

Potomac ALMANAC

SENIOR
LIVING

PAGE 7

Elie Cain in 2007 at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Potomac Almanac, started by Elie's mother, Margo McConihe. Elie died Jan. 19 of complications of Covid-19.

Remembering Elie

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Police in Schools
Disproportionate Effect

NEWS, PAGE 3

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JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 2, 2021

REAL ESTATE SALES, 2 ♦ KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 7

POTOMAC ALMANAC FILE PHOTO

Potomac REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



3 13128 Brushwood Way — \$1,590,000



7 11100 Tara Road — \$1,420,000



8 8900 Belmart Road — \$1,420,000

November, 2020 Sales, \$1,620,000~\$1,420,000

IN NOVEMBER, 2020, 61 POTOMAC HOMES
SOLD BETWEEN \$2,737,500-\$550,000.



2 9 River Falls — \$1,600,000



5 7705 Masters Drive — \$1,590,000



Address.....BR FB HB Postal City.....Sold Price... Type.....Lot AC. Postal Code ... Subdivision..... Date Sold

1	10416 GREY FOX RD.....	5... 4... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,620,000	Detached..	0.52.....	20854...	GLEN MEADOWS...	11/30/20
2	9 RIVER FALLS	5... 4... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,600,000	Detached..	0.35.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	11/16/20
3	13128 BRUSHWOOD WAY ..	7... 5... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,590,000	Detached..	2.45.....	20854.	TRAVILAH MEADOWS	11/30/20
4	11615 SPRINGRIDGE RD.....	4... 5... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,500,000	Detached..	4.97.....	20854.....	POTOMAC	11/19/20
5	7705 MASTERS DR.....	6... 4... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,450,000	Detached..	0.35.....	20854.....	RIVER FALLS	11/09/20
6	7723 FONTAINE ST	6... 5	POTOMAC	\$1,450,000	Detached..	0.49.....	20854.	WILLERBURN ACRES	11/04/20
7	11100 TARA RD.....	6... 8... 2	POTOMAC	\$1,440,000	Detached..	2.15.....	20854	POTOMAC VIEW ESTS	11/23/20
8	8900 BELMART RD	4... 3... 1	POTOMAC	\$1,420,000	Detached..	2.01.....	20854...	POTOMAC FALLS...	11/12/20

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Will Police Remain a Force in Schools?

Registration already full for public hearing on School Resource Officers program Thursday, Feb. 4, at 7:30 p.m.

BY KEN MOORE
THE ALMANAC

Let's repeat the known facts: Black and Hispanic students are suspended twice as often as their white peers in elementary, middle and high schools. Special education students are suspended twice as much as all other students.

By the time students reach high schools, where the police department's school resource officers are employed as a daily presence in the lives of students, the data shows more disparity.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Black students were arrested 73 times and Hispanic students 55 times of the 163 student arrests that school year, compared to 32 White students, and 2 Asian students, according to MCPS data. In the 2019-2020 school year, shortened by the pandemic, Black students and Hispanic students accounted for 62 (34 Black students and 28 Hispanic students) of the 71 arrests.

At-large councilmembers Will Jawando and Hans Riemer introduced legislation last November that would eliminate school resource officers from public schools, calling the program a part of the school-to-prison pipeline.

More facts of what that leads to: Jawando said students of color are four times as likely as their white peers to be arrested in school. While awaiting trial, they are 10 times as likely to be held by the Department of Juvenile Justice as their white peers. And they are nine times as likely to be incarcerated than their white peers.

"It gets worse as you go down the system," said Jawando.

The County Council has scheduled a public hearing on Feb. 4, 2020, in the evening at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom, to allow for all the people who want to comment on the SRO program.

"It's not only that Black and Brown students are likely to be arrested, it's once they are arrested, the outcomes are different," said Riemer.

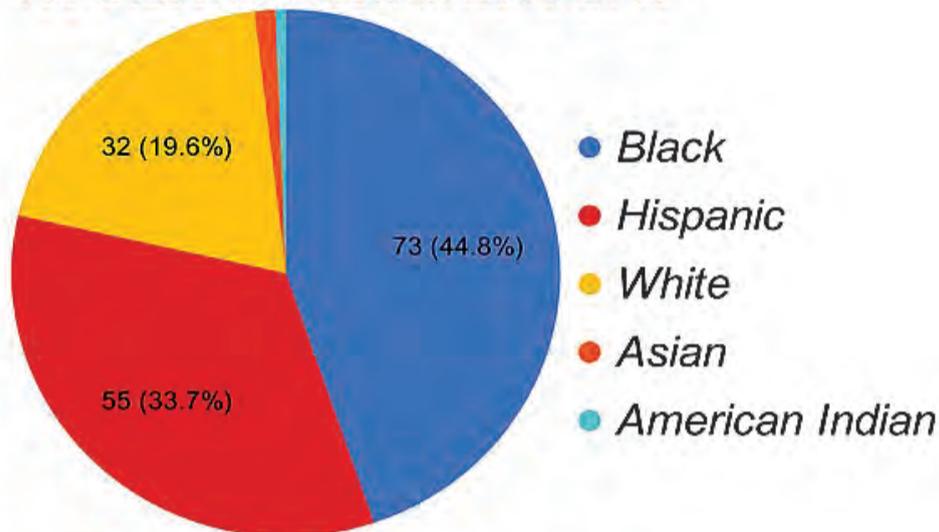
"The program was created with the best of intentions," Jawando said, but, "we know disproportionate harm is happening."

"That's the data we have," he said.

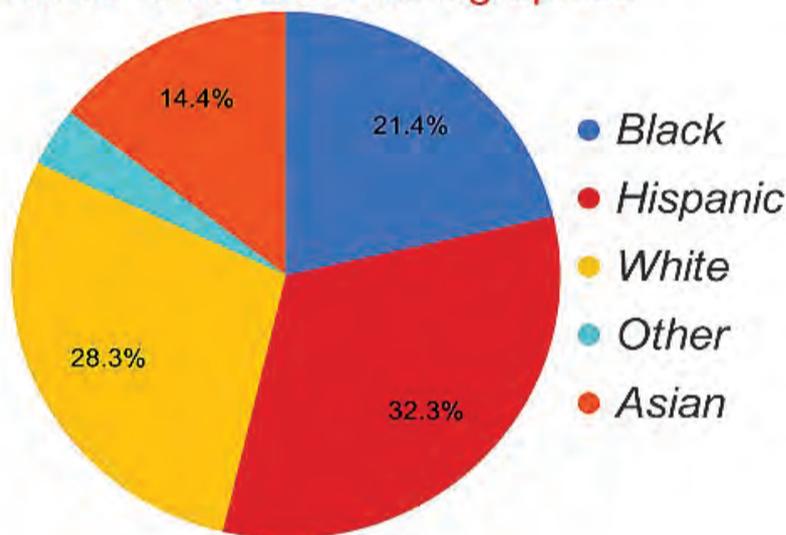
GIVE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM the chance to come up with their recommendations, said councilmember Craig Rice (District 2), at the introduction of Jawando's bill in November.

"I was surprised to see this legislation being issued right now because the Board of Education has not yet issued its report," said Councilmember Nancy Navarro (District 4), who served on the Montgomery County Board of Education before being elected to County Council. Navarro said it was "paternalistic" for Jawando and Riemer to propose legislation before the Board of Education, seven women plus the male student member

163 Student Arrests in 2018-2019



2018-19 Student Demographics



SOURCE: WWW.MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV/POL/BUREAUS/PATROL-SERVICES.HTML

Disparities in arrests lead to questions about police in Montgomery County Public Schools.

Hana O'Looney, student,
Richard Montgomery,
Montgomery County Regional Student Government Association

Study after study has shown the disproportionate effect this program has had on the criminalization of Black, brown and disabled students despite the fact that no national or Maryland study has found that an increase in police presence decreases school violence.

Edward Owusu
Clarksburg High
School principal

School resource officers are needed in MCPS high schools.

As a principal, I can recall many instances where SROs

have reached out on weekday morning or evening, or a weekend, with information that would affect operations or safety of the school the following day, even sometimes in the following hour.

Robert Wilcox
Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations

The data shows deep disproportionality but we haven't disaggregated that by school.

Willie Parker-Loan
Assistant,
Chief of Police, MCPD

SROs are an immediate face-to-face resource that principals can and do rely upon.

Lynne Harris
School Board Member,
At-large

We have to look very very closely at the reality of the impacts of everything that we do in the school system on our students of color.

Patricia O'Neill
School Board Member,
District 3

We need accurate data as a means of accountability.

Councilmember Hans Riemer, At-large

What we are doing today is relying too much on policing. ... Let's make sure that we do not have a school-to-prison pipeline in Montgomery County.

of the board, has acted.

"For us to have legislation before they can even give their opinion," said Sidney Katz (District 3), Council President at the time, "is unfortunate."

Gabe Alborno (at-large, now Council vice president) said he's open to change, but felt the legislation was "somewhat premature."

Rice said he's "anxious to hear what our school system says."

The Board of Education said it would make its recommendation on Jan. 12, at a regular scheduled meeting, and the Council moved the originally scheduled public hearing from January to February.

Jawando, at the time, said, "I do not expect a report [in January], that's not the role they are taking."

LAST WEEK, the Board of Education said they expect to make a recommendation in May; that more vetting of the SRO program and restorative justice initiatives is needed, plus they want to hold meetings in the community.

All high school principals in the county have supported the continuation of the school resource officer program, yet Superintendent Jack Smith acknowledged the problem.

"It's absolutely undeniable that different members of the community and different communities in Montgomery County, in the state, and in the nation, have had a different experience with law enforcement over time. It is undeniable," said Smith. "It is absolutely true that a disparity has and continues to exist for our students of color and especially our African American students."

Student School Board member Nick Asante says the feedback from students who have had experience with the SRO program is critical.

He asked in the Fall for data on the breakdown of incidents and arrests and demographics in specific schools and said part of the disproportionate treatment comes from school culture and is incited within the culture of administrative teams.

"What is it that may be fueling a culture that we need to disrupt?" said Monifa McKnight, Deputy Superintendent.

But the school system was let down by the way data has been collected.

"Whatever changes we make to school safety and security, one of the things we should do is build a data infrastructure that makes sure we can always answer the questions," said Smith.

That change can be done immediately, Smith said.

For the future, School Board member Lynne Harris (at-large) said the school system needs to "better help students throughout their journey with us."

She wants to get to a system that looks at a student and doesn't say, "What's wrong with you?" But looks at a student and says, "What happened and how can we help you?"

School Board Member Shebra Evans (District 4) said she's glad the conversation is happening. "It's very clear we need to do things differently."

NEWS

Remembering Elie

'Mayor of Potomac' dead of complications of Covid-19



Elie Cain with Guy Semmes.



Elie and Ted Cain.



Elie Cain and Cissy Grant.



Elie with Harry Semmes, Ted Cain and Leslie Leven.



Elie and Jean Roessler, former State Senator and Maryland Secretary of Aging.



Elie with Karin Currie, who launched the Friends of the Potomac Library, the first such group in the county, with a good push from Elie. The Friends group in Potomac brings storybook characters to inspire readers at the Potomac Day Parade, like the Very Hungry Caterpillar.



Elie at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Potomac Almanac, started by Elie's mother, Margo McConihe.



Elie with CJPVFD Chief Jim Seavey.



Elie Cain with George and Ginny Barnes, Calum Murray and Susann Lee at a West Montgomery County Citizens Association meeting. Elie and Ginny served on the panel that guided the Potomac Master Plan about 20 years ago.



time: running the Potomac Day Parade with [her husband] Ted, giving testimony at the County Council meetings, planting a garden at the Great Falls Inn, organizing events for the Potomac Chamber of Commerce, organizing a flea market, acting in the Potomac Theatre and I almost forgot starting the On the Left Bank. It makes your head [spin]. It would be impossible to name everything she did."

Bruce Adams, former County Councilmember, former director of Montgomery County Office of Community Partnerships, founder of Bethesda Big Train baseball, grew up as a neighbor.

"I can't imagine it was easy to live up to the legacy of [her parents] F. Moran and Margo McConihe. Mr. McConihe was stern and proper and businesslike. Mrs. McConihe was, well, marvelously free spirited. Because of Mr. McConihe, Potomac had a bank, a church, a shopping center, and a hunt club. Because of Mrs. McConihe, Potomac had pizzazz," said Adams. "They were among the very most important of Potomac's founding mothers and fathers."

Elie had the very best qualities of both of them, Adams said. "For nearly half a century, Elie worked to uphold the values and legacy of her parents. With civic achievements from theatre to the Chamber of Commerce to the Great Falls Tavern, Elie was Potomac's number one cheerleader and most admirable servant leader.

"One of the most memorable and awkward moments of my public service was going before the Potomac Chamber of Commerce while seeking a seat on the Montgomery County Council in 1986 and having to confess I had bitten their president. Elie had been my babysitter and at a tender age I had apparently not yet learned the finer points of conflict resolution. The always good natured Elie, of course, smiled and made an effort to convince her members this should not



Elie Cain with George and Ginny Barnes.



Elie and Ted Cain with Diana Conway in the middle at a Park After Dark gala.

disqualify me from public office. As so many who worked with her for all these decades to preserve her beloved Potomac know well, Elie always had your back."

Ragan Adams, sister to Bruce, recalled: "Elie and I were both the only girls in the families of two Potomac female legends, Margo McConihe (Elie) and Polly Adams (me). Margo and Polly planted and tended community as if each individual was a sacred seed. Elie continued the tradition in her own special way fitting the enormous changes the area underwent. She kept watch on and tended the heart of the community."

Elie was the loving wife of the late Theophilus "Ted" Cain, mother of Susan Pisarra Gadwah (the late Ronald Gadwah), Michael Stuart

Pisarra and Anthony Randall Pisarra (Tricia), step-mother of Bruce Cain (Deborah), Marilyn Cain Browning (Donald), Marcia Cain, Rick Cain (Toni) and David Cain, grandmother of Cory Pisarra, Zachary Pisarra, Matthew Browning, Phillip Browning and Dawn Reid; sister to Michael McConihe (Bruce) and aunt to Frances M Botsford and Marguerite McConihe,

Owing to the pandemic, there are no current plans for a service, but a memorial will be held at some point this summer at St. Francis Episcopal Church when it is possible to have an outdoor event.

In lieu of flowers the family is requesting that donations be made in Elie's name to the Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern: <http://fhfgt.org/youcanhelp.html>.

sets for their production of The Wizard of Oz. I was wandering around, trying to figure out how to photograph the show and probably looking slightly bewildered by all the actors and crew racing around, rehearsing lines, moving props, and having intense discussions with the director and stage manager. Elie took me aside and patiently explained what each person was doing and why.

"Later, when I joined the PTC board and subsequently became their treasurer, Elie helped me understand the administrative and internal working of the theater company.

"I'm sure the entire Potomac community will miss Elie. I know I will."

Born in Washington, DC in 1938, Elie moved to Potomac, with her parents in 1940 and remained there for the next 77 years until moving to Fox Hill in Bethesda shortly before her 80th birthday.

Potomac was horse country in those days, and in her early years, Elie was an avid horse woman, a member of the Potomac Hunt and a regular participant in the annual point-to-point races on her beloved mare, Blondie, according to a family obituary.

She graduated from the Holton-Arms School in 1956 and Skidmore College in 1960.

In her later years Ms. Cain was known as the honorary mayor of Potomac where she ran a business (On the Left Bank) with her mother, Marguerite H. McConihe, for over three decades. A member of the board of the Potomac Chamber of Commerce for 25 years, Ms. Cain served as its president for 3 years in the mid-1980s and was later honored as Citizen of the Year, and later still honored with the chamber's Lifetime Achievement Award.

In her role with the Chamber, Ms. Cain was one of the founders of the Potomac Day celebration and organized the annual parade for over 20 years.

Adam Greenberg: "In the early days of my career I was lucky to meet Elie, and create a long lasting friendship. She taught me the importance of community and giving back to the people who give so much to us. I have guided most of the next 25+ years with in mind. I will miss Elie and Potomac now has our eternal "Mayor."

Harvey Levine, who worked with Elie at the Potomac Theatre Company, remembered:

"Elie was a positive and powerful force in Potomac. She organized the annual Potomac Day celebrations each October. She was one of the driving forces behind the Potomac Theatre Company.

"Anyone who has ever worked with the Potomac Theatre Company will remember Elie. She did whatever was needed. The first time I met Elie, she was painting



Elie Cain was in charge of the Potomac Day Parade each year for decades.



A long-time board member of the Potomac Theater Company, Ms. Cain served as its president for almost a decade and was instrumental in its 10-year run as the resident theater company at the Bullis School.

Elie founded and served as the first president of The Friends of the Historic Great Falls Tavern and, along with her husband Ted, played a key role in the fundraising for, construction and donation of the canal boat, Charles F. Mercer to the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park. A member of the founding congregation of St. Francis Episcopal Church in Potomac, Ms. Cain later served on the vestry and remained active with the church until her passing.

In addition, Ms. Cain was a board member of the Bullis School in Potomac and the Holton-Arms

School in Bethesda, (where she was involved in advocating for LGBT students). Long active in the West Montgomery County Citizens Association, Ms. Cain was member of The Community Advisory Committee to the Transportation Planning Board for the Washington metropolitan region.

Elie was not known only for her formal roles with organizations dedicated to civic pride, she, and the friends she encouraged to join in, added special touches to make Potomac a better place to live.

Guy Semmes recalls more than one instance:

"Potomac will never be the same without Elie. She shared herself so generously with Potomac residents. ... She was so dedicated to making the Village a place we could be proud of and feel an important member of.

By PEGGY McEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

leanor (Elie) McConihe Cain, known to many longtime residents as the mayor of Potomac, died on Tuesday, Jan. 19 of complications relating to Covid-19. She was a community activist and businesswoman, and so much more.

Some of those who knew and worked with Elie over the years recalled her many roles and how she brought others into the task of improving life in Potomac.

"It was so sad to hear of Elie's passing as it marks the end of a chapter of Potomac history," said Karin Currie, of Potomac Friends of the Library. "I'm sure you will receive many tributes to Elie — her love of and involvement in so many activities benefiting Potomac is leg-



Vaccines will not be widely available until later in 2021, according to Montgomery County. Eventually everyone who wants a vaccine will be able to receive one.

Shots into Arms Going Slowly, Montgomery County Is Slower

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
POTOMAC ALMANAC

When Maryland opened eligibility for Covid-19 vaccine to those in Category 1B, Montgomery County did not. They were a week behind.

Now the state is including those eligible from Phase 1C:

- ❖ Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- ❖ Education staff, including K-12 teachers, support staff and daycare providers
- ❖ Public safety workers not covered in Phase 1A
- ❖ Health care workers not covered in Phase 1A, including but not limited to lab services, public health, vaccine manufacturing and other health care professions
- ❖ Front line judiciary staff
- ❖ Continuity of government
- ❖ Food/agriculture production, critical manufacturing, U.S. Postal Service, public mass transit, grocery store employees

- ❖ Veterinarians and support staff
- ❖ Clergy and other essential support for houses of worship
- ❖ adults age 65 and older.

Who is currently eligible in Montgomery County?

Phase 1B includes residents over the age of 75 plus frontline essential workers.

As of Jan. 25, the County had received 26,900 first doses, and administered 23,591 which is 87.7 percent administered of those received, according to the County. www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/vaccine/

“Progress through the priority groups depends entirely on how much vaccine we receive from the Maryland Department of Health and when we receive it. We estimate that there are an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 individuals in the first priority group (1A). We will not wait until everyone in that group is vaccinated before moving

to the next group but we are aiming to get maximum uptake of vaccinations by each group.

Vaccinations are by appointment only, and the county says it will provide a link to the appointment system when we move to the next priority groups.

Priority Group 1C includes individuals with underlying medical conditions which increase the risk of serious, life-threatening complications from COVID-19. The county says it expects additional guidance from the CDC on which underlying medical conditions will be included.

“Vaccines will not be widely available until later in 2021. Eventually everyone who wants a vaccine will be able to receive one.”

It is expected that private doctors and some retailers will eventually be able to order vaccine directly and assist in vaccinating community residents but there is no current timeline as to when that will happen.”

BULLETIN BOARD

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

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 27

Stress Management Seminar.
6-7:30 p.m. Residents are invited to join a free online event for a conversation focused on improving stress management skills and well-being through self-care. The session is part of a series, Wellness Community Events: Healing and Holding On - One Conversation at a Time for the Community, focused on mental health and wellness issues affecting the community as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Self-care is vital for our overall well-being. This workshop will focus on providing the knowledge and skills to help participants develop a self-care plan. Participants will learn how self-care activities can help them cope with stress and improve their mental, emotional, and physical health. Participants will learn:

- Definitions of stress, burnout and self-care;
 - The impact self-care can have on your overall wellbeing;
 - Proven self-care strategies; and
 - How to develop your own self-care plan.
- Join the conversation on Teams Live at <http://bit.ly/wellness-community-4> or view it live on County Cable Montgomery and the County's Facebook page.

THURSDAY/JAN. 28

Should You Move or Remodel?
6 p.m. Hopkins & Porter of Potomac is hosting a virtual session on Should You Move or Remodel? This informative virtual session is perfect if you've asked yourself:
How can I add more functionality or modern amenities?
What costs are associated with moving?
How do I know it's time to move?
What's an example of a major remodel?
After living in the same home for many years, your family's needs may have changed.

Many homeowners are faced with the decision to sell and move to a newer home, or stay and customize their current home to meet their changing needs. Residential home experts will share the pros and cons of moving vs. remodeling to help you make the best decision for your family. Sign up at www.hopkinsandporter.com.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORKSHOPS

Montgomery County Public Libraries in partnership with the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County, is offering the Peace by Peace Series, which is four workshops that explore what conflict means, and how and why individuals react in different ways to conflict. The programs offer tips and techniques on how to develop productive methods to communicate with a partner, friend, family member, acquaintance or co-worker. Workshops are geared toward specific situations and age groups. The Peace by Peace Series free workshops are:

- Understanding and Reacting to Conflict for Adults; Monday, Feb. 8, 4 - 5:30 p.m.
 - Learning to Talk and Be Heard in Conflict – for middle and high Schoolers; Monday, Feb. 22, 4 - 5:30 p.m.
 - Cómo Entender, Reaccionar y Solucionar Conflictos entre Adultos (Understanding and Reacting to Conflict for Adults - in Spanish); Monday, March 1, 4 - 5:30 p.m.
 - Managing Conflict and Maintaining Relationships in the Workplace; Monday, March 8, 4 - 5:30 p.m.
- All workshops are offered virtually. Registration is required for each. For more information about the program, email Clotilde Puértolas at clotilde.puertolas@montgomerycountymd.gov.

TUESDAY/FEB. 16

Virtual Employment Expo. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The JCA Jewish Council for the Aging will host the Montgomery County Virtual Employment Expo for Job-seekers Age 50+ February 5, 2021. Visit virtualexpos.accessjca.org.

~~Free and open to all~~
Potomac Community Village
Join via Zoom

Choosing Assisted Living for a Loved One
How do you know when it's the right time?

Wed, January 27, 7:00pm –8:30pm
Register at 20854HelpDesk@gmail.com

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SENIOR LIVING

Sorority Sisters Celebrate Vice President Kamala Harris

Joy, tears and hope about this historic moment in history.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE ALMANAC

Wearing their sorority's signature strand of pearls and clothing in shades of pink and green, Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) sorority members, Martha Coleman and Shirley Dickerson Taylor were filled with awe and jubilation as they watched their sorority sister and fellow Historically Black College and University (HBCU) alum Kamala Harris, sworn in as Vice President of the United States.

Both women are decades-long members of the sorority and are now part of the Zeta Chi Omega Chapter, which is made up of women from Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax counties. Local members supported Harris' election and say their emotions include pride and optimism, for older members as well as younger.

"As someone who participated in the Civil Rights movement of the 60s, I get emotional just thinking about this huge accomplishment and how far we as a people have come," said Coleman, who has been a member for 53 years. "The idea that a woman of color, who attended an HBCU, and who was raised by a single parent is now our Vice President is mind boggling."

"I was overcome with joy and happiness to witness this historical day," added Taylor, who has been a member for 63 years. "The tears flowed as I watched Soror Kamala take the oath and become the Vice President of the United States."

"I witnessed something that I never thought I would witness in my lifetime, said 68-year old Linder Gibson who lives in Montgomery County. "I was overwhelmed. "This lets me know that my little granddaughter can grow up and become anything she wants to be, even President."

Those who joined AKA at Howard University felt a special connection.

"She has been an inspiration for many, said Linda Elaine Newman, who has been an active member for 43 years. "I was doubly proud because I am also a graduate of Howard University. Her positive accomplishments have given good recognition to HBCUs and our beloved sisterhood."

"From the standpoint of being a black and Asian woman it was a monumental moment," added Patricia Wallace, who has been a member for 55 years. It was astounding since, in both these cultures, women were deemed to be on the bottom rung, thought of as property and second-class citizens. Now the glass ceiling has broken."

The Arlington/Alexandria chapter has been in existence for more than 60 years. "Tears of joy flowed down my face as I watched the first woman, the first woman of color and my sorority sister take the oath of office for the Vice President of the United States of America," said Robin McCoy, who is a 40-year member and serves as the chapter's president.

Many felt a sense of optimism about the possibilities that would be conveyed to the young women and girls in their families.

"The swearing in of my soror Kamala Harris



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA

"Golden" members of the Arlington/Alexandria chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, who joined the sorority before and during the Civil Rights Movement, shed tears of joy as they witnessed the historic swearing-in of Vice President Kamala Harris.

filled me with sadness, joy and delight," said Margaret Peterson, who was initiated in 1959. "Joy came to my heart to know that my granddaughter would continue to grow up in a better world. ... I was filled with sadness because it has taken so long for a black woman with outstanding qualifications to be recognized. I dried my tears and took a picture ... proudly in my Golden Soror tee shirt."

"I thought of my 10-year-old granddaughter's future in a country that has elected the first woman as Vice President, who happens to be Black, who happens to have been shaped by our founders at Howard University, and who happens to have been the recipient of the unflinching support from women all over America," said Tia Johnson. "My granddaughter's future was looking brighter. Vice President Harris' election provides the answer that all things are possible."

The Arlington/Alexandria chapter includes older members that range in age from 60 to 90. Many thanked a higher power for the victory.

"I was overcome with a flood of emotions and ... a tremendous feeling of gratitude that God allowed me to live long enough to witness this historic moment: the first woman, the first Black, the first Asian American, the first HBCU graduate and the first AKA to become Vice President of the United States of America, a heartbeat away from the most powerful office in the world," said Lula McLain Hicks who was initiated in 1968. "In that moment, Vice President Harris represented every member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and our 113 years of service to humankind."

Wanda Smith, who joined the sorority 42 years ago, said the swearing-in underscored the lyrics of the official hymn of AKA: "By merit and culture we strive and we do things that are worthwhile. And with a smile we help each other for we know there's no other like our sisterhood," she said. "Yes, I cried and thanked God."

For Aretha Marable Cunningham who was initiated in 1973, the ceremony offered optimism. "I feel extreme joy, relief, excitement, and hope for our country, the United States of America."

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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Reoriented



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Or to quote my high school baseball coach: "Reoriented." A cancer diagnosis, especially a "terminal" one, can cause that. However, what I'm addressing this week is money: what to do with what you have when you didn't expect you'd still have it. And by 'have it,' I mean you're still alive and you still have some control over what to do with it.

What this previous paragraph questions is what to do with the money you've accumulated your whole life after you've outlived your original prognosis, which for my non small cell lung cancer, stage IV, was "13 months to two years." The timer began in late February, 2009. I was aged 54 and nearly a half. My widowed mother had just died the previous December after reaching her 86th birthday. My father had died almost exactly two years earlier, at the age 87. Given my parent's at death, I figured/planned on living into my mid-eighties. That all changed when Team Lourie met the oncologist who has now been treating me going on about 12 years.

All my life, pre-cancer and post-cancer, I've paid attention to money: working for it, saving it, spending it and financially-planning it. As I became older, my needs expanded and so too did the sum of money I needed: college, car, wedding, house and then retirement. Now at age 66, 42 as a husband and 12 as a cancer survivor, the future has unexpectedly, given my prognosis, become my present.

During the early years of my diagnosis, I didn't really know how to spend the money I had saved: on the here and now because I was diagnosed as terminal and saw no future in depriving myself or to simply continue living my life spending/saving money as I always had. I chose the former because to me choosing the latter would have been giving into my cancer diagnosis.

Well, almost 12 years have passed since late Feb., 2009. Much has happened. None more significantly as has been my re-diagnosis to papillary thyroid cancer, stage IV, from the previous non small lung cancer, also stage IV. Though my particular type of thyroid cancer is terminal (the sole effective medication has a three-year-ish effective window than there's nothing available), I do have less of a lung cancer diagnosis hanging over my bank account. And yet, the money issue has raised its ugly dilemma once again. Rather than living with death occurring at any time, I now have a bit of a timeline: three years, but with an indeterminate one to follow. Before I had a definite that turned into a maybe. Now I have a maybe that's sort of turned into a definite. As such, once again, do I spend like I'm dying or spend/save like I'm living? The further complication is I'm basically retired and now having to make decisions which have been a lifetime in the making that for many of those years didn't have to factor in cancer and an adjusted, shall we say, life expectancy. It's challenging to determine how much money you're going to need when you can't predict the future. I mean, I'm living proof.

Being the baby of the baby - of the family, I'm pretty much the end of the line dating back approximately 150 years to Russia. And since we have no children, there's no one to pick up my slack. I can't run out of money because I'm responsible for my own slack. I can't presume that I won't outlive my resources any more than I can predict my cancer-affected demise. A demise and a quality of life that could be enhanced if I were to spend a bit of the money I do have, mindful always of the consequences however.

I realize, more than most, that there's no time like the present. Nevertheless, I still want to believe I have a future. After all, it's worked (kept me alive) for nearly 12 years. Perhaps I still have another 12 left to live. If so, I'm going to try and treat myself a bit more often this time. I don't see any future in depriving myself.

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