Senior Class secretary Anna Lee introduces Wootton High School principal Dr. Michael Doran at the school’s graduation ceremony on May 27.
LET’S TALK Real Estate

by Michael Matese

Virtual Tours–Smile, You’re on TV!

Virtual tours are a great tool for today’s home owner to use, especially in a competitive market. Photos are good, but to allow a buyer to sit in the comfort of their own home and view yours, staged at its best, will give a seller the edge that can be necessary. You can sit down and discuss with your REALTOR® how you would like to present your home, the specific things that will make it stand out among the others.

Is your fireplace a special marble? Do your French doors span floor to ceiling? Can you see local landmarks from the back deck? What about the kitchen? What makes your home unique? What could make a buyer say “That’s it! That’s the one I want!”? A 360 degree tour of the rooms of your house can bring the buyer to you and is well worth the effort, making your home stand out in the crowd. Show off your house and bring it to the forefront of the luxury home market.

For professional advice on all aspects of buying and selling real estate, call:

MICHAEL MATESE
Long & Foster Realtors
301-806-6829
Mike@michaelmatese.com

Virtual
Tours–Smile,
You’re on TV!

New Townhouses Coming on Seven Locks Road

Winchester Homes will soon be constructing 23 townhouses on 5.24 acres along Seven Locks Road across from the Heights School in Potomac.

The steep, previously heavily wooded site has had just one small house on it until now. The developer has cleared trees in preparation for breaking ground for the townhouses. A sign on the property indicate the townhouses will be priced from $1 million.

In 1992, the Montgomery County Planning Board, in the Final Draft Potomac Subregion Master Plan, recommended acquisition of the property as an extension to Cabin John Regional Park, but the property owner objected and the County Council disapproved the Planning Board recommendation.

The property is adjacent to other townhouse developments, and by approval of all townhouses, the county was able to preserve a significant amount of forest, including specimen trees, on the back and edges of the property.

To honor dad on Father’s Day, send us your favorite snapshots of you with your dad and The Potomac Almanac will publish them in our Father’s Day issue. Be sure to include some information about what’s going on in the photo, plus your name and phone number and town of residence. To e-mail photos, send to: editors@connectionnewspapers.com

“Me and My Dad”

We Bring the Zoo to You!

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Indoor and Outdoor Zoo
Birthday Parties • Reptiles • Squirrels • Zebras • Picnics
Family Reunions • Community Festivals • Fund Raisers
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PHOTO GALLERY!

“Me and My Dad”
Wootton’s Graduates March into the Future

Classmates Elijah Kaplan, Kyle Saggar and Jared Beinart meet up in the north wing outside of D.A.R. Constitution Hall for the graduation ceremony.

Class sponsors Randy Alton and Suzanne Pykosh.

Ashley Dasuki relaxes with friends outside the hall.

The faculty applauds as the Class of 2015 enters.

The audience applauds the graduates.

The Wootton Chamber Singers perform the National Anthem.

“The time has come,’ the Walrus said, and as we end our journey together, I hope that the dreams and goals of each graduate will be achieved and that they all create a life of substance and joy.”

— Principal Dr. Michael Doran

Photos by Louise Krafft

The Almanac
To Alleviate Backups

A new traffic light was installed over the past several weeks at Brickyard Road and MacArthur Boulevard to help alleviate backups at the evening rush hour following the installation of a light at MacArthur and the Clara Barton Parkway. On Monday, June 1, the new light at brickyard and MacArthur was blinking red for the first time. Previously that intersection was controlled by all-way stop signs.

Last Day of May on Towpath

A paddleboarder works her way up towards Violettes Lock on the C&O Canal on Sunday, May 31.

A paddleboarder on the C&O Canal by Blockhouse Point has a dog on board. The dog is wearing a personal flotation device.

Birders were treated to the Bald Eagle, plus Baltimore Orioles, a Prothonotary Warbler, Cedar Waxwing and many more species of birds along the C&O Canal Towpath near Blockhouse Point.
Self Defense Seminar for Teens

SUNDAY/JUNE 7

National Trails Day.

SATURDAY/JUNE 6

Great Decisions: U.S. Policy
Toward Africa. 12:30-2 p.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenside Drive, Potomac. Great Decisions, a national program of the non-partisan Foreign Policy Association is sponsored by Friends of the Library, Potomac Chapter. Most months there is a guest speaker. The program is free and open to the public. Bring a brown bag lunch. A copy of the 2015 Briefing Book is available at the Information Desk. The book cannot be checked out; it takes about an hour to read the relevant article. Books can be ordered at fpa.org.

Saturday/June 6

National Trails Day, 8:30 a.m. at Fletcher’s Cove, 4900 Canal Road, Washington, D.C. Help the Potomac Conservancy clean up along the C&O Canal. Volunteers will receive free vouchers for a canoe, kayak or bike rental. Visit www.potomac.org.

The Ungrateful Shred, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Clara Barton Community Center, 7425 MacArthur Blvd., Cabin John. Clean Cut Shredding is offering shredding services for sensitive documents. A donation of $3.5 is suggested based on quantity. Call 240-777-4910 for more.

Sunday/June 7

Self Defense Seminar for Teens and Adults, 3-5 p.m. at East West Taekwondo, Cabin John Mall, 11325 Seven Locks Road. Self-defense seminar for teens and adults. Attendees ages 10 and older will learn basic kicks, releases, strikes and safety tips in the event of front, back, and ground attacks. No experience is necessary. Fee $40 if pre-registered, $50 for walk-ins. Reserve space at EastWestTKD Events@gmail.com or call 301-461-6770.

Monday/June 8

County Council Meeting—Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy & Environment, 9:30 a.m. at Council Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville. The Montgomery County Council will hold a forum to discuss: Expedited Bill 24-15 that would modify the amount of the tip credit an employer can use to calculate the minimum wage for a tipped employee, and more. Those interested in testifying at the public hearing can sign up by calling 240-777-7803. The deadline to sign up is June 8 at 5 p.m. View the meeting streaming live through www.montgomerycountymd.gov. To obtain copies of the bill call 240-777-7900 or go to tinyurl.com/kjdasq.

Wednesday/June 10

County Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Council Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave, Rockville. The Montgomery County Council will hold a forum to discuss: Expedited Bill 53-14, Bill 54-14, Bill 55-14. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council.


Deadline for Entries: 11:59 p.m. Photoworks is seeking entries for a juried youth photography competition. The theme is “#selfie” and the competition is open to students 18 and under. The entry fee is $25. Email photoworks.gallery@gmail.com for more.

Tuesday/June 9

County Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Council Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council.

Public Hearing, 1:30 p.m. in the Third Floor Hearing room of the Council Office Building, 100 Maryland Ave. The hearing will address Expedited Bill 24-15 that would modify the amount of the tip credit an employer can use to calculate the minimum wage for a tipped employee, and more. Those interested in testifying at the public hearing can sign up by calling 240-777-7803. The deadline to sign up is June 8 at 5 p.m. View the meeting streaming live through www.montgomerycountymd.gov. To obtain copies of the bill call 240-777-7900 or go to tinyurl.com/kjdasq.

Wednesday/June 11

County Council Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Council Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave, Rockville. The Montgomery County Council will hold a forum to discuss Senior Town Hall at Leisure World. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council.

Health and Quality of Life Forum, 6-7:30 p.m. at Executive Office Building 101 Monroe St., Lobby Auditorium, Rockville. Residents are invited to participate in community conversations sponsored by Healthy Montgomery, an effort to improve the health of Montgomery County residents. Attendees will have the opportunity to comment. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov.

Thursday/June 11

County Council Meeting—Health & Economic Development, 2 p.m. at Council Hearing Room, 100 Maryland Ave, Rockville. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council.

For more information, contact Melania Jones, Polo Manager Melanie@capitolpolo.com or visit www.capitolpolo.com

OPENING DAY at CAPITOL POLO CLUB

3 P.M., Sunday, June 7
Be part of the action – cheer on your favorite team, stomp divots, pet a polo pony!

“RED, WHITE and BLUE” Match sponsored by Javier Donatelli, Equine Veterinarian, LLC

TEAMS: America vs England
Wear red, white and blue and get in free. Only $40/car otherwise.

Grandstand seating and tailgating available. Capitol Polo Club is located at 14660 Hughes Road, Poolesville MD 20837

For more information, contact Melania Jones, Polo Manager Melanie@capitolpolo.com or visit www.capitolpolo.com

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As America’s oldest auctioneer, Freeman’s has been a constant within the art market for more than 200 years. Built on the expertise of our specialist and our traditions of excellence, generations of collectors have benefited from buying and selling fine art, antiques, and jewelry with our firm. We are pleased to introduce a new auction to the 2015 autumn season. Curated by specialist Frederick Oster, an internationally recognized authority on the violin family and American fretted instruments, this new sale will include violins, violas, violoncellos, basses, cellos, and guitars.

For a complimentary auction estimate with a view to sell in the upcoming sale, please contact Mr. Oster. He will be in the area on these dates.

Baltimore/Washington, DC
June 8-9

Frederick Oster | 215.940.9830
foster@freemansauction.com

Musical Instruments Auction 11/20/15

www.freemansauction.com

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Food & Drink

Potomac Village Farmers Market. Thursdays, 2-6:30 p.m. at Potomac Methodist Church, 12706 Old Columbia Pike, Potomac. Visit www.potomacvillagefarmersmarket.net for more.

Bethesda Farm Women’s Market. Year-round, every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., at 7115 Wisconsin Ave. Visit www.farmwomensmarket.com for more.

Berkeley Central Farmers Market. Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., next to the Shriver Aquatic Center. All vendors sell only fresh vegetables. Visit www.bcrcentralfarmersmarket.com for more.

Kensington Farmers Market. Year-round on Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon, at Kensington Station parking lot on Howard Avenue. Visit www.kensingtonfarmersmarket.com for more.

Winery & Market. Saturdays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Bethesda Elementary School, 7600 Arlington Road, Bethesda. Stop for a fresh and local products from over 60 vendors. Free. Visit www.centralfarmersmarket.com for more.

Pike Central Farmers Market: Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., next to the Shriver Aquatic Center in the bus parking lot at the intersection of Old Georgetown Road and Executive Blvd. Visit www.centralfarmersmarket.com for more.

‘Hidden District’ Opens at Glen Echo Park

Photographer Steven Marks has taken pictures all over the District of Columbia and its surrounding territories to capture an unseen side of the city. “Hidden District” is a collection of those photographs on display at the Phillips Collection Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. through July 12. Admission to the gallery is free. Visit www.glenechophoto.org for more.

Farm Women’s Market.

On Saturdays the 7th and 14th at 7:30 a.m. at 8131 Greensboro terrace, $10 for FSGW members, $5 ages 17 and under. Free popovers.com for more.

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handbuilding and the wheel. Camp will be held at the art ceramic at Richard Montgomery High School (ages 13-18). The program will run for two weeks from July 12-25 at the Rockville Schools. Camp Art and Drama will run for two weeks from July 12-25 at the Sandy Springs School. M. Campers can participate in daytime or overnight camp. The summer camp will feature students in a final show and half of the final camp. Students who participate in the overnight camp will take part in a full production of the musical "Once on This Island!" Visit www.artsandmakersstudios.com.

Art Explorers Open Studio. Every Saturday, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at The Candy Corner Studio, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Art activities for parents and children. Activities change weekly and there is no pre-registration for this activity. Visit www.glenechoart.org/saturday-art-explorers for more.

Ceramic Classes: Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. located at 11810 Parklawn Drive, Rockville. An opportunity to try the new ceramic workshops. Visit www.visartsatrockville.org for ceramics for a list of class dates, times.

Summer Fun Centers. June 22-July 31. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at various locations. Summer Fun Centers are for children (ages 12-15). Parents will participate in crafts, sports, drama and more. Call 240-777-6811 or Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec for a list of class dates, times.

Thursdays / June 4• "A Taste of Broadway." 7 p.m. at N’alai Israel, 6201 Montrose Road, Rockville. The Congregation holds its annual fundraiser. Tickets are $20 for adults, $10 for children, with a $50 donation for the families. Contact Marcia Levine to RSVP at 301-466-3662 or marciali2ev@verizon.net.


July 1• "Sharpened." Gallery hours at VisArts at Rockville, 155 Gibbs St., Rockville. Artist Greg Brown explores a fascination with custom motorcycles through drawing, video and sculpture. Admission to the gallery is free. Visit www.visartsatrockville.org.

July 4• "A Taste of Broadway." 7 p.m. at N’alai Israel, 6201 Montrose Road, Rockville. The Congregation holds its annual fundraiser. Tickets are $20 for adults, $10 for children, with a $50 donation for the families. Contact Marcia Levine to RSVP at 301-466-3662 or marciali2ev@verizon.net.

July 5• "Hidden District." Saturdays 1-4 p.m., Sundays 1-8 p.m. at Photographers’ Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., "Hidden District" is a photo essay by Steven Marks based on his interpretation of the District of Columbia. Admission is free. Visit www.glenechophotoworks.org.

July 6• Imagination Bethesda. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Imagination Bethesda is a street festival for children with activities, live entertainment and more. Free. Visit www.bethesda.org.


July 8• Video Game Music Concert. 7 p.m. at F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmondson Drive, Rockville. The Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra will perform a concert of orchestral video games music. Free. Visit www.wmgo.org.


House Concert Series. 7:30 p.m. in Bethesda. Arlington-based IBS Chamber Music presents concerts in private homes, followed by a reception. Proceeds fund community concerts $25, limited space. Email susan@ibischambermusic.org or call 703-755-0960 for reservations. Visit ibischambermusic.org for more.

July 8• SATURDAY / June 6• Imagination Bethesda. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. Imagination Bethesda is a street festival for children with activities, live entertainment and more. Free. Visit www.bethesda.org.

July 8• Dawson’s Doggy Dip. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Dawson’s Market, 225 W. Washington St., Rockville. Bring your dog for a day in the sun. Find vendors, samples, and more. Free. Visit www.dawsonsmarket.com.

JUNE 5-JULY 12• "Hidden District." Saturdays 1-4 p.m., Sundays 1-8 p.m. at Photographers’ Gallery at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., "Hidden District" is a photo essay by Steven Marks based on his interpretation of the District of Columbia. Admission is free. Visit www.glenechophotoworks.org.

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SATURDAY / JUNE 6-7• Salsa Showcase. 8 p.m. at Glen Echo Park Spanish Ballroom, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Find a Salsa dance and Performance Showcase for Latin Motion 2015 Student and Semi-Pro routines and featuring performances by other performance companies. Tickets are $18. Visit www.ozusalas.com.

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July 6• JUNE 7-JULY 26• Creative Arts Council 30th Biennial Exhibit. Gallery hours at The Strathmore Mansion, 10701 Rockville Pike, North Bethesda. The Creative Arts Council presents an exhibit of useful art and presents awards to artists for their work. Free. Visit www.creativearts council.org for more.

SATURDAY / JUNE 6-7• Salsa Showcase. 8 p.m. at Glen Echo Park Spanish Ballroom, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Find a Salsa dance and Performance Showcase for Latin Motion 2015 Student and Semi-Pro routines and featuring performances by other performance companies. Tickets are $18. Visit www.ozusalas.com.

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SUNDAY / JUNE 7• Taste of Wheaton. 11 a.m. at Wheaton Triangle, Silver Spring. Find food samples and wine tastings from local restaurants. The event is free, but food samples range from $1- $5 each.

www.visartsatrockville.org.


Tour of the Rocklands Farm Wine & Beer Festival. Sat., 14252 Montevideo Rd., Rocklands Farm, 14252 Montevideo Road, Poolville. tickets can be purchased at the Rocklands Farm website. The tour includes a wine and beer tasting at Rocklands Farm, followed by a tasting of local wines and beers. Tickets are $12.50 in advance, $15 at the door. Visit www.rocklandsfarm.com.
### Potomac REAL ESTATE

**April, 2015 Sales,**

**$949,000~$1,035,000**

In April 2015, 51 Potomac homes sold between $2,350,000-$420,000.

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<th>Address</th>
<th>Sold Price</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Lot AC</th>
<th>PostalCode</th>
<th>Subdivision</th>
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<td>$951,400</td>
<td>Detached</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>20854</td>
<td>RIVER FALLS</td>
<td>04/10/15</td>
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<td>RIVER FALLS</td>
<td>04/30/15</td>
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*Copyright 2015 RealEstate Business Intelligence. Source: MRIS as of May 15, 2015.*
Summer Fun, Summer Safety

Tips for averting summer danger.

By Marilyn Campbell

Summer can be fun, especially if you avoid the heat-related perils. With July being the hottest month of the year, you have a high risk of dehydration and heatstroke. Here are some tips for lessening summer safety risks:

1. Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water throughout the day to avoid heat-related illnesses. Try to drink 4 to 5 cups of water daily during the hot months.

2. Protect your skin: Apply sunscreen with at least SPF 30 to exposed skin before going outside. Remember to reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, even on cloudy days.

3. Dress appropriately: Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing and avoid wearing black or dark colors, as they absorb more heat.

4. Take breaks: Avoid working or exercising for extended periods in the heat. Take frequent breaks to cool down.

5. Be aware of your body: Pay attention to signs of heat exhaustion, such as dizziness, headache, nausea, and fatigue. If you experience these symptoms, seek shade or indoor cooling immediately.

6. Know the risks: Some groups are more at risk for heat-related illnesses, including infants, teens, older adults, and those with certain health conditions.

7. Insects: Consider using insect repellent containing DEET to protect against mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile virus. Apply repellent to exposed skin, but not on wounds or around eyes, mouth, and breaks in the skin.

8. Be cautious around water: If you’re planning to swim or engage in water activities, make sure to monitor the safety conditions. Public pools and beaches typically have lifeguards on duty, but always follow posted safety guidelines.

9. Watch the weather: Keep an eye on the weather forecast and adjust your plans accordingly. If there’s a storm, stay indoors and avoid outdoor activities.

10. Be prepared: Keep a small water bottle with you at all times, even when you’re not planning to exercise. This is especially important if you’re active or sweat heavily.

Always practice caution and be aware of your surroundings during the summer months so you can enjoy the season safely.
### Employment

#### Zone 5: Potomac

**Ad Deadline: Tuesday 11 a.m. • 301-778-9411**

**Engineer**

Full time building engineers wanted for office buildings in Washington DC, MD, & VA. Candidates should have working knowledge and experience with VAV controls, EMS systems, and chiller plant operations in a commercial office-building environment. Please fax resume to 301-938-2229.

### Home & Garden

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Remodeling Bathrooms, Kitchens & Basements

- Exterior & Interior Repair
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- NO $$$ DOWN!

Handyman Services Available
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Energetic gardener, Speaks French & English, Spring Cleanup, weeding, planting, edging, mulching, maintenance.

Excellent Potomac references.

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### Classified

**Zone 5: Potomac**

**Ad Deadline: Monday Noon • 301-778-9411**

#### 25 Sales & Auctions

**Real Estate Auction**

Corner Unit Commercial Condo

Alexandria, VA

801 N PSt S117

2,267 sf divided among 8 offices.

Floor to ceiling windows, 2 hydro-carbon systems, the water.

Located in mixed-use building.

Edge of Old Towne in Port Royal.

Nominal Opening Bid: $50,000

Open: 11am-2pm Fri June 12, 13 & 20 & 27 before auction.

Auctions: 5pm Wed Jun 24

Bid live from anywhere at auctionnetwork.com

800.385.0425

williamsauction.com

Bradford P White RE LIC 0225 200549

Tony Langdon AUC LIC 2907003836

Nominal Opening Bid: $50,000

Corner Unit Commercial Condo

Potomac, VA: (703) 698-0060 • MD: (301) 316-1603

Excellent Potomac references.

21 Announcements

### Home & Garden

**Ad Deadline: Monday Noon • 703-778-9411**

**Picture Perfect**

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Remodeling Bathrooms, Kitchens & Basements

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- Wood Rot, Drywall, All Flooring, Decks

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- “If it can be done, we can do it”
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Energetic gardener, Speaks French & English, Spring Cleanup, weeding, planting, edging, mulching, maintenance.

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By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Given some post-chemotherapy eating challenges I’ve experienced during the past few months, and the subsequent weight loss which has occurred, my oncologist has prescribed Dronabinol, common brand name Marinol. Dronabinol, a.k.a. THC, is “a man-made form of the active natural substance in marijuana” synthesized to stimulate my appetite. It’s been my observation over the six-plus years that I’ve been a chemotherapy patient, that weight loss is a particularly worrisome indicator. Stigma in the past, I doubt he would have even mentioned it to a patient – especially during the six-hours-per-day, three-days-a-week, heavy-duty chemotherapy often infused at the beginning. In fact, assurances were the last thing I was given. Whether I had suffered too much of late, other than the marijuana eating problem I’ve described, my oncologist was quick to this fix. No eating is no good. And even through the potential side effects: dizziness, drowsiness, confusion, feeling ‘high,’ an exaggerated sense of well being, light-headedness, nausea, vomiting or stomach pain,” don’t exactly turn me on; neither do they burn me up. I need to eat – doctor’s orders – so if marijuana pills are the ticket, then I’m ready to buy. Someone has to do it, and as a cancer patient/survivor trying to stay in the game, these pills are a much appreciated resource to help fend off an evil adversary. This is a road I have been down before – in the 70s, but that was more of a pleasure trip. This is a completely different road – and trip, and therefore one that requires thinking and treating outside of the box, if necessary. And since I don’t want to be boxed, I need to remain open to remedies and alternatives that might offer a glimpse into a future that six years ago was not assured. In fact, assurances were the last thing I was given. What I was given, as you regular readers know, was a “13-month to two-year” prognosis with a contrary admission from my oncologist: “I can treat you but I can’t cure you.” Having successfully navigated an extremely long road since February, 2009, I am still afraid for myself and fearful of my circumstances. Nevertheless, giving in is not an option. Nor am I giving up. These pills are just another addition to my ever-expanding arsenal (most recent additions: wheat grass, beta glucans, dandelion root, milk thistle). This is a dynamic time in cancer research and when one considers the conventional along with the non-conventional, there are reasons for hope and dare I say, excitement, for our respective futures.

It’s ironic to consider that back in the day, smoking marijuana was thought to possibly contribute to or even cause lung cancer and now, decades later, it is being prescribed by oncologists for their lung cancer patients to help them cope with the side effects of their treatment. When we first met my oncologist, it was mentioned that I smoked pot in the 70s and perhaps that was a cause of my current diagnosis. The doctor’s response was that he wasn’t interested in the past; he was only interested in the present/future and treating me forward. And so too have I embraced that future, not explaining a past.

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Kudzu: ‘The Vine That Ate the South’

By Carole Funger

Most people living in the Potomac area are used to a sight common along the beltway and area roadsides. That is, thick masses of coiling, dark green vines climbing all over other native trees and shrubs. This plant is known as kudzu. And like it or not, its reputation is spreading.

What is kudzu, exactly, and how did it get here? Also known as Japanese arrowroot, kudzu’s scientific name is Pueraria montana, var. lobata, a species related to the legume family. Deep green and naturally aggressive, it is a perennial vine native to East Asia and the Pacific. Its name comes from the Japanese kuzu.

Kudzu was introduced to the United States in 1876 during the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia where it was featured as an ornamental vine on the Japanese pavilion. Easy to grow and virtually maintenance free, the large-leaved plant with fragrant purple flowers captured the interest of the American public.

About a half-century later, farmers began to observe that kudzu could also be used as a cheap source of animal feed for their grazing livestock. And, as the thick vines carpeted the ground, it helped prevent soil erosion. Recognizing this, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) began importing kudzu for erosion control in the 1930s.

From about 1935 to the mid-1950s, the USDA encouraged farmers in the south to plant kudzu on their land, in some cases paying them a subsidy of $8/day. Over 1 million acres of kudzu were planted during this period, as farmers sowed their fields with the invasive vine. It didn’t take long for things to get out of hand, though, and kudzu began spreading rapidly through the southern states, prompting some people to label it “The Vine That Ate the South.”

It gobbled up other plants as it rapidly reproduced, covering hundreds of acres of land per year. Finally in the late 1950s, kudzu was recognized as the noxious weed it had become, and the Agricultural Conservation Program removed it from the list of acceptable species. In 1972, the USDA classified it as a weed.

Kudzu now grows primarily in the northeast U.S., where it is invasive in naturalized areas extending from Connecticut to Florida and as far west as Texas. Growing with alarming speed, it has become a serious threat to other native plants. Kudzu spreads by runners that root at the nodes to form new plants. According to the National Park Service, the vine grows as much as 60 feet per season, or about 1 foot per day.

By some estimates, kudzu is spreading at the rate of 150,000 acres annually. The plant is easily outpacing attempts to control it either by herbicides or mowing, or a combination of both. Left unimpeded, the large-leaved vine easily blankets other species, plunging them into deep shade and depriving them of light. Coiling around tree trunks and other woody plants, it sometimes uproots them entirely as it smothers the landscape.

Yet, across the world, kudzu has had many uses, going back centuries in time. The root, which can grow up to the size of a human being, has been an integral part of traditional Chinese medicine for centuries, where it is known as ge gan. Modern medicine also recognizes the kudzu root as a good source of isoflavones, which have shown promise in treating migraines and cluster headaches.

Still others insist the vine has value in the landscape, where it aerates the soil with its deep taproots that act as pipelines for mineral flows to subsoil to topsoil. And, it continues to help with erosion.

Kudzu blooms from the end of July through December, sending forth purple flowers with a scent reminiscent of grapes. Perhaps that’s why there are so many recipes for kudzu jelly. Some admirers of the vine swear its flowers can detoxify the liver and provide an effective hangover cure.

In Asia, kudzu leaves have been used for centuries to make herbal teas and tinctures. And in Japan, the vine’s root is often substituted for cornstarch.

Lastly, there is kudzu art. Regina Hines, a textile artist, has been working with the woody plant for years. Weaving the vines into baskets, jewelry and other vessels, she embellishes her art with crystals, beads and silver. Her stunning work has been featured in galleries, museums and art centers across the country.

A word of warning: Before you go out foraging along the roadside for kudzu for medicines, tea, jelly or art, first make sure that it hasn’t been sprayed with herbicides.

Role of Potomac Community Village

To the Editor:

Thank you very much for your coverage in the May 27 issue of Potomac Community Village’s birthday party on May 21. However, your article said we had the pleasure of having Congressman John Delaney as our speaker that evening. We did not. Instead, we heard from Jack Reney, chief of Montgomery County’s Aging and Disability Services unit, who spoke on the predicted significant increase in the number of age 65 and up county residents over the next 30 years, a huge increase in the number of over 100s in that same time period, and how the county is responding to this demographic challenge.

Potomac Community Village (PCV) was also very pleased to have honored five Potomac businesses that evening (as shown in the photo you published) for their support of PCV’s mission to enable Potomac residents to remain in their homes as they age. PCV is partnering with still another Potomac business on Wednesday, June 10, when Tally Ho Restaurant will donate to PCV 20 percent of what is spent from 5-9 p.m. that evening by PCV’s members and friends, whether dine-in, take-out or delivery. We invite the entire community to show their support of our mission by eating dinner with us that evening.

Potomac Community Village (PCV) is a volunteer nonprofit group that provides social, educational and wellness activities, enabling members to be vibrant, contributing members of our community. We link members with neighbors who assist with transportation, computer assistance, simple home repairs and other services. More information about us can be found at www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org. PCV is part of a nationwide movement of more than 400 Villages, with more than 40 in the Washington, D.C. area.

Sheila Moldover
Communications Chair
Potomac Community Village

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