



# Potomac ALMANAC

## Blue Star Memorial Garden

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## \$10,000 Local Songwriting Contest

PAGE 3

## Butterflies, and Saving the Insects

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## Halloween

PAGE 4

Autumn colors hit their peak at Election Day comes to call.

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REAL ESTATE, PAGE 2 ♦ KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 11

PHOTO BY MARY KIMM

NOVEMBER 2-8, 2022

ONLINE AT POTOMACALMANAC.COM

PHOTOS FROM BRIGHT MLS

# Potomac REAL ESTATE

## September, 2022 Top Sales

IN SEPTEMBER, 2022, 35 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$3,050,000-\$550,000.



**6** 12930 Travilah Road — \$2,050,000



**5** 11005 Tara Road — \$2,270,000



**2** 10503 Rivers Bend Lane — \$2,725,000



**4** 10525 Alloway Drive — \$2,318,750



**3** 8919 Bel Air Place — \$2,650,000



**1** 8600 Rapley Gate Terrace — \$3,050,000



Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City.....	Sold Price...	Type.....	Lot AC.	Postal Code ...	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
<b>1</b> 8600 RAPLEY GATE TER.....	4	7	2	POTOMAC	.....	\$3,050,000.....	Detached.....	0.76	.....20854.....	AVENEL.....	09/09/22
<b>2</b> 10503 RIVERS BEND LN.....	6	7	2	POTOMAC	.....	\$2,725,000.....	Detached.....	1.21	.....20854.....	MARWOOD.....	09/15/22
<b>3</b> 8919 BEL AIR PL.....	5	4	2	POTOMAC	.....	\$2,650,000.....	Detached.....	2.17	.....20854.....	GREAT FALLS ESTS.....	09/23/22
<b>4</b> 10525 ALLOWAY DR.....	6	8	1	POTOMAC	.....	\$2,318,750.....	Detached.....	2.00	.....20854.....	POTOMAC RANCH.....	09/30/22
<b>5</b> 11005 TARA RD.....	5	4	2	POTOMAC	.....	\$2,270,000.....	Detached.....	2.29	.....20854.....	POTOMAC VIEW ESTS.....	09/12/22
<b>6</b> 12930 TRAVILAH ROAD.....	5	4	2	POTOMAC	.....	\$2,050,000.....	Detached.....	2.95	.....20854.....	TRAVILAH MEADOWS.....	09/12/22
<b>7</b> 10724 STAPLEFORD HALL DR.....	5	4	1	POTOMAC	.....	\$1,850,000.....	Detached.....	0.92	.....20854.....	POTOMAC OUTSIDE.....	09/15/22
<b>8</b> 10721 BALANTRE LN.....	5	5	1	POTOMAC	.....	\$1,800,000.....	Detached.....	2.00	.....20854.....	POTOMAC VIEW ESTS.....	09/30/22

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[HTTP://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/NEWS/2022/OCT/21/POTOMAC-HOME-SALES-SEPTEMBER-2022/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2022/oct/21/potomac-home-sales-september-2022/)

# NEWS



The Blue Star Memorial Garden at the Potomac Community Center was rededicated on Sept. 11, 2022.



From left, Linda Sillin, Jean Mullan, Tricia Olsen, and Sandy Lavery, cut the ribbon on the rededicated Blue Star Memorial Garden.

## Garden Club Celebrates Blue Star Memorial Garden

BY THE LITTLE FARMS GARDEN CLUB OF POTOMAC

Sept. 11, 2022 saw the re-dedication and celebration of the renovation of the Blue Star Memorial Garden at the Community Center in Potomac. This garden was originally installed 15 years ago under the leadership of Linda Sillin and Jean Mullan, but needed a “refresh.” The Blue Star Memorial is a tribute to our armed forces past, present, and future, honoring those who have defended the United States. This memorial is only given by the Federation of Garden Clubs of America, to be situated in national cemeteries, parks, veteran’s facilities and gardens. During WWII, the Blue Star was used on flags and placed in

windows to denote a service member serving in the military. In 1945, a national program was initiated. Fifteen years ago at the time of the original installation of the Potomac garden, there were approximately 300 Blue Star Memorials and highway markers in the country. Today there are 3000.

In addition to the funds raised by Little Farms Garden Club members, there were generous donations from the Walter Reed Society, which provides patient and family support for service members, including the Wounded Warrior Program, and Stock Brothers, Inc, an 89-year old landscaping business. John Stock envisioned, designed and planted the garden.

At the official ribbon-cutting, President Sandy Lavery, opened the program by not-

ing that Little Farms Garden Club has had a long, rich history with the Community Center. For the club, the garden is a way to reach out and contribute to the larger community. This was followed by a history of the original installation of the garden in 2005 by Linda Sillin.

Past President, Tricia Olsen, who spear-headed this initiative, emphasized the power of community partnership to get significant projects done. She noted that there was no better place for the Blue Star Garden than at the Potomac Community Center, where people come together to learn, play and make new friends. The Community Center is an anchor and key symbol in Potomac of belonging and togetherness.

“I know the garden will ask people to

pause, be curious, and venture over ... to enjoy ... and to remember how very fortunate we all are to have the security and protection that our service members provide. I also know our efforts will send a message to others in our community, that public service is a way to demonstrate the love we have for our country, and Potomac.”

The program concluded with a Patriotic Moment from Jean Mullan, who asked attendees to pause and honor our veterans and those who died in 9/11, twenty-one years ago. “We grieve loss, but are inspired by their dignity, loyalty, and bravery.”

After listening to “America the Beautiful”, the official ribbon cutting was held and American flags were placed in the garden.

— TRICIA OLSEN, PAST PRESIDENT

## 8th Annual Bethesda Songwriting Contest

Winning local songwriter to be awarded \$10,000; contest will conclude with a live concert in 2023.

The Bethesda Arts & Entertainment District announces the eighth annual Bernard/Ebb Songwriting Awards, an opportunity for local songwriters and musicians who are residents of Maryland, Washington, D.C., or Virginia.

The application deadline is Friday, Dec. 9, 2022.

A Grand Prize of \$10,000 will be awarded to the winning songwriter. The Grand Prize Winner will also be awarded 25 hours of recording studio time with Innovation Station Music. The contest also includes a young songwriter (under 18) category for which an

aspiring songwriter will have the chance to win \$2,500.

“The advice that I would offer to songwriters is to go for it,” said 2022 Grand Prize Winner Juliet Lloyd. “Pick songs that mean something to you and don’t worry about having to sound a certain way. As a writer and performer, I’ve often wondered where I fit in stylistically, if my music is “cool” enough to be successful on Spotify, etc. I think you should forget all that and write what is authentic to you, because that’s what’s going to make you stand out.”

The contest, founded by Bethesda resident and arts philanthropist

Cathy Bernard, is named in honor of Fred Ebb, Bernard’s uncle and renowned American songwriter and creator of Broadway hits such as Cabaret and Chicago and iconic songs including New York, New York.

“This competition was created to honor regional musicians and award local artists for their songwriting talent,” said Cathy Bernard. “I am personally honored to be able to support this important program in my uncle’s name because the musical arts were such an integral part of who he was and it’s of great importance to continue

SEE 8TH ANNUAL, PAGE 11



Live concert.

# HALLOWEEN NIGHT



Witches contrast with giant Jack-o-lanterns.



Unidentified leering objects seem equipped to delay wayward trick or treaters.



Reflections in the pavement due to a little rain on Halloween night lend an eerie glow.



Ghosts and unicorns roam the neighborhoods.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Montgomery County Income Tax Assistance Program Seeks Volunteers

Montgomery County Community Action Agency's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is recruiting volunteers to become IRS-certified VITA tax preparers, schedulers, greeters, interpreters, quality reviewers and site coordinators for the upcoming tax season that runs from January through mid-April. The Internal Revenue Service requires that VITA volunteers be U.S. citizens, legal residents or otherwise reside legally in the U.S.

VITA provides free tax help to residents, including ITIN (individual taxpayer identification number) taxpayers, with household incomes of \$60,000 or less. The program links clients to valuable tax credits that provide critical support to lower income households.

Volunteers receive free training and can volunteer in Rockville, Silver Spring, Gaithersburg or Wheaton. High school students may receive student service learning hours by volunteering as greeters

or schedulers.

Two virtual information sessions for prospective volunteers will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 9, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and 6-7 p.m. Email [VITA@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:VITA@montgomerycountymd.gov) to register for a session.

Call 240-777-1123 to learn more about volunteering.

### High School Students Can Be Vision Zero Ambassadors

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is seeking up to 45 Montgomery County high school students to serve as "Vision Zero Youth Ambassadors." The project-based learning program teaches teens leadership skills, outreach and engagement techniques to address traffic safety needs in their community. Applications are now being accepted. The deadline to apply is Wednesday, Nov. 30.

Interested public, private and home-schooled high school students can learn about the program and apply here <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-ped-safety/VZYA/>

The program received 100 applications last year.

The program supports the County's Vision Zero Initiative, whose goal is to eliminate traffic-related severe injuries and deaths. Youth Ambassadors have an opportunity to help the County work toward the goal by becoming road safety leaders in their communities.

"Students can help drive positive change and make a big impact by participating," said County Executive Marc Elrich. "We want creative solutions from our youth to help achieve the goals of our Vision Zero plan, to save lives through traffic safety infrastructure and programming. Teens can play a powerful role in making Vision Zero a reality."

Applicants will be notified by Dec. 14 if they have been accepted into the program. Selected ambassadors are required to attend a virtual orientation that will be held via Zoom from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 7.

After the orientation session, ambassadors will participate in four sessions through May, both virtual

via Zoom and in-person. Sessions will be held from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturdays: Feb. 11 (in person); March 4 (in person); March 25 (virtual); April 29 (virtual).

In-person events will be held at the Montgomery County Public Safety Building, which is located at 100 Edison Park Drive in Gaithersburg.

Youth Ambassadors are tasked with completing a group project based on one of six categories that encompasses engineering or education topics. Resources and project guidance are provided by the County to execute projects that will ultimately improve the safety of County residents.

Students can earn 40 Student Service Learning (SSL) hours for participating in the program. Additional SSL hours can be earned for participating in scheduled County outreach efforts promoting pedestrian and driver safety throughout the program's duration.

"This program offers real world engineering and advocacy experience that has impactful, tangible outcomes," said County Depart-

ment of Transportation Director Chris Conklin. "We are empowering teens to assess needed improvements to the built environment, inform their peers about safe behavior and develop programs that address specific safety needs in communities throughout the County.

The youth ambassadors will complete the program in late May 2023, where they will share their project plans, outcomes and best practices with attendees and special guests at a graduation ceremony.

Learn more about the County Vision Zero effort here <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/>

### Free Workshops Assisting Job Seekers and Entrepreneurs

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) will offer free online workshops and one-on-one sessions geared toward assisting job seekers and entrepreneurs throughout November.

The schedule of workshops will include:

- ❖ Throughout November – SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 5

# NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 4

Monday: 9:30-11:30 a.m. I.R.E. (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) Sessions – Virtual\*. Meet virtually/confidentially one-on-one with a career counselor for advice and assistance with your job search. Register at

Monday, Nov. 7: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7395228>

Monday, Nov. 14: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7395229>

Monday, Nov. 21: <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7395289>

❖ Thursday, Nov. 3: 3-4 p.m. Careers in Cybersecurity – In Person. Wheaton Library, 11701 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. Professor Silvia Vargas, a professor in the cybersecurity program at Montgomery College-Germantown, will discuss careers and related in the growing cybersecurity field. Register at <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7274463>.

❖ Grow Your Business with GoogleBusiness Innovation Series. In Person. Looking for a better way to manage your business? Join MCPL and the Latino Economic Development Center for this three-part series.

❖ Thursday, Nov. 3: 6-8 p.m. How to utilize Google Workspace for your Business. In Person Germantown Library, 19840 Century Blvd., Germantown. Learn how to utilize shared calendars, schedule meetings, collaborate in real-time with google documents, store and share files in the cloud and how to access other Google products. Register at <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7442756>.

❖ Thursday, Nov. 10: 6-8 p.m. How to create and utilize Google Docs, Forms and Sheets for your Business. In Person. Germantown Library, 19840 Century Blvd., Germantown. Learn how to build a Google Form from scratch, how to access data, how to generate official business agreements utilizing Google Docs and how to create Google Sheets to create and track invoices. Register at <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7442756>.

❖ Thursday, Nov. 17: 6-8 p.m. Creating a website for your Business with Google Sites. In Person. Germantown Library, 19840 Century Blvd., Germantown. Learn about the importance of having an established brand, using professional images, key items to include on webpages and how to build a Google Business website. Register at <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7443100>.

❖ Monday, Nov. 7: 11:30 a.m. All about Google Workspace - with Senior Planet Montgomery. Virtual.\* Curious about Google Workspace features? Find out more about Google's most popular personal and work-related productivity tools. Register at <https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/7442509>.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



## 11th Annual DC South Asian Film Festival 2022

IN PERSON | VIRTUAL  
Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 | Nov 7<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2022




**In Person Book Discussion with Deepti Naval**  
November 03, 2022 at 7:30 PM  
Theater Arts Arena, Theater Arts Building  
Montgomery College, 51 Mannakee St  
Rockville, MD 20850

**In Person at Films Screening**  
Nov 04-06, 2022  
AMC Montgomery 16, 7101 Democracy Blvd  
Bethesda, MD 20817

For Schedule and Tickets  
<https://dcsaff2022.eventive.org/welcome>  
www.dcsaaci.org

info@dcsaff.com



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# Documenting Butterflies

Volunteers fanned out across Northern Virginia to survey butterflies, part of the North American Butterfly Association's nationwide count.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

One team started in Belle Haven Park along the Potomac River shoreline.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Some surveyors gathered for pizza at The Haven to tally their numbers.

BY GLENDA BOOTH  
THE ALMANAC

The silvery checkerspot butterfly has a row of black and white spots on the edges of its hind wings. The eastern comma butterfly has a small silvery-white comma-like mark on the underside of its hind wings. Such are the fine distinctions or unique field marks that help citizen scientists identify individual butterfly species.

On Sept. 17, 28 volunteers fanned out across Northern Virginia to survey butterflies, part of the North American Butterfly Association's nationwide count and sponsored by the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. Teams identified 35 species and 798 individual butterflies. Last year, surveyors saw 34 species. People have confirmed over 100 species in Northern Virginia, according to the survey's leader, Larry Meade. Their presence and numbers vary by season.

There are around 120 species in the U.S. mid-Atlantic.

The teams surveyed at the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Mount Vernon Estate, River Farm, the Jackson M. Abbott Wetland Refuge at Fort Belvoir, Huntley Meadows Park, Green Spring Gardens, the Winkler Preserve, Mason District Park, Glencarlyn Park, Bluemont Park, Four Mile Run and Fort C.F. Smith.

"It was optimal butterfly weather," said Meade. "It was sunny and

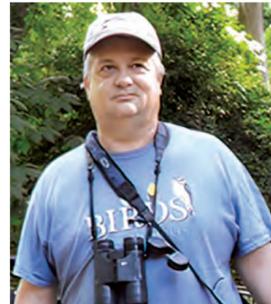


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Larry Meade organized and led the butterfly survey.

and be active. If it gets into the 90s, it's too hot. They like sun." Butterflies spread their wings and absorb the sun's heat, say experts.

September is a good month to observe butterflies, not just because of usually temperate weather and because some butterfly species are migrating through. The best-known migrant is probably the monarch, a four-inch butterfly that has orange wings with black veins and white edges. Through several generations, they make a two-way migration. In the fall, they fly from the central and eastern U.S. to central Mexico to overwinter. In the spring, they mate, leave Mexico for the U.S. and the next generation continues north. Their yellow-, white- and black-striped caterpillar feeds exclusively on milkweed

warm with a light breeze, but not really hot," he explained. "The low 80s are perfect. It's warm enough for them to get energy from the sun

leaves.

Meade was heartened to see the ocola skipper at River Farm, a butterfly with dull yellowish-brown wings, a 1 1/4-to-1 3/4-inch wingspan and a forewing much longer than its hindwing. Ocolas migrate to and through Northern Virginia from the south in the fall.

At Mount Vernon Estate, Meade's team spotted an American lady and a painted lady.

Swallowtails, striking two- to four-inch butterflies with forked hindwings, are always show-stoppers. The zebra swallowtail has black and white striped wings, hence the name. The eastern tiger swallowtail has bold yellow wings with black stripes. Males are yellow,

but females can be yellow or black.

Meade sees surveying not just as data collection, but a gateway to becoming engaged in nature.

Jessie Strother, retired Fairfax County urban forester, spent her Saturday counting butterflies because she said, "Identifying butterfly species and their numbers is one measure of the diversity and health of our increasingly compromised environment in Northern Virginia. Environmental protection and con-

servation need to be front and center of much of what we do today."

Master naturalist Judy Gallagher from Woodbridge also sees butterflies as indicators of the health of the environment. She co-authored "Butterflies of the Mid-Atlantic" with Bob Blakney.

Butterflies and moths are in the order Lepidoptera, a Greek word that means "scaly wings." Butterflies are active during the day

and have a knob or club on their antennae. Most moths fly at night and have thicker antennae that are sometimes feathery. Butterflies tend to be colorful and moths more drab brown or beige.

Meade is a dedicated conservationist and naturalist who lives in Merrifield and is president of the Northern Virginia Bird Club.

## Helping Butterflies

Butterflies usually like natu-

ral vegetation and most adult butterflies feed by nectaring at flowers. "Butterfly diversity is usually correlated with the complexity of the landscape," observes Jeffrey Glassberg in *Butterflies through Binoculars*. He calls manicured lawns, "biological deserts." Some butterfly species spend the winter in fallen leaves as eggs, caterpillars, pupae or adults so many butterfly enthusiasts recommend leaving the leaves.

Some gardeners are creating butterfly gardens, which can be from a window box to a multi-acre field.

The key is planting plants appropriate for butterflies, host plants for laying eggs and plants for caterpillars to feed on.

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail



Ocola Skipper



Monarch Butterfly



American Lady Butterfly



Silvery Checkerspot



Peck's Skipper



Zebra Swallowtail

BUTTERFLIES PHOTOS BY LARRY MEADE

# Our Very Necessary Insects

**Advice: cut lawns in half, plant native plants and trees, remove invasive plants, minimize use of pesticides, reduce light pollution.**

By GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE ALMANAC

## How to Find Native Plants

[www.audubon.org/native-plants](http://www.audubon.org/native-plants)  
[www.plantnovanatives.org](http://www.plantnovanatives.org)  
<https://www.nwf.org/NativePlantFinder/>

People spend more time trying to kill insects than trying to save them, University of Delaware entomologist Douglas Tallamy told a Zoom gathering of 300 on Sept. 25. Think about all those pest eradication products on hardware shelves, trucks spraying grassy lawns and bug zappers, also aptly called electric insect killers.

Many people want to eliminate insects, he lamented, but his key message was, life as we know it depends on insects. Without insects, food webs would collapse, plants would not get pollinated, animals would disappear, insect decomposers would vanish and people would be left with bacteria and fungi, he explained.

Tallamy quoted the late Dr. E.O. Wilson, an ant expert, who wrote, “Insects are the little things

that run the world,” but Tallamy stressed, though critical to life, insects are in serious decline.

A 2019 study published in Biological Conservation concluded that more than 40 percent of the world’s insect species face possible extinction, a phenomenon the media has called the “insect apocalypse.” A study published in Science in 2020 found that one-quarter of land-dwelling insects have disappeared in the past 30 years. One million species face extinction in the next 20 years and most will be insects, said Tallamy, citing a United Nations report.

“The creatures that keep us alive are disappearing,” he warned.

Many birds depend on insects for food. Birds that winter in Costa Rica and migrate north lose



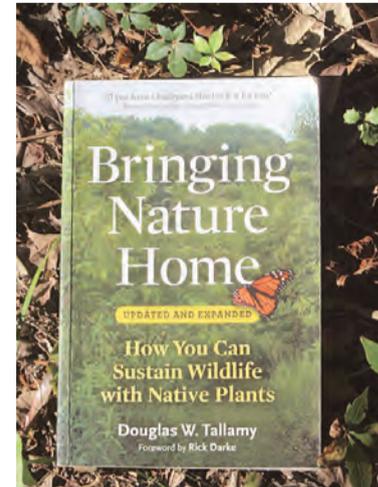
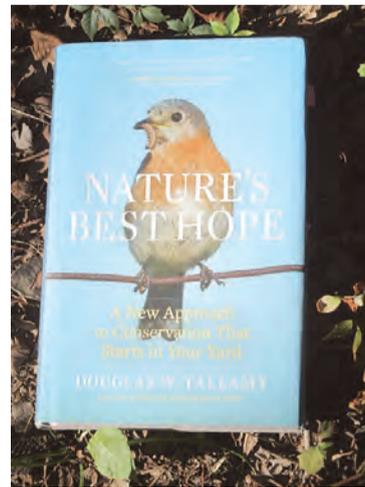
University of Delaware entomologist Dr. Doug Tallamy, the Sept. 25 speaker. (Photo of a photo from book jacket, by Paul Reeves Photography)

35 percent of their body weight when they cross the Gulf of Mexico. When they land, they must replace that weight by eating insects. Resident birds too need insects, especially caterpillars to feed their young. A chickadee, for example, needs 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars to raise two young or one caterpillar every three minutes. But many bird species too are declining in numbers and at least 432 species birds in North America are threatened with extinction, a 2016 analysis found.

He showed a photo of a church surrounded by a treeless lawn and noted the irony that people were inside worshipping God’s creation, but with few to no native plants, destroying it outside.

### Losing Critical Plants

A major cause of these declines is that people have altered and disturbed natural habitat by replacing native plants on which native insects depend with non-native or invasive plants that give little support. Ninety percent of insects eat



Two of Dr. Doug Tallamy’s books.

only vegetation from plants with which they share an evolutionary history. One of the most famous examples is the monarch butterfly. Its caterpillar eats only milkweed. Other examples: the Pandora sphinx needs Virginia creeper; the Zebra swallowtail butterfly needs pawpaw trees; the evening prim-

rose moth, evening primrose; and the emerald moth, smooth sumac.

### Other Causes

Insects are also adversely affected by climate change, herbicides, pesticides and light pollution.

Building and street lights can increase predation on insects and cause incineration, collisions, dehydration and disruption of circadian rhythms and mating, Tallamy said.

**Tallamy’s “message is particularly powerful because he enables folks to see how each of us can make a positive difference for conservation right in our own backyards.”**

— Libby Lyons, president, Audubon Society of Northern Virginia

### What You Can Do

East of the Mississippi, 85.6 percent of land is privately owned so saving insects requires broad-based action, Tallamy challenged. We must “live in harmony with the natural world sustainably,” he urged, instead of “declaring war on nature.”

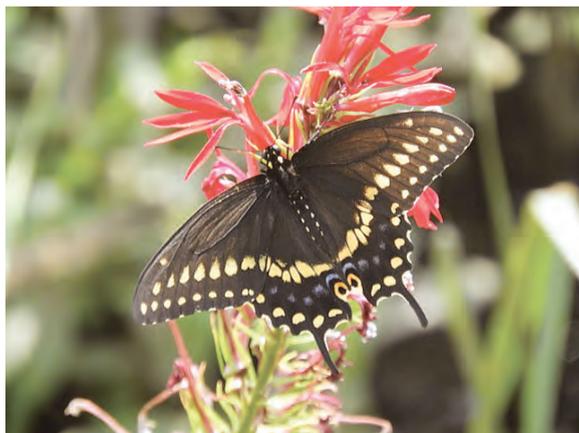
He offered some suggestions:

- ❖ Cut lawns in half, create beds around trees, add trees and leave the fall leaves for overwintering

SEE OUR VERY, PAGE 9



A monarch caterpillar on milkweed at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, September 2022.



A black swallowtail butterfly on a cardinal flower.



A differential grasshopper.



A bumblebee on a milkweed flower.

# NATURE

## Our Very Necessary Insects

FROM PAGE 8

insects.

- ❖ Plant native plants and remove invasive plants.
- ❖ Reduce light pollution by using motion-sensitive lights and yellow light bulbs outside.
- ❖ Avoid mosquito spraying, even if companies claim their products are “natural.” These products kill all insects, not just mosquitoes. Use a mosquito dunk or a fan instead.
- ❖ Minimize insecticides and pesticides.
- ❖ Don't use bug zappers. They kill 99 percent of insects.

Tallamy concluded, “Insects are the currency in our ecological bank account. The insect decline is a global problem with a grassroots solution. We created the problem and we can solve it.”

Tallamy is the author of *Bringing Nature Home*, *Nature's Best Hope* and *The Nature of Oaks* and formed Homegrown National Parks ([www.homegrownnationalparks.org](http://www.homegrownnationalparks.org)) to encourage private property owners to restore habitat and ecological networks with native plantings.

Libby Lyons applauded the talk “because his approach is straightforward and promises significant impact. His message is particularly powerful because he enables folks to see how each of us can make a positive difference for conservation right in our own backyards.” Lyons is president of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia (ASNVA). ASNVA has free “ambassadors” that will advise property owners. Visit <https://www.audubonva.org/audubon-at-home>.

The meeting was sponsored by the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, Plant NoVaNatives, the Prince William Conservation Alliance and the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy.

You can watch Tallamy's talk at <https://vimeo.com/753632644>.



The Audubon Society's poster advertising Dr. Tallamy's talk.



Milkweed bugs feed on seeds, leaves and stems of milkweed plants.

PHOTOS BY CLENDIA BOOTH/THE ALMANAC

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at this serene lakefront cabin during the day or under starry skies on clear nights

Even throw a line for catch and release fishing

Vacation property borders Blue Ridge Parkway, Milepost 180, southwest Virginia, six hours from DC. Less than hour from Andy Griffin's Mayberry in Mount Airy, NC and Virginia Tech in Blacksburg.

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https://mmmlakerearet.weebly.com/the-white-house.html

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## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### COUNTY TO SPONSOR FREE ELECTRIC SCOOTER CLINICS

Residents 18-and-older who are interested in electric scooter lessons can attend a free clinic on Nov. 5 sponsored by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. Participants will be able to take a test ride, learn safety tips and get details on basic scooter laws.

The clinics generally will last two-to-four hours and e-scooters will be available at each site. Those interested in e-scooters can stop in at any time during the clinic.

Participants must have a valid driver's license or ID. No registration is required to attend a clinic and walk-ups are welcome. Check [tinyurl.com/5n8adaj](http://tinyurl.com/5n8adaj) for cancellations due to inclement weather.

Saturday, Nov. 5. 12:30-2:30 p.m. Wheaton Ice Arena. 11717 Orebaugh Dr., Wheaton (back left parking lot).

### SUNDAY/NOV. 6

Waltz Dance. 3:30-6 p.m. At Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Featuring the ensemble Elke Baker, Paul Oorts and Dave Wiesler playing a lively mix of folk waltzes with a few other couple dances, including Hambro, Schottische, Swing, Tango, and Polka. The 45-minute dance lesson begins at 2:45 p.m. with a half-hour introductory Waltz workshop and a more advanced move presented the last 15 minutes. Social dancing follows until 6 pm. Admission is \$15, \$5 for full-time students with student ID. For more information, call Joan Koury at 202-238-0230 or Glen Echo Park at 301-634-2222, go to [www.WaltzTimeDances.org](http://www.WaltzTimeDances.org) or e-mail [info@WaltzTimeDances.org](mailto:info@WaltzTimeDances.org).

### LIBRARIES JOIN WASHINGTON WIZARDS BOOK OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

Montgomery County Public Libraries is teaming up with the Washington Wizards to encourage reading for fun. MCPL will share great reads with children and families by recommending three books that the library and Wizards community can read together. The Washington Wizards Book of the Month program will feature one book for readers grades K-2, one book for readers grades 3-5 and one book for readers grades 6-8 to explore each month. The books will be great for kids to read alone or for families to read together. Montgomery County joined this program on Oct. 1. MCPL's October selections can be found at [Montgomery.dcfamily.com](http://Montgomery.dcfamily.com).

### 988 SUICIDE LINE

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has launched 988, the new National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, in Maryland.

Contacting 988 provides a direct connection to support for anyone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, having thoughts of suicide, or being worried about someone who may need crisis support.

Suicide was a leading cause of death for people ages 10 to 34 years in 2020, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Moreover, from April 2020 to 2021, over 100,000 individuals died from drug overdoses in the U.S.

When someone in Maryland calls 988, the call is routed based on the caller's area code, not their location. If your cell phone has an out-of-state area code, your call will be routed to the state in which the area code originates. For those calls routed to Maryland, the call is answered by one of eight strategically located call centers across the state. These centers provide phone, text and chat-based support and information regarding local resources free of charge.

The Lifeline provides phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 150 additional languages for people who call 988. Veterans can access the Veterans Crisis

Line by calling 988 and pressing 1.

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY VACCINATING CHILDREN AGES 6 MONTHS TO 5 YEARS

Following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) full approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine for children ages 6 months to 5 years of age, the County's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) began vaccinating children in this age group by appointment only, last month. The Maryland Department of Health is also providing vaccine to pediatricians and participating local pharmacies. Available appointments are posted at [www.GoVaxMoCo.com](http://www.GoVaxMoCo.com).

### REQUEST FOOD ASSISTANCE

Residents looking for information on food assistance resources can request help by completing an online form. Available in seven languages (Amharic, Chinese, English, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese), the form is reviewed by a trained resource specialist, and residents receive a return phone call within one business day. The specialist will determine a resident's individual food needs and help them locate food assistance in their community. No personally identifiable information is needed to get help. Information is available about free food distribution sites, free meal and grocery delivery, SNAP (Food Stamps), local food assistance providers, and other resources in Montgomery County. Residents can also call 311 and ask for the Food Access Call Center to get help with their food needs.

### CRISIS PREVENTION SERVICES

EveryMind Crisis Prevention and Intervention specialists are available by phone, text and chat every hour of every day. The community can also look to EveryMind for mental health professionals who are prepared to talk about warning signs and ways anyone can help to prevent suicide from ending lives far too soon. EveryMind is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Visit [Every-Mind.org](http://Every-Mind.org). More resources include:

- ❖ Call or Text Montgomery County Hotline: 301-738-2255
- ❖ Chat: Crisis Prevention Chat: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>
- ❖ Call: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- ❖ [www.every-mind.org/services/crisis/](http://www.every-mind.org/services/crisis/)
- ❖ [www.every-mind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Talking-to-Kids-about-Suicide.pdf](http://www.every-mind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Talking-to-Kids-about-Suicide.pdf)
- ❖ [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)
- ❖ [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)

### MONKEYPOX VACCINE OFFERED

Public health officials from the County's Department of Health and Human Services announced that they have received a limited number of monkeypox vaccine doses. Currently, the supply of vaccine is very limited and the County, under the guidance of the Maryland Department of Health, will only offer vaccinations to a limited number of eligible residents who are at highest risk of contracting the virus.

The risk of monkeypox in the United States is believed to be low. Monkeypox does not spread easily between people, and the time between exposure and when symptoms start give public health officials time to track down contacts and break the chain of infection.

Anyone, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, can catch monkeypox. However, many cases in the current outbreak are among gay, bisexual, or other men who have sex with men.

Residents who believe that they have been exposed to monkeypox should contact their health care provider or a community provider such as an urgent care center. Those without a health care provider can also call the Disease Control Program at 240-777-1755. People who believe they are in a high-risk group and meet the above criteria for vaccination can contact their health care provider or the Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) clinic at 240-777-1751.

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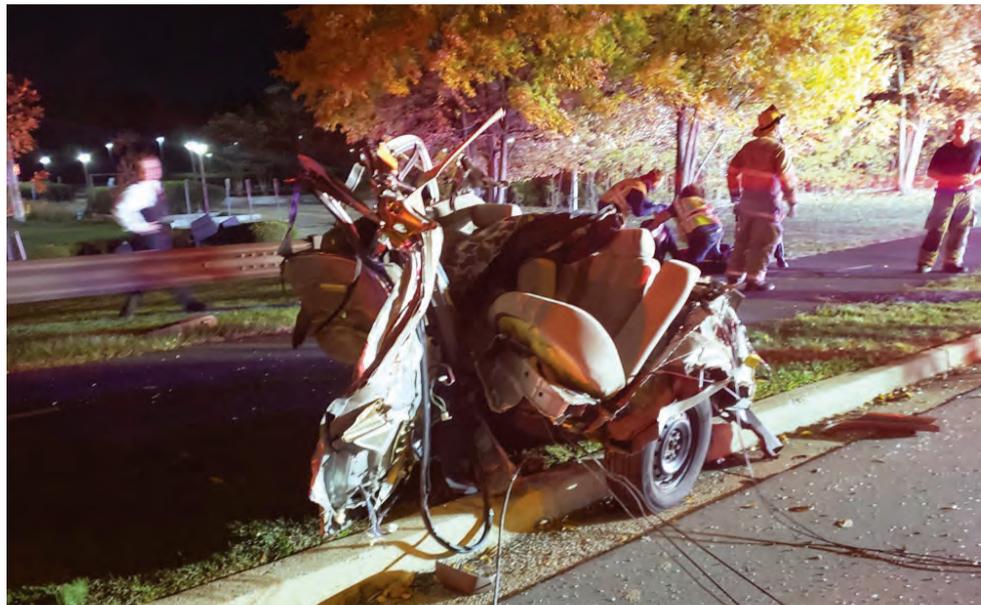
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## Serious Accident on Wootton Parkway

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue responded to a collision with injuries on Wootton Parkway near Tower Oaks in Rockville on Oct. 26 just after

9:30 p.m.

Two adults being evaluated; one with serious but not life threatening injuries. Via twitter, @mcfirsPIO @mcfirsPIO33



Calista Garcia of Arlington, Va. was a winner in 2017.

## 8th Annual Bethesda Songwriting Contest

FROM PAGE 3

honoring creativity and aspiring songwriters.”

The contest will be a multi-staged, juried competition. The first round judging panel will include professional artists, venue operators, booking agents, and music academia. They will choose the semifinalists from the total pool of applicants.

A grand prize jury will then select the finalists who will perform their original songs during the concert on Friday, April 21, 2023 at the Bethesda Blues and Jazz Supper Club. Each finalist receives \$500 for performing at the concert. The award winners will be announced at the close of the show.

All musical genres are accepted. Songs must include lyrics and cannot be more than four minutes long. Musicians can apply online or down-

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load a mail-in application at Bethesda.org.

Previous winners have included (grand prize and youth winner): Juliet Lloyd of Takoma Park, Md. and Marian Hunter of Alexandria, Va. in 2022; Heather Aubrey Lloyd of Owings Mills, Md. and Emily Mitchell of Gaithersburg, Md. in 2019; Rochelle Rice of Washington, D.C. and Skyler Foley of Burke, Va. in 2018; Lea Morris of Alexandria, Va. and Calista Garcia of Arlington, Va. in 2017; Justin Jones of Arlington, Va. and Maddy Clark of McLean, Va. in 2016; and Owen Danoff of Washington, D.C. and Lexi Peto of Warrenton, Va. in 2015.

Tickets to attend the eighth annual concert will be available January 2023 at www.bethesda.org.

Visit www.bethesda.org or call 301-215-6660 for more information.

## POTOMAC ALMANAC

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## A Distinction Without a Difference



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I've had health insurance with the same provider for 20+ years. For the past seven years I had been accepted into a special, more fortunate subgroup. Initial qualifications were simple: Serious illness (like my cancer) qualified. The application was a two-page pamphlet asking half-a-dozen, token-type questions. Nothing beyond name, rank, and serial number – and disease, of course. Naturally, I was accepted. The plan paid all co-pays for office visits, scans and such, and every dollar of any prescription medication I was prescribed. It was a freebee, so to speak; and to invoke Dennis Eckerlesley, formerly of the NESN/ Boston Red Sox television broadcasting crew (while describing a particularly fortuitous event on the field): "It was a beautiful thing." And when you consider the cost of cancer drugs, receiving a pass such as this, was instrumental in my survival – financially (you'll learn why: keep reading). Not incurring these costs has been a Godsend for my family.

A year or so ago however, my provider changed the rules. No more would seriousness of disease be the trigger. It would now be means-tested requirement where you had to make less than minimum wage, if you know what I mean? But the application was still modest in its initial approach. I answered a few questions and amazingly made the cut somehow and the benefits were renewed for another year, until Oct. 4th of this year. Apparently, the provider felt the pinch of its generosity. In response to my renewal application submitted 30 days before this year's expiration, the provider responded by mail a few days before my coverage was scheduled to terminate; that they needed additional financial documentation: tax returns, (all schedules), W-2s, 1099s, et cetera. They further advised that I could expect a response 45 days after receipt. This meant that I would be out of time/coverage when my cancer medication was due to be refilled. The timing could not have been worse.

I tried to reorder the medication as near as possible to the end of my current coverage so it would last through the 45 days until I was possibly renewed (hardly guaranteed), but I was advised by the pharmacy that the order was placed too soon, and I'd have to wait until, you guessed it, as it happened, after this special coverage had ended. Frantic, I called the provider's home office, spoke with a pharmacy coverage specialist, and explained my dilemma. She was understanding and said the provider offered a once-per lifetime accommodation for these exact transitional-type circumstances (when the patient now has to pay), to pay for the medication as they previously had: zero dollars. I was ecstatic. I thanked her profusely and hung up. When it was timely to reorder, I called the pharmacy and submitted the order. A day or so later, I received a text advising me that my medication was ready, and the co-pay would be \$985 – for one month. Disappointed (to say the least, panicked to say the most), I called the local pharmacy which was processing the order and asked if they were familiar with this special one-time dispensation. They said they were. Then I said, "that's what this order was about. I was then put on hold as the pharmacy tech. went "to get the pharmacy manager," she said. (I feared this day of reckoning would occur one day. Not to be a fatalist, more so a realist, but I figured this amazing benefit had to end at some point. I couldn't be this lucky forever. Now however, I might say the eagle has landed. Moreover, given the co-pay I received today, let me amend that statement to say the eagle has crashed and burned.)

Within 30 seconds or so the pharmacy manager comes on the line and asks if she can help. I briefly review with her the basic components of my expectation and ask why the co-pay is \$985 (I'm rounding up, to be fair). She says: "You are covered." "This is not the price that the home office told me I would be paying. It sure doesn't sound like I'm covered." I pleaded, calm. Then she said those words that led to this column: "I'm afraid that one-time offer doesn't apply for this medication." I snickered. You can probably imagine what I said to myself. Then I said: "I don't consider \$985 'coverage.'" Again, she assured me: "You are covered." I snicker, louder and more aggressively this time. You call \$985 for one month, "covered?" She responds that my regular policy still covers medication, just not like the special coverage I had previously did: free; and this \$985 is my current co-pay due. Otherwise, the medication would cost upwards of \$20,000." I hem and haw and eventually hang up the phone after asking how long the prescription will remain available for pick up. I still have a few weeks before I have to decide to pay the piper or not take my cancer medication. Either way, I'm worse off than I am now. Hardly a prescription for future good health.

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

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