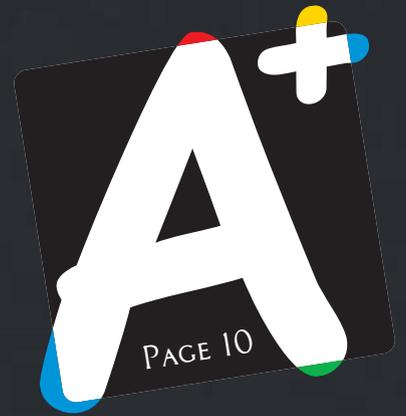


Potomac ALMANAC



HOLIDAY
ENTERTAINMENT AND
GIFT GUIDE
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Bringing Joy

Water, Silt and
A Canal-Full of Issues

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So Many Gifts,
And So Close

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Helping Others
Deal with Loss

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Escorted by the Cabin John Volunteer Fire Department, Santa made his annual rounds through area neighborhoods, collecting toys for the National Center for Children and Families, the U.S. Marines Toys for Tots and the Children's National Medical Center.

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

So Many Gifts, And So Close

Exploring what's available in the shops at Potomac Woods Plaza and Park Potomac.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

Not to bring on a Potomac panic, but soon all holiday shopping must be finished. This year, instead of driving to Montgomery or Tysons Corner malls — avoid the hassle of jockeying for a parking place, the frustration of searching through boring department stores and make it easy on yourself. Hustle to two often-forgotten shopping centers located near the Seven Locks and Montrose Road (just off I-270) intersection. No jostling through crowds, waiting in lines, or driving an hour for the same-old gifts. The best news: Local store owners will give lots of help locating that one-of-a kind perfect present.

In addition, both Potomac Woods Plaza and Park Potomac offer restaurants where, because you saved so much time finding your gifts, you can enjoy a lunch, a cocktail and appetizer or a delectable meal. Harris Teeter is also located in Park Potomac for grocery needs.

IF SHOPPING for the women in your life, head to the contemporary Park Potomac fashion boutique, Emily Grace which provides trendsetting styles and accessories. All the latest designers such as Vince, Diane Von Furstenberg, Alice and Olivia, AG Denim, James Denim, Bobi Tees, Splendid and Velvet can be found at this boutique. Best of all, Emily Grace will provide a personal shopper for styling tips, closet consultations and creating outfits.

“We have fabulous gifts for women of all ages,” said sales consultant Kim Levine. “Come to Emily Grace to shop for the holidays before our unique present supply gets low. We get new things in every day — but they often fly off our shelves.”

Levine has worked at the store for many years and is an expert in helping to find just the right gift. “We carry everything from gorgeous jewelry by local designer Lori



An assortment of wine at The Bottle Shop.



Brian Low displays the Christmas Prosecco at The Bottle Shop.



Pair a red wine with some chocolates for the perfect gift.

Albert to jeans, jackets, sweaters, hats and gloves. Our sales team provides excellent advice at pulling together the perfect outfit for your occasion,” she said. Check this store out at www.shopemilygrace.com.

NEXT HEAD UP the hill to the “neighborhood wine and beer shop.” The Bottle Shop, located in the Potomac Woods Plaza, just adjacent to Park Potomac, offers quality, ambiance and education. Try to come on Thursday from 5-8 p.m. for the Craft Beer Tasting or on Friday from 5-8 p.m. for a wine tasting. Brian Low or one of the other knowledgeable employees will help pair your wines with your holiday menus or select that perfect wine or beer for a hostess

gift.

The Bottle Shop marks their wines with the Wine Spectator wine ratings and also sells their beers and ales as individuals so you can create a gift of six different craft brews for that beer lover in the family. Take them a Flying Dog, Mad Scientist or, believe it or not — a Ben and Jerry’s Chocolate Cooking Dough Ale. For Christmas, try the St. Bernardus Christmas Ale or a Christmas Prosecco (paired with their specialty chocolates) makes a great gift too. Their website is www.mybottleshop.net.

NEED A SPECIAL gift for your daughter, granddaughter, niece or friend — or for yourself? Or is your pre-teen attending a bar/bat mitzvah or cruising this winter or spring vacation? On Cloud 9 is a one-stop shopping destination for party dresses, casual wear, swimsuits, pj’s and hard-to-find special gifts. They carry dresses for infants to adults.

This is the place to look to discover lots of stocking stuffers including emojis, pillows, rhinestone bling stickers, and stuffed animals. Sales consultant Marcy Steffes said, “We are right on top of the latest trend and we cater to every girl’s whim.”

Owned by Carol Gowling, the store has long been a primary destination for Potomac moms and their daughters.

Learn more about this fantastic store at www.shoponcloud9.biz.

ANOTHER SHOPPING destination has only been in the Potomac Woods Plaza for a little over a year. Ibhana Boutique caters to women of all ages and sizes 2 – 20.

Owner Meena Tharmaratnam said, “I created the store in 2002 when I returned from my native India with 100 pashmina shawls. It was the year the pashmina became popular in America. I sold all 100 in the first week, and one night I sat and designed my business card and launched Ibhana a few months later.”

Initially, she sold her clothing from her home, then at boutique fairs and now has several storefronts. Ibhana offers clothing, separates, dresses, pants, tunics, raincoats, and fleecewear for the modern woman looking to create a flair and ease of style.

Tharmaratnam carries both Canadian and American lines including Joseph Ribkoff, IC, Samuel Dong, Tianello and Papillon Blanc.

Tharmaratnam is generous with her time and her store.

She designs scarves for corporate and non-profit organizations to help them with their fundraising and branding. She said, “Over 40 commissioned scarves have been

SEE EXPLORING, PAGE 6



The purses and wallets from Ibhana.



The window at Ibhana provides a look into the store.



A cape and necklace from Ibhana.

PHOTOS BY DEBORAH STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



Jeans and All at On Cloud 9.



Emojis at On Cloud 9.

Water, Silt and a Canal-Full of Issues

Brandt updates WMCCA on C&O National Historic Park.

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
THE ALMANAC

Members of the West Montgomery County Citizens Association got a verbal tour along the C&O Canal from Kevin Brandt, superintendent of the C&O National Historical Park, Wednesday.

Speaking at the WMCCA meeting Dec. 14, Brandt updated the group on work along the canal starting at mile marker zero in Georgetown and continuing upriver.

"There is a ton of stuff going on starting in Georgetown and moving upstream," Brandt said. "About two years ago we started getting calls for the Georgetown Business Improvement District about the canal boat just sitting there."

Conversations between the business district and Brandt's office sharing ideas about improving the look and usage of the canal have been ongoing. Georgetown residents even formed a nonprofit group, Georgetown Heritage, to work with the park seeking grants for the improvements both felt necessary.

To get water back into the lower part of the canal, Locks 3 and 4 will be reconstructed.

Unfortunately, Brandt said, when beginning the reconstruction of Lock 3 a contami-



Kevin Brandt, superintendent of C & O National Historical Park, talks with Susanne Lee and Carol Van Dam Falk, president of the West Montgomery County Citizens Association after the group's meeting Dec. 14.

nant was found in the soil and that needs to be removed. So, the lock is being taken apart stone by stone in order to get to the contaminated soil and mitigate the problem. It will then be reconstructed.

Often, he noted, one thing leads to another along the canal, but funding is in place and the two locks are expected to be finished in the early summer of 2018.

"It's exciting to think about doing programs down there," Brandt said.

As Brandt's report got closer to the sections of the canal and towpath the WMCCA members use most often, he got more questions from those at the meeting.

Brandt told about the Locks 5 Through 22 Project that he expected to be funded this year but which has been held up because, rather than pass a new budget, Congress continues to fund existing programs through Continuing Resolution. That means, Brandt said, the project which includes a number of improvements along the canal in Montgomery County is on hold.

Lock 5 is just above Little Falls, below Glen Echo Park. Lock 22 is Pennyfield Lock, off River Road. The distance between the two is roughly 15 miles.

"We would like to have flowing water along this stretch," Brandt said, "The allu-

vial fans are so significant we can't get water [to flow]."

The discussion of silt in the water prompted Glen Hills resident Ken Bower to ask about the plan Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission proposed to move its mid-river water intake farther into the Potomac.

"Our objection is they [WSSC] keep asking to go farther and deeper," Carol Van Dam Falk, WMCCA president, said. "But that does not address the problem."

They need to be reforested in order to reduce erosion.

Brandt said the problem is the streams leading into the river above the current intake valve.

"In all our discussions of [the midriver intake] we've constantly pushed [WSSC] to fix the silt problem from Watts Branch," Brandt said, "but we have no authority."

Brandt said the midriver channel intake is still in the review process. He said the National Park Service looks at specific impacts the project will have on the canal and makes recommendations.

"There are some significant impacts of the plan," he said.

Other concerns expressed by those in attendance at the meeting were the proposed catering facility which will be built behind Anglers Inn, the deer population along the canal, traffic and parking along MacArthur Blvd. near Angler's Inn and the loss of trees caused by the Emerald Ash Borer.

Being 184.5 miles long, The C&O National Historical Park gives Brandt and the communities it serves a lot of concerns, but also provides pleasure to approximately 3,150,000 people annually according to the National Park Service website.

Mom and Daughters Launch Sonoran Rose in Potomac

Boutique shop opened last month.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

Potomac is welcoming Sonoran Rose — a new women's boutique loaded with clothing, jewelry, accessories, home décor and gift items — to the retail space previously occupied by Flora's Nest. The boutique's creators are Isabel Chiotti and her daughters Alessandra and Cristina of Bethesda. "We are a team of fashion-forward, trend-setting ladies with a passion for sharing our love of style and beauty," said Isabel Chiotti.

The picturesque bungalow is just a few miles north of Potomac Village on River Road. This is the first brick and mortar store for Sonoran Rose; previously they have shown their wares at holiday boutique shows and festivals, at shopping events in private homes and on-line. The specialty



Alessandra Chiotti's "Quirky Dog Artwork" decorates the walls of Sonoran Rose.

shop opened its doors on Nov. 10 with merchandise from local and U.S. vendors and also many international items from Argentina, Great Brittan, France, South Africa, Turkey and Canada.

Potomac's Susie Redmond has been shop-

ping at Sonoran Rose since it opened. "It's a country boutique that gives me such a warm feeling," she said.

Isabel Chiotti explains how they found this location: "My daughters and I had been looking for the perfect site for our shop but could not find anything that fit our vision. Driving by one day, I noticed that the Flora's space was now available — and we were fortunate to be in the right place at the right time. I was leaving to go hiking in Sedona, Ariz. — my favorite place in the world — and when I returned we worked out the details, and here we are. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to get to know our customers better, to offer personal shopping services and to provide exceptional, one-of-a-kind items that have previously not been found in our area."

Alessandra Chiotti is an artist who painted the many whimsical animal portraits that decorate the walls of the boutique. Her business is called Quirky Dog Artwork — and she is available to paint that custom por-



Isabel and Cristina Chiotti created Sonoran Rose.

SEE MOM AND DAUGHTERS, PAGE 6

OPINION

Blessings in a Special Season

BY THE REV. MARK MICHAEL
RECTOR, ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

I fumbled in my wallet for a bill, my fingers a little numb from the frosty air. The man ringing the bell flashed me a smile and waited patiently for me to drop it into the red kettle. "God bless you, my friend," he said. I thanked him for what he was doing, grateful he'd given me the chance to bless someone else in this special season.

This is my first Christmas in Potomac. It's only been a few weeks since my family and I moved here from Virginia so I could begin serving as the pastor of Saint Francis Church in the middle of the village. But like many of you, I've been dropping money in those kettles for years. It was a comforting sight to see the ringer and the kettle outside the Giant last Saturday. "The Salvation Army," I thought to myself, "they're here, too. They make Christmas feel a little more like Christmas, and this town feel a little more like home."

I shouldn't have been surprised to see the Salvation Army here in Potomac, as the charity operates 25,000 kettle stations around the country each year, and thousands more in cities and towns all around the world. They've been ringing bells and people have been tossing change in those red pots since 1891, when a local leader in San Francisco decided to hang out a crab pot by the dock to collect change to give a few dozen poor men a Christmas dinner.

Over \$144 million were collected last year in those kettles, with millions more given online. The funds are used to support Christmastime gifts and meals for 4.5 million families, as well as other programs throughout the year. There are millions of volunteer bell ringers, who serve in shifts at this busiest time of the year, to collect support for so many vulnerable people.

As I drove away, I regretted not having asked the man with the broad smile why he had taken a turn at the kettle. He was clearly enjoying himself, swaying a bit to the music coming through the loudspeakers, waving to little kids in shopping carts. Like everybody else, he surely had dozens of other things he could have been doing on a Saturday afternoon in mid-December. But here he was, helping people bless the poor. Maybe he'd been through hard times once, and someone had reached out to extend him a hand up. Maybe he just found joy and fulfillment in being part of something so valuable and important, "a bit of the Christmas spirit."

Maybe, too, it was an expression of his faith. Salvation Army bell-ringers come from all walks of life and profess many faiths, I'm sure. But the army itself is an unashamedly religious organization, a church founded to serve people who sadly didn't feel at home in other churches: the destitute and forgotten. There's still a bit of military panache about the outfit: brass braids, snappy salutes and the like. But

the organization exists to wage a spiritual battle, a battle against hunger and indifference, a battle for light over darkness, for love and hope and joy. It relies on God's help even more profoundly than the dollars we fish out of our wallets to make a real difference in the lives of the people it serves.

It's no accident, either, that this a Christmastime project, sometimes still accompanied by old-fashioned carols played by those stunning brass bands. For Christians, Christmas is above all the time that God chose to bless the world by sending His only Son. He came as a poor man, a child born in a stable, part of a family that was dependent on the makeshift hospitality of others. The angels who sang the night of His birth proclaimed that they came bearing good tidings for all people, that the One who was coming would bring peace on earth and goodwill to all.

He is a gift and the bringer of gifts, this baby born for us in Bethlehem. And nothing imitates His work quite so well as blessing someone who really needs a sign of love, a reminder that their life has value, that someone else cares enough to make sure they have something to eat and a warm place to sleep.

Everybody's always reminding us how many shopping days are left until Christmas. But don't forget how many days remain at this blessed season, to share a little hope and joy. Maybe, down in front of the Giant, he's still ringing that bell.

IN THE SOUND OF THE BELLS

Berliner Urges Regional Cooperation

On Metrorail and economic competitiveness.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Board of Directors Chairman Roger Berliner urged area leaders to "replace competition with cooperation and collaboration" on issues like restoring the Metrorail system and strengthening the region's economic competitiveness. He addressed an audience of 200 of the area's top elected officials and business, civic, and non-profit leaders at the COG annual membership meeting at the Washington Marriott at Metro Center recently.

BY ROGER BERLINER
PRESIDENT, COUNTY COUNCIL

Ladies and gentlemen, regional leaders all, thank you for joining us today. Before reflecting on our progress this year, and how we can continue to advance our priorities in 2017, I wanted to share a few thoughts about the current state of affairs and what it means for our work.

I am not trying to be dramatic when I say to you that I truly believe this is a watershed moment for our region. We are being tested and it is by no means an easy test. And it is one of those pass/fail tests. There is no in-between. We either rise to the occasion or our legacy will be failure. Many are either skeptical or cynical or both when it comes to judging our capacity to put the region's needs ahead of parochial demands.

We must prove them wrong. Metro is us. Not anyone else. We must look



in the mirror and know that our region is collectively responsible for Metro's current state of affairs, and more importantly, its future. Time and time again, regional leaders sacrificed the future in order to

avoid short term pain. And here we are. As is often said, insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

There's a saying: Be the kind of leader that you would like to follow. Paul Wiedefeld is that kind of leader. No, even in the holiday spirit, he doesn't walk on water. But Paul Wiedefeld has a clear vision unclouded by parochial demands and, after just one year, an already impressive track record of taking on every obstacle that stands in the way of restoring this system. We cannot fail to take advantage of his leadership.

Safety comes first. We didn't need this week's decoupling event to remind us that it is priority 1, 2, and 3. But if this system belongs to the region, then the region, not the federal government, has to have the capacity to ensure safe operations. What we have had in place until now was not capable of achieving

that result. With COG playing a very significant role, we should be poised to pass legislation in the District, Maryland, and Virginia creating a real Metrorail Safety Commission that will have both authority and the responsibility to ensure that safety remains the highest priority.

If we let the GM do what must be done, we will be in a better position to address Metro's long term funding needs, which we must do. Our goal this past year has been to lay the foundation for our region to coalesce around a responsible plan that we can move forward with in time for the 2018 legislative sessions.

In furtherance of that goal, after a forum we hosted of leading transit operators, we at COG have insisted that Metro adopt metrics for safety, reliability, customer satisfaction, and fiscal management. We understand that accountability is a predicate to increased financial support, and so does WMATA.

We also need the federal government to recognize its own responsibility, both for where we are and where we need to go. We need the federal government to be a true partner, not an overlord.

As we move forward, we will need to come together. COG is doing its part to advance that outcome. We have engaged the region's lead-

COMMENTARY

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SEE URGING REGIONAL, PAGE 11

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Exploring What's Available in Nearby Shops

FROM PAGE 2

designed to date for prestigious organizations like The Washington Performing Arts Society for their 40th Anniversary, Adventist Healthcare, American Lung Association (a scarf and tie), the MMMF Fund (for their scholarship program), The Wellness Community (to support their mission of education and hope for cancer survivors), Charity Works, National Women's Business Center (for their leadership conference), the Pierians (promoting a love and learning of art), etc."

She also hosts fashion shows and fundraising events in the Ibhana store. For more information about Ibhana, go to www.ibhanaboutique.com.

AFTER SHOPPING, head to Founding Farmers, Sugo, Amici Miei, Elevation Burger, Zoe's, Grand Fusion or the Wine Harvest for a meal.



Bracelets at Emily Grace.



Gloves and scarves at Emily Grace.



Tees, hats, vests, and scarves at Emily Grace.



Scarves at Emily Grace.

PHOTOS BY DEBORAH STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

Mom and Daughters Launch Sonoran Rose in Potomac

FROM PAGE 3

trait of a beloved pet. Her work can be seen at www.quirkydogartwork.com. "We are considering turning the upstairs of this property into an art gallery for local artists to display their paintings," said her sister Cristina.

The store displays French soaps, South African towels and bags, handbags from Argentina and Canada, scarves, trendy denim, Zkano socks from Alabama, candles from Love Nature NYC, Hand in Hand Charitable soaps and candles, soaps made with favorite wines from the Napa Soap Company, Scamp's Toffee from Pennsylvania, trays from Sweden and jewelry created by Alessandra and Isabel as well as other jewelry created by local designers. They also offer a range of original gifts — and even carry the gift for puppies — creative doggie cookies.

Potomac's Melinda Richardson said,

"Flora's couldn't have found a nicer replacement. I used to be a Flora's Fanatic — and now I love coming here. I love their relaxed yet stylish clothes."

"What began as a mother's dream to start her own boutique slowly evolved into Sonoran Rose," said Isabel Chiotti. "Our joint passion for fashion, combined with Isabel's love of retail and Alessandra and Cristina's creative talents, inspired Sonoran Rose."

"We started Sonoran Rose with the mission of bringing women an easy and unique shopping experience. We believe in individuality and that it is possible to dress comfortably and easily without sacrificing style or quality. The Sonoran Rose woman is a confident, easy-going gal with an eco-conscious and fashion savvy mind. Our aesthetic is a clean, minimalist look with easy and modern silhouettes."

Sonoran Rose is open Monday through



Some of the items for sale at Sonoran Rose.

Saturday from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. and on Sunday from 12-5 p.m., or visit www.sonoran-rose.com.

Soaps and candles can be stocking stuffers and hostess gifts.



PHOTOS BY DEBORAH STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



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Find Their Way
Since 2001

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way.
2. not appreciated or understood.
3. no longer owned or known

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www.lostdogandcatrescue.org

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Email community entertainment events to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com.

DEC. 6-JAN. 7

Waverly Street Gallery Holiday Show. At Waverly Street Gallery, 4600 East-West Highway. Mix of small and large pieces including ceramics, glass, photography, multi media, prints, jewelry, collage, and sculpture. Opening night reception: December 9, 5-9 p.m. 301-951-9441

DEC. 16-JAN. 3

Jingle Bowl Partnership with Feeding America. At Bowlmor Bethesda, 5353 Westbard Ave. \$1 from every purchase of a select food and drink item will go to Feeding America. Bowlmor expects to reach up to \$50,000 worth of donation nationwide, doubling the company's efforts from 2015. www.jingle-bowl.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 16-SUNDAY/JAN. 1

WRAP Sober Ride Program. 10 p.m.-6 a.m. each evening as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period. Washington-metropolitan area residents celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Holiday Show

Waverly Street Gallery Holiday Show, through Jan. 7, features a mix of small and large pieces including ceramics, glass, photography, multi media, prints, jewelry, collage, and sculpture. Waverly Street Gallery, 4600 East-West Highway. The opening night reception is Friday, Dec. 9, 5-9 p.m. 301-951-9441

cost (up to \$ 30 fare), safe way home. (AT&T wireless users can dial #WRAP for the same service.)

THROUGH DEC. 23

Christmas at Pemberley. A rolling world premiere of Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon's "Pride & Prejudice" sequel. Round House Theatre, 4545 East-West Highway. Tickets start at \$30. RoundHouseTheatre.org or 240-644-1100.

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY/DEC. 21-23

Moscow Ballet's Russian Nutcracker. 8 p.m. at The Music Center at Strathmore Concert Hall, 5301 Tuckerman Lane. CityDance students perform in Moscow Ballet's Russian Nutcracker. Visit www.strathmore.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 24-25

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services. Various times at St. James' Episcopal Church, 11815 Seven Locks Road

❖ Saturday, Christmas Eve:
5 p.m.: Family-friendly Christmas Eve service with Christmas Pageant and Eucharist
7:30 p.m.: Candlelight and Festival Service with Holy Eucharist; music by Brass Traditions

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY/DEC. 21-23

Moscow Ballet's Russian Nutcracker. 8 p.m. at The Music Center at Strathmore Concert Hall, 5301 Tuckerman Lane. CityDance students perform in Moscow Ballet's Russian Nutcracker. Visit www.strathmore.org.

THURSDAY/DEC. 22

Bob Stout Concert. 7-11 p.m. at Margery's Lounge at Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road. Sing along or dance the night away. 301-983-8838 or popovers.com

DECEMBER 27-30

Recreation Centers Pool Hours. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Potomac Community Recreation Center, 11315 Falls Road, and North Potomac Community Recreation Center, 13850 Travilah Road, will have modified schedules, closing at 3 p.m. on the eves of the holidays.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 28

Potomac Movie Day. 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. Join us for a showing of "Guardians of the Galaxy" (2014; PG-13) in honor of Montgomery County Public Library's upcoming comic convention "MoComCon." Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/ or 240-777-0690

Teen Writers Club. 6-8 p.m. at the Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive. Author Neal Gillen will facilitate writing fiction, non-fiction, drama, poetry, and more in a fun, relaxed atmosphere. No previous writing experience needed. We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month. Grades 6-12, free. www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/ or 240-777-0690

Tom Saputo. 7-10:30 p.m. at Margery's Lounge at Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road. He brings the piano to life. 301-983-8838 or popovers.com

THURSDAY/DEC. 29

Bob Stout Concert. 7-11 p.m. at

10:15 p.m.: Pre-service Music of Carols and Anthems

10:30 p.m.: Candlelight and Festival Service with Holy Eucharist; Music by St. James' Singers, Ringers and Brass Traditions

❖ Sunday, Christmas Day:
10:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist with organ and carols
Call 301-762-8040, visit www.stjamespotomac.org, or email office@stjamespotomac.org

THROUGH JAN. 1

Brookside's Garden of Lights. Various times at 1800 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton. There will be more than one million colorful lights shaped into hand-crafted, original art forms of flowers, animals and other natural elements. The gardens will be open every night through Jan. 1, except for Dec. 24 and 25. Admission is \$25 per car/van Sunday-Thursday and \$30 per car/van Friday-Saturday. www.montgomeryparks.org/

DEC. 26-JAN. 2

Winter Break Camp. 1-4 p.m. Monday-Friday at My Gym Potomac, 11325 Seven Locks Road. Three hours of nonstop fun at My Gym including themed games, crafts, gymnastics, sports and snack. \$40 members, \$45 non-members. potomac@mygym.com 301-983-5300

Margery's Lounge at Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road. Sing along or dance the night away. 301-983-8838 or popovers.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 30

Tom Saputo. 7-10:30 p.m. at Margery's Lounge at Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road. He brings the piano to life. 301-983-8838 or popovers.com

SUNDAY/JAN. 8

Waltz Dance Featuring Audacious. 2:45 p.m. in the Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambro, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. www.WaltzTimeDances.org or 301-634-2222

SATURDAY/JAN. 14

River Clean Up. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Fletcher's Cove, 4940 Canal Road, Washington, D.C. The Potomac Conservancy is looking for volunteers to help kick off 2017 by honoring Martin Luther King Jr. with a day of service along the river. potomac.org/

MONDAY/JAN. 16

MLK Day of Service Volunteer Fair. 1-3 p.m. at Bethesda North Marriott Conference Center, 5701 Marinelli Road. Planned projects include packaging food for the hungry, creating blankets for hospice, and cutting patterns to create shoes for children in Uganda. Most, if not all, will be pre-approved for Student Service Learning hours. 301-822-9200

THURSDAY/JAN. 19

55 and Older Basketball. 9:30 a.m.-noon at the North Potomac Recreation Center 13850 Travilah Road. This is pick-up basketball, not a league, come as often as possible. 240-773-4800

An Acoustic Evening with Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt. 8 p.m. at the Strathmore, 5301 Tuckerman Lane. \$55-95 301-0581-5199

CALENDAR

Email community entertainment events to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

2016 Inaugural Video Art Exhibition. 5-7 p.m. at Glen Echo Photoworks Gallery, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Photoworks showcases a group of female visual artists who use video to reveal the personal, the intimate and the artistic. Desires, dreams and fears are all visually explored in Photoworks' Inaugural Video Competition and Exhibition, curated by Na'ama Batya Lewin. Free. Visit www.glenechophotoworks.org for more.

Winter Lights Festival. Through Dec. 31, Sunday-Thursday, 6-9 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 6-10 p.m. at Seneca Creek Park, 11950 Clopper Road, Gaithersburg. Winter Lights is a 3.5-mile drive through a holiday light show at Seneca Creek Park with more than 360 illuminated displays. Additional events include Wine Under the Lights, Run Under the Lights, Leashes 'n' Lights, and, S'More Lights & Trolley Rides. Visit www.gaithersburgmd.gov/leisure/special-events/winter-lights-festival.

Jingle Bowl Partnership with Feeding America. Through Jan. 3 at Bowlmor Bethesda, 5353 Westbard Ave. \$1 from every purchase of a select food and drink item will go to Feeding America. Bowlmor expects to reach up to \$50,000 worth of donation nationwide, doubling the company's efforts from 2015. www.jingle-bowl.com

Bethesda Film Fest. Deadline for submissions Jan. 4. Filmmakers whose films are selected will receive an honorarium of \$500. Young filmmakers will receive a \$250 honorarium. The film festival is sponsored by the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District. www.bethesda.org/bethesda/bethesda-film-fest-application bomalley@bethesda.org.

"Dialogue: A Visual

Conversation." Through Jan. 5. Gallery hours at the Dennis and Phillip Ratner Museum, 10001 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda. "A Visual Conversation" is a collection of visual arts - paintings, photographs, digital images and more - resulting from an unusual collaboration between professional artists in the Washington area, and artists receiving mental health treatment from Cornerstone Montgomery. Free. Visit www.Personalvisionsgallery.org.

Waverly Street Gallery Holiday Show. Through Jan. 7 at Waverly Street Gallery, 4600 East-West Highway. Mix of small and large pieces including ceramics, glass, photography, multi media, prints, jewelry, collage, and sculpture. Opening night reception: December 9, 5-9 p.m. 301-951-9441

Club Friday. Through March 17, 7-9 p.m. at Potomac Community Recreation Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac. Children grades 3-6 are invited to participate in games, crafts, movies, sports and more. Membership fee is \$88. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec.

Potomac Games Group. Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. at Potomac Community Recreation Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac. The world is in the midst of a Golden Age of new board and card games for players of all ages. Free. Contact event host Randy Hoffman at 412-983-5411 or wrandyhoffman@gmail.com for more.

CAMPS, CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

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; \$10 per child. Visit www.glenechopark.org/saturday-art-explorers for more.

Ceramic Classes. Various dates and times. VisArts, 155 Gibbs St, Rockville. An opportunity to try the new ceramic workshops. Visit www.visartsatrockville.org/ceramics for a list of class dates, times.

LET'S TALK Real Estate



by Michael Matese

Real Estate As An Investment

Real estate is a cash generating asset that can only appreciate with time, given proper care and today's market is a good time to think about investing. Real estate is like gold or silver; it appreciates in value, but since it is a tangible asset, it doesn't function like a bond or a stock that can lose value in a heartbeat. There are three main forms of return on investment with real estate: appreciation, cash flow and return on taxes. Each of these things should be considered before you decide to become a real estate investor and a Realtor® can help you with these decisions.

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- **Return on taxes** - many investors in the higher tax brackets are less concerned with the cash flow and tend to focus more on the tax advantages an investment property can provide or your home's purposes, and reach for the sky(light)!

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—John Wooden



Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

IN OCTOBER 2016, 37 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$3,775,000-\$410,000.

October, 2016 Sales, \$657,000~\$825,000



4 9021 Paddock Lane — \$737,000

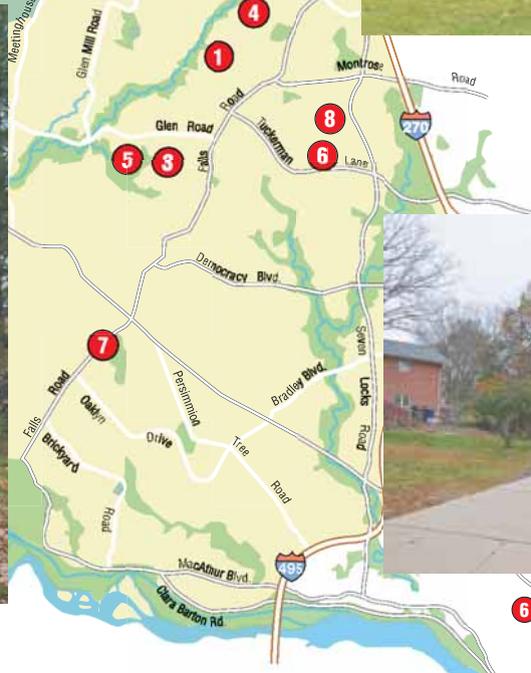
2 10608 Farmbrooke Lane — \$820,000



8 11819 Kim Place — \$657,000



3 9805 Wilden Lane — \$770,000



6 11601 Georgetowne Court — \$700,000



7 9621 Falls Road — \$665,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 9460 COPENHAVER DR	5	3	1	ROCKVILLE	\$825,000	Detached	0.27	20854	COPENHAVER	10/21/16
2 10608 FARMBROOKE LN	4	2	1	POTOMAC	\$820,000	Detached	0.22	20854	PINEY GLEN VILLAGE	10/27/16
3 9805 WILDEN LN	5	3	1	ROCKVILLE	\$770,000	Detached	0.23	20854	BEDFORDSHIRE	10/20/16
4 9021 PADDOCK LN	4	2	1	POTOMAC	\$737,000	Detached	0.24	20854	POTOMAC COMMONS	10/27/16
5 11417 BEECHGROVE LN	4	4	0	ROCKVILLE	\$710,000	Detached	0.26	20854	BEDFORDSHIRE	10/19/16
6 11601 GEORGETOWNE CT	5	2	1	POTOMAC	\$700,000	Detached	0.27	20854	REGENCY ESTATES	10/17/16
7 9621 FALLS RD	3	1	0	POTOMAC	\$665,000	Detached	0.23	20854	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	10/11/16
8 11819 KIM PL	4	3	0	POTOMAC	\$657,000	Detached	0.53	20854	REGENCY ESTATES	10/03/16

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Congratulations

Hoover Middle School artists who entered this year's national PTA Reflections art contest were congratulated at a school award ceremony Dec. 16. Potomac Almanac writer Colleen Healy served as literature judge this year, along with painter Yolanda Prinsloo for visual arts, and photographer Dan Gross for photography and film. Dance and music composition entries were also sent on to the county level of judging.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to assist sexual assault, domestic violence victims, and their families through the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP) of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. Interviews are currently being conducted for a December 2016 training session. 240-777-1355 or www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vasap.

DONATE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Donations are being accepted for InterPLAY, a nonprofit organization of adult musicians who have cognitive disabilities. They are mentored by professional and amateur musicians, high school seniors, and others. The orchestra performs year-round at Strathmore (check www.interplayOrchestra.org). Whitman High School junior Lucas Polack is in charge of this project, and he is in need of guitars, violas, cellos, basses, flutes, clarinets, marimbas, electronic keyboards and percussion instruments. However, all donations are greatly appreciated. Contact lucasmusicaldrive@gmail.com or 240-506-4390.

LATE DECEMBER

New traffic pattern on Little Falls Parkway at Capital Crescent

Trail. Later this month, parks staff will implement a new traffic pattern to improve safety at and near the Bethesda intersection of Little Falls Parkway and the Capital Crescent Trail. Specifically, vehicular traffic on Little Falls Parkway will merge from two lanes to one in each direction, the speed limit will be reduced from 35 to 25, and additional signs alerting motorists of pedestrians and bicyclists will be installed. www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/capital-crescent-trail/

FRIDAY/DEC. 30

Deadline to Serve on County

Boards. Montgomery County's Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board is seeking applicants to fill two resident vacancies. The 19-member Board represents the residential and business communities of Bethesda, Cabin John, Chevy Chase, Friendship Heights, Garrett Park, Glen Echo, North Bethesda, Potomac and Rockville. The Board advises the Director of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, the County Executive, and the County Council on community needs and priorities such as transportation, human services, environmental, public safety, and other issues of local importance.



PHOTO BY SHEILA MOLDNER

An International Life

Grand (Randy) Kurkjian, a consultant to developing nations for more than 30 years, including two years as Peace Corps country director in Yemen, spoke on "My Contributions to My Adopted Country" at a Potomac Community Village event at the Potomac Library on Dec. 6. Sitting next to Kurkjian is PCV Vice President Jill Phillips.

SCHOOL NOTES

Email announcements to almanac@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos are welcome.

Hannah Chenok, a graduate of Walt Whitman High School, and **Lauren Rosenbauer**, a graduate of Winston Churchill High School, have been inducted into the national Phi Eta Sigma honor society this year at Colgate University.

Mohit Bisbey of Potomac, a seventh grade student at Randolph-Macon Academy Middle School, has earned a spot

on the principal's list for the first academic quarter of the 2016-17 school year.

St. Andrew's Episcopal School quizbowl team in Potomac finished first at Mustang Invitational in early December. The team qualified for the National Scholastic Championship on June 10 and 11 in Chicago, where St. Andrew's Episcopal School quizbowlers would compete against more than 90 other high school teams from around the country and the world.

The "Suite-Life": In-law Spaces Are Growing In Popularity



As the number of multi-generational households continues to rise, in-law suites provide the perfect living space for an aging parent or other relative. They offer all of the independence of living alone but with the luxury of having loved ones nearby. In-law suites typically include: a bedroom, bathroom, living area, and kitchenette and usually have a separate entrance.

There are many options for finding space to incorporate an in-law suite into a single-family home. Some of the most popular are redoing the basement or lower level, building an addition or bump out or adding a separate structure. In addition to the convenience they can provide for your family, in-law suites can also be great in terms of resale value.

Keeping accessibility in mind is key to building a functional space. Including features such as roll out drawers and task lighting in the kitchen, and curb-less showers and grab bars in the bathroom are important considerations. With the variety of options available today, accessible features not only provide functionality but beauty as well.



Russ Glickman, founder of Glickman Design Build, is a Master Certified Remodeler and Certified Aging in Place Specialist. The award-winning Glickman Design Build team has completed thousands of general remodeling and accessible design projects in the Metro DC area and is passionate about the work they do. Their work has been featured in a variety of publications. Visit GlickmanDesignBuild.com or call 301.444.4663 to learn more.

Our best wishes for the Holidays with family and friends...

...come for Afternoon Tea and Talk Tuesday, Dec. 27, 3- 4:30

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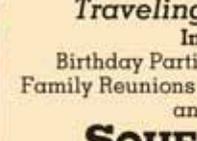






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1/4/2017.....Wellbeing, Renewal, Resolutions

1/11/2017.....HomeLifeStyle

1/18/2017.....A+ Camps & Schools

1/25/2017.....Community Guide

1/25/2017.....Winter Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment; Valentine's Preview

FEBRUARY

2/1/2017.....Valentine's Dining & Gifts I

2/1/2017.....Wellbeing - National Children's Dental Health Month

2/8/2017.....HomeLifeStyle

2/8/2017.....Valentine's Dining & Gifts II

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Holiday Grief

Workshop helps
others deal with loss.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

The holiday season is bittersweet for Jeanne Rorke. The days leading up to Christmas are filled with memories of her parents. Her mother committed suicide when Rorke was 12, and her father died on Christmas Eve eight years ago.

"No one really helped me through the grieving process," said Rorke, recalling her mother's death. "My family was like, 'Don't talk about it.' ... My Christmases have always been kind of sad ... even though I put on a happy face for my family."

Rorke joined about two dozen others at a workshop on handling grief during the holidays called, "Facing the Empty Chair: Surviving the Holidays after Losing a Loved One" at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria, Va. From those who are preparing to celebrate a first Christmas without a loved one to those who've been grieving for decades, participants shared experiences, supported each other and gained tools for surviving the season while facing the reality of the empty chair in which their loved one once sat.

"The holidays can be time of longing for those who've lost someone," said Carey Gauzens, a licensed clinical social worker at the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia in McLean, Va. "The holidays are a time when you reflect on family, and it's hard for someone who's aware that that person isn't there."

At the workshop, Gauzens clarified some of the misinformation surrounding grief, especially during the holidays. "First and most important, is that normal grieving is really hard for most people. Some people believe the myth that grief lasts only for a few months, but it's hard to measure your healing because it's an up and down process, not a smooth, straight line."

THROUGHOUT the process, and particularly during the holidays, being able to tap into a source of strength other than oneself is a factor that Gauzen underscores: "It's important to have a support group, friends, a therapist."

Finding someone who is also grieving can be particularly helpful. For example, when Beverly Bell's husband died nine years ago following an extended illness, she found strength and comfort in a friendship with another widow.

"[We] had a wonderful relationship ... for several years following my husband's death," said Bell, who attended the workshop. "We had a regular lunch date and also shared a number of holidays. She also died a couple of years ago, and I realized that I am particularly missing her presence."

Earlier this year, Bell's brother died as well. "I found myself re-experiencing many of the feelings I had had when my husband died, [but feeling] particularly helpless to comfort my sister-in-law," she said. "Perhaps [my] presence is the most important thing I can ... offer my sister-in-law."

Some of the workshop attendees wanted to learn

how to better support others. "I am a member of the Community of Hope International, a group of lay pastoral caregivers whose ministry is to visit those who are experiencing sickness, trauma, tragedy or loss of a loved one," said Caroline McCormack, one of the participants. "I wanted to have a better understanding of the grieving process, so I might be a more compassionate listener."

She and Bell learned that process is different for everyone. "My husband's death was preceded by a long illness. My brother's death was sudden," said Bell. "I wondered if something about the timing made a difference in how we experience and cope with grief. I learned that it really does not."

"... We all experience grief in different ways and it can show up at unexpected times and places and so we need to be gentle with ourselves and find ways

that we can express our grief in ways that feel healing and safe for us," added Reverend Elizabeth Rees, associate rector, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church.

This is a point Gauzens tried to underscore: Grieving is an individual process and there is no one-size-fits-all method for coping. Even people who are grieving for the same person can experience it differently and have different needs. "For example, one person might want to talk about the loss, but others might not," she said. "It's important to be sensitive to family members who grieve differently and compromise so that each person feels emotionally safe."

Cultivating self-awareness and knowing what is normal to expect while one is grieving is important. "Sometimes the symptoms are so intense it makes people feel like they're going crazy and frightens them sometimes," said Gauzens. "They might cry at the drop of a hat, get angry or feel unable to control their emotions. There could become deeply distracted or confused like get lost going someplace they know well."

"Give yourself permission to make careful decisions about how you'll spend your time," she added. "It's helpful to discern within yourself what feels right. Decide whether to maintain holiday traditions or do something completely different."

Avoiding all festive, social activities might do more harm than good, however. "A person who's grieving might end up isolating because they won't go to places they once went to with the person they've lost," said Gauzens. Instead, Gauzens suggests planning "something to look forward to after the holiday to reward yourself for getting through the holidays." She also stressed the need for self-care, including exercising, eating healthy and staying hydrated. "It's important to minimize your use of mood altering substances like alcohol," said Gauzens. "It's tempting to try to numb the pain, but it comes back."

Changing customs can make holidays less painful, says Dr. Linda Gulyn, Ph.D., professor of psychology, Marymount University in Arlington, Va. "I like to break with traditions that are familiar and that remind us of the loved one we lost," she said. "Sometimes it's good to shake it up and start a new tradition, so you're looking forward instead of behind you."



Carey Gauzens of the the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia in McLean, Va., led a workshop on grieving during the holidays at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria, Va.

I Have Ca, Ca, Ca, Cancer



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Here I am thinking, believing, writing that I'm Mr. Well-Adjusted cancer patient and all it took was one conversation in a restaurant the other night at the Connection Christmas party to prove that I'm not. It was a casual, festive atmosphere with everybody enjoying food and drink. I was sitting in a booth with my wife, Dina, my co-worker, David, and his mother Sherry, who I had never met before, who was in-town visiting her sons and planning a drive downtown to see the National Christmas Tree. We were all exchanging pleasantries and getting on quite well when I remembered that David's mother is a nurse. I thought she would be the perfect person to ask about my oncology nurse. But to give the question some context, I thought I had to tell her I had cancer. And when I did, I could barely get the word out. After I stammered I asked, if there was any professional reason/advisory explaining why I haven't heard back from my long-time (seven years) oncology nurse who, I had learned four weeks earlier at my last infusion when he wasn't there to tend to me, retired early. He didn't exactly leave me adrift but a month later, he still hasn't returned my cellphone message (an email to his Verizon account bounced back and he hasn't posted anything current on Facebook).

Obviously he's entitled. Nevertheless, I'm perplexed. We were buddies. We were extremely compatible: sports, humor, from the Northeast, same age, Jewish and both spoke a little Yiddish. Heck, I had even been to his house for a Super Bowl party; plus we've been out to lunch a couple of times after my infusion, met locally for a medical follow up (not exactly a house call but he did come to me), and as I may have written in a previous column, he likely saved my life when I showed up at the Infusion Center with an oxygen level of 85. (Subsequent to that reading, he went into high gear making the necessary arrangements to get me transferred to on-site urgent care and ultimately "ambulanced" to Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring where I spent the next week. Though he didn't visit me; he later explained that he rarely visited patients, he did call to check on me.) The short story is: our relationship went beyond patient-nurse. I wouldn't say I looked forward to my infusions, but because of him, I didn't dread them either.

It's not as if he has to do anything for me or acknowledge me or even stay in contact with me. He has his own life; he's made a change and presumably, his oncology patients are not part of it. I can understand that. In the medical specialty field, oncology is one of, if not the most, emotionally demanding/wrenching: patients with whom you've developed a relationship often die. I can imagine how there's only so much loss of life one can take. However, I thought our relationship went beyond that, in spite of the challenging demands that dealing with a "terminal" patient can exact.

Oddly enough, I'm not taking it personally. My feelings are not hurt, really. Until I know more of the circumstances surrounding his retirement (health, family, lifestyle, etc.), I'm not begrudging him at all. Moreover, he doesn't owe me an explanation. His retiring is not about me. It's about him and because of that, I want to know why he decided to leave and whether we can still stay in touch. So far, we haven't; he hasn't.

There's no doubt that he's been an important part of my cancer-patient life, and in a way, I thought — through my personality and survival, important to him also. Perhaps I was, professionally. Personally, I thought so as well. I just haven't heard any evidence of it in the last month. Still, I will always be grateful for his care and concern.

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

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THE CONNECTION
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OPINION

Urging Regional Cooperation

FROM PAGE 4

ership, working with WMATA, to identify both the real need and the best path to achieve dedicated funding. The work of this group will result in a report this spring.

In my view, we do not have the luxury of having competing plans. It will be challenging enough to secure victory, but it will be almost impossible if we are fractured. Only by being united can we secure Metro's future. We have time, but not an unlimited amount. It is my hope that in the months ahead, our business community and other stakeholders will join with COG and together we will march forward.

Our destinies are linked. And that includes our economic destiny. We know that our region's economy has been too dependent upon federal government spending. And now that future is — as Senator-elect Van Hollen knows all too well — uncertain. We also know that we have been very competitive in our relationship with one another in this region. And while competition has its place, it can also be destructive.

We need to replace competition with cooperation and collaboration. Rather than move assets around, or even try to land the big fish, we need to focus on growing what we have. Every economic analysis reaches the same conclusion — growing what you have gives each of us our best return on investment. The Global Cities Initiative that COG played an instrumental role in launch-

ing this year is precisely that. Let's work together to help our small to mid-size companies realize their export potential and grow their business ... and our tax base.

Those two issues — Metro and growing our regional economy — have been your board of directors' priorities this year.

But fortunately, COG has done much more this year. And that is a tribute to the great team of professionals at COG, a team so ably led by our executive director, Chuck Bean. Ladies and gentlemen that is an applause line. Under their collective leadership, we secured \$58 million in federal grants for transit initiatives throughout the region. And that is but one example of what the institution achieved this year. The list goes on and on, and is there on our website.

Now let me conclude as I began. Those of us who have been entrusted with the responsibility of leading our local governments in this incredible region must step up our game. As Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution said to us in this very room a few years back, local governments are now at the top of the government pyramid now. It's on us. Look around the room. Look at the quality of people in this room. I know we can do this, together.

Thank you board colleagues for the incredible privilege of serving as your chair this year and I wish Mr. McDuffie the very best as he leads us forward next year.

God bless, and Happy Holidays.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

New President

Potomac resident Roger Berliner (right) was unanimously selected as the new president of the Montgomery County Council on Dec. 6. Hans Riemer was unanimously selected as vice president. They will serve one-year terms.

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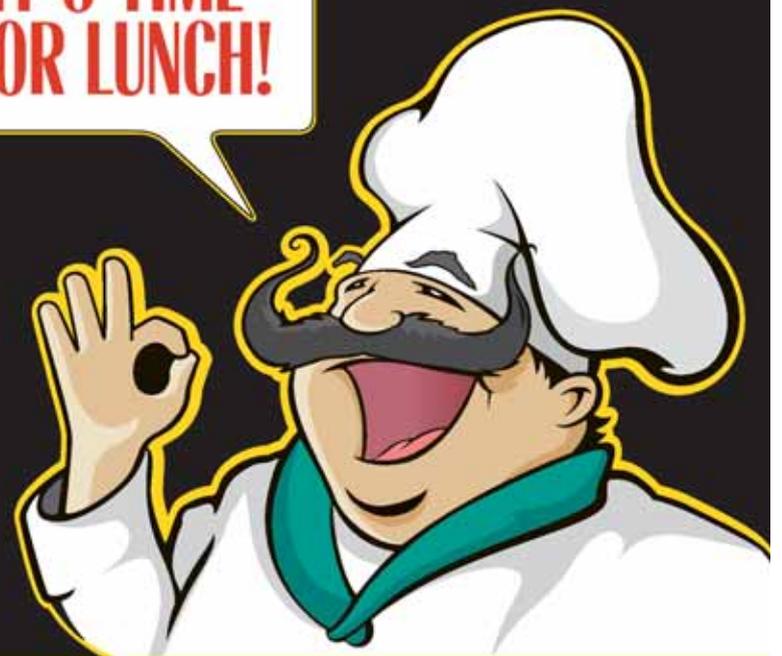
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