Just the Right Amount Of Snow?

Anna, Declan and Ada Dixon enjoy a Snowman and a snow day.

Farmland Protected As Solar Proceeds

News, page 3

Advice on ‘Going Pro in Life’

News, Page 6

Little Protected as Toll Lanes Proceed

News, Page 3
Potomac REAL ESTATE

November, 2020 Sales, $1,412,500~$1,150,000

In November, 2020, 61 Potomac homes sold between $2,737,500-$350,000.

Address ..................................BR FB HB Postal City .....Sold Price ...Type ........Lot AC .Postal Code ...Subdivision....... Date Sold
1 10217 HOLLY HILL PL ....6...5...2 ...POTOMAC, $1,412,500 ... Detached .. 0.49 ........ 20854 ... POTOMAC VILLAGE ... 11/13/20
2 10901 PICASSO LN ....6...3...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,355,000 ... Detached .. 1.57 ........ 20854 .. POTOMAC ....... 11/16/20
3 11220 FALL RIVER CT ....5...4...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,320,000 ... Detached .. 0.30 ........ 20854 .. NORMANDY FALLS ... 11/13/20
4 10 GATE POST CT ....4...3...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,230,000 ... Townhse .. 0.09 ........ 20854 .. RIVER FALLS ... 11/06/20
5 7902 TURNCREST DR ....4...3...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,225,000 ... Townhse .. 0.08 ........ 20854 .. POTOMAC CREST .. 11/16/20
6 10038 CARMELITA DR ....5...3...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,219,000 ... Detached .. 0.58 ........ 20854 .. MCAULEY PARK .... 11/16/20
7 9101 MARSEILLE DR ....5...4...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,200,000 ... Detached .. 1.25 ........ 20854 .. LAKE NORMANDY ESTS .... 11/16/20
8 7709 LAUREL LEAF DR ....4...4...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,189,900 ... Detached .. 0.66 ........ 20854 .. WOODROCK .... 11/30/20
9 8574 BRICKYARD RD ....4...3...1 ...POTOMAC, $1,150,000 ... Detached .. 0.83 ........ 20854 .. FAWCETT FARMS ... 11/16/20

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Photos by Deb Stevens/The Almanac
Final Tweaks Protect the Reserve
Solar will be permitted but restricted in the Agricultural Reserve.

By Ken Moore
The Almanac

Soil is important enough that the Office of Agriculture rates it by levels based on how fruitful it is for farming. “Soil is what makes agriculture, that’s how farming works,” said Potomac’s councilmember Andrew Friedson.

The Montgomery County Council last week voted 5-4 to include Friedson’s amendment to prohibit solar from being planted on the second richest level of soil, as well as the first.

“Certainly, if there’s concern where a solar array can be placed, there’s greater concern where crops can be harvested,” said Friedson.

In response to climate change, at-large councilmember Hans Riemer had proposed permitting the solar industry to build in the Agricultural Reserve, 93,000 acres the 1980 Montgomery Council intended to preserve forever for agricultural use.

“We made a decision in 1980 as a council,” said Friedson. “I feel very strongly about our job to protect and preserve that decision that has been viewed by many as one of the most important land conservation decisions in the country.”

The Council will vote officially on the overall zoning text amendment this Tuesday, after the Almanac’s press time.

RIEMER’S ZONING AMENDMENT had groups that would typically support each other at odds with each other.

Proponents of Riemer’s zoning text amendment believed that allowing solar arrays in the Agricultural Reserve would produce enough energy to power 50,000 homes. The initiative would propel the Council towards its clean energy goal of using only renewable energy by 2035.

But opponents also advocated for a critical goal, the integrity of the Agricultural Reserve and food sustainability.

“This has been without a doubt one of the most challenging issues that has come across my desk,” said Friedson.

The 1980 Montgomery County Council set 93,000 acres in upper Montgomery to be preserved forever for agricultural use. Part of the Agricultural Reserve in Poolesville, snow-covered.

MDOT Prefers 4-Toll-Lane Option
‘Surprise announcement’ raises concerns of rushing forward with a PPP.

By Ken Moore
The Almanac

Hundreds of people testified against Gov. Larry Hogan’s proposed public-private partnership to build toll lanes -- nearly 83 percent of responders voiced disapproval -- but the Maryland Department of Transportation chose the option to add four toll lanes to the American Legion Bridge and up I-270 as the best choice to mitigate traffic congestion. MDOT made its cheerleader announcement Wednesday, Jan. 27:

“In addition to delivering significant congestion relief in the existing free lanes, this Recommended Preferred Alternative provides www.ConnectionNewspapers.com Marylanders with new travel options including free use of the new managed lanes for carpoolers and transit riders, new bike and pedestrian connections in the community and across the Potomac to the C&O Canal, and a consistent reliable transportation network for the entire National Capital Region from Maryland into Virginia,” said MDOT Secretary Gregory Slater.

Citizens Against Beltway Expansion wasn’t as sanguine, with its response.

“Today’s surprise announcement of a design for $11 billion I-495/I-270 Luxury Lane means MDOT is putting taxpayers and communities at unnecessary risk by racing to approve a design, a developer, and toll rates months before there’s a Final Environmental Impact Statement to show whether the project is even viable,” accorded Stewart Schwartz, Coalition for Smarter Growth.

“A lasting increase in telecommuting will likely be enough in our view that we can and should stop widening highways and arterials.”

The survey was released last week. “The separate COVID-19 assessment shows that travel on our roadways is still down over 18 percent, which is largely a reflection of the big increase in telecommuting,” Schwartz said. “A lasting increase in telecommuting will likely be enough in our view that we can and should stop widening highways and arterials. The benefits of telecommuting for both work productivity and as a peak hour transportation solution are becoming clear.”

MARYLAND NATIONAL PARK

See MDOT, Page 5

POTOMAC ALMANAC       FEBRUARY 3-9, 2021        3
impacts, not to mention expensive serious health and environmental care and maintenance of wells and Figure General Meeting, we heard these changes.

Noise, and pollution into narrow concentrate all the airplane traffic, changed airplane flight patterns. NextGen, FAA’s new Airplane noise is not just a qualitative issue. The president of the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) NextGen program, Steve Dickson, told Congress that the Next Generation Air Transport System (NextGen) will decrease the height from three to ten and replaced by a compromise large solar arrays in the Agriculture Education Zoning Amendment (ZTA 20-01) to allow the proposed Heritage Forest Conservation Plan Amendment (ZTA). There was also an official vote (5-4) to protect Class 2 soils (in addition to the Class 1 soils protected in the ZTA as written). We wrote a thank-you note to our Councilmembers Friedson and Katz for the work they did on the issues and the amazing results that achieved.

And, we signed on to two different letters with comments on Montgomery County’s draft Sewer Category request. Montgomery Stormwater Partners Network of which we are both members. A WMCCA Board member provided input to both of these letters.

We provided written testimony to the Planning Board on the Forest Conservation Plan Amendment: Congressional Country Club: Final Forest Conservation Plan Amendment No. CBA 1206. We stated that the proposed “stream restoration,” by armor-plating the stream, will result in stormwater being “fire hosed” along the stream causing damage to downstream neighbors and property. The Congressional Country Club should control its stormwater runoff by practices which keep stormwater out of its stream to begin with. We also said that the M-NCPCC determination that “The granting of this variance is not a special privilege that would be denied to other applicants, makes a mockery of the Forest Conservation easement. This is a problem: if variances like this one are granted to all other applicants, then what is the purpose of a Forest Conservation easement?”

As always, we welcome your help since the Board is an all-volunteer group. You don’t have to be a Board member to work with us on a topic of concern or interest to you. Let us know about any issue that is bothering or concerns you: President@WMCCA.org.

Sewer Category Change Requests

Submitted by Susanne Lee

WMCCA President Ken Bawer testified on our behalf at two public hearings — one before the Planning Board and the other before the County Council regarding multiple sewer category change requests: 10400 Boswell Lane, 10401 Boswell Lane, and 10403 Boswell Lane. These homes are on Montgomery County’s draft sewer category request.

In addition, a sewer category request for public hearing was filed for the proposed Heritage Forest Conservation Plan Amendment (ZTA). There was also an official vote (5-4) to protect Class 2 soils (in addition to the Class 1 soils protected in the ZTA as written). We wrote a thank-you note to our Councilmembers Friedson and Katz for the work they did on the issues and the amazing results that achieved.

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AND PLANNING Commission staff opposed the project moving forward based on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, raising serious deficiencies in the plans. Main issues are impacts on parkland, wetlands, streams and other aquatic resources under the Maryland Clean Water Act, as well as inadequate definitions of limit of disturbance, compliance with social equity law, and evaluation of stormwater runoff.

“We cannot agree with the direction of the Managed Lanes Study until our land use, transportation, and environmental concerns are addressed, and that just hasn’t happened despite months of trying to get answers,” said Casey Anderson, M-NCPPC Chair and Montgomery County Planning Board Chair in October.

Local impacts for Potomac and Bethesda would be significant, and still are not defined.

River Road is one of the locations the state recommends providing direct access to the toll lanes, raising the possibility of adding another lane in the middle which would ramp up to River Road.

A renovate American Legion Bridge should include room to carry a shared-use trail for bikers and hikers, like the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, but it’s not clear how that would access the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

**Final Tweaks Protect the Reserve**

An initiative to permit the solar industry to plant industrial solar in the Agricultural Reserve will advance with restrictions. Here, part of the Reserve in Poolesville in the snow.

The Planning Commission would be required to report back to the Council in 2023 whether the projects should be expanded, modified or discontinued. The straw vote taken on that issue was unanimous last Tuesday, Jan. 26.

“If we do too much we will never be able to undo the impact we make. If we do too little and don’t do enough, we can come back and address that,” Friedson said, when arguing to protect the soil.

With another 6-3 straw vote last Tuesday, Jan. 26, the Council also will make solar projects conditional uses, adding another level of oversight by the Planning Commission and Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings when projects are proposed.

“Our Agricultural Reserve is frankly a treasure that was bestowed upon us by previous policy makers that had the vision,” said Albornoz.

“This is not the last time the Agricultural Reserve is going to be under pressure.”
'Going Pro in Life'

By Peggy McEwan
Potomac Almanac

Andy Dinkin, who grew up in Potomac and found his life in athletics, recently launched “Going Pro in Life,” a book and seminar designed to help student athletes create a strategy for landing a job after college.

“I spent my entire childhood in Potomac – Beverly Farms, Hoover, Churchill. Playing high school football at Churchill for legendary Coach Fred Shepherd changed my life and is by far the highlight of my life in Potomac,” Dinkin said.

“I was an all-state player and earned a football scholarship to UNC-Chapel Hill. When I graduated college, I decided to stay in North Carolina, and we found and bought a house in Charlotte ever since.”

Dinkin said playing football taught him the importance of preparation, teamwork, effective communication, discipline, perseverance, and above all, the power of having a positive attitude.

“Since entering the workforce in 1992, I’ve used these skills to achieve success as a salesmen, senior executive, business owner, nonprofit board member, and commercial real estate broker and developer. I am passionate about passing along what I learned under [UNC football coach Mack Brown], such a gifted college coach and UNC’s support staff to help many other college athletes across the country make the most of their vital time in college.”

In his forward to “Going Pro in Life,” Coach Brown wrote, “Andy Dinkin has done a great service to young athletes everywhere. Although they don’t think of it now, in a few years most of them will no longer be playing in stadiums and arenas for thousands of people; they will be earning a living some other way. It is my fervent hope that you read and implement the ideas in this book and share them with others.” Dinkin said he still remains close with [Churchill High School] Coach Shepherd and his family, as well as dozens of friends from high school.

“I have been to every single high school class reunion, every 5 years for the past 30.”

Dinkin’s book can be purchased via Amazon or directly from the website, www.goingproinlife.com, where you can also enroll in the Career Development Seminar.

From Slave Ship to Harvard, Yarrow Mamout and the History of an African American Family
Feb. 26, 3:30 p.m.

Yarrow Mamout was a Fulani Muslim who came to Maryland on a slave ship in 1752. Jim Johnston’s book follows later generations of the family through Robert Turner Ford, who graduated from Harvard in 1923. No Pressure! Social Justice Discussion
Feb. 28, 2 p.m.

No Pressure! Social Justice Discussion

Becoming Vision Zero
Youth Ambassadors
Montgomery High School Students Can Become ‘Vision Zero Youth Ambassadors’ and Help Make Roads Safer
Deadline to Apply is Friday, Feb. 5

In his forward to “Going Pro in Life,” Coach Brown wrote, “Andy Dinkin with fellow Churchill graduates in Charlotte to celebrate his birthday last year. From left, Joe Preston, Justin Freer, Andy Dinkin, Dan Bernard, Jim Haley, 1987 Churchill graduates.

Andy Dinkin with fellow Churchill graduates in Charlotte to celebrate his birthday last year. From left, Joe Preston, Justin Freer, Andy Dinkin, Dan Bernard, Jim Haley, 1987 Churchill graduates.

Becoming Vision Zero Youth Ambassadors
Montgomery High School Students Can Become ‘Vision Zero Youth Ambassadors’ and Help Make Roads Safer
Deadline to Apply is Friday, Feb. 5

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), in partnership with the National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS), is seeking 20 students in County public or private schools to serve as “Vision Zero Youth Ambassadors.” The program is aiming to encourage youth to have an active role in road safety efforts and improvements. Visit the website: https://montgomery-countymd.gov/Galaxy/detailed?need_id=552950

County Begins Vaccinating Residents 75 and Older
Montgomery County is now vaccinating residents 75 and older and will continue providing appointment links to others in Priority Group 1B as vaccine supply allows. A national COVID-19 vaccine shortage, and the limited amount of doses Montgomery County and the State receive weekly, will result in fewer residents who are preregistered getting an appointment immediately. More than 50,000 residents 75 years of age and older have preregistered so far, and the County receives an average of 6,000 doses weekly. The County, as well as other large jurisdictions in the State, may not move as quickly through the priority group phases as other parts of Maryland because of the demand and limited vaccine supply. Residents can also sign up on the vaccine website for weekly vaccine updates. Emails and text messages will be one way to update the community on the County’s progress in reaching the priority groups. For the latest COVID-19 updates, visit the County’s COVID-19 website and follow Montgomery County on Facebook @MontgomeryCount yInfo and Twitter @MontgomeryCoMD. Residents can also sign up to receive text or email updates about COVID-19 vaccinations.

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Visit us at www.potomaccommunityvillage.org
When a Loved One Is Hospitalized with Covid-19

Coping with separation and uncertainty.

By Marilyn Campbell

When a loved one is hospitalized with COVID-19, the agony of being separated from them while they are battling a life-threatening and unpredictable illness can feel overwhelming. Often occurring without warning or time to prepare, the sudden life change can lead to a tidal wave of emotions. Those feelings vary from person to person and are affected by the resources available to them, says Lisa Jackson-Cherry, Ph.D., Professor of Counseling at Marymount University’s College of Counseling and Psychological Services.

Normal reactions for the majority of [people] may include feelings of anxiety, depression, helplessness, hopelessness ... and thoughts of abandoning their loved one,” she said. “This may be exacerbated if the caretaker also has health issues, lack of support or a clinical mental health diagnosis or history.”

A lack of control can exacerbate those feelings.

“Gaining any control over the situation — even when limited — is helpful,” said Jackson-Cherry. “This could mean gaining as much information as possible about the medical situation in order to make decisions [and] try to build in some normalcy in the abnormality of the situation.”

Drawing up one’s support systems and creating a collection of soothing or supportive remedies or a ‘medical health tool box’, such as taking a walk with a friend or meditating, are useful when dealing with the stress and anxiety, advises Dr. Anton C. Bizzell, MD. “This is the time to shore up all the support you have,” he said. “For some people, this could mean contacting close friends and family, clergy, or neighbors to ask for emotional support. Ask for help with child care, household tasks, or other needs that could be alleviated to allow you to focus on your loved one.

It is important not to be in solitude, added Jackson-Cherry. “Isolation is not helpful and can be harmful.”

As she began to heal, Stern was able to have telephone conversations with his mother. “Use technology as possible,” he said. “If they are able to converse, technology is your friend,” Stern said. There are cases, says Bizzell, when one needs more support and guidance than self-help strategies can provide. “For many others, this is a time to call a counselor or family physician for help with adding extra support services and care,” he said. “This is a traumatic situation, no matter the outcome, and it’s not only okay to ask for help, it’s essential. There is no one right way to do this. Find what works for you.

For those might have a friend whose loved one is battling Covid-19, there are uncomplicated ways to offer comfort. “We can support friends and loved ones by expressing interest and concern,” added Jerome Short, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology, George Mason University.

Recognize that these are unprecedented times, advises Bizzell. “We are now nearly a year into a crisis of unimaginable proportions,” he said. “People are suffering. We have never needed our support community more. You don’t have to have all the answers; you just need to be there.”

By KENNETH H. LOURIE

I received in the mail today what in the sales/marketing world, we’d call a “pre-ap- peal” letter. It was a letter confirming that my health care provider is aware of me and my covid needs. Moreover, it offered up the tantalizing notion that one day (although they didn’t specify when or how) I will indeed get contacted/scheduled for my inoculation. Unfortunately, they couldn’t be any more specific because their allocation of vaccine barely barely scratches the surface of the actual need. Nevertheless, both my wife and I have been assured that we are on a list. I suppose that’s something. As “Forest, Forrest Gump” would say: “One less thing.”

But I am not scarcity about avoiding the virus ever or do I throw caution to the wind by actually integrating into the outside/formerly well-bounded world, especially considering the commodity I represent: cancer, but all things being equal, I’d sure like to receive my inoculation. I’d just be so much old age. And my wife is doing everything she can to make that happen. She has me on a very short leash. I’m barely able to take a single step or a punch will do it. As we begin our second year of living dangerously, I hope we can overcome that. To see that this virus has killed more Americans than died in World War II is a stunning reality to behold. Seeing the death tally rise every day is a terrifying/ head-shaking moment. Progress, so far, has been hard to come by. Though there are some alternative theories and explanations about the actual numbers, I tend to believe what the news organizations are telling us. I really don’t see the motivation to do otherwise.

Ultimately, we’re all responsible for our own actions - and inactions, and the consequences that follow it only heard that a million times from my father while growing up. If I was to contract covid, I’d have no one to blame but myself. My wife might also feel she’s very important/indigent of people who are not adhering to public health advisories and who don’t abide by the Vulcan philosophy, especially during a worldwide pandemic: “The good of the many outweigh the good of the few. And it does not” (not) s” says. It must be worth our respect that your fellow man - and woman, should respect the constiction of some of our freedoms as a “pre-ap” letter. Hopefully, we work to overcome this once-in-a-century health crisis. In an odd kind of karma, what goes around does indeed come around. And to prevent this virus from continuously coming around, we must be mindful of the scientific facts as more and more is known about this virus.

Still for those of us who have survived this worst pandemic since the Spanish Flu, it’s one year and counting. I don’t view it as much of an accomplishment, more a series of random strokes that add up to X. However, since luck doesn’t last forever, and can’t exactly be counted on, I was happy to receive today’s letter acknowledging that although I have the power to be know who I am and where to find me and that I need a vaccination. Presuming otherwise, in the midst of an organizational challenge that the likes of which haven’t been experienced by the current generation in charge, or previous generations for that matter, would be logical. Here’s hoping we all “live long and prosper.”

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