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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 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.

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, pij’s and hard-to-find special gifts. They carry dresses for infants to adults. This is the place 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 Thammaratnam 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. Thammaratnam carries both Canadian and American lines including Joseph Ribkoff, IC, Samuel Dong, Tianello and Papillon Blanc. Thammaratnam 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 sold to corporate clients.”

Owner Meena Thammaratnam 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.”

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Jean and All at On Cloud 9.

Emojis at On Cloud 9.

The purses and wallets from Ibhana.

The window at Ibhana provides a look into the store.
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 upstream.

“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 contaminant 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 township 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 alluvial 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 reformed 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 the Potomac.

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

Potomac’s Susie Redmond has been shopping 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 portrait for your pet. 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.”

See Mom and Daughters, Page 6
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 cooperation with competition 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 nonprofit leaders at the COG annual membership meeting at the Washington Marriott at Crystal City recently.

By Roger Berliner
President, County Council

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 our region and 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. 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 the sound of the bells

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 enabler.

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 leadership 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.

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Mom and Daughters Launch Sonoran Rose in Potomac

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

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

Helping Animals Find Their Way Since 2001

Volunteers needed for adoption events, fostering, transportation, adoption center caretaking and more.

Adopt/Donate/Volunteer

www.lostdogandcatrescue.org
HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Email community entertainment events to alanme@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and website for event details. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

2016 Inaugural Video Art Exhibition. Through Dec. 31, Saturday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Glen Echo Photographers Gallery, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Photographers Gallery showcases a group of female visual artists who use video to reveal the personal, the political and the artistic. Desires, dreams and fears are all visually explored in Photographers’ inaugural exhibit and Exhibition, curated by Nuna Batya Lewin. For more information contact www.glenecheophotographers.org.

Wavyer Street Gallery Holiday Show. Through Jan. 7, Saturday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at The gallery hours at the Dennis and Phillip Ratner Museum, 1000 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda. “A Visual Conversation” is a visual arts – paintings, photography, digital images and more – resulting from an unusual collaboration between professional artists in the Washington area, and artists receiving mental health treatment from Cornerstone Montogmery. Free. For more information contact www.personalvisionsgallery.org.

Wavyer Street Gallery Holiday Show. Through Jan. 7 at Wavyer 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 is Friday, Dec. 9, 5-9 p.m. at 301-951-9441.

THURSDAY/DEC. 22
Bob Stout Concert. 7-11 p.m. at Margery’s Lounge at Normandie Farm, 10710 Falls Road. He brings the piano to life. 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. Sing along or dance the night away. 301-983-8838 or popovers.com

SUNDAY/JAN. 8
Waltz Dance Featuring Audacous 2-4 & Polka Band. 6-9:30 p.m. at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambo, Schuhplattler, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. www.WaltzTimeDances.com or 301-634-2222

SATURDAY/JAN. 14
River Clean Up. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at 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/rivercleanups

MONDAY/JAN. 16
MLK Day of Service Volunteer Fair. 1-3 p.m. at Bethesda North Marriott Conference Center, 5701 Marriott Rd. Planned projects include packaging food for the hungry, creating blankets for hospice, and turning gentle 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. 301-773-4800

An Acoustic Evening with Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt. 8 p.m. at the Strathmore, 3031 Tuckerman Ln. $55-$59. 301-588-5519

Weekly Events

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS (Continued)

Friday through Sunday of the week beginning December 2, 6-9 p.m. at the 3.5 acre site at 11950 Clopper Road, Gaithersburg. Prices are $5.50 per person and $5.00 for seniors, students, and children with adult escort. Gaithersburg Area Chamber of Commerce and Gaithersburg Main Street. www.gaithersburgmd.gov/leisure/holiday-entertainment

SATURDAY/SUNDAY/DEC. 24-25
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services. Various times at St. James Episcopal Church, 11815 Seven Locks Road, Potomac. Christmas Eve Service with Christmas Pageant and Eucharist. 7:30 p.m. at Candledlight and Festival Service with Holy Eucharist; music by Brass Traditions and Dance the Nutcracker. 301-983-8838 or popovers.com

WEDNESDAY/FRIDAY/DEC. 21-23
Moscow Ballet’s Russian Nutcracker. 5 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
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. Opening night reception is Friday, Dec. 9, 5-9 p.m. at 301-951-9441

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Learn as if you were to live forever; live as if you were going to die tomorrow. —John Woodren

Real Estate As An Investment

Real estate is a cash-generating asset that can only appreciate in value, with time 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 investing in 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 with these decisions. • Appreciation. Appreciation represents the amount of return on investment. Properties can increase in value a great deal over time and if your goal is long term, the house/land will yield great benefits later.

• Cash flow represents the most direct part of investing in real estate, it is ‘put in your pocket right now’ money. Investing in real estate is a way to increase your cash flow which in turn provides capital you need to expand your investing.

• 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 purpose, and reach for the skylight?!

For professional advice on all aspects of buying and selling real estate, call: 301-806-6829

Lifestyle Real Estate

by Michael Mateas

Real estate is a cash-generating asset that can only appreciate in value, with time 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 investing in 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 with these decisions.

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by Michael Mateas
In October 2016, 37 Potomac homes sold between $3,775,000-$410,000.

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

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<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>RR FB HP</th>
<th>Postal City</th>
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<th>Type</th>
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<th>Subdivision</th>
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**News**

**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.

**An International Life**

Hrand (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.

**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 Pulask is in charge of this project, and he is in need of guitars, viola, cellos, basses, flutes, clarinets, marimbas, electronic keyboards and percussion instruments. However, all donations are greatly appreciated. Contact lucasmusicaldriver@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.

**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-Cherry 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.

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

...come for Afternoon Tea and Talk Tuesday, Dec. 27, 3-4:30
Meet some neighbors, share ideas about thriving in place in the homes we love
Corner Bakery, Westlake Drive, near the Mall
Potomac Community Village
240-221-1370 info@PotomacCommunityVillage.org
www.PotomacCommunityVillage.org

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Holiday Grief

By Marilyn Campbell

December 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 among a 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 of 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 and success,” she said. “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 more compassionate another time.”

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. “Some 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 can be feelings of deep depression of confusion 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 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 Gulya, 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.”

Workshop helps others deal with loss.
I Have Ca, Ca, Ca, Cancer

By KENNETH R. LOUIE

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 everyone 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 son 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 reasons she hadn’t returned my call or at least left a message on my voice mail. And when I 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 hasn’t returned my cellphone message (an email to his Verizon account bounced back and he hasn’t posted anything 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 attended many parties and events together, and for adults considering

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 conflicting 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 launching 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.

Educational Internships

Unusual opportunity to learn many aspects of the newspaper business.

Internships available in reporting, photography, research, graphics.

Opportunities for students, and for adults considering change of career. Unpaid.

E-mail internship@connectionnewspapers.com

Montgomery County Council

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.
POTOMAC PIZZA LUNCH COMBOS

$9.99 PIZZA COMBO
• ANY TWO SLICES OF PIZZA WITH UP TO 3 TOPPINGS EACH
• CHOICE OF ONE:
  ◦ SMALL TOSSED SALAD
  ◦ CUP OF SOUP
  ◦ SMALL FRIES
• SMALL FOUNTAIN DRINK

$9.99 SUB COMBO
• ANY SUB, SANDWICH OR WRAP*
• CHOICE OF ONE:
  ◦ SMALL TOSSED SALAD
  ◦ CUP OF SOUP
  ◦ SMALL FRIES
• SMALL FOUNTAIN DRINK
  *For veal parmigiana or tuna steak add one dollar.

Combos available Monday thru Friday, 11am–4pm.
Additional charge for priced condiments.
Good for dine-in and carryout only.
Not valid with other offers.

IT’S TIME FOR LUNCH!

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Serving Our Communities Since 1978

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