C&O Park Repairs Underway

Har Shalom Players To Present ‘The Secret Garden’

New Chief

Retired Chief James Seavey pins the chief’s badge on Corinne Piccardi, who was sworn in as new head of the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department on Monday, Jan. 22. She is the county’s first female fire chief.
Visitors to the C&O National Historical Park at Great Falls in Potomac can already see evidence of a $6.7 million project to improve local sections of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. The canal has been drained between Little Falls, below Glen Echo, and Violettes Lock near mile marker 22. Pipe has been laid on the canal bed to drain water from the construction, orange fencing is up to guide visitors safely along the towpath and workers have begun preliminary construction.

It’s a big project according to Pete Peterson, supervisory park ranger for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Palisades District which includes all of the park in Montgomery County.

“Eight different structures are going to be repaired, in stages, over the next 500 days,” Peterson said. The National Park Service announced the project, called Maintaining the Flow, last month.

“A $6.7 million construction project will soon be underway to improve several locks, waste weirs, bridges and other water control structures within one of the most popular segments of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal). These improvements will help the park’s historic structures withstand impacts from Potomac River floods and make the features easier to maintain,” a December press release said.

More than 5,000,000 visitors a year visit the park, according to the press release. Peterson said the whole project is going to take all of 2018 and probably to April 2019.

“It’s temporary,” Peterson said. “The end goal is to enhance the structures and the visitor experience.” Areas of the park that will be directly impacted by construction are Swain’s Lock, Great Falls Tavern, Olmstead Island, Carderock, Rock Run Culvert and Lock 7 – Glen Echo.

Peterson said visitors to the park will be directed around construction and have full access to the tow path and trails in the park.

He said the Charles Mercer, the Park’s excursion boat will not operate this summer since there will be no water in the canal. He is hoping that visitors will be able to go on the boat for interpretive programs.

“We will be having interpretive programs, living history and guided walks,” he said.

More information can be found at www.nps.gov/choh, the park’s website.

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Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department installs county’s first female fire chief.

By Peggy McEwan
The Almanac

Corinne Piccardi, a 19-year member of Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department, was installed Monday, Jan. 22, as the department’s chief, the first female to earn the rank of chief in Montgomery County. She has been serving as acting fire chief, taking over the reins from James Seavey who served in that position for 26 years.

“Corinne has been here almost 20 years,” Seavey said. “She and I hit it off very quickly because she is such a worker. She said her goal was to be chief of this department.”

The new chief expressed her thanks to Seavey and to her family for their support and to all of the volunteer firefighters who work to keep their communities safer. She pointed out that 69 percent of all firefighters in the United States are volunteers.

“My success could not have happened without those in this room and those who sat in this room before and those who will in the future,” Piccardi said. “My job is to find the balance between [the past and the future].”

Piccardi said she looks forward to the challenges ahead.

In a press release announcing her appointment, Michael Harting, Cabin John Park VFD board president, called her “a visionary — a forward thinker who brings not only a wealth of background and experience to the chief’s position but also respects the heritage and community values of the Cabin John, West Bethesda and Potomac citizens we serve.”

Piccardi, 47, is a Baltimore resident. She is married to Monika Piccardi and is the mother of Nicole, 18, and Riley, 8, who were at Monday’s dinner and swearing in, celebrating with CJPVFD members and fire officials from Montgomery County.

The fact that her mother is the first female fire chief in Montgomery County is an inspiration, Nicole said.

“It’s showed me that no matter who I am, I can do anything,” she said. “It makes me proud to be her daughter.”

Kerry Pullano, 17, and Brooke Holden, 18, probationary members of CJPVFD, said they find it inspiring to have a female chief to look up to.

“Its empowering because, like me being a probationary member, … to see how far you can go,” Pullano said.

Besides Piccardi’s long track record in all department ranks, the board and membership cited her specialty training and qualifications in fire suppression, emergency medical service, swift-water rescue and community outreach in a press release.

“The new chief will oversee more than 100 active firefighters and emergency medical service, administrative and auxiliary volunteers. Her leadership philosophy and approach to public safety management are straightforward,” the press release said.

“Everything we do is to make the community safer,” Piccardi is quoted in the release. “I don’t believe in stagnation. We can consistently explore ways to better serve our citizens, fellow first-responders and volunteers.”

Born and raised in Manly, New South Wales, Australia, Piccardi holds a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Sydney and taught locally in Potomac and Bethesda private schools for 13 years as well as seven years in Australia. She is a nationally certified full-time firefighter/paramedic with the Manchester Fire Department in Carroll County and works part-time for Baltimore County’s newly established Upperco Volunteer Fire Department.

“I hope that I am the first of many female volunteer firefighters who put in the work and achieve the rank of Chief Officer. The fire service is a male-dominated industry and that is particularly evident in the volunteer service. This is a nationwide trend and not just evident in Montgomery County. All fire organizations struggle to recruit and retain women on the fire side of the service, the EMS side of the service is more attractive. Why that is, is a discussion that could take hours. MCFRS and CJPVFD has provided me with every opportunity to succeed but it is 2017 and we are still having to highlight the progress of women into a role that they are very capable of filling because we still meet resistance simply because of our sex,” Piccardi wrote in a December email.

New Chief Corinne Piccardi with retired Chief James Seavey.

Har Shalom Players To Present ‘The Secret Garden’

Working together like a family.

By Susan Belford
The Almanac

“The Secret Garden’ is all about second chances and realizing one’s potential when in a different environment. Many of the characters are damaged and unhappy but with nurturing and care, they become fuller people that they didn’t know they could be. Just like a garden that some may write off as ‘dead,’ people can be rejuvenated with work and love.”

Paul Rossen, vocal director for “The Secret Garden” defines the essence of this inspirational play — a performance that will delight and invigorate audiences of all ages.

The Har Shalom Players (HSP) — a cast of 51 including students from five area schools — will perform “The Secret Garden” at Congregation Har Shalom’s Burke Sanctuary with performances at 8 p.m. on Saturday Jan. 27 and at 4 p.m. on Sunday Jan. 28.

The production team for this year’s musical is led by Shelly Horn (director), Marci Shegogue (orchestra director), Paul Rossen (vocal director) and Ken Lechter and Stew Remer (producers). In this production, a young girl wants to “make things grow.” Her story, written by Frances Hodgson Burnett more than a hundred years ago is still transformational. The musical tells the story of 11-year old Mary Lennox, a girl raised in India during the 1920s who was sent to live with her only remaining relatives in Yorkshire, England due to her parent’s death from tuberculosis. Mary is brought to the story of 11-year old Mary Lennox, a girl raised in India during the 1920s who was sent to live with her only remaining relatives in Yorkshire, England due to her parent’s death from tuberculosis. Mary is brought to London to live with her father’s cousin, Lord March. He sends her to live at the Indian estate of her father’s family, the Howards. Mary is introduced to India and the garden that was once vibrant and alive.

The Secret Garden family photo: Back row, from left, are Steve Cairns (Archibald Craven), Eric Jones (Dr. Neville Craven), and Paul Loebach (Captain Albert Lennox). Front row, from left, are Megan Evans (Lily), Blake Strauch (Collin), Meredith Abramson (Mary Lennox), and Michelle Moses-Eisenstein (Rose Lennox).
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The Secret Garden’ To Be Performed

From Page 3

The Secret Garden, a novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett, has been adapted into a musical. The production will be held at the Potomac Synagogue. The musical will feature a cast of actors who have a special fondness for children, dedicated and supportive — many of whom have been performing or working with HSP since it began 13 years ago. While I have experienced a similar sense of warmth and family in other community theatre companies, at HSP I have felt especially welcomed — even after a 7 year hiatus — it is as if I had never left. I have loved seeing the same familiar friendly faces.

Stevie Reimer is again serving as co-producer with Ken Lechter. He has been involved with HSP since the beginning 13 years ago. He helped to create HSP as a community builder for the synagogue and to involve their many talented members in a fun and enriching activity. Since the first musical, lasting relationships have been formed and fostered. He said, “We are fortunate to have a combination of highly talented actors who perform regularly with us as well as around our community. Our cast has worked especially hard during rehearsals to learn the difficult vocals and I am looking forward to them ‘wowing’ our audiences with their incredible talent. Seeing our production will give them the opportunity to see the novel come alive in a musical format with enchanting and haunting melodies that enhance the story line.”

General Admission tickets for “The Secret Garden” are $32 for adults and $18 for children (12 and under).

Patron tickets, which include guaranteed front row seating, a voucher for intermission refreshments, reserved parking, and special recognition in the playbill, are $180 each.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.harshalom.org/play or h t t p : / / t i n y u r l . c o m / hspthesecretgarden

For information on group sales, email play@harshalom.org or call 301-299-7087. Ticket pick up and check-in begins one hour prior to the show.

Table read (early rehearsal): From left are Joni Donlon (Nurse, Adult Dreamer), Toby Holtzman (Mrs. Winthrop, Adult Dreamer), Gene Ridberg (Ben Weatherstaff), and Paul Loebach (Captain Albert Lennox).

Co-producers for The Secret Garden: Kenneth Lechter (left) and Stewart Remer

Steve Cairns (Archibald Craven) and Eric Jones (Neville Craven).
Honored in Reflections Contest

Students from Hoover Middle School participated in the National PTA Art Reflections Program with entries for writing, fine arts and photography. Two Maryland State Finalist students and two Honorable Mention students will send their work on to the state competition.

Lauren Ty receives the Award of Excellence for Outstanding Interpretation of the Theme in Photography. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

Anna O’Connor receives the Award of Merit for Interpretation of the Theme in Literature. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

Kaylen Chang receives an Honorable Mention Award in Visual Arts. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

Caroline Chou receives an Honorable Mention Award in Photography. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

Schools

Rabbi Leonard S. Cahan

Rabbi Leonard S. Cahan of Potomac died on Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018. He was the devoted husband of Elizabeth Pelen Cahan, father of Jonathan and Benjamin Cahan, Dr. Sara (Dr. Kenneth) Helms Cahan and Rabbi Joshua (Dr. Tamar Gordon) Cahan; brother of Naomi Katz; and pop-pop of Elisha and Sara (Dr. Kenneth) Helms Cahan; father of Jonathan and Beth Peilen Cahan; father of Naomi Katz; and pop-pop of Elisha and Sara (Dr. Kenneth) Helms Cahan.

Originally from Philadelphia, Pa., Rabbi Cahan was the Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Har Shalom where he served 27 years. In addition, he held pulpits in Detroit, Mich., and Oakland, Calif. He was a Navy Chaplain and served in Quantico, Va., and Japan, and retired as the rank of Commodore. In 2012, Rabbi Cahan was part of the original planning group which chose the name Potomac Community Village, and became a director of the nonprofit corporation which two years later achieved exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Volunteering to serve as its treasurer, Rabbi Cahan continued in this position, even after diagnosis and treatment for pancreatic cancer.

Funeral services were held on Friday, Jan. 19, 2018, at Congregation Har Shalom, 11510 Falls Road, Potomac, followed by burial at Judean Gardens, Olney, Md.

Memorial contributions may be made to Congregation Har Shalom, JSSA Hospice or to the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research (www.lustgarten.org).

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Lost in Space

By KENNETH H. LOURIE

Not a reference to the iconic television series of my youth, but there was “danger,” Ken Lourie, and it wasn’t caused by Dr. Zachary Smith nor by “robot,” “Robbie” either. And it wasn’t a conspiracy. It was simply a confluence of absenteeism by my health care providers. Both my oncologist and internal medicine doctor were absent with leave and my treatment was stopped. Whether or not a week or two delay ultimately mattered in checking the cancer, it certainly mattered – emotionally, to the patient. You feel adrift, sort of, which is exactly how I felt during the first two weeks of January. Typically, what my current lab work presents is my creatinine level and the associated glomerular filtration rate, measuring kidney function/efficiency. After nearly nine years of infused toxicity, I have suffered some collateral damage to a major organ. My oncologist and internal medicine doctor are incredibly sensitive to and concerned about this damage. Per these results, every medical decision made concerning me, from prescriptions approved to normal internal medicine stuff to whether I get “contrast” when I have my scans and MRIs to what chemotherapy drug I infuse and how frequently it’s infused, is decided with my kidneys in mind. Nothing happens medically until my kidneys sign off on it, if you know what I mean.

As it happened, my creatinine level for my Jan. 12 infusion was higher than usual. When this measure occurs, I know to call the Infusion Center and ask the head nurse if I should come in for treatment. She will contact my oncologist and with his direction, will advise me what to do, except for this week. My oncologist was away and though another oncologist – whom I’ve never met – was covering, I’m not really sure she knows enough about my situation. Specifically, I’m a bit of a special case, per my oncologist’s own characterization of me, and I’ve never gone seven weeks, let alone eight weeks without treatment. Delaying my infusion would break a multi-year precedent. In fact, around the holidays when I asked my oncologist if I could extend my infusion interval from six to seven weeks (to accommodate life), he emphatically said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a cover-up), my oncologist has said “No.”

So not only was I in the middle of an unprecedented one to possibly two-week delay in my infusion, but I also needed an oncologist – who I don’t know and who doesn’t know me – to decide what intervention/maybe risk her medical license (if someone were to happen to me), to authorize treatment for a patient whose creatinine levels fall outside of protocol, and me not having either of my two primary-care physicians available for consultation. And it wasn’t a conspiracy. It was simply a confluence of absenteeism by my health care providers. Both my oncologist and internal medicine doctor were absent with leave and my treatment was stopped. Whether or not a week or two delay ultimately mattered in checking the cancer, it certainly mattered – emotionally, to the patient. You feel adrift, sort of. The default emails advising that both were out of town, I had nowhere to go and no one to turn to.

Heck, I might as well have been on another planet, given the limited choices I had.
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