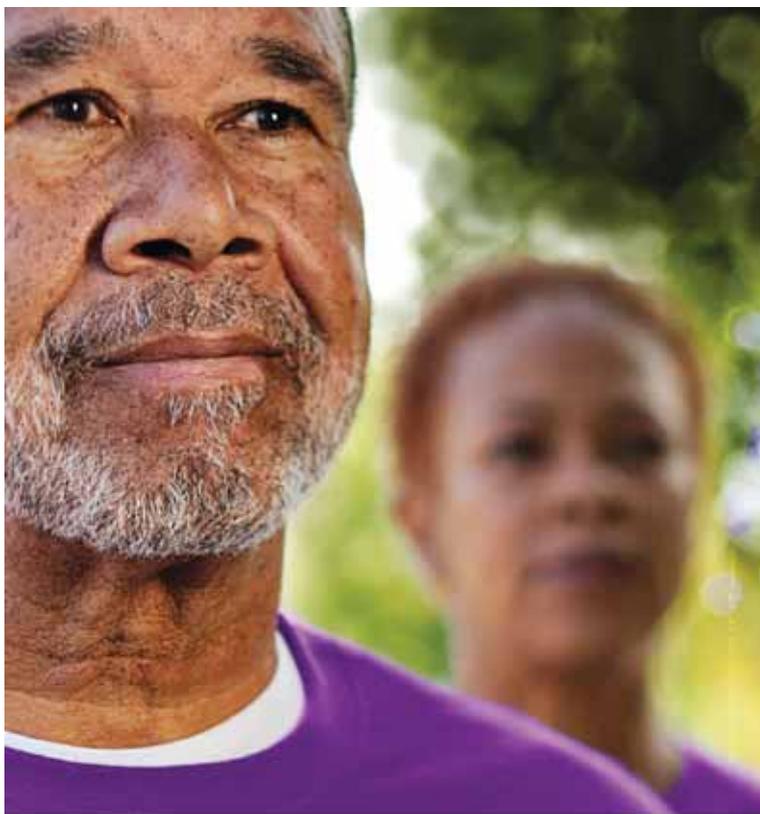
Sunday afternoon, Oct. 6, is the perfect time to enjoy your favorite melodies while making a difference in the fight against ocular melanoma — a little-known disease that affects 2,000 people annually. However, this disease is life-altering and researchers are desperately seeking a cure. But this can only happen if they receive funding. This is a personal fight for Harvey Levine of Potomac, coordinator of the concert.

His sister Sheila is fighting ocular melanoma — and he is doing everything in his power to raise funds for research.

This benefit concert, “The Music of George Gershwin and John Denver,” will take place on Sunday, Oct. 6, at the Sixth and I Street Historic Synagogue at 600 I Street, NW, Washington D.C. The art

show will begin at 1 p.m. and the concert will start at 1:45 p.m. Performing artists will be pianist Shaun Tirrell with his 12-year-old daughter Audrey on the violin, pianist Matthew Bachman and Side By Side (Doris Justis and Sean McGhee, vocals and guitars). The art of Carl Dryer, Jill Freedman, Alan Rubin and others — as well as paintings by benefit coordinator, Harvey Levine — will be featured. A reception and continuation of the art show will take place following the concert.

Tickets to this benefit concert and art show are \$50 (or \$35 for parties of six or more). People will also be admitted by making a contribution of any amount to the Melanoma Research Foundation. Checks are payable to CURE OM and should be sent to Harvey Levine, 7803 Cadbury Avenue, Potomac, MD 20854 — or come to the concert and donate what one can. For more information, contact Harvey Levine at [hoybean39@yahoo.com](mailto:hoybean39@yahoo.com).



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# Two Schools, a World Apart, Join for Theatre Event

**D**rama students from Thomas S. Wootton High School will share the stage on Oct. 4 with 23 visiting students from Beijing in a first-ever companion performance of the Shakespeare classic "Romeo and Juliet."

The event, two years in the making, will feature performances in English and Chinese. The event is free and open to the public.

Wootton has been partnering with Beijing School #166 since 2007. The school was started in 1864 by American missionaries and has a thriving cultural arts program.

As part of the exchange program, Beijing students visited Wootton two years ago for a joint band concert that attracted nearly 400 people.

"It was an amazing experience just to be part of that," said Wootton's Humanities and Arts coordinator Michelle Hanson, who is overseeing the cultural exchange. "It was unbelievably beautiful."

This year, drama students from the two schools will work together to perform the same scene from "Romeo and Juliet," the classic moment when the star-crossed lovers spot each other across a crowded ballroom for the first time.

Students from Beijing will perform the scene in English, but wearing traditional Chinese costumes. Wootton's students will



Wootton students (left) and Beijing School #166 students (right) prepare for show.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

perform the scene from an American Civil War perspective.

Students from each school will also present one additional performance. The Beijing students will perform a scene from a production that celebrates the school's 150th anniversary.

## Details

### A Cultural Exchange of Theatre

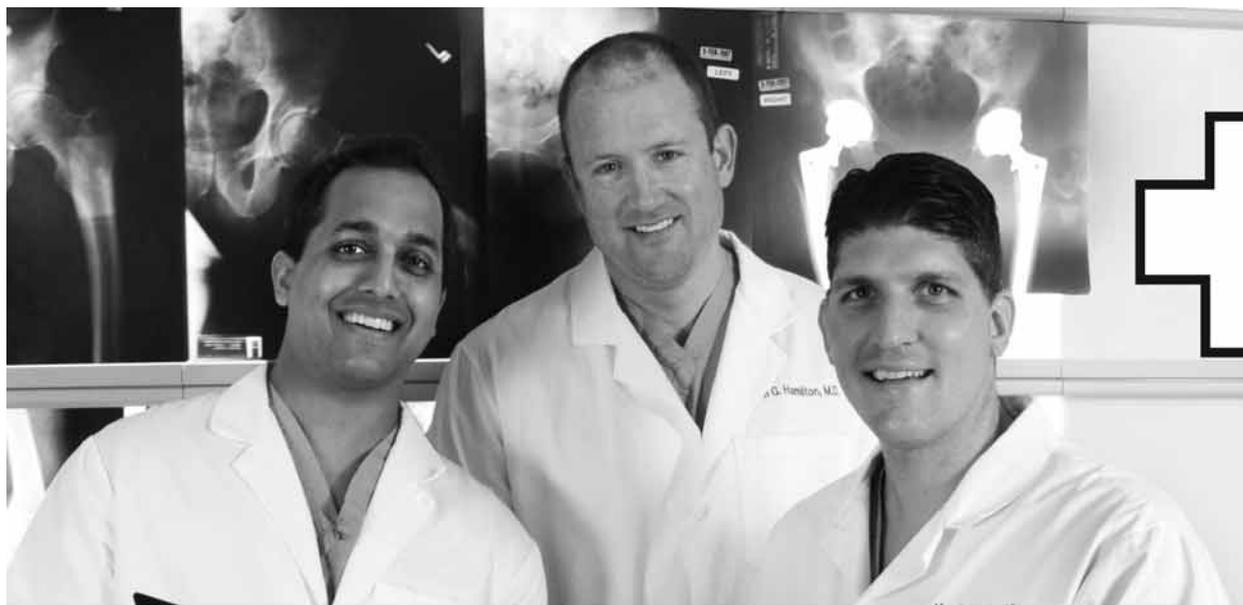
The Wootton Center for the Arts and Beijing School #166

Oct. 4 at 7 p.m.  
Wootton High School Auditorium  
Free and open to the public

Wootton students will present a scene from the upcoming production of "Little Women." The performance weekend for this play is Oct. 18, 19 and 20.

"We have always wanted our exchange pro-

gram with Beijing School #166 to be different than just home stays and visits to tourist sites," said Wootton Principal Michael Doran. "We wanted to play, perform and learn together, and this is the second such opportunity. Two years ago, our bands put on a joint concert, and this year, it is the turn of our drama department working together on different interpretations of Romeo and Juliet— how cool is that?"



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# OPINION

## Supporting Incorporated Brickyard Coalition

BY GINNY BARNES  
WMCCA PRESIDENT

For the last two years, WMCCA has been deeply committed to saving the Brickyard School site from becoming a commercial sports enterprise on public land. We worked with Brickyard Road neighbors and other local citizens groups in an all out effort, including multiple legal actions, relentless fundraising and untold hours of volunteer time. Finally, County Executive Ike Leggett withdrew the county from the Board of Education lease, ending Montgomery Soccer Inc. (MSI) plans to build a soccer complex on the site. Although the organic soil it took 30 years to create lies fallow and the Board of Education has been silent on its fate,

WMCCA

the Brickyard Coalition, of which WMCCA was an integral part, has elected to carry on as a member-driven organization (Brickyard Coalition Inc.) that continues to monitor the school site and other proposals of concern to the Brickyard community. WMCCA has transferred to them the remainder of funds donated through a Brickyard fund we administered during our long collective effort. We will continue to work together toward preserving our Master Plan and the rights of citizens to be informed and involved.

WMCCA is an all-volunteer 60-plus year old civic association, and with Brickyard so all-consuming, we've come late to the zoning code

### WMCCA Meeting

The West Montgomery County Citizens Association will meet at the Potomac Community Center on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 7:15 p.m. If schools are closed because of inclement weather, the meeting will be cancelled. The speaker will be Pamela Dunn, planning coordinator for the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

The current zoning code for Montgomery County is 30 years old and runs to more than 1,500 pages. Considered antiquated, redundant and lacking in tools to guide future growth, the zoning code rewrite project initiated by Park and Planning has been underway for several years. It has already passed through review by the Planning Board and is currently undergoing review at the County Council. Potomac citizens have a Master Plan based on environmental resources, low-density zoning and limiting sewer capacity to

control growth. How will the zoning code rewrite change the way our community looks and functions? There are county citizen groups closely following the rewrite that fear major negative impacts on neighborhoods. Will our RE-1 and RE-2 zoning be altered? Will the concern about the addition to the code of a new building type, the general/residential building, that could be built "by right" with no public input in the middle of residential neighborhoods affect us? What about allowing incompatible nonresidential and institutional uses without notice to nearby neighbors? Will our carefully crafted Master Plan be weakened by the new zoning code? Dunn will tailor her presentation on the zoning code revision's impacts to the Potomac Subregion Master Plan to help citizens prepare for and comment to the County Council when their public hearing is held on Nov. 12. The public is welcome to attend.

rewrite. We have been embroiled in another potential Master Plan precedent; the Glen Hills Sewer Study is about to be finalized by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and sent to the County Council. What the council does with results of this study could have a major impact on water quality in Watts Branch — our largest watershed and a drinking water source for 40 percent of the Washington region.

In early August, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) held a joint scoping meeting with the National Park Service at Potomac Elementary School to announce and elicit public comments on their proposal to seek a mid-river intake to reach cleaner water for the filtration plant on River Road. Sediment loading in Watts Branch, which enters the Potomac River at the current intake, overwhelms filtration capacity, particularly in peak flow storms.

WMCCA has major concerns about the damage to the C&O National Historical Park. We must also question what happens next as the regional demand for drinking water increases and the powers-that-be have put the last straw in the river to reach cleaner water while doing nothing to help the Watts Branch recover from long-standing development impacts?

Lastly, we bid a sad goodbye to our excellent secretary, Mike Denker, who passed away in late May. Mike was a good man gone too soon. In the last year we lost a beloved former treasurer and long time WMCCA member, Meredith Williams. His daughter, Nancy Madden, was recently elected our newsletter editor — so nice to have a family tradition of service to the community continue. Please join us at the Oct. 9 meeting and consider what skills you might bring to the association that guards our residential "green wedge" and has done so since 1947.

### GLEN HILLS SEWER STUDY: The Slumbering Beast is About to Rear Its Ugly Head

BY SUSANNE LEE

No news is never good news when it comes to the Glen Hills Sewer Study. After months of silence and no engagement with the Study's Citizens Advisory Committee, let alone the

general public, the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) indicates that it is about to finish the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Reports and make them final.

Recall that in the prior draft of the Phase 1 report, DEP declared, based totally on flawed, hypothetical factors, that over 240 homes were not sustainable on septic, even though there are only nine septic failures among the 500 houses within the study area. Based on this data, the Phase 2 draft report proposed 13 new sewer lines be constructed, with their enormous costs borne totally by the abutting property owners. Now DEP is using these reports to prepare recommendations that will be submitted to County Executive Leggett for submission to the County Council. DEP plans to meet with Leggett in mid-October and anticipates that his transmittal and recommendations will be before the Council before their end-of-year break.

The DEP spokesperson states that it's unclear what the County Council will do with the study and the recommendations, including the public process, if any, they will utilize in determining the fate of the Glen Hills neighborhood.

At its last meeting on June 3, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), of which WMCCA is a member, demanded that it be allowed to review the revised Phase 1 and Phase 2 reports before their final publication and, most importantly, that they be allowed to see and comment on the recommendations before they are submitted to Leggett and the County Council. Given the extensive comments that have been made on the prior drafts, the CAC also asked that all comments from the CAC and the public be included in the package that is submitted to Leggett and the Council. To date, DEP has refused all these requests.

Barring a miracle, we presume that the same flawed, damaging, property value-lowering data and conclusions will be included in the final report and recommendations. It is outrageous that the CAC members, some of whom even support limited extensions, are barred from seeing and commenting on whatever final product comes from DEP. This is particularly egregious in light of the critical role the Master Plan mandates for citizen representatives and the hours of effort and expertise CAC members have already dedicated to the study.

### LETTER

#### Protect River

To the Editor:

My name is Seth Brody, I am originally from Potomac and I find the current state of the Potomac River disgusting. The fact that the Potomac River obtained a "D" or a "barely passing grade" is disturbing and off putting to say the least.

Since the Potomac provides drinking water to around five million people we need to do something about the pollution, and we need to do it sooner than later. However, I do not agree that educating farmers on the correct way to apply fertilizer will eliminate the problem. I offer a solution. Imagine the Potomac River as a person, just like you or me. Now imagine that the Clean Water Act, government and non-government organizations are a bullet proof vest, and that the pollutants (such as fertilizers) are the bullets. Doesn't it make more sense to remove the bullets than to apply the vest in the first place?

Farmers shouldn't be allowed to use these fertilizers. No matter how careful you are with them, someone is bound to mess up. It is not a question of if; it is a question of when.

Seth Brody  
Potomac

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# NEWS



Thomas Selished finished in 1st place.



Matt Clark finished in 2nd place.



## 5K Oktoberfest Run

The 5K Oktoberfest Run was held at the German School Washington D.C. in Potomac on Saturday, Sept. 28. Above, 5K runners at the school.

PHOTOS BY  
DEBORAH STEVENS  
THE ALMANAC

Pretzels were among the treats at Oktoberfest.



Traditional Oktoberfest at the German School.



Shai Neal took 1st place in the 1K for children.



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## GETTING AROUND

# Turtzi the Turtle: A 13-Year Saga

BY CISSY FINLEY GRANT  
THE ALMANAC

It's a Painted Turtle, notice the caps. It's not a drawing, not something covered in latex, and certainly not a thing of beauty, except for maybe in the eyes of the beholders.

This Painted Turtle is a lumbering aquatic creature Miriam and John Crook have living in a bath tub in their Potomac home. That is, it's in the bath tub when it's not swimming in their pool where it loves to play bump 'em with them, unless there is a guest included she doesn't recognize. "Then, she dives to the bottom and won't surface until our friend leaves," Miriam said.

This is an honest-to-goodness story about a turtle named Turtzi. It might help to explain some of the turtle's anecdotes when her name was questioned. "Oh, we just gave her a little class. Instead of just Turtle we decided on Turtzi. Sort of like, Mitzi. It was Turtle fancied up," Miriam said.

"We had just moved to Rome. All of Italy goes to the beach in the summer. I was just wandering around and decided I needed a little companionship. It was in the summer of year 2000, when Miriam wandered into a pet store and purchased a turtle, "the size of a quarter," she indicated with a thumb to finger gesture.

Miriam's husband, John, was general consul for MFO (Multi National Force and Observers), a peace-keeping force in the Sinai and traveled extensively. Hence the reason for Miriam's need "for a little companionship." Turtzi became more than just a companion she became a mystery to both of them throughout their four-and-a-half-years stay in Rome.



PHOTOS BY CISSY FINLEY GRANT/THE ALMANAC

**John Crook holds Turtzi, now 13 years old. She has been a Maryland turtle for 9 years following her adventurous stay in Rome, Italy.**



**Up close, and personal, Turtzi extends her front claws in hope of escape.**

Turtzi, now 13, has had numerous companions. In one way or the other, they have all disappeared. Perhaps, because shortly following the purchase of Turtzi, they took her to a "Blessing of the Animals" celebration at Rome's San Antonio Abate Church. Her blessing must have stuck. Turtzi is the only one left to date, even though when she arrived in the USA from Rome, Miriam was holding high above her head, two Painted Turtles. Unlike Turtzi, the second one has long since disappeared, name forgotten. "I do remember fellow passengers screaming in terror when they saw two large turtles. They do have a habit of hissing when they encounter strangers and strange places," she said.

Prior to leaving Rome, Turtzi had numerous experiences to prepare her for most any unexpected happenings. For the uninitiated, Painted Turtles grow to be about 10 inches



PHOTO BY MIRIAM CROOK

**"I'm not so sure I need company," Salime, one of the Crook's three dachshunds, seems to be thinking, as Turtzi makes her way into the dog bed.**

long. Their top shell, known as a carapace, is dark green to blackish with yellow or red lines. The head and feet have more distinctive yellow lines. It's not hard to find them if you know where to look.

However, when Turtzi went among the missing from the Crook's upper floor apartment in a Rome building, it was pretty much ascertained she had fallen off the balcony and was gone for good. "We figured she was caught somewhere, maybe in a hedge," Miriam said. But, she wasn't to be found until one day there had been a terrible downpour of rain. "I came home from shopping and there she was sitting on the front porch," she said. That was six weeks after Turtzi had taken the plunge from the fourth floor.

When the Crooks moved from city life in Rome to a nearby farm on a lake, Turtzi went along to enjoy country living. It was during this time John befriended a neighbor's dog and agreed to care for him while the owners went away. En route to putting the dog to bed one night, and following the pup in the dark to his dog house, John fell into a dry well and broke his leg. Unfortunately, he was due to leave shortly thereafter for a two-week session in The Netherlands.

Turtzi was to remain at the farm in her tank. Also, unfortunately, when the Crooks returned they discovered Turtzi had crawled out of her tank.

"No," the farmers who owned the prop-

erty and lived nearby said. "We haven't seen the turtle." Again they gave her up for lost. Soon thereafter, they were moving once again, this time to a hotel and were preparing to head back home to the states, with John still on crutches. "We left the farmhouse lady our hotel number, just in case," he said. Once again, Turtzi came through. The Crooks received a call from the farm owner saying new renters had called to say they had found the turtle.

Turtzi the Painted Turtle made her way to the U.S. and officially is now a Maryland turtle. Like everything else in which Turtzi has been involved, it wasn't easy. The Crooks had to contact the Federal Fish and Wild Life Service in Maryland to be assured she was legal. "I had to use all my best Italian to explain to the Carabinieri at the airport that she was not an endangered species," John said. It is legal to import a Painted Turtle into the USA.

However, Turtzi's life in Potomac has continued to be one adventure after another. There was the time when the Crooks were on vacation and their son, Victor, came to take care of her. While in Barbados, the Crooks received a call that Turtzi's heater in her bath tub had shorted out when she was in her tub. It was severe enough to melt her plastic water house. Turtzi had escaped electrocution.

Another time, had it not been for Miriam's curiosity about an unfamiliar noise behind their home, Turtzi would have become carrion for a couple of hawks. "I was watching her after putting her outside and noticed something was with her, but thought it was a squirrel. I went to get a camera and glasses and then saw the hawks. I went flying out there and grabbed her. The hawks actually chased us. I had taken their dinner," Miriam said.

Turtzi lives quite comfortably in the Crook household, along with three dachshunds she enjoys except when they try to show her who is boss. One day Salime (Italian for one sausage), the eldest of the three, noticed Turtzi digging down deeply into the pachysandra. Apparently Salime did not approve of this and pulled her out by her head before Miriam could get to her. "It left a dent in her head," Miriam said. Turtzi had gotten cold and was trying to hibernate. Salime was lucky Turtzi didn't bite back.



**Salime attempts to head off Turtzi as the Painted Turtle makes her way down a hallway. Painted Turtles, Turtzi's species, can live to be between 75 and 100 years old.**



PHOTO BY JOHN CROOK

**Turtzi the turtle enjoys a ride on a kick board piloted by Miriam Crook.**

Turtles will bite, in spite of what one hears. When Turtzi was among the pets being blessed at the aforementioned Blessing of the Animals in Rome, a German TV guy went to pet her. He stuck his finger near her mouth and Turtzi took a nip. "She made German television," John proudly announced. Turtles don't have teeth but a sharp pointed beak. They will open their mouths to indicate when they have the inclination to bite. The TV guy found this out when he stuck his finger in her mouth, the Crooks surmised.

Although turtles have a natural life span of between 75 and 100 years, Miriam Crook will be the first to tell you that having a turtle as a pet is not the wisest of choices. She elaborates by explaining they are messy, must have proper food, heat, lighting, temperature, and particularly an appropriate habitat. This includes changing the water at least twice a week. The omnivorous Painted Turtle, indigenous to North America, eats, fish, fruits, berries, even canned dog food. The Crooks rely on commercial aquatic turtle food. "But I give treats like shrimp and fresh veggies. She loves carrots," Miriam added.

Turtzi's bathtub habitat has all the proper equipment and space, but her summertime pleasure riding on a kickboard in the outdoor family pool is a special treat. She also particularly enjoys floating on John Crook's stomach after she has crawled aboard. It's a photo he adamantly refused to allow taken. Just imagine a turtle in paradise, even a turtle with seemingly as many lives as a cat, and you get the picture.

In spite of all the entertainment Turtzi provides, the Crooks still maintain a turtle is not for you if you want a soft and cuddly pet. However, they do insist she has a personality of her own, comes when she is called, likes music, ("it calms her down") knows the dogs, ("gets in their beds") has good vision and lays eggs about five times a year. The eggs are usually buried outside and critters dig them up. Grimacing, Miriam said, "We are careful not to let our dogs get them. It would be like our pets eating each other."

It was the late Ogden Nash who waxed poetically:

*"The turtle lives twixt plated decks  
Which practically conceals its sex.  
I think it clever of the turtle  
In such a fix to be so fertile."*

# BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to [almanac@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:almanac@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday at noon.

## THURSDAY/OCT. 3

**Talk.** 10:30 a.m.-noon at Aspen Hill Library, 407 Aspen Hill Road, Rockville. JSSA presents "Getting a Job in the Age of Social Media Workshops at Libraries and Community Centers" for job seekers. Visit [www.jssa.org/ecsprograms](http://www.jssa.org/ecsprograms) or 301-610-8380.

**Secondary School Fair.** 6-8 p.m. at Norwood School, 8821 River Road, Bethesda. Learn about independent high schools, boarding schools and more. Free. 301-841-2101 or [www.norwoodschool.org](http://www.norwoodschool.org) for more.

## THURSDAYS/OCT. 3-NOV. 14

**Class.** Adults age 18 and older can learn helpful hints to strengthen support systems and deal with structure, organization and medication. "Deaf Adults Coping with ADHD" will be at JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Road, Rockville. \$75/session. Registration required, [lkatz@jssa.org](mailto:lkatz@jssa.org).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 5

**Volunteers Needed.** The 24th annual Taste of Bethesda is coming up on Saturday, Oct. 5, and the Bethesda Urban Partnership needs 100 volunteers to make it happen. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old. Each volunteer works a three-hour shift on one of five teams: set-up, ticket booth, drink tent, roving and parking. Each team is led by a "captain" who will explain what needs to be done. Details and the volunteer application form are available at [www.bethesda.org](http://www.bethesda.org).

## MONDAY/OCT. 7

**Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention Forum.** 7-9 p.m. at Richard Montgomery High School Auditorium, 250 Richard Montgomery Drive, Rockville. The free forum will address youth substance abuse in Montgomery County for concerned residents and parents who want to learn about drugs, addiction, and promoting wellness in the community. For information and to register, visit [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org) and click on "Preventing Alcohol and Drug Abuse" or call 301-279-3100.

**Chronic Pain Support Group.** 1-2:30 p.m. at Pain Connection Office, 12320 Parklawn Drive, Rockville. Guest speaker Laurel Rubinstein will speak on "Nutrition and Chronic Pain." Bring items to be comfortable. Visit [www.painconnection.org](http://www.painconnection.org) or 301-309-2444.

## WEDNESDAY/OCT. 9

**Speed Networking for Job Seekers.** 7-9 p.m. at Temple Beth Ami, 14330 Travilah Road. Get constructive feedback and more on job related speeches. Free. Visit [www.jssa.org/ecsprograms](http://www.jssa.org/ecsprograms) or 301-610-8380.

**Town Hall Meeting for Students.** 6:30 p.m. at the Council Office Building in Rockville, 100 Maryland Ave. Students who wish to attend the meeting are asked to RSVP by calling 240-777-7931. The meeting will be broadcast live on County Cable Montgomery (CCM-cable Channel 6 on Comcast and RCN, Channel 30 on Verizon) and rebroadcast at various times in the weeks following the meeting. The October meeting is open to high school and middle school students from public and

private schools from around the county and to students from local colleges. The meeting will allow the participants to let councilmembers know how they feel about specific issues and also will provide the opportunity to ask questions of the councilmembers in an organized, but informal, setting.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 12

**Special Education, Two-Part Series.** 1:30-4 p.m. at Rockville Memorial Library meeting room, 21 Maryland Ave., Rockville. Designed for parents, get information on the special education process. Free. The second session is Saturday, Oct. 26. Free. RSVP at [www.ldamc.org](http://www.ldamc.org), [ldamcpc@yahoo.com](mailto:ldamcpc@yahoo.com) or 301-933-1076.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 13

**Senior Expos.** 12-4 p.m. at Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza. The Expo will feature speakers, health screenings, resources, information and entertainment for older adults and their families. Dr. Luigi Ferrucci will give the keynote address. Call 301-949-9766.

**Public Microchip Clinic.** 1-3 p.m. at Aspen Hill Memorial Park. \$35/cat or dog. Selected pets from the Montgomery County Humane Society will be available for adoption. Visit [www.mchumane.org/countyadoptionfees.shtml](http://www.mchumane.org/countyadoptionfees.shtml) for more.

## MONDAY/OCT. 14

**Community Forum.** 6-8 p.m. at The Children's Resource Center, 332 W. Edmonston Drive, Rockville. Help identify services that will help ensure the department's goal of building a



PHOTO BY COLLEEN HEALY/THE ALMANAC

## Bake Sale

Joey Aldridge (left) and Sean Healy volunteer at the St. Raphael bake sale. The event raised money for the 5th annual Father Bill Finch Memorial Golf Classic. The tournament will be held on Monday, Oct. 21, at Manor Country Club. For more information go to [www.straphaels.org](http://www.straphaels.org).

safe, healthy and strong community. Sign up to speak at 240-777-1211.

**Program.** 7:45-10 p.m. at County Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville. Learn about the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan. Free. Visit [www.montgomerycivic.org](http://www.montgomerycivic.org) for more.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 20

**Fire Station Open House.** 10 a.m.-2

p.m. at Glen Echo Volunteer Fire Department, Station 11, 5920 Massachusetts Ave., Bethesda. This year's theme focuses on the importance of preventing kitchen fires. Open house events include: tours of the station, fire safety activities, educational information/handouts, demonstrations of emergency equipment and more. Free. Call 301-229-3200.

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# ENTERTAINMENT

Email community entertainment events to [almanac@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:almanac@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos and artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**Art Exhibit.** See works by Nebiur Arellano in VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville, through Sunday, Oct. 13. Visit [www.visartsatrockville.org/gallery/kaplan-gallery](http://www.visartsatrockville.org/gallery/kaplan-gallery) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See "The District: The Streets of Washington, D.C., 1984-1994" through Monday, Oct. 14 at Photoworks Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Michael Horsley shows how much the city has changed, as well as how much it has survived. Free. Hours are Saturdays, 1-4 p.m. and Sundays and Mondays from 1-8 p.m. Visit [www.glenecho.org](http://www.glenecho.org) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See "Core With Rocks" by John Ruppert at Kaplan Gallery in VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville, through Oct. 20. Visit [www.visartsatrockville.org/gallery/kaplan-gallery](http://www.visartsatrockville.org/gallery/kaplan-gallery) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See works by Judy Stone at Gibbs Street Gallery in VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville, through Oct. 20. Visit [www.visartsatrockville.org/gallery/kaplan-gallery](http://www.visartsatrockville.org/gallery/kaplan-gallery) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda, presents "Cityscapes," featuring David FeBland, Beata Drozd, Ben Ferry and Gavin Glakas through Saturday, Oct. 26. Visit [www.bethesda.org](http://www.bethesda.org) or 301-215-6660.

**Theater Performance.** Through Sunday, Oct. 27, see "Goodnight Moon" at Adventure Theatre at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. All ages. Visit [www.adventuretheatre-mtc.org](http://www.adventuretheatre-mtc.org) or 301-634-2270.

**Theater Performance.** See "Lulu and

the Brontosaurus" through Oct. 27 at Imagination Stage, 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda. Best for children ages 4-9. Performances are Tuesdays-Fridays at 10:30 a.m., Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. and select Saturdays at 11 a.m. Tickets start at \$12 and can be purchased at [www.imaginationstage.org](http://www.imaginationstage.org) or 301-280-1660.

**Art Exhibit.** Through Monday, Oct. 28, see "The Power of Color" at Gallery Har Shalom, located at Congregation Har Shalom, 11510 Falls Road. Free and open to the public. Call for hours and directions 301-299-7087.

## ART CLASS REGISTRATION

**Acrylics for Kids.** Starting Saturday, Oct. 5 from 1-3 p.m. at VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville. Children can explore artist tools, paints and introductory color concepts. Eight-week course. Register at [www.visartscenter.org](http://www.visartscenter.org) or 301-315-8200.

**Progressive Painting.** 7-9:30 p.m. at VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville. This acrylic painting class will accommodate beginners through advanced painters using still life of varying degrees of difficulties. Class runs on Tuesdays from Oct. 8-Nov. 26. Visit [www.visartscenter.org](http://www.visartscenter.org) or 301-315-8200 to register.

**Chinese Brush Stroke Painting.** 6:30-9:30 p.m. at VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville. Runs Fridays from Oct. 4 through Nov. 22. Visit [www.visartscenter.org](http://www.visartscenter.org) or 301-315-8200 to register.

## THURSDAY/OCT. 3

**Friends of the Library Presentation.** 12:30 p.m. at Potomac Library community room, 10101 Glenolden Drive. Great

## 'The Body Beautiful'

Capitol Arts Network, announces its October show, a juried exhibition titled "The Body Beautiful," opening Friday, Oct. 4, at Capitol Arts Network gallery at 12276 Wilkins Ave., Rockville.

The show will highlight the human figure in various forms, and will include painting, photography and mixed media. October's featured artist will be Baltimore's Jessica Damen, widely acclaimed for her ability to capture youthful emotion in her images. For more information on Damen and her art, visit her website at <http://damenart.com/Welcome.html>.

The opening reception for "The Body Beautiful" is set for 6-9 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4. The exhibition runs through Oct. 25. For more information on Capitol Arts Network or its facilities, visit [www.capitolartsnetwork.com](http://www.capitolartsnetwork.com) or call 301-661-7590.



"Hold on Tight, This is Gonna Hurt Like Hell" by Jessica Damen

Decisions is a program in which local groups gather to discuss topics associated with foreign policy. This meeting the topic will be China in Africa. Brown bag lunches encouraged. Visit [www.folmc.org](http://www.folmc.org).

**Preschool Storytime.** 10:30 a.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. For children 3-5 years. Free. Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries) or 240-777-0690.

**Blues Dance.** 8:15 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-11:30 p.m. in the Ballroom Annex, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. \$8. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit [www.capitalblues.org](http://www.capitalblues.org) for more.

## FRIDAY/OCT. 4

**Contra Dance.** 7:30 p.m. lessons start; 8:30-11:30 p.m. dancing at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Divine Comedy provides music. \$10/adult; \$5/17 and under. Visit [www.fridaynightdance.org](http://www.fridaynightdance.org) for more.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 5

**Taste of Bethesda.** 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Bethesda's Woodmont Triangle. Enjoy five stages of entertainment, more than 50 restaurants providing food and drinks, crafts and more. Free. Food costs tickets, \$5/four tickets. Visit [www.bethesda.org](http://www.bethesda.org) or 301-215-6660.

**Cajun & Zydeco Music and Dance Festival.** Noon-midnight at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Dancing by the Bayou presents a day of music with Jesse Lege & Bayou Brew, Rusty Metoyer & Zydeco Krush and more bands. \$50/door. Visit [www.dancingbythebayou.com](http://www.dancingbythebayou.com).

**Music Performance.** 7:30 p.m. at the Bethesda Blues and Jazz Supper Club, 7719 Wisconsin Ave. D.C. native Cathy Ponton King and her band will perform songs off her new CD "The Crux" long with blues guitarist Bobby Parker. Call 240-330-4500 or email [soulspeech@hotmail.com](mailto:soulspeech@hotmail.com).

**Solo Piano Concert.** 8 p.m. at Wesmoreland Congregational Church, 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. Free. Haskell Small will perform. Free. Visit [www.washingtonconservatory.org](http://www.washingtonconservatory.org) or 301-320-2770.

**Kick-off Art & Wine Tasting Party.** 4-7 p.m. at Semmes Hall, St. Francis Episcopal Church, 10033 River Road. Enjoy an exhibit by The Art Gallery of Potomac and more. Presented by The Women of Saint Francis, with proceeds benefiting local and national charities.

**Art Exhibit.** See "Mostly Drawings," drawings and paintings by Ken Conley in the Yellow Barn Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., from noon-7 p.m. A reception is scheduled from 5-7 p.m. See works that depict food, landscape locations around Great Falls, Maryland and Washington. Free. Visit [www.glenechopark.org](http://www.glenechopark.org) or 301-371-5593.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 6

**Benefit Concert and Art Show.** 1 p.m. at the Sixth and I Street Historic Synagogue, 600 I Street, NW, Washington, D.C. "The Music of George Gershwin and John Denver" will take place for the benefit of the Melanoma Research Foundation/CURE OM ([www.cureom.org](http://www.cureom.org)). The art show will begin at 1 p.m., concert at 1:45 p.m. Tickets are \$35-\$50. Checks are payable to CURE OM c/o Harvey Levine, 7803 Cadbury Ave., Potomac, MD 20854. Email [hoybean39@yahoo.com](mailto:hoybean39@yahoo.com) for more.

**DC Dance Challenge.** 9:30 a.m.-11 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Enjoy competitive dances and all

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levels of ability welcome. Visit [www.dcdancechallenge.com](http://www.dcdancechallenge.com).

**Waltz Dance.** 2:45-6 p.m. at Bumper Car Pavilion at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Dance to live music by Larry Elke & Friends. \$10. Visit [www.waltztimedances.org](http://www.waltztimedances.org) for more.

**Contra Dance.** 7-10:30 p.m. at Bumper Car Pavilion, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$13/nonmember; \$10/member; \$5/17 and under. Visit [www.fsgw.org](http://www.fsgw.org) for more.

**Music Performance.** 5 p.m. at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Drive, Bethesda. The Inscape Chamber Orchestra presents "Songs of the Earth." Free. Visit [www.redeemerbethesda.org](http://www.redeemerbethesda.org) or 301-229-3770.

**Potomac Vintage and Arts Festival.** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on the grounds at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 10033 River Road. Enjoy a silent auction with restaurant and ticket vouchers, vacation getaways and more. Browse arts and crafts, hear stories, play games (\$2/game) and make crafts related to Potomac history, eat food and more. Profits will support families in need.

**Art Exhibit.** See "Mostly Drawings," drawings and paintings by Ken Conley in the Yellow Barn Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., from noon-5 p.m. See works that depict food, landscape locations around Great Falls, Maryland and Washington. Free. Visit [www.glenechopark.org](http://www.glenechopark.org) or 301-371-5593.

**Potomac Village Block Party.** 4-6 p.m. on the north cul-de-sac of Holly Hill Place. Open to all residents of Potomac Village, the event features an inflatable obstacle course, basketball games and treats for children. Free.

#### WEDNESDAY/OCT. 9

**Snapshot Day.** At Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries) or 240-777-0690.

#### THURSDAY/OCT. 10

**Potomac Toddlers.** 10:30 a.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. For children 1-3 years. Free. Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/libraries) or 240-777-0690.

**Blues Dance.** 8:15 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-11:30 p.m. in the Ballroom Annex, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. \$8. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit [www.capitalblues.org](http://www.capitalblues.org) for more.

#### FRIDAY/OCT. 11

**Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Montgomery County Fairgrounds, 16 Chestnut St., Gaithersburg. Enjoy gourmet treats including breads, olive oils, chocolates and more; live music and interactive children's activities. \$8/online; \$10/door and is good for all three days of the show. Visit [www.sugarloafcrafter.com](http://www.sugarloafcrafter.com) or 800-210-9900.

**Opening Reception.** 6-9 p.m. at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. Meet the artists of "Cityscapes," featuring David FeBland, Beata Drozd, Ben Ferry and Gavin Glakas. Visit [www.bethesda.org](http://www.bethesda.org) or 301-215-6660.

**Art Walk in the Park.** 6-8 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Enjoy open studios, demonstrations and more. Free. Visit [www.glenechopark.org](http://www.glenechopark.org) for more.

**Contra Dance.** 7:30 p.m. lessons start; 8:30-11:30 p.m. dancing at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Glen Echo Open Band provides music. \$10/adult; \$5/17 and under. Visit [www.fridaynightdance.org](http://www.fridaynightdance.org) for more.

**Blues Dance.** 8 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-midnight in the Bumper Car Pavilion, 7300

MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Admission to be determined. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit [www.capitalblues.org](http://www.capitalblues.org) for more.

#### SATURDAY/OCT. 12

**Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Montgomery County Fairgrounds, 16 Chestnut St., Gaithersburg. \$8/online; \$10/door and is good for all three days of the show. Visit [www.sugarloafcrafter.com](http://www.sugarloafcrafter.com) or 800-210-9900.

**"Eye Spy" Halloween Train.** 1-8 p.m. at Cabin John Regional Park, 7410 Tuckerman Lane. Children 8 and under can enjoy a journey through a slightly haunted forest and mark their "Eye Spy" cards each time they spy a familiar friend hiding there. Halloween movies and other activities are included in price. Costumes encouraged. \$5/person. Visit [www.cabinjohntrain.com](http://www.cabinjohntrain.com) or 301-765-8670.

**Playhouse Puppetry Slam!** 7 p.m. or 9 p.m. at the Puppet Co. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Adults can watch the final slam event featuring puppets. \$15/person. Visit [www.puppetryslam.com](http://www.puppetryslam.com) for tickets.

**Blues Dance.** 8 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-midnight in the Spanish Ballroom, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Admission to be determined. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit [www.capitalblues.org](http://www.capitalblues.org) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See "Sun/Water/Sky," paintings by Amy Sabrin in the Yellow Barn Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. A reception is scheduled from 5-7 p.m. Free. Visit [www.glenechopark.org](http://www.glenechopark.org) or 301-371-5593.

**Art Workshop.** 1-4 p.m. at VisArts, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville. Learn to deal with mental blocks and old behavior patterns. No experience necessary. Visit [www.visartscenter.org](http://www.visartscenter.org) or 301-315-8200.

#### SUNDAY/OCT. 13

**Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Montgomery County Fairgrounds, 16 Chestnut St., Gaithersburg. \$8/online; \$10/door and is good for all three days of the show. Visit [www.sugarloafcrafter.com](http://www.sugarloafcrafter.com) or 800-210-9900.

**Feast Fundraiser.** 1-5 p.m. at Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, 5020 Battery Lane, Bethesda. Enjoy all-you-can-eat shrimp and oysters, potato salad, ham, rolls, baked beans, beer and soft drinks. \$45/person. For tickets call 301-977-6634. Visit [www.bccrs.org](http://www.bccrs.org) for more.

**"Eye Spy" Halloween Train.** 1-8 p.m. at Cabin John Regional Park, 7410 Tuckerman Lane. Children 8 and under can enjoy a journey through a slightly haunted forest and mark their "Eye Spy" cards each time they spy a familiar friend hiding there. Halloween movies and other activities are included in price. Costumes encouraged. \$5/person. Visit [www.cabinjohntrain.com](http://www.cabinjohntrain.com) or 301-765-8670.

**Contra and Square Dance.** 7-10:30 p.m. at Spanish Ballroom, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. \$13/nonmember; \$10/member; \$5/17 and under. Visit [www.fsgw.org](http://www.fsgw.org) for more.

**Blues Dance.** 8 p.m. lessons start, dancing from 9-midnight in the Ballroom Annex, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Admission to be determined. Capital Blues presents the dances. Visit [www.capitalblues.org](http://www.capitalblues.org) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See "Sun/Water/Sky," paintings by Amy Sabrin in the Yellow Barn Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Visit [www.glenechopark.org](http://www.glenechopark.org) or 301-371-5593.

## 'Little Women' at Wootton

Thomas S. Wootton High School will present the Broadway musical version of "Little Women," based on Louisa May Alcott's story of four sisters and their mother set during the Civil War.

The four sisters in Wootton's production will feature Corrieanne Stein as Jo, Jackie Kempa as Beth, Mara Pugh as Meg, Meghan Wright as Amy and Sasha Bartol as Marmee. Rounding out the cast is Max Fowler as Laurie Laurence, Naomi Boxman as Aunt March, Jeffrey Morse as Prof. Bhaer, Simon Chen as John Brooke, Zachary Korn as Mr. Laurence/Braxton. Joining them are ensemble members Janet Lewandowski, Saira Umar, Melanie Schaeffer, Denise Nalibotsky, Maddie Weldon and Austin Oliver.

Performances Oct. 18, 19 and 20. Adults, \$12; students, \$8. Order online at <http://schooltix.org/wootton/> and click on "Drama: Little Women." Thomas S. Wootton High School, 2100 Wootton Parkway, Rockville.



Corrieanne Stein (Jo) and Mara Pugh (Meg) rehearse for Wootton's upcoming performance of "Little Women."

## LET'S TALK Real Estate



by Michael Matese

### Get it Inked or it Didn't Happen

Amidst the rapid banter and emotional highs of pursuing a home, it's easy to let things slip through the cracks, go unnoticed, or allow them to fall by the wayside. Fortunately, there is, along with endless conversation, endless paperwork. It is important to protect yourself and provide legitimacy to claims by making sure to get them written down, as verbal contracts in the midst of a complicated negotiation process do not go far.

#### Paperwork and Reasons to Get it in Writing

During the process of purchasing a home, you will file articles of paperwork to make an offer, have an appraisal done, and agree to your responsibilities versus those of either the bank or seller. Things not usually covered in this paperwork, though, are things like inclusion of furniture or appliances, expectations regarding disclosure of home history, and anything else that would be difficult to prove. It is also a worthwhile discipline for the future, as a contract is the best way to clarify expectations, measure results, and avoid disappointment. When writing a contract, use firm, descriptive language, and consider opting to have your documents notarized. Unless otherwise stated, contracts of this nature stay valid for a "reasonable time." So even if you're in the initial stages of negotiation, it's not a terrible idea to approach things with the mindset that if it didn't get put on paper, it didn't really happen.

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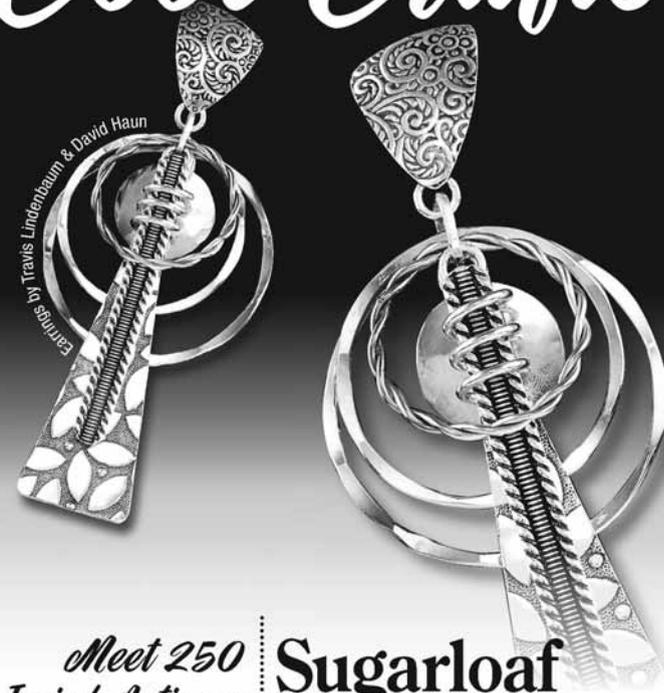
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# Documentary Highlights Wounded Warriors Program

Potomac filmmaker focuses on healing aspect of horses.

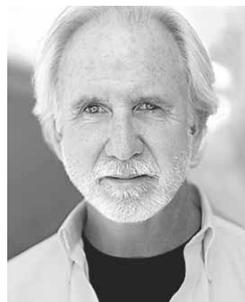
BY SUSAN BELFORD  
THE ALMANAC

**W**ounded Warrior J.D. Hartley credits a horse for changing his life. “I was scared at first, but I haven’t had a nightmare since I met Peanut, my horse.

“What a difference it has made in the Wounded Warrior’s lives to be around horses. The spirit of being around an animal is incredible,” Col. John Mayer said.

These are just two of the real-life stars of Potomac filmmaker Thomas R. Waters’ documentary “The Best Thing For the Inside of a Marine Is the Outside of a Horse,” a film that records how a week’s participation in the Jinx McCain Wounded Warrior Horsemanship Program builds self-confidence, relieves emotional pain and helps Wounded Warriors feel more positively in their outlook for their futures.

Waters describes his latest project with enthusiasm: “This documentary has given me a profound respect for these men and women who have severe injuries — PTSD,



Tom Waters

amputations, brain injuries — yet are determined to rebuild their lives. ... It takes a bravery beyond imagination to face life after sustaining some of the injuries these men and women do. Having horses as a

way to help these soldiers heal both physically and mentally is a fantastic rehab tool.”

Waters moved to the Potomac area 18 years ago from Los Angeles, wanting to pursue his life-long love of horses and eventing. “But after 25 years of training horses, I have come back to my roots as an actor/producer,” said Waters. He has acted in a number of films and television shows, including “Saving Mr. Banks,” “Effigy,” “Forever,” “Night Falls Fast,” “Tales of the Frontier,” “My Dirty Little Secret” and others. He was formerly associated with the Hidden Hills Playhouse and with Neon Art Productions where he produced and co-produced several stage plays including the critically acclaimed “Working.” His new production company is called El Gato Rojo Productions.

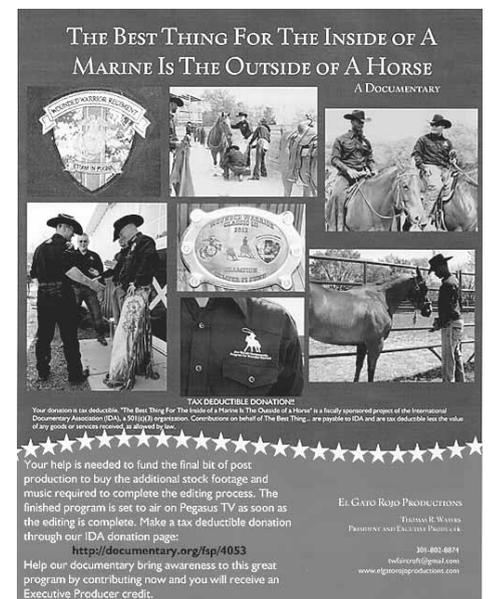
The documentary will be aired on

ConvergTV as soon as it’s completed. However, in order to finish film, El Gato Rojo Productions needs to raise funds to complete the editing process. A fundraising event was held on Sept. 18 to view the trailer and to explain why donations are critically needed.

“We are also hoping for donations to Semper Fi, the Marine organization that administers the Wounded Warriors Horsemanship Program, said Waters. “They do not receive funding from the government, but must run these meaningful programs from donations. I hope Potomac residents will understand how worthwhile these programs are for the healing of the wounded veterans.”

Waters is also scheduled to shoot several episodes of the television program, “Paranormal Experience.”

“We are filming in a home in Poolesville, one outside of Poolesville, another in Middleburg — and the Olney House Restaurant. All have a history of ghosts and paranormal activity.” In the show, host Waters and paranormal experts Sandra Dunphy and Debbie Perkins share revelations and visions without prior knowledge of the history or occupants of the homes. Waters said, “Perkins is known for her ability to vividly visualize past events accurately in great detail. Afterward, these happenings are researched and confirmed. Dunphy is



known for making contact with the spirits of children. During the episode, Perkins and Dunphy compare findings and the strongest evidences of spirit activity. I hope that everyone will join me in the next few episodes, entitled “Horse Country Hauntings.”

To view the trailer of the film, “The Best Thing For the Inside of a Marine Is the Outside of a Horse,” go to [www.eventingnation.com/hom/wounded-warriorproject.html](http://www.eventingnation.com/hom/wounded-warriorproject.html) or to contact Waters, go to [www.elgatorojoproductions.com](http://www.elgatorojoproductions.com).

## St. James Episcopal Travels the ‘Via Media’ or Middle Way

FROM PAGE 3  
of themselves.”

Today, St. James is a worship-centered denomination — focusing on liturgy, contemporary music and blended services for its 350 members. They meet on “Religion Row” — alongside Beth Shalom Synagogue, Seven Locks Baptist, and Geneva United Presbyterian. The “Pot-Rock” group as she calls them, is more derived from Rockville than Potomac — with a mix of Caucasian, European, Philippine, and African Americans.

According to Baskin, her No. 1 mission is: “We try and provide meaningful worship where people can hear the word of God and how it relates to their life. Are the Bible stories written 2,000 years ago still relevant? I think so.”

Three services are offered on Sunday: 8:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m.; and Christian Education for adults at 9:15 a.m. There’s a Children’s Arts Program at 9:15 a.m. for fifth-grade down. A Youth Group meets Sundays 6-8 p.m. for high school and middle school ages. Also have adult education at 9:15 a.m.

The Christian Education classes for children and adults offer a number of outreach ministries. In 2014, the Youth Mission Trip will take students in grades 9-12 to Puerto Rico for a week to repair and build houses.

The church is known for its Christmas Pageant and Feast of Light — celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany on Jan. 6. In the

spring, it offers a six-week Spring on Earth Stewardship with six events focusing on biodiversity, water, climate change.

The church also rents its building out on weekdays to Celebrate Ability, an after-school program for autistic children. It also rents out to eight, 12-Step programs — like AA and Food Anonymous. A Bridge Club of 100 seniors meets four days a week from 11-3 p.m. to play bridge.

“This is a win-win. It gives them a place that’s convenient, it helps us financially,” said Baskin.

Baskin calls church members “mainstream,” serving both liberals and conservative — theologically and politically. “The Scriptures don’t come out with who you should vote for in a presidential election,” she said. “They’re not going to hear from me, here’s how you should believe on social issues like abortion, same-sex marriage or capital punishment.”

For those discussions, St. James offers “Contemporary Issues and the Gospel,” on Sundays, tackling current topics. “It’s de-



Childcare Director Mary Lou English has worked there for 20 years.



The \$15,000 rain garden was funded by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Trust and also from Montgomery County.

signed to encourage people to reflect on their own spiritual journey to help interpret what’s going on in the world.”

She added: “We believe God gives people brains to think with,” she said. “We welcome questions. And the Episcopal Church recognizes there are often a lot of shades of gray.” Episcopalians are more comfortable in recognizing that the world is more complex, what she calls “Via Media” or the Middle Way — where absolute clarity is not always easy to discern.

Church member Holly Winzler agreed. She likes that St. James offers opportunities to participate and serve on many different levels. “To have opportunities to

## Children’s School

The St. James Children’s School caters to 90 children, ages 6 weeks to 6 years old, including a full kindergarten, five days a week, from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The staff of 32 teachers (18 full-time, 12 part-time) is guided by Director MaryLou English, who has been there from the start. “I think we’re able to have a warm, loving atmosphere with creative activities for children,” said English, married 43 years to artist husband Craig.

The academics, which includes conversational Spanish, begins at age 3. Children can also take piano lessons, Tumble Bus (gymnastics), and soccer lessons. Upstairs is a martial arts (karate) business that rents space and offers lessons.

“We’re able to give a one-on-one atmosphere where they feel loved and appreciated,” English said. “We’re able to give attention where the children need it.”

serve, in social justice capacities and Christian education .... learning about the different ministries, volunteering, becoming more aware and exploring the ‘Via Media.’”

Church members also minister by offering financial help to people in Bon Samaritain and L’Acul, Haiti, where they build wells and support the school lunch program. And St. James works with St. John’s Church in Connecticut, which sends its volunteers to Haiti.

There’s also a Prison Aftercare Ministry at the Detention Center on Seven Locks Road, which used to be a major outreach with volunteers ministering to inmates to help cut down on recidivism, but that program has since moved out to Clarksburg.

## Churchill Field Hockey Falls to B-CC

The Churchill field hockey team lost to Bethesda Chevy-Chase 1-0 on Sept. 30, dropping the Bulldogs' record to 5-2.

Churchill opened the season with five consecutive victories, defeating Quince Orchard, Watkins Mill, Kennedy, Whitman and Poolesville by a combined score of 16-2. The Bulldogs defeated Poolesville 3-2 in overtime, with Clare Nolan scoring the game winner.

Since then, the Bulldogs have lost to Wootton (3-0) and B-CC.

Churchill will travel to face Richard Montgomery at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 2. The Bulldogs' next home game is against Paint Branch at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 5.



PHOTOS BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE ALMANAC

**Carly Kabelac and the Churchill field hockey team won five of their first seven games.**



**Churchill's Clare Nolan, seen against Bethesda-Chevy Chase on Sept. 30, scored the game-winning goal in overtime against Poolesville on Sept. 23.**

## Wootton Football Beats Whitman

The Wootton football team defeated Whitman 43-20 on Sept. 27, improving the Patriots' record to 3-1.

According to stats from the Washington Post's allmetsports.com, Wootton quarterback Sam Ellis completed 27 of 44 passes for 335 yards with three touchdowns and three interceptions. Trevon Diggs had 11 receptions for 108 yards and a touchdown.

He also returned a fumble 85 yards for a score.

Whitman running back Zac Morton rushed 26 times for 197 yards and a touchdown. Quarterback Evan Smith completed 4 of 13 passes for 129 yards with one touchdown and one interception. Nick Newsham caught two passes for 97 yards and a score.

Wootton won its first four games, but had to forfeit its season-opening victory over Walter Johnson.

The Patriots will travel to face Gaithersburg at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4. Whitman (2-2) will host Richard Mont-

gomery.

## Bullis Football Wins Third Straight

The Bullis football team defeated John Carroll 37-8 on Sept. 27, improving its record to 3-1. The Bulldogs have won three straight since dropping their season opener to St. John's.

Bullis will travel to face Cape Henlopen at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4. The Bulldogs' next home game is Oct. 11 against

St. Stephen's & St. Agnes.

## Churchill Football Falls to Paint Branch

The Churchill football team lost to Paint Branch 41-0 on Sept. 27. The Bulldogs have been outscored 89-0 in their last two games, including a 48-0 loss to rival Wootton.

Against Paint Branch, Steven Stillwell led the Bulldogs with 10 tackles and two sacks.

Churchill will travel to face Quince Orchard at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4.

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# "Mor-Tality" Or Less



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Meaning, in my head anyway, the future and what there is left of it. More specifically, I mean life expectancy. When you're given a "13-month to two-year" prognosis - at age 54 and a half, by a cancer doctor, your cancer doctor, the timeline between where you are and where you thought you'd be - and when, becomes as clear as mud. Yet not planning for the future, a future that previous to your diagnosis was thought to be guaranteed (based on family/patient history) creates a negative when all health care professionals advise being positive. Anecdotal evidence suggests that acting like you have a future helps in some unexplainable way in you/the patient having one.

Over the last month, I've had some time-sensitive and planning-for-the-future-type decisions/expenditures that on paper at least - given my terminal diagnosis, could be construed as money poorly spent. Nevertheless, since it is my life - and I'm trying to live it, I went ahead and signed up and paid to have these future benefits in place (starting at the present), and I'm not talking funeral arrangements, either. What I'm referring to are everyday/ordinary expenses where your dollars guarantee years ahead rather than years behind: one-year anti-virus coverage for my computer - until September 14, 2014; two-year coverage until September 30, 2015, for my Life & Health Insurance from the Maryland State Insurance Administration (I used to be an active agent in my previous career); and finally, six-years renewal (although one has no choice, really) until September 30, 2019, for my new Maryland Driver's License.

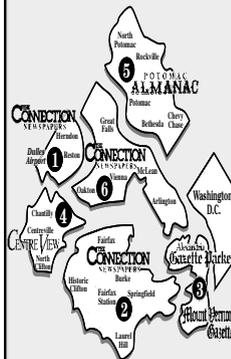
Certainly, in my mind and experience, these renewals are sort of necessary, perhaps more so for the present than the future, but since I can't know for sure, I felt as if hedging my bets was the prudent course of action. And though not renewing these three obligations was not really practical, given the realities of my life and its related responsibilities, the planning-for and purchase-of them did give me pause to consider my future and my expectations for it. Having terminal cancer will do that to you: stop you in your tracks and cause you to measure (almost literally) every step you take. It's not exactly fun, but it is a living, and I'm particularly happy to be the one doing the living.

And during these past few weeks, I did stop, and I hemmed and hawed too and decided to pay it (and my life) forward; to invoke and rework a concept made famous by a movie of the same name starring Haley Joel Osment. So I'm now officially paid up - for a few years. If I think too much about what's happened to me (stage IV non-small cell lung cancer) and why, I fear it will weaken my resolve. A resolve which is short on facts but really long on feelings. Feelings which I've become accustomed to having and believing.

I have to believe in something, and believing I have a future is the best way I know how to turn these feelings into facts.

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

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# Planting a Suburban Meadow Garden Sustainable gardening at home.

BY CAROLE FUNGER  
THE ALMANAC

**T**hese days, many of us are searching for alternatives to conventional lawn and garden care, a task that has become increasingly dependent on time and maintenance, as well as pesticides and other poisons. The suburban meadow offers a solution to this problem.

Low-maintenance and chemical-free, meadows eliminate the need for constant yard work while optimizing land use, saving water and preventing soil erosion. Planting a meadow can improve water quality in the community by dispensing with the need for harmful chemicals and fertilizers. And by making use of native wildflowers and grasses, meadows help conserve the natural landscape while complementing and enhancing a home's natural terrain.

According to meadow expert Catherine Zimmerman, author of "Urban and Suburban Meadows," and currently at work on two projects in Potomac, what she terms "meadow-scaping" can liberate residents from their lawn's virtual monoculture and restore healthy, sustainable ecosystems to back yards.

"If you think about things in life, diversity is usually the most healthy," Zimmerman said. "Traditional lawns allow little opportunity for biodiversity, let alone plant or insect life." Aside from the regular applications of pesticides and fertilizers needed to sustain them, lawns require constant maintenance while placing heavy demands on water supplies "Water is going to become very precious in the future," said Zimmerman.

## LAWNS VERSUS MEADOWS

Lawns planted with non-native species such as Kentucky bluegrass engage people in an ongoing battle to maintain a landscape that requires constant monitoring and irrigation. According to Zimmerman, most all lawn seed sold today originated in other parts of the world. Kentucky bluegrass, native to Europe and northern Asia, is actually a cool-season species that goes dormant in the dry summer months, making it a poor choice for local hot, humid conditions.

Many native grasses, on the other hand, are drought tolerant and can be used to establish low-maintenance, low-cost alternatives to the traditional lawn. Examples include Little Bluestem grass, Indian grass and Box Sedge. Buffalo grass is a warm-season species that is sod forming, with roots that can extend as deep as seven feet into the ground.

Even the ubiquitous white clover can offer a viable option for lawn enthusiasts who are trying to wean themselves from chemicals. A member of the pea family, clover uses



Catherine Zimmerman designed these meadow projects for local homes.

bacteria in its root system to convert nitrogen into fertilizer in the soil. A rapid spreader, it can crowd out broadleaf weeds while growing harmoniously with grass. Drought-tolerant clover also keeps its cool green color even in the hottest summer months.

To meet growing demand, many nurseries are now developing native grass seed mixes, adapted to specific regions that require little attention once rooted. This adaptation makes watering infrequent and requires no fertilizer input. Mowing is minimal, required as infrequently as once or twice a year, or once a month for a more manicured appearance.

Compared with the native lawn, meadows deliver even more low-cost, low-maintenance advantages. When successfully modeled after plant communities already existing in the area, they can stabilize soil, control storm run-off and make watering a bygone chore. Ultimately self-sustaining, the suburban meadow is a smaller and more intentioned space than traditional meadows. It is often used in conjunction with natural lawns.

A meadow designed for the urban/suburban landscape typically consists of more grasses than flowers. Zimmerman stresses that while flowers are beautiful, the meadow should actually comprise at least 60 percent grasses. Grasses aid in stabilizing soil while supporting taller meadow flowers. They are also capable of surviving drought and act as food and shelter for local wildlife.

During its crucial developmental phase, usually two to three years, the meadow adapts and aligns itself with conditions native to its environment. This enables complex relationships to form between the meadow's plants, animals and other microorganisms. Over time, each meadow develops into its own unique ecosystem, attracting scores of insects and wildlife.

**THE BEST TIME TO PLANT** a meadow is in the fall, or before the first frost. Sowing seeds in the fall allows for them to break



PHOTOS FROM THE MEADOW PROJECT

their dormancy. Warm, wet spring weather induces them to germinate.

A standard seed mix comprises 25 species, making meadow seed more expensive than grass seed initially. However, over the long term the emerging seedlings are much cheaper to maintain, requiring little to no watering or mowing. "Over time, you really start to see you're saving money," said Zimmerman. "Plus you are providing a habitat for insects and birds that are becoming extinct because there are no longer places left for them to feed and make nests."

While seeds are the most economical way to go, "plugs" or live plants bought in flats or containers, are also an option, especially for those who don't want to wait the two to three years it takes for the meadow to establish. Appropriate planting tools can be determined based on number of plants, soil type and soil conditions. While a planted meadow requires less mowing in the first two to three years to control weeds, after it is established, maintenance is the same as the seeded meadow, with mowing required only once annually.

Potomac residents Bill and Diana Conway are calling upon Zimmerman's skills to design a meadow in their backyard this fall, just in time for planting. They're planning to cover approximately a half-acre of their large property. The couple loves the idea of bringing in plants that will support native pollinators such as butterflies and bees. They are also excited about the idea of mowing a large chunk of their property only once a year.

The Conways will be hand-broadcasting seed and settling down for the two to three year wait until the meadow is established. "We are looking forward to creating a visual focal point from the back of our house and all the back bedrooms," said Diana Conway. "Plus, we're tired of paying the mowers."

Down the street, the Slovers are working with Zimmerman to design three meadow areas. They're intrigued by the idea of turning a portion of their yard into an area where native plants and flowers can thrive and feed the bees, butterflies and birds. The plan is to use a combination of seeds and plugs so that the meadows have visual impact from the start.

"We know that adding a meadow will not

only help conserve the local flora and fauna but will add to our enjoyment of the outdoors as well," said Katherine Slover. "It's really better than watching TV."

## CHOOSING A SITE

According to Zimmerman, careful analysis of the prospective site, coupled with correct soil preparation, are the two most important tasks in creating a meadow garden. Site analysis allows for the selection of plants that are best suited to the environment, while good preparation is essential to controlling weeds and aiding in establishment of the plants. "What species you end up putting in is secondary. Once you understand the site, you will know what plants are most suitable," Zimmerman said, adding, "It is very important to start out correctly."

For instance, through simple observation, the homeowner can get a good idea of where the water collects on their property and which spots remain damp or dry. Tops of hills are typically dry, while the bottoms of hills are most likely to exhibit wetter conditions. While the best place to establish a meadow is typically in an open, sunny and well-drained area, successful meadows have been designed for wet, low-lying spots as well. Many plants traditionally associated with meadows are tall, but meadow plants can be small as well, sometime measuring only 2-4" in size. Following are some of the best meadow sites:

- ❖ Areas of new construction where the soil is either rocky or poor
- ❖ Lawns
- ❖ Ground where trees have been removed
- ❖ Land where woods and lawn meet
- ❖ Slopes where there is an erosion problem and mowing is difficult
- ❖ Areas where heavy rains cause flooding.

## SUITABLE PLANTS

Many nurseries offer meadow plants and seed mixes suitable for the Potomac area. Zimmerman recommends the North Creek Nurseries' wholesalers catalogue as a great resource for plants at [www.northcreeknurseries.com](http://www.northcreeknurseries.com). The website features color photos and meadow layouts. Check to make sure the plants you're choosing aren't on the state's noxious weeds lists. For a list of native plant and seeds, go to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center plant database at [www.wildflower.org/plants](http://www.wildflower.org/plants) or [www.nativeseednetwork.org](http://www.nativeseednetwork.org) for information on all aspects of native seed.

To learn more about meadows, and how to incorporate one into one's own site, go to <https://themeadowproject.com/> and read about Zimmerman's work. Or purchase her book, "Urban & Suburban Meadows," available through Amazon.com.

Zimmerman is a certified horticulturist and landscape designer. Follow her on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Meadow-Project/> or read her blog about planting a meadow at <http://nativeplantwildlifegarden.com/is-there-a-meadow-in-your-future>.

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# Senior Living

OCTOBER 2013



Potomac  
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# Senior Living

## Choosing a Home for the Golden Years

Many options for retirement communities in the region.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Jim Harkin, 81, and his wife, Phyllis, 80, have little free time these days. Jim spends his days protecting and photographing wildlife on the 60-acre campus at The Fairfax, a Sunrise Senior Living Community, in Fort Belvoir. He helped build, refurbish and maintain more than 20 birdhouses on the grounds, including homes for tree swallows and purple martins.

Phyllis Harkin manages a small gift shop and runs marathon bridge games. The couple moved to The Fairfax more than two-and-a-half years ago because they wanted the freedom to pursue their interests and live among people with similar lifestyles without the responsibility of maintaining a household. “We were getting older and keeping up a house and yard in Fairfax was getting harder,” said Jim Harkin, a retired Navy captain. “We also wanted to make our own decisions about where and when we moved and not have that left up to our busy children.”

Phyllis Harkin, a former real estate appraiser, said, “We did it in time, but after living at The Fairfax, we wish we’d done it earlier. You have no idea how much fun it is over here.”

Kathy Aust, 67, has lived at Heritage Hunt Golf and Country Club, an independent living retirement community in Gainesville,



Phyllis and Jim Harkin are active residents of the Fairfax, a Sunrise Senior Living Community, in Fort Belvoir. Jim, 81, runs the facility’s birding club and Phyllis, 80, manages the campus gift shop. The couple wanted to live among people with similar lifestyles without the responsibility of maintaining a household.

Va., since 2001. She moved there from Burke, she said, for social reasons. “I wanted to move into a community where there were people who had lifestyles that were similar to mine,” said Aust, a retired federal employee who has no children. “I like living in a community with people in similar situa-

tions. It is very active here. There are indoor and outdoor pools, tennis and golf. There is so much to be done here.” Aust volunteers on the Heritage Hunt community task force and with the community’s women’s group.

### Where to Find Help for Seniors

The decision to move out of one’s home and into a retirement community is often complicated and can be fraught with anxiety. Experts in geriatrics say that reasons to relocate to a retirement community usually boil down to three factors: social connections, physical condition and personal safety.

“It’s like a trifecta or a three-legged stool. It is hard to be stable if one leg isn’t working” said Andrew Carle, an executive-in-residence at George Mason University’s program in senior housing administration in Fairfax. “A person might be physically healthy, but if they are isolated in their home and not driving or have lost touch with friends, they could become depressed.”

Carle, who has more than 25 years of executive-level senior housing and health care experience, adds that if a person has had a stroke or another condition that affects mobility, living

“We wish we’d [moved] earlier. You have no idea how much fun it is over here.”

— Phyllis Harkin

SEE CHOOSING A HOME, PAGE 4

## Diverse Needs, Desires Drive Mobility Solutions

Seniors increasingly seek innovative plans that embrace both the present and the future.

BY JOHN BYRD

Russ Glickman was a traditional full-service remodeler until the late 1990s when he abruptly added a host of accessibility certifications to a long list of building industry credentials. The service extension was less about opportunity than a personal call to apply what he’d learned from personal experience in helping his son, Michael, who was born with cerebral palsy.

“As a professional builder and a parent, I was fascinated with the challenges entailed in helping people with mobility issues make use of their homes, and really eager to absorb the evolving strategies and technologies that were then beginning to evolve,” Glickman said. “I spent several years acquiring new certifications while continuing to execute full-scale remodeling projects.”

Starting initially as a helpful neighbor with sound advice, Glickman, who has op-

erated Glickman Design Build for more than 30 years, eventually recognized that the demand for accessibility solutions was larger than he had thought.

“I was offering feasibility studies in special needs situations mostly on referral, but the inquiries pretty quickly became about half of my work,” he said. “It wasn’t that there weren’t other practitioners in this field. But I soon discovered that the need for original solutions was as pronounced among people with mobility requirements as it is in remodeling — may be more so.”

His conclusion: an accessibility solution that’s tailored to an individual is always best, especially when designed to accommodate both current and probable future needs.

“Mastering guidelines and practices specific to a particular condition is a good starting point,” Glickman said. “The Americans with Disabilities Act, for instance, publishes recommendations everyone should know.

But the reality is that every disability is also uniquely personal, and every house presents challenges that must be fully understood if a solution is to work well.”

On top of this, Glickman said, there are always code and budget issues, emerging technologies and, often, collaborative input from therapists, engineers and other specialists.

In the end, it is field experience that makes a mobility or access solution practical.

“This is an enormous societal issue, with a significant and growing practice literature that must be absorbed,” he said. “Having said this, I find that the best solutions arise from effectively collaborating with someone facing challenges who’s really passionate about making the most of their situation.”

**IF THERE’S ONE TREND** that’s well underway in Northern Virginia, it’s that seniors are consistently deciding to age in place — even when a major retrofit is called for.

In McLean, for instance, a retired executive and his wife recently hired Glickman to develop a plan for installing a three-story

elevator in their 10,000-plus-square-foot house. “The owners are in their late 60s, and walking without assistance. The stairs have gradually become a chore, however, a situation that was unlikely to improve.”

SEE DIVERSE NEEDS, PAGE 3

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# Senior Living Mobility Solutions

FROM PAGE 2

Since elevator access within the home's existing structure wasn't feasible, Glickman's plan calls for a 60-foot tower designed to house an elevator shaft — a substantial modification that will not be visible from the front facade.

Inside, the tower will connect a finished lower level, a study on the main level and a third floor sitting room. The owners are also considering an option to build-out the fourth floor as a guest room suite, a choice which will entail extending the tower another floor, finishing selected attic rooms and tying off the roof.

The execution is meant to be architecturally seamless, with the tower clad in brick to match the 25-year-old, original masonry. The new roof will then be tied into existing rafters, reframed and reslated.

Not surprisingly, professionals regarded this as a highly specialized assignment.

"There aren't lot of local contractors who could execute a project like this," said Andria Gregory of Area Access, Inc., the firm that will install the elevator.

"The specifications are always exacting, so it's important to us to work with people who have a track record," Gregory said.

Gregory notes that Glickman's experience in mobility prescription puts him in a selective class. "He's among a handful of our preferred contractors in Northern Virginia," Gregory said. "It's critical to us that the project satisfies the client in every respect."

**IN ARLINGTON**, a mobility plan with incremental components has been implemented in the two-level ranch Jaime and Janice Marquez have occupied for 24 years.

Jaime, 59, who had polio as a child but walked without assistance for most of his adult life, started intermittently using crutches again about 10 years ago.

"This wasn't a surprise," Janice Marquez said. "The research shows that polio survivors can have increased mobility challenges as they age, so we wanted a wheelchair friendly plan even though it's not a necessity right now."

The biggest obstacles: a curving, ruggedly-steep front walk that links up with a front stoop; standard-width interior halls and doorways that had proven restrictive; and a back deck inaccessible to Jaime Marquez from the ground.

"It had become difficult for Jaime to negotiate the house on

## Details

Russ Glickman periodically offers workshops on accessibility solutions for seniors. Visit [www.GlickmanDesignBuild.com](http://www.GlickmanDesignBuild.com) or call 301-444-4663

crutches, so we we're looking ahead," Janice Marquez said. "Initially, I wasn't sure if we should remain in this house, but I had read about Glickman and decided to get his feedback."

Compounding the "move vs. improve" question was the couple's mutual concern that an accessibility solution might make the house less functional for others, including two daughters away at college who are frequent visitors.

"I've seen accessibility modifications that become obstructive," Janice Marquez said. "I wanted to see if we could make changes that would enhance the property — functionally and aesthetically."

To improve front elevation access, Glickman and team removed the existing front walk, re-graded the front slope so that it rises at the rate of one inch per foot and introduced a "zero step" entry.

Inside, hallways have been widened from 36 inches to 48; doorways from 30 to 36 inches.

To facilitate Jaime Marquez's access between the rear deck and yard, Glickman designed and constructed a wider, low-rise staircase that accommodates his crutches.

While focused and small-scale, the changes have improved Jaime Marquez's ability to move freely from driveway to front door and throughout the house. They've also bestowed an unexpected benefit. "The interior now feels much more spacious," Janice Marquez said, "and the wider doorways allow more natural light."

Also, she notes, the new front walk adds considerable curb appeal. "Honestly," she said, "I wish the walk had been in place when I was still pushing the girls in their stroller. It's just a lot easier for everyone."

**OUT IN STERLING**, the Saads, both in their mid-60s, asked Glickman for a plan that would make life easier for Mrs. Saad — who recently transitioned to a wheel-chair. The couple's desire to stay in place for the near-term inspired an alternative vision: convert the 2,000-square-foot lower level into a four-room suite complete with accessible bath, kitchenette and other amenities.

To facilitate access to the new one-level living area, Glickman designed a lift that connects the first floor to the new suite.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOME FRONTS NEWS

**Arlington seniors Jaime Marquez and Janice Shack-Marquez on their newly designed accessible front walk.**

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# Senior Living Choosing a Home for the Golden Years

FROM PAGE 2

alone is challenging. "If you need assistance with dressing and bathing that would make it difficult for you to stay in your home alone," he said. Safety issues, such as a risk of falling or medication management, are other reasons that one might not be safe living alone, said Carle.

Not everyone who leaves their home does so willingly. Gail, who has no children or family in the area and asked that her last name be withheld, moved to Potomac Valley Nursing and Wellness Center in Rockville, after her close friends and a social worker determined that she was not healthy enough to live alone. "I want to go back to my house," she said. "That is where I want to be."

Linda Gulyn, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington, who teaches aging psychology, says that despite the amenities and services that can make retirement communities a good fit, a feeling of losing the ability to make decisions about one's life makes many seniors resistant to leaving their homes.

Andrew Carle said, "The very best strategy for a resistant parent is respite stay, which is essentially a short-term stay. The family goes on vacation and lets the senior stay at a retirement community for a week



John Mutchler



Peg Bixler



Dorothy Lavoie

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HERMITAGE

or two. It gives the senior a chance to meet the people, eat the food and participate in the activities. Usually after about a week or two the senior realizes that living alone in their home and watching television all day isn't all it is cracked up to be."

**WHEN ONE DECIDES** that living alone is no longer wise, there are plenty of options. Local retirement communities run the gamut from independent living where a person lives among fellow seniors, but does not need special care, to levels of assisted living. Assisted living facilities provide different levels of care for those who need help with small tasks such as medication administration, to those who need help with daily

tasks such as getting dressed or taking a bath. Skilled nursing facilities, where residents have greater medical needs, are another option.

Some facilities such as The Fairfax and the Hermitage in Alexandria, are actually continuing care retirement communities that enable residents to transition from independent living to nursing care in the same facility as conditions change.

"Independent living basically meets a person's social needs," said Carle. "Assisted living is for people who have physical needs or limitations. I don't think of nursing homes as senior housing. It is long-term health care or for someone who is recovering from an injury or who needs physical

therapy."

"Fox Hill's... amenities, services and fascinating residents all combine to offer a distinctive retirement lifestyle that is both very attractive and very accessible," said Julie Sabag, director of marketing at Fox Hill, in Bethesda, Md.

Peg Bixler, an assisted living resident at The Hermitage, said her doctor advised her that she should not live alone anymore. Living in an assisted living community allows her to maintain an active lifestyle while still getting the help that she needs.

Dorothy Lavoie, 93, another resident of The Hermitage, moved to be near family. "I don't have any children, but I am close to my niece" said Lavoie, a former nurse who served in World War II and the Korean War. "I was living in California, and my niece who lived here wanted me to live near her."

Another Hermitage resident, John Mutchler, a retired chemist who has a daughter in Arlington, and a twin sister in Alexandria, moved from New Jersey to Alexandria to be closer to his family. "It is no problem for me to visit with my family often, which is nice for me," he said. "I keep busy here. I am the chairman of the executive committee. I am also a member of the poetry group where we read poetry every week. I am a member of the current events group."

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