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# Potomac ALMANAC

Recently, several homes in Potomac have had their outgoing mail stolen.

## Signaling Thieves

NEWS, PAGE 3

Federal Government Reopens, Area Getting Back to Normal

NEWS, PAGE 3

Missing Potomac Teen Sought

NEWS, PAGE 3

**Senior Living**

PAGE 6

ATTENTION POSTMASTER:  
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL.  
REQUESTED IN HOME 1-31-19

PRSRV STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EASTON, MD  
PERMIT # 322

PHOTO BY PEGGY MCEWAN/THE ALMANAC REAL ESTATE, PAGE 2 ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 6 CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 7

# Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC

## November, 2018 Sales, \$789,000~\$900,000

IN NOVEMBER 2018, 48 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$3.150,000-\$570,000.

**8** 9913  
Bedfordshire Court  
— \$789,000



**7** 7913 Ivymount Terrace  
— \$790,000



**4** 11209  
Old Post Road  
— \$880,000



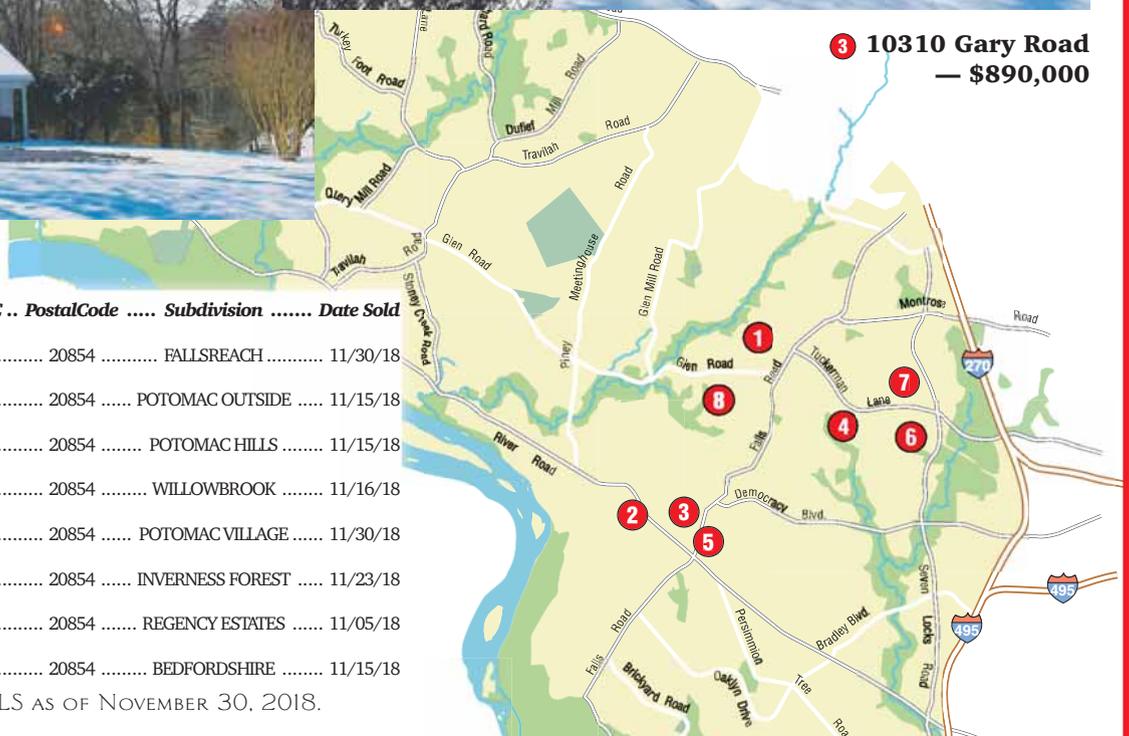
**6** 8105  
Paisley Place  
— \$825,000



**2** 10700 River Road — \$895,000

**3** 10310 Gary Road  
— \$890,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 12004 STARVIEW CT	5	4	2	POTOMAC	\$900,000	Detached	0.23	20854	FALLSREACH	11/30/18
2 10700 RIVER RD	4	3	0	POTOMAC	\$895,000	Detached	2.00	20854	POTOMAC OUTSIDE	11/15/18
3 10310 GARY RD	4	4	1	POTOMAC	\$890,000	Detached	0.61	20854	POTOMAC HILLS	11/15/18
4 11209 OLD POST RD	6	3	1	POTOMAC	\$880,000	Detached	0.34	20854	WILLOWBROOK	11/16/18
5 10005 GABLE MANOR CT	3	3	1	POTOMAC	\$840,000	End Row/Townhse	0.11	20854	POTOMAC VILLAGE	11/30/18
6 8105 PAISLEY PL	4	3	1	ROCKVILLE	\$825,000	Detached	0.37	20854	INVERNESS FOREST	11/23/18
7 7913 IVYMOUNT TER	4	2	1	POTOMAC	\$790,000	Detached	0.19	20854	REGENCY ESTATES	11/05/18
8 9913 BEDFORDSHIRE CT	5	2	1	POTOMAC	\$789,000	Detached	0.23	20854	BEDFORDSHIRE	11/15/18



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# Red Flag Warning

Mail theft? Call police and postal inspectors.

BY PEGGY MCEWAN  
THE ALMANAC

**M**ailbox red flags may alert more than the postal carrier that there is outgoing mail in your box. The Avenel Community Association Newsletter of Jan 15 contained the following note:

“Mail Theft Alert

“Recently we have heard of four instances where an owner’s outgoing mail was stolen and checks were altered and, in some cases, subsequently cashed. In three instances, it was reported to us that the theft occurred after the owner placed their mail in the blue postal mailbox on Beman Woods Way. It appears that the incidents all occurred on Jan. 2. In another instance the mail was taken from the homeowner’s personal mailbox with the red flag up. The ACA has reached out to the U.S. Postal Investigator in an effort to obtain more details but to date have not been able to establish contact. It is unknown if the checks were somehow removed from the postal box directly, or subsequently after collection, however, we encourage all residents to use caution when handling your outgoing mail.

“We recommend that residents who placed outgoing mail in the postal mailbox, particularly on or around Jan. 2 review your bank statements for any fraudulent activity. The Association would also like to encourage all residents not to place any outgoing mail in your personal mailbox, but rather drop off important outgoing mail at local post offices, hand it to your letter carrier, or have sensitive documents delivered with a signature required for delivery. If you place mail in the blue postal mailbox, postal investigators have recommended that it be deposited during the day time hours prior to the scheduled pick up time of 1 p.m.

“The Association will keep residents up-

dated with any new, pertinent information. If you believe that your mail has been tampered with, please file a report with the Montgomery County Police by calling the non-emergency number at 301-279-8000. In addition, report it immediately to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service at postalinspectors.uspis.gov or 877-876-2455. After the authorities have been contacted, please contact Avenel Surveillance at 301-299-1518, or the ACA office during regular business hours at 301-299-5916.”

The mail theft goes farther afield than Avenel. Take heed of the story Potomac resident Donald Sladkin wrote in a recent email.

“... on Columbus Day morning, Oct. 8, 2018, I dropped into my home’s street-side mailbox an outgoing envelope with check for \$631 made out to Toyota Financial Services, forgetting that the Post Office does not collect on Columbus Day. I checked around 6 p.m. that day, and the envelope was still there, and so I left it for pick-up the next afternoon.

The following morning, while picking up the newspaper, I checked the mailbox and found it empty. Suspicious, but unbelieving that someone would have stolen the letter for a nefarious purpose, I let the matter rest but checked my bank account each day. Sure enough, on Oct. 10 my statement showed the check had been cashed in full, with the Pay To line changed to read the name “Meek.” Also, in the “For” line to the left of the signature space, they had altered



Several homes in Potomac had their outgoing mail stolen.

my account number to read as if it were a phone number, including a fake but legitimate area code. The stamps on the back of the check were virtually illegible.”

Thus, started Sladkin’s quest to get his money refunded and his account secure again.

“After working with Capital One, my bank,” Sladkin wrote, “I had to provide information for the investigation and change to a new checking account, as the bad guys now had my account number

and signature. I was, in the end, reimbursed the \$631 by the bank.”

Sladkin said he posted his story on the River Falls Chat, his community newsletter, and heard from two other neighbors who said they had checks stolen the same evening. Their checks were cashed too.

Anthea Higgins, who lives next door to Sladkin, had mail stolen the same night Sladkin did last fall.

“Yes! I did have this happen,” Higgins wrote in an email. “Very surprising. I put an envelope in my mailbox with a check made out to my landscaper on Sunday night before Columbus Day forgetting it was a holiday. It was stolen then I believe. It was cashed at a branch of my bank (M&T) in Bethesda they think. The payee in the check was not altered, so don’t understand how it was allowed. I did not end up reporting to police as I was waiting to hear back from my bank, about their theft investigation (and then the holidays hit ... I need to circle back with them).”

Higgins said she did not notify the post office of the theft either. But she has decided to use a Postal Service box instead of leaving outgoing checks and documents in her own box with the flag up.

Mail theft is a Federal Issue, according to local Postmaster Rick Rucker. But, he said, residents should call [local] police if mail is stolen.

“Because that’s your personal property,” he said.

Potomac Post Office branch manager Wes McMahan said he was not able to speak with the press except to

**“If you see someone suspicious near a mailbox or see them steal mail, call police immediately, then report it to Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455.”**

— U.S. Postal Inspectors website

say the situation, “is being looked into.”

The U.S. Postal Inspectors website offers the following information:

“If you see someone suspicious near a mailbox or see them steal mail, call police immediately, then report it to Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455. If you believe your mail was stolen, report it immediately by submitting an online complaint at postalinspectors.uspis.gov or calling us at 877-876-2455.”

## Trust To Assist in Shutdown Recovery Efforts

### Canal Pride Days to focus on maintenance.

**W**ith the re-opening of the government, the C&O Canal Trust, the official nonprofit partner to the C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP), will be working with park staff in the coming weeks to assess damage done to the C&O Canal NHP during the month-long closure, and to identify immediate and longer-term maintenance needs.

The Trust will then leverage its volunteer network to provide boots on the ground to take care of those projects suited to the capacity and skills of community volunteers.

The Trust’s 12th annual Canal Pride Days, which bring hundreds of volunteers together in the

spring to tackle a range of improvements along the length of the canal, will this year focus on recovery efforts. Projects have been scheduled for Great Falls, Williamsport, and Allegany County, although they are subject to change based on the results of the park’s damage assessment.

“We will be working to help mitigate damages and backlog maintenance that has arisen during the shutdown,” said the Trust’s Director Programs and Partnerships Becky Curtis. “We are still dealing with significant damage in the Park from multiple flood events in 2018 that needs to be addressed. The need for volunteer assistance this Spring is substantial, and we encourage the community to join

us and show their love for the C&O Canal.”

Community members interested in assisting can sign up at [www.canaltrust.org/canalpride](http://www.canaltrust.org/canalpride).

About the C&O Canal Trust  
The C&O Canal Trust, as the official non-profit partner of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park, works in partnership with the National Park Service and local communities to raise funds to preserve the Park for future generations and to broaden support through programs that highlight the Park’s historical, natural and cultural heritage and recreational opportunities. It is a 501(c)(3) organization. For more information about the Trust, visit [www.canaltrust.org](http://www.canaltrust.org).

## Missing Teen Sought

**M**aryland Center for Missing and Unidentified Persons (MCMUP) issued an alert on Jan. 24 asking residents to be on the lookout for Mahkaylah Hammonds, 15 year old, missing from Potomac since Jan. 21, 2019. She has multiple tattoos: female symbol on left wrist, trident arrow on right wrist, 301 on left side of hand, number 5 between thumb and index finger, and a heart and number 11 on the left hand. Both sides of her nose are pierced and she wears a cross stud earring.



**Mahkaylah Hammonds**

tions Division at 301-279-8000, or 911.

Anyone having information should call 1-800-843-5678, Montgomery County Police Dept./Special Victims Investiga-

See [www.missingkids.com/poster/USMD/b190003291/1/screen](http://www.missingkids.com/poster/USMD/b190003291/1/screen)



From left: 3rd Place Finisher Francisco Gonzalez-Berrington (6), 2nd Place Finisher Will Lankenau (8), GeoBee Moderator and 5th Grade Teacher Kelly Tanzi, and School Champion Areg Louis Devoyans (5).

## On Way to National GeoBee

Local students compete in the first round of national competition.

Students from The Woods Academy in Bethesda participated in the school-level competition of the National Geographic GeoBee on Jan. 28. Areg Louis Devoyans, a 5th Grade student, won first place, with Will Lankenau, an 8th Grade student, winning second place and Francisco Gonzalez-Berrington, a 6th Grade student, finishing third place.

The school-level competition is the first round in the annual National Geographic GeoBee, a geography competition designed to inspire and reward students' curiosity about the world. Questions cover not only geography but also cultures, physical features, history, and earth science.

The National Geographic Society developed the GeoBee in 1989 in response to concern

about the lack of geographic knowledge among young people in the United States. Over more than three decades, 120 million students have learned about the world through participation in the GeoBee.

School champions, including Areg Louis Devoyans, will take an online qualifying test; up to 100 of the top test scorers in each state then become eligible to compete in their State GeoBee. The winners of the State GeoBees receive and an all-expenses-paid trip to National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, D.C., next May to participate in the GeoBee national championship, competing for cash prizes, scholarships and all-expenses-paid Lindblad expedition to the Galápagos Islands aboard the National Geographic Endeavour II. Learn more at [www.natgeobee.org](http://www.natgeobee.org).



This photo was found inside a bedroom ceiling in a home on River Road. Recognize her?

## Help Identify Woman in Photo

To the Editor:

We have lived at 9000 River Road since 1971. The house was built by Bill and Ann Christmas in 1947. In the last few months, the ceiling in our bedroom began to crack and had to be repaired. The plasterer had to replace the ceiling.

In deconstructing the ceiling, a photo was found inside of it. The plasterer, John Urbas, who has 50 years of experience, told me it was common for plasterers to leave their business cards in ceilings. John said he had never had seen a photo before. Some of the remaining old-timers in Potomac might recognize the young woman in the photo if you were to publish it in the Almanac. It could be Ann Christmas, who at one time was the equestrian writer for The Washington Times.

Neal Gillen  
Potomac

Readers could email their responses to [almanac@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:almanac@connectionnewspapers.com).

## BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUDGET

#### FY20 Operating Budget Forums.

Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich is holding five budget forums to seek input from residents about Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Operating Budget priorities. The County Executive will announce his recommended FY20 Operating Budget on March 15. FY20 Operating Budget Forums are scheduled as follows:

- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 23, 7 p.m. at the Mid-County Recreation Center, 2004 Queensguard Road, Silver Spring.
- ❖ Monday, Feb. 4, 7 p.m. at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, 4301 East West Highway, Bethesda. Visit [montgomerycountymd.gov](http://montgomerycountymd.gov) for more.

### TUESDAY/JAN. 22

**Summer Camps Registration Opens.** 8:30 a.m. Montgomery County Recreation and Montgomery Parks are hosting hundreds of camps

that promote active and healthy lifestyles for children. Take advantage of early bird registration through April 5 and receive \$25 off select camps. Summer camps include aquatics, arts, cooking, nature exploration, sports and more. Camp registration opens via [ActiveMONTGOMERY.org](http://ActiveMONTGOMERY.org).

### SATURDAY/FEB. 2

#### Addiction Family Support.

Saturdays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Second Chance Addiction Care, 9800 Falls Road, Suite 7, Potomac. Second Chance Addiction Care, a boutique substance abuse facility, offers free support for anyone with a loved one suffering from addiction. Contact Robert Roth at [roth@secondchancecare.com](mailto:roth@secondchancecare.com) or 301-983-5130. Visit [www.secondchancecare.com](http://www.secondchancecare.com) for more.

### TUESDAY/FEB. 5

**1-1 Business Coaching Sessions.** Empowered Women International will hold 1-1 Business Coaching Sessions each Tuesday, until the end of February in their Maryland Office, for Montgomery County residents. Spots are limited. Visit [ewint.org](http://ewint.org) for more.



"Doe and Fawn" by Christine Boltz

## How To Manage Deer

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources is seeking public comment on the state's management of white-tailed deer. The input will be used to help revise the state's deer management plan for the next 15 years, establishing long-term goals, and identifying specific objectives and strategies for achieving them. Through Feb. 28,

the public can provide comments online: [www.doit.state.md.us/selectsurvey/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=18108m2#](http://www.doit.state.md.us/selectsurvey/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=18108m2#)

The department is also accepting feedback by phone at 410-260-8540 or write: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Heritage Service, 580 Taylor Ave., E-1, Annapolis, MD 21401.

# POTOMAC ALMANAC

[www.PotomacAlmanac.com](http://www.PotomacAlmanac.com)

Newspaper of Potomac  
A Connection Newspaper

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

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## SENIOR LIVING

# Senior Housing Planned for Former Marriott HQ

**Erickson Living plans continuing care retirement community.**

**U**pon the relocation of Marriott International, Inc., in 2022, Erickson Living plans to redevelop the 775,000-square-foot global headquarters into a continuing care retirement community.

Acquisition of the headquarters, located in Montgomery County's Rock Spring area just off of I-270 in North Bethesda, was com-

pleted in December 2018.

"As a thriving urban center, this location provides an ideal opportunity to further expand our service offerings in the State of Maryland, as well as Montgomery County," said Alan Butler, chief executive officer of Erickson Living. "As a trusted leader in senior housing and health care, we embrace the opportunity to serve communities by

meeting the growing demand for senior housing."

Specific payment details on the property sale are not being disclosed at this time. The Master Plan for the Rock Spring area of Montgomery County was updated by the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission in 2018. While Rock Spring has been developed over the years

as a suburban office park, the updated plan encourages more residential and retail uses.

Erickson Living manages other communities in Maryland, including Charlestown in Catonsville, and National Senior Campuses' communities of Riderwood in Silver Spring and Oak Crest in Parkville.

More information regarding Erickson Living is available at [EricksonLiving.com](http://EricksonLiving.com).

*Potomac Community Village presents...*

### **Bring a Friend Social Lunch**

*Tuesday, Feb. 12, 12 noon, Tally Ho Restaurant*

*Participants pay for their own meal*

*RSVPs preferred by Feb. 11, but not required*

### **"Meet Dr. Stonestreet"**

*Rockville's Civil War Physician*

*Thursday, Feb. 21, 7 pm*

*Potomac Comm Ctr, 11315 Falls Road*

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## Senior Living

# Weight Lifting in Golden Years

When done properly, strength training can have tremendous benefits for seniors.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**R**ichard Foley of McLean says he hits the gym at 7:30 five mornings a week. He spends about 40 minutes lifting weights followed by 40 minutes of walking on the treadmill and 10 minutes of sit-ups and crunches.

"I've always been physically active," he said. "I've actually slowed down a little, but it's important to me to keep going for as long as I can."

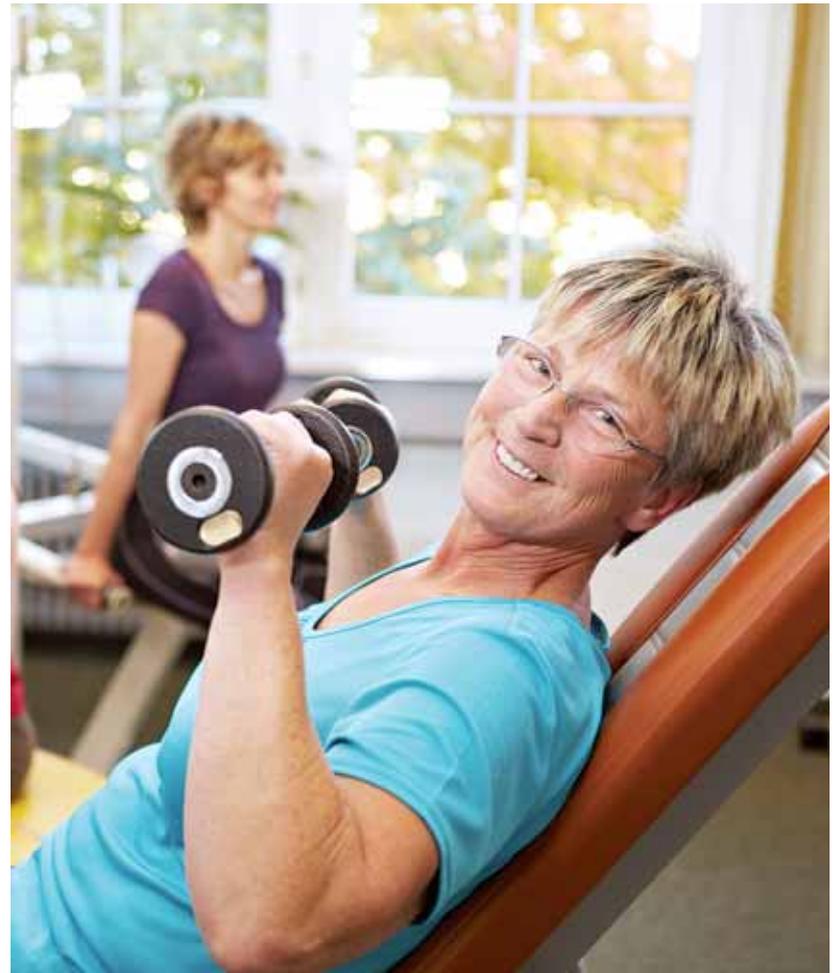
A National Institutes of Health (NIH) study of Americans over the age of 60 showed that strength training, such as lifting weights, reduced the risk of osteoporosis and chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. It also found that strength-training exercises has the ability to increase muscles strength and mass and allows seniors to stay mobile longer, while also combating weakness and frailty.

"Improving and increasing the muscles in your legs for example, makes them stronger, which means that you'll be able to maintain your ability to walk without assistance longer than you might otherwise," said Rita Days, RN, a gerontological nurse in Falls Church who was not involved in the study. "For seniors who enjoy traveling, shopping or any activity that requires walking, having strong quadricep and hamstring muscles means that you'll be able to enjoy those activities longer. It also means that you'll have the strength and endurance to navigate difficult terrain during vacations and other activities that involve walking."

Strength training can lead to a sense of independence for everyday activities like grocery shopping or even getting up from a chair, says Jay Rader, a private health and fitness coach based in Arlington. "When you strengthen the muscles around your joints, you can prolong and even improve your range of motion," he said.

Weight training for seniors, says Days, comes with caveats. "Just because it's beneficial doesn't mean that an 89-year-old should go out and start trying to lift 50 pound weights so that he can regain the ability to walk up three flights of stairs like he could 30 years ago," she said. "The benefits of strength training are tremendous, but they also come with risks and must be done safely. You should definitely consult with a doctor before beginning any kind of exercise program, and it would be my strong recommendation that any one over the age of 50 hire a personal trainer if they're starting any kind of exercise program."

In fact, David Schwartz, a personal trainer in



**Strength-training exercises has the ability to increase muscles strength and mass and allows seniors to stay mobile longer.**

Bethesda says that he has four clients who are over the age of 60, and while he personalizes each client's workout, there are specific exercises that are particularly beneficial to seniors. "I have one client who is 72 and began training with me when she was 68," he said. "The workouts that I do with her include lunges and squats which strengthen the quadriceps, or the muscles in the thigh area. It's been interesting to watch her gain leg strength and be able to walk longer distances. But strengthening the quads can also protect your knees and prevent injuries and other problems."

The bicep and tricep muscles of the arm are also important to building strength. "All you need are a pair of light to medium weight dumbbells," said Kat Chetrit, a personal trainer in Fairfax. "Two great exercises, that are also relatively simple are bicep curls where you hold the weight in your hand and bend your arm at the elbow and curl the weight in the direction of your shoulder; and hammer curls, which are very similar except that you hold the weight like you would a hammer. Those are both great exercises for maintaining arm strength."

Days however, underscores the fact that there are risks involved "You can strain a muscle or drop a weight on yourself or even fracture a bone," she said. "With the elderly, these injuries can take a longer time to heal than they would in a person who is much younger. The benefits definitely outweigh the risks, but you want to be safe and smart. That includes talking with your doctor and getting help from a personal training, especially if you've never or rarely exercised before."

# ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday.

## ONGOING

**Exhibit: "Hard Wired."** Through Jan. 31 at Touchstone Gallery, 901 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. Tory Cowles of Potomac is represented by Touchstone Gallery, a resident artist in Studio 7 at Alexandria's Torpedo Factory, and an abstract painting instructor at Glen Echo Park's Yellow Barn. Call 202-347-3787 or visit [www.touchstonegallery.com](http://www.touchstonegallery.com).

**Art Exhibit: "Destroy the Picture."** Through Feb. 2, Wednesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m. at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. Beverly Ryan has been a resident artist at the Torpedo Factory Art Center since 2001 and has taught at The Art League School in Alexandria, Va., for 15 years. She has curated several shows of abstract painting, narrative painting and encaustic painting. Between 1949 and 1962, numerous painters including Alberto Burri, Salvatore Scarpitta and Yves Klein produced artwork that incorporated destruction in their processes. Visit [www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b](http://www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b).

**Photography Exhibit: "Place and Displacement."** Through March 3, gallery hours at Photoworks in Glen Echo Park at 7300 MacArthur Blvd, Glen Echo. Featuring photos by Andrew Currie and Patricia Howard and curated by Fabian Goncalves Borrega. The show intertwines the series House to House and Suburbs by Pat Howard and Andy Currie. In both series, images of inhabited and desolated towns and suburbs share similar sense of alienation produced by powerless and meaningless life. Visit [www.glenechophotoworks.org](http://www.glenechophotoworks.org).

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 1-3

**The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940.** Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville. The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940 is a comedic mystery spiced with just a hint of piano and a dash of singing. Comedy and murder take center stage in this play, the music just makes a cameo appearance. \$20-\$22. Visit [rlt-online.org](http://rlt-online.org) for tickets.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 2

**18th Annual All-star Tribute.** 7:30 p.m. at Rock Creek Mansion, 5417 West Cedar Lane, Bethesda. Tribute on the 60th Anniversary of the fateful Winter Dance Party plane crash, featuring the music of rock n' roll legend Buddy Holly and fellow tour stars Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper. General admission seating, large dance floor and cash bar and kitchen will be open. Emceed by British radio host and music writer Colin Davies ([www.theprofessorrocks.com](http://www.theprofessorrocks.com)). \$25-\$30. Tickets at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4031795](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4031795).

**Pressenda Chamber Players.** 8 p.m. at Westmoreland Congregational UCC, 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. Featuring the Pressenda Chamber Players: French Masterworks for string quartet and piano quintet as part of the 2018-19 Washington Conservatory Concert Series. Free, with donations welcome at the door. Visit [www.westmorelanducc.org/](http://www.westmorelanducc.org/).

## SUNDAY/FEB. 3

**Waltz Dance.** 3:30-6 p.m. At the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Introductory Waltz Workshop from 2:45-3:30 p.m. Featuring the ensemble Rhapsody. This versatile band will provide a lively mix of folk waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambro, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. Admission is \$13, \$5 for full-time students with student ID. No partner required. Call Joan Koury at 202-238-0230 or Glen Echo Park at 301-634-2222, go to [www.WaltzTimeDances.org](http://www.WaltzTimeDances.org) or e-mail [info@WaltzTimeDances.org](mailto:info@WaltzTimeDances.org).

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 8-10

**The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940.** Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville. The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940 is a comedic mystery spiced with just a hint of piano and a dash of singing. Comedy and



## 'a word too small: love'

The all-star professional choir, The Thirteen, will perform an intimate concert titled "a word too small: love." Inspired by the art song tradition, The Thirteen sings music of the heart in this intimate concert featuring eight soloists and piano, featuring works by Johannes Brahms, Samuel Barber, Gustav Mahler, Daniel Elder, Caroline Shaw, Ted Hearne, Scott Ordway, Jocelyn Hagen and more. Sunday, Feb. 10, 5 p.m. at Bradley Hills Church, 6601 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda. \$10-\$30. Purchase tickets at [www.TheThirteenChoir.org](http://www.TheThirteenChoir.org).

murder take center stage in this play, the music just makes a cameo appearance. \$20-\$22. Visit [rlt-online.org](http://rlt-online.org) or tickets.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 10

**Symphony of the Potomac.** 3 p.m. at the Cultural Arts Center, Montgomery College, 7995 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. The second program of the Symphony of the Potomac's 2018-2019 season, From the Gilded Age to the Jazz Age and Beyond, features the music of George Whitefield Chadwick, George Gershwin, Florence Price, and George Walker. Advance tickets to the performance, \$15 (adults), \$5 (student/youth under 18), and \$10 (groups of 10 or more) are available from BoxOfficeTickets.com until Feb. 9. Tickets purchased at the door are \$20 (adults), \$17 (adults over 65), and \$5 (students with ID/youth under 18). Visit [www.symphonypotomac.org](http://www.symphonypotomac.org).

**Concert: The Thirteen.** 5 p.m. at Bradley Hills Church, 6601 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda. The all-star professional choir, The Thirteen, will perform an intimate concert titled "a word too small: love." Inspired by the art song tradition, The Thirteen sings music of the heart in this intimate concert featuring eight soloists and piano, featuring works by Johannes Brahms, Samuel Barber, Gustav Mahler, Daniel Elder, Caroline Shaw, Ted Hearne, Scott Ordway, Jocelyn Hagen and more. \$10-\$30. Purchase tickets at [www.TheThirteenChoir.org](http://www.TheThirteenChoir.org).

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 16-17

**One Acts and Scenes With Jewish Themes.** Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. at Temple Beth Ami, 14330 Travilah Road, Rockville. The Jewish Community Theater of Montgomery County and The TBA Players present Jewish Theater Showcase: New One Acts and Scenes With Jewish Themes. Saturday, \$15; Sunday, \$10. Tickets at the door (cash, check, or charge) or online at [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com) (search for "Jewish Theater Showcase"). Email [jctmc18@gmail.com](mailto:jctmc18@gmail.com).

## SUNDAY/FEB. 17

**Waltz Dance.** 3:30-6 p.m. At the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Introductory Waltz Workshop from 2:45-3:30 p.m. Featuring the ensemble Tim Ball Trio playing a lively mix of folk waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambro, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. Admission is \$13, \$5 for full-time students with student ID. No partner required. Call Joan Koury at 202-238-0230 or Glen Echo Park at 301-634-2222, go to [www.WaltzTimeDances.org](http://www.WaltzTimeDances.org) or e-mail [info@WaltzTimeDances.org](mailto:info@WaltzTimeDances.org).

**Lunar New Year Celebration.** 4:30-7:30 p.m. at Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac. The Lunar New Year Celebration is open to the entire community with performances, activities, ethnic appetizers, Dragon Dance and more. Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/facilities/recreationcenters/potomac.html](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/facilities/recreationcenters/potomac.html) or call 240-777-6960.

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## Cat It Again



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As my white cat, Twinkle, continues to walk left to right and right to left across my writing pad with various stops in between for scratching, nudging, belly-rubbing and paw patty cakes, I can't help wondering if there's a method to her non-madness. She doesn't appear to be the least bit agitated. She's not meowing her presence or seemingly demanding anything – other than attention, that is. In fact, she's purring and seems quite pleased with herself.

What's puzzling to me is exactly what the attraction/need is here? I don't have any treats. Her food and water bowls are not here. Neither is her litter box. It's in the adjacent room. Yet here she sits and rolls and scratches herself with what appears to be not a care or concern in the world. She seems extremely content with her situation.

I would have expected her to be sleeping in the house somewhere like our other four cats. I mean, it is 2:15 in the afternoon, many hours after her 6:30 breakfast and hours still to go before her 5:30 dinner. Heck, I've even dozed off myself for a bit before I sat down to try and write this column. But here she is, wide awake, and back and forth.

My wife, Dina, maintains that cats and dogs have a sixth sense when it comes to people being sick, and tend to hang around those afflicted with something or other, providing aid and comfort, if you will.

And so, she gets nervous when multiple cats surround me when we're sitting on the couch watching television: a black cat, usually "Sleeky," lays on top of the couch behind where I'm sitting; Twinkle, sits on the couch next to me and cuddles up against my left thigh; and Biscuit (one of our two buff-colored brothers) "sphinxes" on the coffee table staring at me while I'm having to stare through him to watch television. The other two cats, "Chino" and Andrew are usually sleeping in their spots, out of sight, but never out of mind.

A shift change, apparently. "Chino" has just jumped on my desk and Twinkle has jumped off, no doubt to find a warm spot to sleep perchance to dream. Chino is now laying on his side/back – partially on my writing pad, with his rear end pressed up against my left forearm with all four paws raised up in the air not exactly in my direction but definitely in my proximity.

This cat exchange sort of reminds of how my brother and I would alternate our visiting time with our parents on Sundays, splitting the day so that one of us was always present and accounted for.

But I'm not sick (OKAY, diseased then), and I don't feel as if I need 24/7-type cat companionship. Though I am home alone a lot – and left with my own thoughts, I don't view the cats shifting around me as anything more than there considering me as a big toy.

A toy whose movements and appearance are stimulating to them, sort of like a giant scratching post infused with catnip. A combination they couldn't possibly ignore, like peanut butter and chocolate is to me.

So as much as I feel nurtured and loved and comforted by this cat behavior, I don't feel it's because I'm sick, or rather about to be sick (again, their sixth sense at work), I feel simply that we have some very affectionate cats whose indoor-only lives have caused them to become dependent and appreciative of those who feed and water them. (We won't mention that we're also the ones who stuff them into cat carriers and drive them to the vet, an experience which they collectively hate.)

But if I do get sick (I guess I should be honest: get sicker, I do have cancer) I know I can count on "Chino," Biscuit, Twinkle, Andrew and "Sleeky" to always keep me company. I don't know how much better their presence will make me feel, but I do know their presence will keep me from feeling worse.

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

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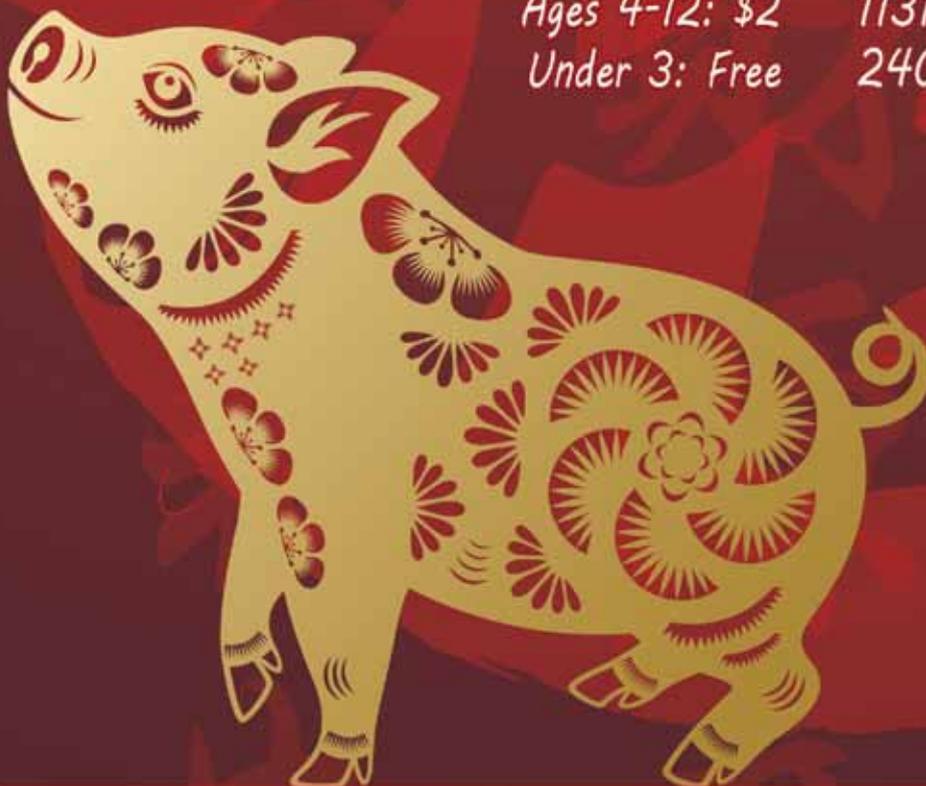
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