Newcomers & Community Guide
2020-2021

Great Falls Tavern. Enter the park at Falls Road and MacArthur Boulevard.
July, 2020 Sales, $1,565,000-$1,325,000

In July, 2020, 92 Potomac homes sold between $3,820,000-$468,000.
Houses Selling Fast as Inventory Drops in Potomac

Community, larger homes and yards, nearby parks, great schools drive demand.

By Peggy McEwan

Residents love Potomac for many reasons: good schools, convenient to all of Montgomery County and D.C., peaceful neighborhoods, and the sense of community.

Recent interviews with local Realtors and Adam Greenberg, president of the Potomac Chamber of Commerce, listed those and other reasons people want to move to Potomac. “I love the community,” Greenberg, who lives and works in Potomac, said. The sense of community came up again and again.

Greenberg is the president and founder of Bagels ‘n Grinds Restaurant Zone, Inc., the company that manages Potomac Pizza restaurants in Chevy Chase, Potomac, Rockville and Gaithersburg.

“Many of the communities in Potomac provide a sense of community that appeals to many prospective buyers. With so many people now working from home, working with online classes, many Potomac homes have ample interior space to allow members of the family to have their own space,” Alexa Kempel from Compass Real Estate said. “In many cases people love the homes on larger two-acre lots that offer opportunities to enjoy a pool, which was especially popular this summer, sports/tennis courts, decks and gardens.”

Patti Marsh who is with Long and Foster, is a long-time resident of Potomac. She likes the convenience to shopping, restaurants, churches, and the lovely neighborhoods she said.

“We also have access to the best schools in the state of Maryland,” she said. “I think that is a major drawing point. Buyers say, ‘Find them something in the three Ws [Winston Churchill, Thomas S. Wootton and Walt Whitman school districts.’”

Susana Zhuo, a Realtor with Taylor Properties and an active member of Potomac Elementary School PTA, said: “Potomac is a wonderful place to grow up. It’s safe, has great schools, has no shortage of restaurants, and boasts wonderful nature on the C&O Canal. (See Parks starting on page 5) [People] want to live here [for the] schools, the strong academics all around the Potomac area brings in many families looking for a great education for their children.”

As for herself, she said, “I love turning on the street seeing the mini horses and feeling the peacefulness of my neighborhood. The sunsets also never disappoint.”

As such a good place to live, Potomac has experienced a real estate “boom” during the pandemic.

GCAAR [Greater Capital Area Association of Realtors] states that Potomac Median home sales price is $910,000 up + 0.8% from last year, Zhuo said. “My listings have been selling in days, buyers are encountering multiple offer situations. Buyers are definitely increasing and out looking for homes that have workspaces and outdoor settings.”

Kempel added to the reason for the active real estate market in the Potomac Area.

“Much of this market is a direct result of the historically low interest rates improving a buyer’s ability to afford ‘more home,’” she said.

“But I believe the biggest driver of the market excitement is because the inventory of homes is so much lower than it has been to offer but who: People who care about each other and making our community the very best it can be.

A village movement of neighbors helping neighbors to age in place with dignity, vitality, and security. Schools and programs dedicated to supporting children with different abilities. Some of the world’s top talent in business, philanthropy, and government. Purpose-driven people in a place with tremendous natural resources and an unmatched physical location.

“We’re so glad you’ve chosen this place. You’re going to love it, too.”

Andrew Friedson is the District 1 Montgomery County Councilmember representing Potomac, Bethesda, Poolesville, Chevy Chase, Kensington, and North Bethesda. Contact him at councilmember.friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov.
Potomac was not intentionally planned for large houses but it is how many people define us. In fact, at the end of the 19th and into the early 20th century, one old timer once told me River Road was lined with shacks and much of the farmland was leased to tenants. There were grain mills along streams. There was the Peter's Store in the Glen where people often bartered for goods. The C&O Canal was a commercial route to ship farm goods to the city. But early planners wisely decided to turn the numerous stream valleys into conservation parkland and zone the region low density residential to protect water quality and provide a buffer between the urbanizing Maryland suburbs outside DC and large agricultural farms in the upper county.

As Potomac grew, conservation became increasingly important. The narrow corridor of the canal became Federal parkland, considered a 19th century transportation engineering feat allowing us access to 184+ linear miles of walking or biking from Georgetown to Cumberland along the towpath. Such a long riparian corridor supports abundant wildlife and diverse habitats. Great Falls is an international attraction. Numerous tributary streams leading to the mighty Potomac also became County parks with names like Cabin John Creek, Muddy Branch and Watts Branch. Many of our rural roads cross these streams. They shape the landscape of our region.

Potomac also has unique parks that hold rare geologic wonders like the Serpentine Barrens Conservation Park and River Road Shale Barrens. We are rich in park variety from specially designed playgrounds and local parks with playing fields to large tracts like Blockhouse Point Conservation Park. Many parks have trail systems. These can be found at montgomeryparks.org/activities/park-trails with maps and information on allowable uses within each park.

Beyond the Potomac Subregion proper and easy to reach via River Road extended is the jewel of Montgomery County conservation; the 93,000 acre Agricultural Reserve. Here is an ideal place to revive something many families grew up loving; the Sunday drive. A landscape of farm fields, orchards and roadside markets with meats and vegetables. There are breweries, wineries, even handmade soaps and the most beautiful rural countryside. You can take White’s Ferry across the Potomac River or hike on Sugarloaf Mountain.

This year the Covid pandemic has sent our residents flocking to nearby parks. The C&O Canal is crowded with walkers and bicyclists. I live in a log cabin adjacent to Watts Branch Stream Valley Park and though not easily accessible, with no planned trails, it has become a mecca for the local community, especially neighborhood children. It seems like all our parks are busy now, all day, every day. But what I’ve noticed with dismay is that we can easily forget these places are home to other species. They are not just places to rush through for exercise but forest and plant communities, some of which are rare. They are full of wild creatures, some of which require specialized habitats and they are steam communities of varied, fragile aquatic life. We are just visitors and we need to learn how to respect our wild lands, wherever we find them.

County resident Melanie Choukas-Bradley, author of books on trees, Rock Creek Park and Sugarloaf mountain, has recently written Resilience- Connecting Nature in Potomac
The Falls

Potomac is bordered by more than 12 miles of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, including the towpath and the Potomac River. Living in Potomac provides opportunities to enjoy the sights and sounds of the river with outdoor activities ranging from an easy stroll to a challenging hike; a flat bike ride of a few miles to multi-day bike trips; rock climbing; world-class whitewater kayaking or a gentle paddle on flatwater. Wildlife is abundant and birders flock to the area. All outdoor areas of the C&O Canal National Historical Park are open daylight hours year round. Visitors pay an entrance fee at the entrance to Great Falls Tavern Visitors Center at Falls Road and MacArthur Boulevard, but access everywhere else is free. Three-day pass for a vehicle is $20; a person on foot, bicycle or horse is $10; motorcycle is $15; annual pass, lifetime and senior citizen passes are also available. See www.nps.gov/choh

Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center and Olmsted Overlook
Visitors Center: Open Wednesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
11710 MacArthur Blvd.
301-767-3714

ABOUT THE FALLS:
From The Geologic Story of Great Falls and the Potomac River Gorge published by the U.S. Geological Survey in 1980: “In its seaward course, the Potomac River crosses many small rapids and cascades, but these are insignificant in comparison with the foaming fury of Great Falls, where the river drops 12 meters in about 180 meters and is channeled into a narrow rock-walled gorge less than 25 meters wide in places. In the summer the flow may be less than 38,000 liters a second, but during floods the flow commonly reaches 40 million liters a second. The average flow pouring over the falls is 349,000 liters of water every second and in a year, more than 9.5 trillion liters, enough water to flood the entire District of Columbia to a depth of 55 meters, converting the Washington Monument into a tall lighthouse.”

If you haven’t seen Great Falls, it’s time. Enter the C&O Canal National Historical Park at the intersection of Falls Road and MacArthur Boulevard. (See above.) For up close views of Great Falls, walk 0.2 miles over the Olmsted Conservation deck over the spectacular views of the Falls and the head of Mather Gorge.

INSIDER’S TIP
The Gold Mine Trail can be accessed at the top of the entrance to Great Falls, at the intersection of Falls Road and MacArthur Boulevard, or near the Great Falls Tavern Visitor’s center. Trails, which can be used for running or walking, include some steep inclines but are easier and shorter than the famous Billy Goat Trail. See the remains of an old building that was used from 1900–1939 to mine gold.

MULE DRAWN BOAT RIDES
Take a trip back in time to the 1870s and ride along the historic C&O Canal in a boat pulled by mules, sometime in the future. Experience rising eight feet in a lock while park interpreters in period clothing describe what life was like for the families that lived and worked on the canal. The boat is not operating in 2020 due to the pandemic but stay tuned and remain optimistic that it will begin again in 2021.

BILLY GOAT TRAIL
Thousands hike the Billy Goat Trail. See Guide to, Page 267

The canal boat at the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park.

Newcomers & Community Guide
Potomac's Parks: A Healthy Sampling

Potomac is home to a remarkable diversity of parks, natural areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, golf courses, and swimming pools. The area offers access to the Potomac River where the water is flat and inviting, and parks that offer access to the Potomac River where the water can be deadly. Here, in an unusual tradition, is our guide to much of what Potomac has to offer.

Carderock Recreation Area
Search "Carderock Recreation Area" in Potomac
Reach this 250-acre part of the park from the Cabin John Parkway or the Naval Surface Warfare Center at the west entrance or via the Great Falls Road exit. These areas include playing fields and baseball diamond, picnic facilities, and access to the Potomac River for fishing and boating, with access from the Old Angler's site or Carderock. Thousands use this part of the canal quarters program.

Hoyt's Woods Recreation Area
Search "Hoyt's Woods Recreation Area" in Potomac
Hoyt's Woods offers 155 acres of woods, creeks, meadows, and two lighted tennis courts, and a small family golf course. The area offers access to the Potomac River for fishing and boating, with access from the Old Angler's site or Carderock. Thousands use this part of the canal quarters program.

Forest Vale Garnet Center Nature Preserve
Search "Forest Vale Garnet Center Nature Preserve" in Potomac
This 115-acre park preserves a historic mill pond and a natural wetland that provides habitat for wood ducks and other wildlife. The park is open to the public for hiking and bird watching.

Adventures in Conservation Park
Search "Adventures in Conservation Park" in Potomac
Opened in 1999, this 52-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Beltway Park
Search "Beltway Park" in Potomac
This 100-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Greenbelt Park
Search "Greenbelt Park" in Potomac
This 200-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Lion's Park
Search "Lion's Park" in Potomac
This 200-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Edwards Farm Park
Search "Edwards Farm Park" in Potomac
This 100-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

West Greenbelt Park
Search "West Greenbelt Park" in Potomac
This 200-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Hillcrest Run Park
Search "Hillcrest Run Park" in Potomac
This 100-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Cabin John Recreation Center
Search "Cabin John Recreation Center" in Potomac
This 70-acre park includes a playground, walking trails, and a natural area for hiking and bird watching.

Carderock Recreation Area
Search "Carderock Recreation Area" in Potomac
Reach this 250-acre part of the park from the Cabin John Parkway or the Naval Surface Warfare Center at the west entrance or via the Great Falls Road exit. These areas include playing fields and baseball diamond, picnic facilities, and access to the Potomac River for fishing and boating, with access from the Old Angler's site or Carderock. Thousands use this part of the canal quarters program.

Hoyt's Woods Recreation Area
Search "Hoyt's Woods Recreation Area" in Potomac
Hoyt's Woods offers 155 acres of woods, creeks, meadows, and two lighted tennis courts, and a small family golf course. The area offers access to the Potomac River for fishing and boating, with access from the Old Angler's site or Carderock. Thousands use this part of the canal quarters program.
Campsites are available at Swain's Lock.

Swain's Lockhouse

Trail every year, with access from the Old Angler's site or from the Great Falls Tavern Visitors Center or Carderock. The loop between the C&O Canal and Potomac River is less than five miles long but has steep and rocky sections. Bring water and wear good walking shoes. No flip flops or ballet slippers. Allow plenty of time to stop and enjoy spectacular views of the cliffs, Potomac River passing through the gorge and sensitive vegetation and rare plants. This hike is marked by light blue trail blazes to keep visitors from trampling on Bear Island’s many rare plants and sensitive vegetation. The trail can be rough and rocky with steep climbs. But the trail is one of the most popular hikes in all of the metropolitan area, which can be done by people of all ages.

INSIDER’S TIP: The park service seeks volunteer trail stewards willing to hike parts of the trail, educate visitors at the trailheads, protect the natural resources of Bear Island, ensure visitors are prepared for the strenuous hike, share stories about the sensitive vegetation, and reduce trampling of the Bear Island’s many rare plants. Active trail stewards carry park radios for emergency communication and receive basic first aid training to help with minor injuries. www.chohvip.org/billy_goats/

CARDEROCK RECREATION AREA

Rock climbers visit Carderock daily for its famous cliffs. The recreation area includes playing fields, a large picnic pavilion available by reservation and access to the Potomac River and the Billy Goat Trail. Reach this 200-acre part of the park from the Clara Barton Parkway at the Naval Surface Warfare Center.

INSIDER’S TIP: Get involved on the river by joining the Bike Patrol, becoming a Billy Goat Trail Steward, or volunteering to help run the Canal Boat, or serving as a docent at the River Center. The Level Walker Program is the most popular volunteer activity of the C&O Canal Association. There are 69 levels, defined by the association along the canal, which vary from 1.2 miles to 5.66 miles. Volunteers are expected to walk their assigned area and report at least once a year, preferably more. Level walkers report on the condition of the towpath and any hazards they encounter by reporting to the Association. See http://www.chohvip.org/

OLD ANGLER’S INN

Access the park across from Old Angler’s Inn, 10801 MacArthur Blvd., a Potomac institution since 1860 for users of the canal or for patrons interested in food, drinks or live music in an idyllic setting. Indoor and outdoor seating. A popular spot for kayakers and stand-up paddleboarders, and a great spot to find outdoor adventure companies teaching beginning to advanced paddleboarding, kayaking and canoeing. Hiking enthusiasts have quick access to the Billy Goat Trail from here, or those who simply want to take an evening stroll or bike ride along the Burma Road or around Widewater, the area of the canal used for turning large boats around. Parking available across from the restaurant not at the restaurant. See https://oldanglersinn.com/ 10801 MacArthur Blvd. 301-365-2425

SWAIN’S LOCK

10700 Swain’s Lockhouse Road (off River Road)

Campsites are available at Swain's Lock, one of the largest of the canal lockhouses. The lock...
BLOCKHOUSE POINT:
INSIDER’S TREASURE

Those who know this 630 acres include Blockhouse Point, the jewel of Potomac. The natural and cultural resources at Blockhouse Point are amongst the most valuable in the country. The park contains a variety of exceptional and rare habitat, including mature upland forest, floodplain forest, wetlands, streams and river-rock outcrops. Nine species of threatened, endangered or watchlist species of plants have been identified in the park, along with 25 species of fish, nine species of amphibians, four species of reptiles, 39 species of nesting birds and 10 species of mammals.

During the Civil War, the 19th Massachusetts Infantry built three blockhouses in 1862 to guard Vi- olette's Lock and Pennyfield Lock, taking advantage of panoramic views from Blockhouse Point. Union sentries kept watch for Confederate movements across the river and at area fords. Source: National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit

INSIDER’S TIP

Montgomery County developed a brochure so people can walk the footsteps of Union Soldiers. Blockhouse Point is an area to enjoy peace, solitude, and an example of the natural and cultural resources of Potomac that rival the most valuable in the country.

VIOLETTE’S LOCK

Violette’s Lock is also home to a lockhouse built in 1830 that you can rent by the night. The Canal Master Plan. Rhode Island was the official nonprofit partner of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, which works in partnership with the National Park Service and other local communities to raise funds to preserve the park for future generations. See http://www.canaltrust.org/plan/explorer-mobile-app or download from your app store.

INSIDER’S TREASURE

Violette house is named for Jess Swain, a lock-keeper in the early 1900s whose help was in the excavation and construction of the canal. After running a boat rental and refreshment stand at Swain’s Lock for almost a century, the family ceased operations in 2006. Now part of Canal Quarters and available for overnight stays. Up to seven friends can spend up to three nights here, experiencing life on the canal. Lockhouse 21 is furnished to depict 1916 and tells the story of the Swain family, generations of whom helped build and run the C&O Canal.

https://www.canaltrust.org/programs/canal-quarters/

PENNYFIELD LOCK

End of Pennyfield Lock Road (off River Road)

The three-mile walk from Penn- nyfield Lock to Violette’s Lock takes you through many kinds of bird habitat and around Blockhouse Point. Pennyfield Lock was President Grover Cleveland’s favorite destination when he went on fishing excursions, according to a brochure so people can walk the footsteps of Union Soldiers. Blockhouse Point is an area to enjoy peace, solitude, and an example of the natural and cultural resources of Potomac that rival the most valuable in the country.

INSIDER’S TIP

Montgomery County developed a brochure so people can walk the footsteps of Union Soldiers. Blockhouse Point is an area to enjoy peace, solitude, and an example of the natural and cultural resources of Potomac that rival the most valuable in the country.

VIOLETTE’S LOCK

Violette’s Lock is also home to a lockhouse built in 1830 that you can rent by the night. The Canal

Blockhouse Point Conservation Park.

C&O Canal

A mobile app, “C&O Canal Explorer,” will aid users in exploring the 184.5 miles and 20,000 acres of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. The mobile app includes over 600 points of interest in the park mapped in a searchable format, allowing users to find at-a-glance hiking trails, historic sites, trailheads, parking and more. The app also calculates the distance from a user’s location to nearby amenities and points of interest, with the ability to view both upstream and downstream of a current location. The app was developed by the C&O Canal Trust, the official nonprofit partner of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, which works in partnership with the National Park Service and local communities to raise funds to preserve the park for future generations. See https://www.canaltrust.org/plan/explorer-mobile-app or download from your app store.

The Potomac Master Plan. Rhode Island was the official nonprofit partner of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, which works in partnership with the National Park Service and other local communities to raise funds to preserve the park for future generations. See https://www.canaltrust.org/plan/explorer-mobile-app or download from your app store.

INSIDER’S TIP

Montgomery County developed a brochure so people can walk the footsteps of Union Soldiers. Blockhouse Point is an area to enjoy peace, solitude, and an example of the natural and cultural resources of Potomac that rival the most valuable in the country.

VIOLETTE’S LOCK

Violette’s Lock is also home to a lockhouse built in 1830 that you can rent by the night. The Canal

Blockhouse Point Conservation Park.

C&O Canal

A mobile app, “C&O Canal Explorer,” will aid users in exploring the 184.5 miles and 20,000 acres of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. The mobile app includes over 600 points of interest in the park mapped in a searchable format, allowing users to find at-a-glance hiking trails, historic sites, trailheads, parking and more. The app also calculates the distance from a user’s location to nearby amenities and points of interest, with the ability to view both upstream and downstream of a current location. The app was developed by the C&O Canal Trust, the official nonprofit partner of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, which works in partnership with the National Park Service and local communities to raise funds to preserve the park for future generations. See https://www.canaltrust.org/plan/explorer-mobile-app or download from your app store.
newcomers to Potomac hoping to learn about the area and make new friends have no further to look than the Potomac Area Neighbors Club, a long-standing women’s organization, a group that truly has something for everyone.

Within the larger group, which met monthly before the pandemic, and now meets via Zoom, there are activity groups where you find that something for you. Choose from book groups, cooking groups, film buffs, current affairs discussions, power walkers, bridge, theatre, writing, Mah Jong and two or three dining groups.

If nothing sounds appealing, suggest an idea of your own. “It’s great because whenever new people join, they bring good ideas,” President Joanne Zinsmeister said.

Members are included in some activities but, PANC is mostly a women’s group Zinsmeister said. “I wouldn’t rule [men] out as members,” Zinsmeister said. “After all we are a neighbors club.”

PANC started as Potomac Area Newcomers Club in the late 1960s. “The object is still the same, to develop new friendships,” Zinsmeister said.

But, in the three years she has been president of the group, especially before the pandemic, Zinsmeister has worked to expand membership and make it multi-generational. She worked to add activities that appeal to younger members, planning activities that include children and families, along with planning events for weekends and evenings to include working women, she said.

“Our mean age is probably 60, which is why I was reaching out to younger members,” she said. When the pandemic started, Zinsmeister said, she was afraid that would be the end of PANC, but they turned to Zoom and joined with friends of the Library and Potomac Community Village to offer programs.

They have had author talks and have an art historian and a photographer scheduled to speak this fall and a local chocolatier will teach the art of making bon bons.

“We aren’t just girls having fun,” Zinsmeister said. “We want to be a presence in the community, it’s our civic duty, we want to be women helping women.”

The group donates meals to Interfaith Women’s Shelter in Rockville, sponsored a toiletries collection for the women and helps in other ways within the constraints of COVID-19.

“I asked members what they like best about PANC,” Zinsmeister said. “Most said long lasting friendships. I think that is the glue that binds us.”

To learn more about Potomac Area Neighbors Club visit www.potomacneighbors.com.

Where to Give Locally

In the Potomac Area

Nonprofits with local missions need your help in this dire crisis.

We list many kinds of nonprofits in and around Potomac: food banks, animal adoption, arts, environment, housing; find what appeals to you, and pitch in. It’s fair to say that most organizations would like financial contributions and volunteers.

Manna Food Center

Manna Food Center, the main food bank in Montgomery County, strives to eliminate hunger through food distribution, education, and advocacy. Manna provides food to 32,000 individuals each year and helps distribute rescued food to soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters county-wide. Nearly every social service organization in Montgomery County relies on Manna to provide food to their clients.

You can drop off food donations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at: the Warehouse, 5311 Gaither Road Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 424-1130 info@mannafood.org www.mannafood.org

Mercy Health Clinic in Gaithersburg is a non-sectarian, non-profit, community health clinic committed to providing high quality medical care to eligible patients free of charge.

It serves around 2,000 patients annually with more than 50 volunteer physicians and over 100 medical and administrative volunteers. “At Mercy, we believe that we all benefit when everyone in our community has access to health care.”

The clinic is located at 7 Metropolitan Court, Suite 1, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. Phone 240-773-0300 or visit www.mercyhealthclinic.org

Interfaith Works provides shelter, food, and clothing to low-income and homeless neighbors.

Offices are at 114 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville, MD 20850 www.interfaithworks.org

Shepherd’s Table is a nonprofit organization in downtown Silver Spring, supported by volunteers, religious organizations, government, businesses, foundations, and individual donors.

It provides help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance.

Where to GiveLocally In the Potomac Area

Nonprofits with local missions need your help in this dire crisis.

We list many kinds of nonprofits in and around Potomac: food banks, animal adoption, arts, environment, housing; find what appeals to you, and pitch in. It’s fair to say that most organizations would like financial contributions and volunteers.

Manna Food Center

Manna Food Center, the main food bank in Montgomery County, strives to eliminate hunger through food distribution, education, and advocacy. Manna provides food to 32,000 individuals each year and helps distribute rescued food to soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters county-wide. Nearly every social service organization in Montgomery County relies on Manna to provide food to their clients.

You can drop off food donations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at: the Warehouse, 5311 Gaither Road Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 424-1130 info@mannafood.org www.mannafood.org

Mercy Health Clinic in Gaithersburg is a non-sectarian, non-profit, community health clinic committed to providing high quality medical care to eligible patients free of charge.

It serves around 2,000 patients annually with more than 50 volunteer physicians and over 100 medical and administrative volunteers. “At Mercy, we believe that we all benefit when everyone in our community has access to health care.”

The clinic is located at 7 Metropolitan Court, Suite 1, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. Phone 240-773-0300 or visit www.mercyhealthclinic.org

Interfaith Works provides shelter, food, and clothing to low-income and homeless neighbors.

Offices are at 114 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville, MD 20850 www.interfaithworks.org

Shepherd’s Table is a nonprofit organization in downtown Silver Spring, supported by volunteers, religious organizations, government, businesses, foundations, and individual donors.

It provides help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance.

Where to Give Locally In the Potomac Area

Nonprofits with local missions need your help in this dire crisis. We list many kinds of nonprofits in and around Potomac: food banks, animal adoption, arts, environment, housing; find what appeals to you, and pitch in. It’s fair to say that most organizations would like financial contributions and volunteers.

Manna Food Center

Manna Food Center, the main food bank in Montgomery County, strives to eliminate hunger through food distribution, education, and advocacy. Manna provides food to 32,000 individuals each year and helps distribute rescued food to soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters county-wide. Nearly every social service organization in Montgomery County relies on Manna to provide food to their clients.

You can drop off food donations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at: the Warehouse, 5311 Gaither Road Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 424-1130 info@mannafood.org www.mannafood.org

Mercy Health Clinic in Gaithersburg is a non-sectarian, non-profit, community health clinic committed to providing high quality medical care to eligible patients free of charge.

It serves around 2,000 patients annually with more than 50 volunteer physicians and over 100 medical and administrative volunteers. “At Mercy, we believe that we all benefit when everyone in our community has access to health care.”

The clinic is located at 7 Metropolitan Court, Suite 1, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. Phone 240-773-0300 or visit www.mercyhealthclinic.org

Interfaith Works provides shelter, food, and clothing to low-income and homeless neighbors.

Offices are at 114 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville, MD 20850 www.interfaithworks.org

Shepherd’s Table is a nonprofit organization in downtown Silver Spring, supported by volunteers, religious organizations, government, businesses, foundations, and individual donors.

It provides help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance.

Where to Give Locally In the Potomac Area

Nonprofits with local missions need your help in this dire crisis. We list many kinds of nonprofits in and around Potomac: food banks, animal adoption, arts, environment, housing; find what appeals to you, and pitch in. It’s fair to say that most organizations would like financial contributions and volunteers.

Manna Food Center

Manna Food Center, the main food bank in Montgomery County, strives to eliminate hunger through food distribution, education, and advocacy. Manna provides food to 32,000 individuals each year and helps distribute rescued food to soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters county-wide. Nearly every social service organization in Montgomery County relies on Manna to provide food to their clients.

You can drop off food donations Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at: the Warehouse, 5311 Gaither Road Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 424-1130 info@mannafood.org www.mannafood.org

Mercy Health Clinic in Gaithersburg is a non-sectarian, non-profit, community health clinic committed to providing high quality medical care to eligible patients free of charge.

It serves around 2,000 patients annually with more than 50 volunteer physicians and over 100 medical and administrative volunteers. “At Mercy, we believe that we all benefit when everyone in our community has access to health care.”

The clinic is located at 7 Metropolitan Court, Suite 1, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. Phone 240-773-0300 or visit www.mercyhealthclinic.org

Interfaith Works provides shelter, food, and clothing to low-income and homeless neighbors.

Offices are at 114 West Montgomery Ave., Rockville, MD 20850 www.interfaithworks.org

Shepherd’s Table is a nonprofit organization in downtown Silver Spring, supported by volunteers, religious organizations, government, businesses, foundations, and individual donors.

It provides help to people who are homeless or in need by providing basic services, including meals, social services, medical support, clothing, and other assistance.
Potomac Day Cancelled This Year

By Peggy McEwan

There will be no scouts leading the parade down River Road, no bands, no fancy floats, and no candy thrown out for children to scramble for.

Potomac Day has been cancelled because of the pandemic.

This year would have marked the 38th annual event which, Jennifer Matheson, director of Operations for the Potomac Chamber of Commerce, said can only remember being cancelled one other time.

“That was during the sniper,” she said.

For three weeks in Autumn 2002 the area was terrorized by a series of apparently random shootings accounting for ten deaths and three wounded.

“We have an area with lots of families and old er people,” Matheson said. “We have to protect them.”

Nature in Potomac

PAGE 4

With Nature in a Time of Crisis. It is filled with ideas and gentle ways to approach those places which for some have become salvation. Like finding a ‘wild home’ where we go to feel safe and connected. Waking to a deeper appreciation of what lives in our own backyards. We can travel to other worlds in Nature. Places of wonder and open spaces, and rural lands in Montgomery County’s Agricultural Reserve for the benefit of all Washington Metropolitan area residents. Write PO Box 24, Poolesville, MD 20837, call 301-461-9851 email info@mccoolonline.com or visit www.mccoolonline.com.

Spire Club Foundation Inc. is a non-profit organization organized to ensure that people with disabilities and other health-related challenges have the opportunities to pursue healthy, fun and rewarding activities that contribute to physical fitness and nutrition in an integrated setting.

MCAPW (Montgomery County Partners for Animal Well-Being) is the non-profit program of the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center (MCASAC) working through MCA- SAC to keep pets healthy and happy by prohibiting at all locations and venues, including but not limited to parties, receptions, parades, festivals, conventions, and fundraisers.

MCAPW was founded in 2005, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and has evolved into a vibrant animal rescue organization. Their mission is to save the lives of abandoned dogs and cats and place them in loving and permanent homes. PO Box 60714, Potomac, 20859, 1-877-838-9171; info@petconnectrescue.org, www.petconnectrescue.org.

POTOMAC ALMANAC

www.PotomacAlmanac.com

@PotomacAlmanac

Newspaper of Potomac
A Connection Newspaper
An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.
1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/potomac

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

EDITORIAL
PHONE: 703-778-9415
E-MAIL: almanac@connectionnewspapers.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Carol Dell, Kenny Lourie, Peggy McEwan, Debbie Funk, David Griffin, Jerry Vernon, Production Manager: Gourav Purohit.

ADVERTISING
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com

Display Advertising:
Kenny Lourie 301-325-1398
klourie@connectionnewspapers.com
Debbie Funk
Display Advertising/National Sales
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Jerry Vernon
Executive Vice President
703-549-0064
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

Potomac Almanac is published by Local Media Connection LLC

Five Time First Place Award-Winner
Public Service
MDDC Press Association
Four Time National Award-Winning Newspaper in Writing, Photography, Editing, Graphics and Design

And So It Continues

By Kenneth H. Lourie

Two-plus weeks into my thyroid cancer treatment, all is as I anticipated. I’m still not in a comfort zone, routine wise, nor side-effect wise, I am feeling some reactive distress. I won’t self-indulge and list the difficulties that I’m having. I will say that even though I’m extremely thankful not to have any of the very severe side effects (blood clots, atrial fibrillation), I have felt something, the ‘something’ I’ve felt has been made more complicated due to this thyroid pill I take daily, since I had my thyroid surgically removed in late January, 2020. The proper dosage, prescribed to replace the function of the thyroid is not easy to determine. As such, I’m not exactly feeling myself. I’m not sure who I’m feeling as Groucho said he could not get that close, but it’s not who I’ve come to feel.

The complication I refer to is the effect on my thyroid replacement medication (synthroid) by my thyroid cancer pills. What happens, I’m told, is that the effectiveness is partially mitigated by the cancer medication and as a result, I need regular lab work to monitor the situation and maintain proper thyroid replacement. If my thyroid hormone is too low, I’ll feel tired and unmotivated. And since a side effect of the thyroid cancer medication is among others, fatigue, I am tired for two reasons: the cancer drug itself and the effect the same cancer drug has on the synthroid pill, which has to work in order to do its job.

Now, not only am I a two-plus-the-price-of-one cancer patient (non small cell lung cancer and thyroid cancer), I am also a thyroid cancer patient being treated for cancer and for the replacement of the thyroid. As a result, in addition to juggling two cancers, I am also juggling cancer treatment for both with two semi competing side effects: feeling tired due to low thyroid hormone and feeling tired as a side effect of the thyroid cancer treatment. Imagine one or the other would be manageable but simultaneously, not so much. It’s just another RGOO-type situation.

Granted, it’s a living and it sure beats the alternative. Still, I was hoping one set of side effects would be enough rather than having to consider a second set (side effects of the side effects, if you will. My concern is compounded by something my oncologist was wary of doing years ago. Treating the side effects, in addition to treating the cancer. Moreover, he said that often it’s the side effects that become so debilitating and harmful that the actual cancer treatment itself has to be stopped. And though your quality of life might improve - with the reduction (or elimination) of the side effects, the cancer is now left untreated and cancer left untreated generally speaking, doesn’t usually end especially if it’s cancer. If you know what I mean? In either scenario, you’re unlikely to be smelling any roses.

And ‘not smelling any roses’ is what I’m most worried about. Stopping treatment for the thyroid cancer would be bad enough, but what about my previous pre-existing stage IV, non small cell lung cancer diagnosed Feb. 2009? I’m currently not receiving any treatment for that as we defer to the thyroid cancer. I do have to stop the thyroid cancer treatment because of the side effects, will I then re-start the lung cancer treatment for which I had very minor side effects. Is treating the back-up (so to speak) cancer better than not treating the new primary thyroid cancer? As you can possibly tell, I am potentially between a rock and a very hard place.

Nevertheless, as my oncologist emailed me a month or so ago when we received the results of my third tumor biopsy (which was taken from a tumor inside my lung and came back from a lymph node), “Thyroid cancer is better than lung cancer.” And though I certainly liked the sound of that when I read it, the peculiar complications were not yet a part of the discussion. But that’s what being a cancer patient is all about: an evolving existence of good, bad, and indifferent information with nary a guarantee in sight.

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