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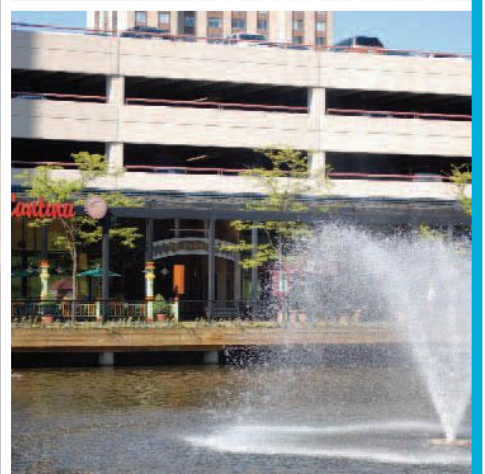
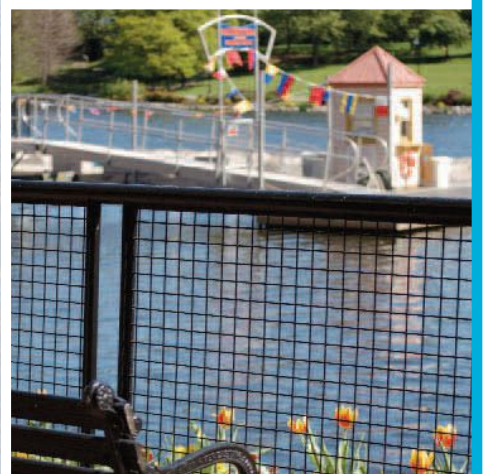
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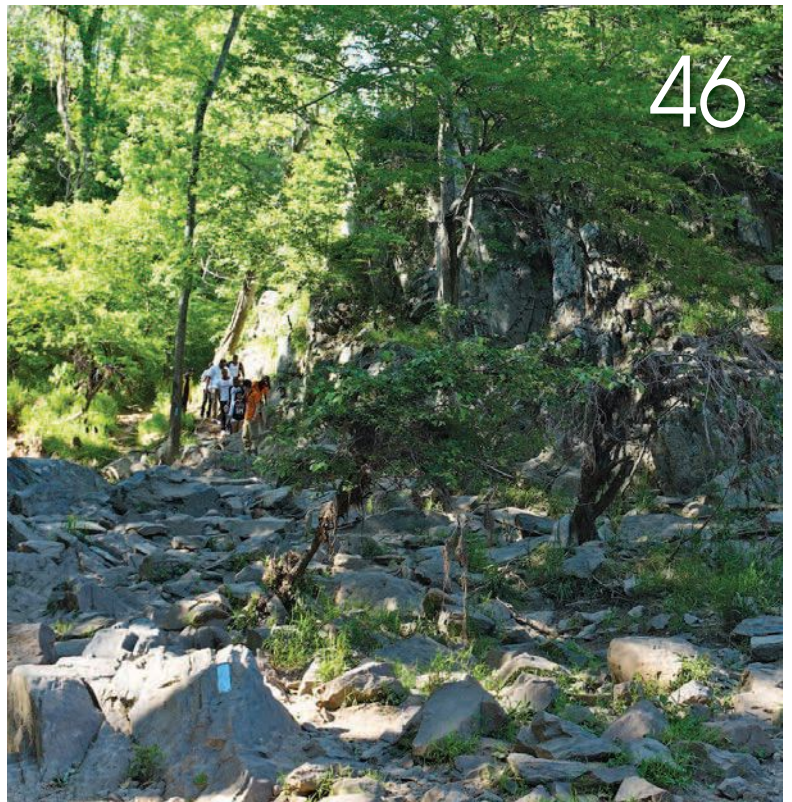
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Quality Education

As the new school year approaches, I've noticed more ads on television touting teachers as superheroes and urging viewers to help support their classrooms. It's funny what time and perspective does to one's point of view.




When I was in school – back when we attended junior high school instead of middle school – I always liked my teachers, but didn't fully appreciate their talents and how they were helping shape me as a person. Of course, when they were always assigning homework, administering tests and making sure we didn't fool around in class, it was easy to overlook their valuable attributes.

Now that I have two children in high school and one starting middle school, I know firsthand that teachers are indeed superheroes. Thankfully, my kids are doing well in school and I am grateful for all the teachers that they have had throughout their scholastic careers.

Some teachers are certainly better than others and some have a way of inspiring their pupils more than others, but I have nothing but great respect for these wonderful teachers. I especially appreciate the ones that sometimes use real life as examples in their teachings. After all, real life is where our kids end up on graduation day. My kids have not loved each and every one of their instructors, but that in itself is a lesson. We don't always get along with everyone who crosses our lives in every way – school, work, community, etc. With this we try to accept and get along because that is what society is and it's the one in which we live.

I have wondered throughout the years what makes one want to be a school teacher. It certainly isn't the money because our children's educators aren't paid enough. It is interesting how they are such a huge part of our children's lives and futures and our country's future, yet they are not fairly compensated.

But that's a topic for another issue. In this one, just in time for school, we asked a selection of public and private school teachers in the county, including Joseph Gannon Jr., Montgomery County Public School Teacher of the Year, a variety of questions on education and to get a glimpse inside their art. I hope you enjoy our feature on the art of teaching and, more importantly, I hope you support them and their schools whenever you can.


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Fire in the Sky

All that malarkey about the journey; about getting there being half the fun. Whoever came up with that didn't have to deal with Montgomery County traffic, because anyone who has ever spent 30 minutes on Interstate-270 creeping along to go one mile knows that our journey is never half the fun – or even a quarter, a third or an eighth. It's just painful. We hate Interstate 270 because it inevitably makes us late to work, our kid's soccer practice or date night. But occasionally it can be a spot of beauty, like at the end of a stormy summer evening. Here, the northern sky lights up as a June day comes to a close. This sky followed a wicked thunderstorm. In the distance at the top left is Sugarloaf Mountain. The shot was taken from the Route 118 bridge that crosses I-270 in Germantown. Even the most dreaded places occasionally flash a brilliance you never would have expected. Photograph by Jeff Thoreson



5 Things You Don't Know *About Montgomery County*



BY BILL KAMENIAR

Literary giant F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda, are buried in the St. Mary's Church cemetery in Rockville. Though neither lived or died in Montgomery County, Fitzgerald's father, Edward, was born and died in Rockville and had a family plot at St. Mary's. The great author died unexpectedly of a heart attack in Hollywood, California, so Zelda, then living in North Carolina, scrambled to make arrangements. With the couple's less-than-puritan lifestyle, burial for F. Scott was denied at the Catholic St. Mary's. So Zelda purchased a single plot in nearby Union Cemetery. When she died eight years later, she was buried on top of her husband. By 1975, Fitzgerald's literary significance had grown considerably beyond what it was in his lifetime and the couple's graves were moved to the family plot.

The first reference to the name Damascus, apparently copied from Damascus, Syria, came in 1816 when President James Monroe appointed Edward Hughes postmaster of the developing area. At the time settlers were coming to the area to find work. A newspaper article encouraged folks to come, saying that the area had two blacksmith shops, a saddler and a store, but that it was in search of a wheelwright, a tailor, a shoemaker and much more.

Happy birthday to us. Montgomery County celebrates its 239th anniversary on September 6. Shortly after the Declaration of Independence was signed, local leaders helped draft the new Maryland constitution. At the Maryland Constitutional Convention, lawmakers, led by Thomas Sprigg Wootton of Rockville, formed Montgomery County by parceling land that at some point belonged to neighboring Prince George's, Frederick and Charles counties and naming the new county after Revolutionary War General Richard Montgomery. Along with Washington County, which was named after George Washington, Montgomery County was among the first to use a name without a connection to Great Britain. Two hundred years later, the county adopted its motto of "Gardez Bien" which means watch or guard well.



The county's population grew six percent in 2014, almost twice the rate of growth statewide. The official U.S. Census Bureau estimate of the number of people living in the county is now 1,030,447. Of those, 51.8 percent are women. More than one in six Marylanders lives in Montgomery County.

The county's five biggest employers are all government agencies. As of last year the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services employed more county residents than any government or business entity at 28,500. Montgomery County Public Schools is next with 25,429. The U.S. Department of Defense employs about 12,000. The county itself employs 10,815 and a third federal agency is the fifth-largest employer at 5,500. The three largest private employers are Adventist Healthcare (4,900), Marriott International (4,700) and Lockheed Martin (4,000). Interestingly, of all those eight largest employers in the county, only the school system and the county have more employees now than in 2011.

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WHILE MANY TEENS SPEND THEIR FREE TIME ON PERSONAL pursuits, Yidong Hu, 16, devotes hers to serving others – and perhaps more important, to inviting her peers to join in her efforts. The winner of both the Key Club 2014 Above and Beyond Award, Montgomery County Division, and the 2015 Montgomery Serves Youth Award, Hu has walked this path since her days at Herbert Hoover Middle School in Potomac.

A rising senior at Winston Churchill High School, Hu said it all began when she volunteered to help her seventh-grade science teacher. “A little kid feels like the center of the world,” she observed. But at that age “I began to realize that teachers are people with lives, too, that life is more than just you.”

That teacher, Dennis Ross, remembers Hu as “an exceptional student and an exceptional person. She was incredibly responsible, and I could entrust her with all sorts of tasks and know they would be done accurately with very little oversight needed.” Hu recruited friends to help, and Ross says when the work was completed, they “would have a blast eating popcorn, drawing art on my blackboard and just laughing like middle school girls do.”

At Hoover, Hu also joined the Kiwanis Club-sponsored Builders Club, which offers middle-schoolers opportunities to develop leadership, improve self-esteem and increase civic engagement through service. Being a buddy for the Miracle League of Montgomery County was among the projects Hu found most fulfilling. She helped children with physical or mental challenges play baseball. “What these kids do is really a beautiful thing,” Hu says. “And once they get to know you, these kids, who often have been ostracized, feel included.”

High school brought Hu into Kiwanis’ Key Club service organization. As her division’s lieutenant governor, which includes eight Montgomery County high schools and 250 members, she directs her efforts at increasing membership and volunteering in both international projects and local institutions. Last year, to support Project Eliminate, which distributes vaccines to eradicate neonatal and maternal tetanus around the world, the club held a walkathon and concerts featuring members of the Montgomery County Youth Orchestra. Hu is planning another walkathon for late October at Churchill.

Local projects, Hu insists, are equally important. “Real, direct service is as simple as going out into the community and making a difference in a few kids’ day. The smaller projects back at home ... soup kitchens, shelters, hospitals and local fire departments are here and now, and deserve our attention, too.”

As such, in March 2014, Hu founded Children’s Corner to support families staying at the Children’s Inn at NIH. “When I checked out the Inn, I found the kids in Miracle League are healthy compared to the kids at the Inn,” she says. Hu, the president, and the 39



Yidong Hu

Volunteer

By Ellyn Wexler

members raised more than \$1,000 last year via fundraisers like bake and pizza sales. Their contribution qualified them for the Inn’s Hall of Donors. “They also made handmade cards with cheerful greetings and special lollipop centerpieces to bring color and whimsy to the dining room tables,” says Laura King, the Inn’s director of volunteers and community outreach. “As a young emerging philanthropist, Hu has demonstrated to her peers that no matter what age you are, you can truly make a difference in your community.”

When NIH scientist Dumitru Mazilu saw Hu pushing a cart filled with the centerpieces, he spoke with her and learned about her volunteer efforts. Mazilu recommended her for the Montgomery Serves Award. “It’s hard to find that kind of enthusiasm for volunteering, and her love for giving back to the county,” he said.

Hu, who plans to study biomedical engineering at Johns Hopkins, summed up her philosophy: “I think the money and time you put into volunteering is really defined by you. Just like a hobby — such as when I paint or play piano — you do what you love because it makes your day fulfilling and worthwhile.

“To me, volunteering is ... not a task to cross off my to-do list or a Plan B, but rather a lifestyle. For me, giving to others is something that can’t be shut off at the end of the day. In all I do, I like to incorporate a bit of volunteering or helping others. I want to go bed every day knowing I’ve done something meaningful.”



Anne Shroeder

Animal Lover

By Molly Golubcow
Photograph by Bill Kamenjar

NOAH HAD HIS ARK, BUT ANNE SHROEDER HAS HER sanctuary – Star Gazing Farm.

The four-acre farm in Boyds not only provides a refuge for farm animals needing a home, but an opportunity to become part of a new “family” of assorted sizes and species. As of last count, Shroeder shares her house and land with more than 60 animals, including a donkey, ox, sheep, goats, geese, llamas, and others seized by animal control, picked up as strays or given up by owners unable to care for them.

Having grown up in a family that rescued pets, Shroeder is a natural with nature. After she and her pets, including two ducklings, outgrew her Silver Spring apartment, she knew it was time to head out to the country. Over the years, she has volunteered at animal rescue agencies like the DC Animal Shelter and Days End Farm Horse Rescue, learning the ins and outs of animal care. “These experiences were formative. They showed me not only the great need for high quality rescue organizations, but also taught me some of the nuts and bolts of running such an organization,” Shroeder says.

Understanding animals is like being proficient in a foreign language. Shroeder has a Masters degree in Arabic linguistics, so she knows how to “listen” and “talk” to different animals so she can address their daily needs and understand their quirks.

Imagine Dr. Doolittle on steroids with a methodical approach to understanding animals.

“There is nothing magical about this,” she says. “First, I love animals. Second, I read, listen and learn. It’s about curiosity, interest and persistence.”

Shroeder and her band of devoted volunteers have much work to do – feeding, grooming, shearing, veterinary care, grounds keeping, maintaining infrastructure, and, of course, dishing out a lot of love.

To educate and share the farm experience with others, Shroeder offers weekend work programs and tours for youth and adults to experience animals “hands-on.” She believes in teaching others to “get it” – understanding quality care and humane treatment of farm animals.

“I hope that animal lovers who know about and visit our farm will extend their compassion from pets to all animals,” she says.

According to its motto, Star Gazing Farm is “a haven for retired farm animals and wayward goats.” And speaking of goats, when visiting the farm, ask to meet Newman, the goat. He’s quite a character. According to Shroeder, if Newman could speak he’d tell you straight out, “Star Gazing Farm is a totally cool place, but we need more molasses cookies.”

To visit or volunteer, www.stargazingfarm.org.



A Man's Place is in this Shop

By Charles Jeffries
Photograph by Bill Kamenjar

THAT JERRY O'BRIEN HAS BEEN CUTTING HAIR IN ROCKVILLE FOR 45 years, or that he's been barbering in the same shop at 9 Dawson Street for 31 consecutive years, is no indication of his staying power. O'Brien has lived in the same house for 77 years.

When his parents brought him home from the hospital in 1938, they took him to their house at the corner of 4th and Channing streets Northeast and he hasn't left.

"My dad bought the house in 1932 for \$5,600," he says. "I've lived there all my life."

He started barbering in the Tenley Building on Edmonston Drive in 1971 and moved to Dawson Avenue in 1985 and renamed the shop the Yankee Clipper. O'Brien is the small town barber now surrounded by a city that grew up around him. And the Yankee Clipper may be the last bastion of pure manliness in Rockville.

O'Brien is proud to be a barber, not a hairstylist. No one settles into one of O'Brien's leather barber chairs and is overcome by a chemical waft of someone getting a perm in the next chair. There is nothing unisex about the Yankee Clipper, and O'Brien makes no apologies for it.

You won't find any tabloids or hairstyle picture books on the reading table, just magazines like *Esquire*, *Men's Journal*, *Men's Health* and, yes, *Playboy*. The pool table (free for customers), the mounted blue marlin, the eight-point buck, the largemouth bass are all appropriate for a barbershop, not a styling salon.

And his customers respect that.

"My customers are all men," he says. "I'm on my third

generation now. I've cut the hair of their fathers and their grandfathers."

O'Brien shows up at the shop by 5:30 or 6:00 a.m., making his schedule fit that of his customers. He cuts hair for a lot of Rockville's lawyers, judges and county officials who stop in on their way to work. He's often there for them on their way home from work as well.

Even the name of the shop is manly, named after baseball great Joe DiMaggio. "I was a fan of Marilyn Monroe from the time I saw her in her first movie. DiMaggio was her first husband, and the Yankee Clipper was his nickname."

In the shop, O'Brien has pictures of Monroe sprinkled in with historic paintings by Rockville artist Houston Edward Hancock.

Three years ago O'Brien survived a bout with leukemia and kept the shop open during his battle. But now, after 45 years of cutting hair, his future in Rockville is in question. Last year the building he rents space in was sold, and O'Brien is on a month-to-month lease while the new owner contemplates the building's future. He wants to continue, and his customers would hate to see him go. "Barbers tend to live a long time," he says. "It's a low-stress job."

If retirement is in his future, he plans to travel to his family's homeland of Ireland. And somehow, Rockville just won't be the same without a real barber. O'Brien is one of those guys who knows everyone in town, and everyone knows him. Well, at least the men.

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ROBERT ZMUDA OF KENSINGTON RECEIVED
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UNCLAIMED PROPERTY PROGRAM

Who Wants to be a...

Maryland's
Unclaimed
Property Program
made a Rockville
woman a
millionaire, but
others aren't
so lucky.

By Warren Douglas
Photograph by Bill Kamenjar

IT'S AN AGE-OLD QUESTION AND ONE WE ALL DREAM ABOUT: WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH \$1 million? A Rockville woman recently got her answer after discovering the state of Maryland was holding more than \$1 million in stocks and dividends that were legally hers. The claimant, who asked the state to withhold her identity, secured the assets in May after discovering that her name or that of a relative was included in a database of current and former Maryland residents who have unclaimed property just waiting for them.

Run by the office of the Comptroller of Maryland, the state's Unclaimed Property Program reunites lost money with its rightful owners. Common sense would dictate that since people don't inherently like to leave money and property behind, the program wouldn't have much to distribute.

But in this case, common sense is superceded by error, omission, lack of communication and information or just plain forgetfulness as there are more than one million accounts valued at more than \$1 billion waiting to be claimed.

The law requires banks and financial institutions, corporations and insurance companies to contact the Comptroller's office when any property has gone unclaimed – or an account has been dormant – for more than three years. Such property can take the form of uncashed payroll checks, bank accounts, stocks or dividends, utility deposits, life insurance policies or the contents from abandoned safe deposit boxes.

When non-monetary items reach the Unclaimed Property Fund, the state has them appraised and then auctioned off on eBay. Proceeds from the sale are held indefinitely. There isn't any statute of limitations on filing a claim and funds are not considered as income and thus not subject to taxes.

Despite public awareness campaigns, Comptroller Peter Franchot says many people don't realize there is money in the fund that might belong to them. Sometimes people simply forget about a check or cable deposit or don't know that a relative has left behind property.

"A top priority of mine as Comptroller is to reunite Marylanders with their hard-earned money. That's why over the past eight years, my office has made unprecedented efforts to inform taxpayers who may be one of the more than one million people eligible to claim nearly \$1 billion we're holding for them ... In these tough times, it can make a big difference to families across our state," Franchot says.

Despite the large number of accounts, it appears the program of reuniting money and their owners has been very successful. Since 2007, the state has returned more than \$450 million in unclaimed property. In fiscal year 2014, the Comptroller's office processed nearly 51,000 claims worth more than \$62 million.

TO CLAIM YOUR LOST FORTUNE

To see if you have any unclaimed property go to: www.interactivemarylandtaxes.com/individuals/unclaim

For questions, call 800.782.7382 or email unclaim@comp.state.md.us.

To check for items up for auction, go to: www.ebay.com/usr/mdcompfranchot.

The Comptroller's office will also have a booth at the Montgomery County Fair (August 14-22) where staff will be on hand to help residents look up their names in the state's database.

Margaret Smith discovered her deceased husband's name on the list of accounts and called the Comptroller's office in search of more information. An employee there hinted that the funds were from a dormant bank account so Smith dug through some old files and came across a bank statement from an account her husband had opened more than a decade ago.

"It had something like \$15.39 in it. The bank wanted me to produce a new death certificate which was going to cost me \$25 so I think I'll let it go," said Smith of Kensington.

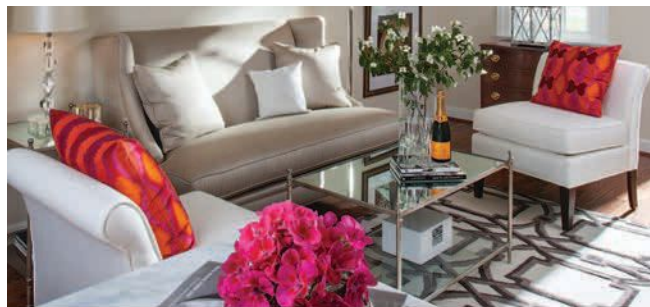
The anticipation of experiencing Christmas in summer awaits Scott Meade, who ran an insurance business in Rockville for 10 years before taking a job in New Hampshire a dozen years ago. He recently discovered that his name and old business address appear four times in the Comptroller's database.

"I have absolutely no idea what it could be, but I'm sure as heck going to find out," he said.

Because Rockville's newest millionaire didn't want to be identified, we may never know what she did with her windfall. Robert Zmuda, however, is going to spend his \$295 check from the state on college tuition.

When a recent 192-page newspaper insert listed Zmuda as one of 78,000 new unclaimed property accounts worth more than \$58 million, friends and family members alerted the Kensington resident that he might have some money coming his way. Six weeks after submitting a claim form with the Comptroller of Maryland, Zmuda received his check.

"It was awesome ... and I have absolutely no clue what it was for. They never told me," says Zmuda who noted the unexpected Godsend will be earmarked for "University of Alabama tuition."



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My Two-Wheel Commute

By Sarah Lichtner • Photograph by Bill Kamenjar

THERE'S NO NEED TO GAS UP THE CAR. My legs will do all the work. As I strap on my helmet and hop on my bike, I realize I actually enjoy my morning commute.

For me, the benefits of biking make a compelling case. Biking saves significant amounts of money spent on parking (\$8 a day in Silver Spring), gas and car maintenance. It's also a great way to jumpstart your day with exercise or blow off steam on the trip home. Even better, it's environmentally friendly. And for me, a commute by bike often takes less time than the same trip by car. So it's no surprise that I pass others who have made the same commuting decision, many of whom bike much greater distances than my short, though surprisingly hilly, 1.5-mile ride.

Supporting this alternative form of transportation in our county of about one

million residents requires a robust bike-friendly infrastructure. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation maintains 100 miles of shared bike paths and lanes, and the Department of Parks maintains 45 miles of bike paths and trails. MCDOT also provides maps, including a mobile app, of bike trails and lanes to help bicyclists identify safe routes. Recognizing that there's always more that can be done, the county has a number of in-progress and planned projects to improve bikeways.

As the county-funded infrastructure grows, many corporations are following suit. Though companies can request bike racks from the county on a first-come, first-served basis, some build customized biking infrastructure. My office building has its own bike room in the parking garage with 20 bike racks, along with tools for maintenance,

lockers, and even cold water. The swipe-card-accessible room keeps my bike secure and protects it from the elements, removing some of my concerns about biking to work rather than driving.

Even if you don't own a bike, biking is still an option. Capital Bikeshare (www.capitalbikeshare.com) is becoming more prevalent in Montgomery County, with more than 30 stations across Silver Spring, Bethesda, Gaithersburg and Rockville. The service costs \$85 a year for unlimited rides or \$8 a day. Capital Bikeshare charges an additional usage fee for each ride—about \$2 for a 30- to 60-minute commute.

Bicycles aren't just for leisure any more. They are a cost-effective, environmentally friendly and healthy commuting alternative. Lace up your shoes, strap on a helmet and see for yourself.

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Danielle Verbiest

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THE LITERACY COUNCIL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Interview by Sarah Litchner



In a county where about one-third of residents hold advanced degrees, the Literacy Council of Montgomery County has spent the past 50 years helping nearly 20,000 residents learn to read, write and communicate in English.

LCMC's executive director Danielle Verbiest talks about the LCMC's mission, students, and volunteer opportunities.

WHAT SHOULD RESIDENTS KNOW ABOUT LCMC?

The Literacy Council of Montgomery County is a non-profit organization founded in 1963. We offer a variety of educational programs for adults focused on building English literacy skills, including one-on-one tutoring and more intensive classroom-based programs. All of our programs are offered at little-to-no cost to our students and our classes and tutoring sessions take place all over the county so we can meet the students where they are. We serve about 1,500 learners every year with the help of more than 700 volunteers and certified teachers.

HOW SIGNIFICANT OF A PROBLEM IS ILLITERACY IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY?

A lot of people think that we're a highly educated county, without recognizing that there are more than 160,000 in our county who are limited English proficient—

that's one out of every seven residents. When you look at it from a state perspective, about 40 percent of the Maryland immigrant population lives in our county, and 40 percent of our county population speaks a language other than English at home. We have about 58,000 adults who do not have a high school diploma, and many are unable to read above a fourth-grade level. There is a big problem here with illiteracy, and the demand for literacy services exceeds the supply. Countywide there are about 2,000 people who are on waiting lists with organizations offering literacy services.

CAN YOU TELL ME A BIT ABOUT THE STUDENTS WHO SEEK OUT LCMC'S SERVICES?

We serve adults, and our adult learners come from all over the world, including the United States. Last year, our students came from 89 different countries. Some students have received formal education and are literate in their native language, while

others are not. Our students are committed and motivated. In spite of the fact that they may work two or three jobs, take public transportation, and have to care for their families, they attend their classes or tutoring sessions regularly, do their homework and promise to work toward their goals.

WHAT OR WHO IS LCMC'S GREATEST SUCCESS STORY?

We consider every student a success story. When someone comes to our organization, he or she takes the skills we teach to transform his own life and the lives of his family. There's the mother, for instance, who is able to attend a parent-teacher conference for the first time without a translator. Or the lawyer who finally passed the bar and can practice law again as he did in his native country. Or someone who's finally able to fill out a questionnaire at the doctor's office without fear of checking off a wrong box. Whatever our students' goals are, they work hard toward achieving them.

HOW DO YOU ENVISION THE FUTURE OF LCMC?

I would envision a future where we have no waiting lists, where we can serve everyone who comes to us for help. A bigger vision is for a community where every member, whether born in the United States or abroad, has the literacy skills they need to reach their full potential.

HOW CAN MONTGOMERY COUNTY RESIDENTS SUPPORT LCMC'S EFFORTS?

There are multiple volunteer opportunities, including tutoring one-on-one, assisting a teacher in a classroom, leading a conversation class or helping with administrative tasks like data entry in the office or volunteering at an event.

Another big way someone can support our efforts is financially. We offer our services at little to no cost to our learners, and we would like to keep it that way. Donations are appreciated in any amount. Every \$1 that's invested in adult education creates \$3.15 in economic benefits back to the community. I would say that's a great return on investment.

How to Help: www.literacycouncilmcmd.org

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The Good Life for Families

IF YOU LIVE IN ROCKVILLE, THIS PROBABLY doesn't come as news to you, but the city is considered one of the 10 best cities in the United States for families. That's hard to argue, given the quality of the schools, its location near the nation's capital and all the social, cultural, sports and, of course, family things to do nearby.

The website Livability.com conducted a study that examined census, consumer spending and school data, among other factors, to determine the rankings. Rockville ranked ninth overall and was recognized for having the lowest crime rate of the cities in the top 10 as well as being "most walkable." Livability surveyed more than 2,000 cities to come up with a top 10 list.

"What makes Rockville one of the best cities for families is the extremely low crime

rate, high percentage of children in the community, and the focus schools in Rockville put on science and technology," the study said.

Rockville staples like Rockville Town Square, the Rockville Memorial Library, the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, Croydon Creek Nature Center and the Carl Henn Memorial Millennium Trail all caught the attention of the folks doing the study, just as those places do for families that live here.

"The city keeps the playgrounds, walking trails and athletic fields in great shape, and families often utilize these amenities," it reported.

Families in Rockville pay a premium to live in this affluent Washington, D.C., suburb where the cost of living is among the highest in the nation. But the return may be even greater.

THE 10 BEST FAMILY CITIES

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2. PLANO, TEXAS
3. HOLLAND, MICHIGAN
4. CARMEL, INDIANA
5. LEESBURG, VIRGINIA
6. CHANDLER, ARIZONA
7. NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS
8. BENTONVILLE, ARKANSAS
9. ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
10. ST. GEORGE, UTAH

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BY BILL KAMENIAR

Then & Now

THEY RAZED PARADISE AND PUT UP A

PARKING LOT. OK, the Little Tavern wasn't paradise, but old timers in the Washington, D.C., area remember it fondly. It was one of the first hamburger chain restaurants and the little white and green shacks were scattered throughout town and into the suburbs. Harry F. Duncan founded Little Tavern in 1927, opening the first one in Louisville, Kentucky. But they became integrated with D.C. life – dozens dotting street corners from Capitol Hill to the growing suburbs, including this one at the

corner of Ripley Street and Georgia Avenue which was built in 1938. It closed in 1991 though the building operated as Ollie's, also a hamburger shop, until 1999. In 2003 the building's owner tried unsuccessfully to sell it for \$89,000 on eBay. It was razed that year to make way for parking in an expanding downtown Silver Spring and now looks like the above picture.



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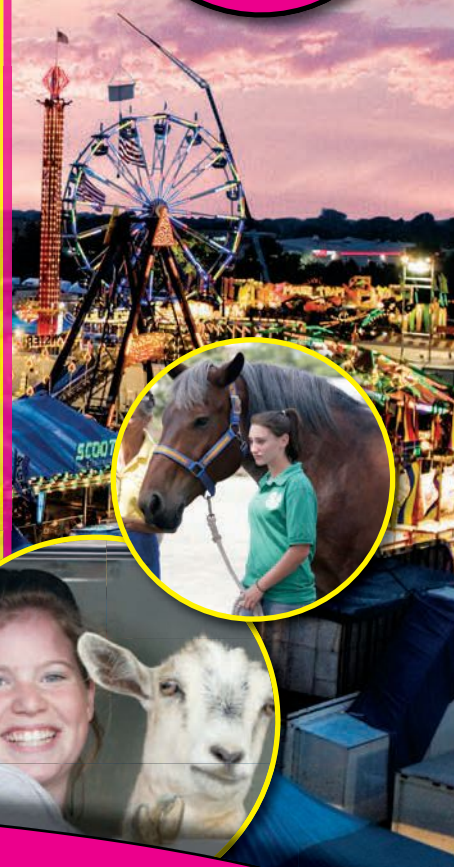
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Life (and Death) According to John

I've cried twice since I outgrew the tantrum stage of life many decades ago – once out of pure joy the night my oldest child was born and again when I was blindsided by sadness on the day my father unexpectedly died at a young age.

Ended relationships, weddings, graduations – the things that move others to tears – just don't tug on my heartstrings that way. Some who know me might argue that I don't run emotionally deep enough to cry, and in some ways I can't say they are wrong.

So when John passed earlier this summer, there were plenty of tears from family members and friends, and deservedly so. But none came from me.

I came to know John while dating his daughter, who I eventually married, and had three children with. As their grandfather, John became part of my life for more than three

decades, and his life and passing had an impact, even if at the time of his passing I hadn't yet realized to what extent.

Truth be told, I didn't have much in common with John. We found conversation in the last bastions of male bonding – sports, home improvement projects and geographical directions – the topics you go to when you have no go-to topics.

I admired John for his beliefs, though not the same as mine, and his devoutness in them. In his healthier days

when he would visit from North Carolina he would rise early, and each morning when I came down for breakfast I would find him sitting at the kitchen table reading the Bible and saying his morning prayers – a daily ritual he never missed. He was a deacon in his church, a devoted husband for more than 50 years and a good father, and

that's a trifecta you don't find very often.

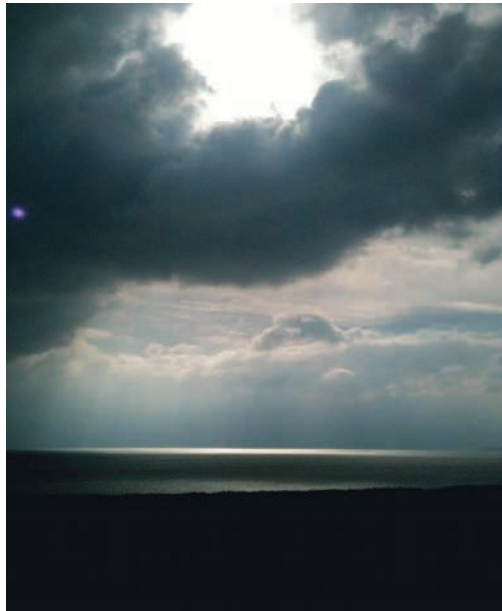
Death is our constant companion because no one knows what's around life's next bend. John managed to stave it off for 78 years, not a bad run for someone who was given nothing, earned what he had and asked no quarter.

When he passed, I looked for meaning in his death, but found none. Instead, I came to the conclusion that death has no meaning. Death's task is to define life. Without death, what would inspire us to experience life? Without that clock ticking

down, life would be hackneyed and passionless, perhaps even meaningless. Any sense of urgency would give way to the temptation of adjournment – to put off what should be expeditiously done because we know we could get to it tomorrow or next week or two centuries from now.

John didn't have that kind of time. None of us has that kind of time.

We are lucky enough to occupy the moment, to stand here in the present and to be a small part of the link between two eternities – the endless past and the



uncontemplatable future. And when I look at it from that vastness, it all seems so insignificant and it forced me to the conclusion that life really has no meaning either. The yin of life and the yang of death are the forces that create the fabric of our existence. Our brief and fleeting presence in this world has meaning not simply because we exist but because of what we bring to that existence and what we leave behind when that existence comes to its inevitable end.

In death those left behind learn something about themselves, about their own significance. And if what they learn makes them a better person, then the life now spent is worth crying over.

What I learned in John's passing is that a person's significance goes

beyond his brief being in that the best lives are carried forward by others, by offspring, by loved ones. And that's what gives life its meaning.

Ultimately the measure of a man's life is what he leaves behind, not in material things but in legacy, because it's not the one with the most toys at the end who wins, it's the ones who have made an impact on their small corner of the world, and will continue to make an impact after departing.

The night we said goodbye to John, much of what he left behind was gathered in a room at his house. His widow, his five children, most of his 13 grandchildren and both of his great grandchildren – the people to whom John's life gave meaning and now the bloodline charged with carrying that life forward. There is none of John's

blood in me. It runs through my children. The evening was for John's bloodline to complete the grieving and move on to healing. Toasts were made, stories were told, things were remembered. But as I stood there on the periphery, watching the significance John's life and death on his bloodline, I realized there was only one thing that needed to be said.

"Well done, John."

That night was a celebration of a life completed. Maybe every good life deserves a good cry. Maybe every great life demands a good cry. Even though John's passing was not unexpected, that didn't mean it wasn't a cause for tears.

And if there's a smudge on this page, it just might be from one of mine. MM

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By BILL KAMENIAR

STOP THE PRESSES

*Journalism in Montgomery County
May Never be the Same* By Elyn Wexler

The email from my editor arrived on June 12. From its subject line, “Confirmation of the inevitable,” it was not difficult to determine its content.

“Well, as much as I wish I didn’t need to send this email....” he wrote. “I’ll go ahead and clarify what’s already being said online (if you haven’t heard already). All the *Maryland Gazette* papers are being shut down. Next week’s issues (June 17-18) will be the last ever for *The Gazette*.”

I was heartbroken. *The Gazette* had

landed in my driveway when I was a newcomer to Montgomery County 30 years ago, and from its pages, I learned what was going on in my immediate community, the county and the state. A few years later, I took a job there, but it was never the 40-hours-a-week grind for a paycheck. I looked forward to work each day, and would leave note pads around my home to scribble ideas for headlines and leads that would come to me in the shower or in the middle of the night. For me, the loss of *The Gazette* is an intensely emotional experience.

For county residents, *The Gazette* was more like a friend who showed up on our doorstep once a week to keep us updated on what was going on around the corner rather than around the world. The succession of Washington newspapers – *The Star*, *The Post*, *The Times* – couldn’t do justice to the news we really needed. They reported the heck out of a civil war halfway around the world, but the election of a new Gaithersburg mayor was lucky to get a line or two. *The Gazette* gave us the full story: Who is he? What he’s thinking? How will

< **THE MEDIA** >

Gaithersburg change with him at the helm? When a new elementary school was being planned or an old school closing, *The Gazette* was there for us. We appreciated its intimate knowledge of the minutiae of Montgomery County and the detail with which it kept us abreast of local happenings. It was a small-town newspaper in the big-city suburbs, and it did its job well for 56 years.

I am not the only one who will miss it. Gaithersburg mayor Jud Ashman says the closing “leaves a gaping hole” in the community. County council president George Leventhal says it is “a gigantic abandonment by The Washington Post Company of its responsibilities

to the community.” And County Executive Ike Leggett says, “*The Gazette* has long been an influential asset to our county communities.”

As the news of *The Gazette's* demise spread, I received emails and calls from people I had written about and worked with, and a plethora of friends and acquaintances wrote or stopped me in the supermarket or at the gym to express their sadness about the loss of our hometown newspaper. A former colleague started an alumni Facebook page that within days had more than 500 members.

I joined *The Gazette* staff in 1986, before its heyday and seven years prior to *The Post's* purchase.

Throughout my tenure, my co-

workers were talented, creative journalists who had passion for what they did, despite their meager salaries. My mentors were brilliant, and as an editor, I did my best to pass on what I had learned from them to the next generation of journalists.

I saw the papers increase in circulation, number of editions, sections and page counts. My job was to write and edit articles about the arts and people who had passion for what they did. There were entire newsrooms of dedicated reporters, editors, photographers and designers in *The Gazette* chain who had a similar passion for telling the stories and reporting the news of Montgomery County.

Beyond the news, *The Gazette*



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family reached out to the community; employees invested volunteer hours, and the company made substantial financial contributions and gave free advertising to local nonprofit organizations.

Sadly, with the Internet era came the slow but steady decline of the newspaper industry across the country. At *The Gazette*, advertising revenues dropped, and then came the inevitable cost-saving plans – painful and disheartening reductions in sections, page counts and staff.

Seeing the writing on the wall, I reluctantly took the attractive buyout *The Post* offered long-term employees in 2012. But once my contractual year off passed, I began freelancing for what remained of the arts and entertainment section – no longer the stand-alone full-color section of years past, but instead, a couple of pages after the sports news.

Naively, I hoped Amazon founder and billionaire Jeff Bezos would save *The Gazettes* when he acquired them with *The Washington Post* in 2013. Now I wonder about his reasons for including the community newspapers in his purchase. And why did he sell the Southern Maryland and Fairfax community papers and not Montgomery and Prince George's? Former *Gazette* owner Davis L. Kennedy has said he made an offer.

The Gazette Website home page is a solicitation for advertisers to call *The Post*, so I wonder if Bezos' design was to eliminate the competition. The big paper's lackluster Local Living section is regional at best and is unlikely to fill the *Gazette*-less void in Montgomery

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GAZETTE

Former Rockville resident Earle D. Hightower produced the first issue of *The Gaithersburg Gazette* in 1959. Ironically, he died June 8 at the age of 92, four days before the announcement of *The Gazette's* termination. The final edition of *The Gazette* reported that his daughter said she was glad he never heard the news.

That first edition was produced in the basement of Hightower's home and from there it would grow into one of the most successful community newspaper chains in the country. A year after starting the paper, Hightower turned it over to his business partner Nat Blum, who nearly doubled *The Gazette's* size. Blum sold it in 1966 to John Panagos, who increased circulation to about 38,000.

He sold the papers to Davis L. Kennedy in 1979.

Kennedy added the Courier newspapers in Damascus, Olney and Mount Airy to the chain, and created *Gazette* editions in Rockville, Germantown, Potomac, Bethesda and Chevy Chase. His focus was very, very local news. Kennedy made the 10-cent paper free, and

circulation grew to 200,000. He sold 80 percent of the company to The Washington Post Co. in 1992 and initiated Silver Spring and Burtonsville editions. He sold his remaining 20 percent to *The Post* the following year.

The Post invested heavily in newsroom and printing technology and launched *The Montgomery Gazette*, known as *The Gazette of Politics and Business*, followed by the *Business Gazette* in 1996. The *Gazette* acquired the Comprint printing plant and Comprint Military Publications. In 1996 it expanded into Frederick County and the next year into Prince George's County. By then, blanketing the Maryland suburbs, *The Gazette's* circulation grew to 550,000 in 2011.

At that time the chain included 10 Montgomery County editions (Bethesda, Burtonsville, Damascus, Gaithersburg, Germantown, Olney, Potomac, Rockville, Silver Spring and Wheaton), eight in Prince George's County (Bowie, Clinton, College Park, Hyattsville, Landover, Largo, Laurel and Upper Marlboro) and two in Frederick County (Mount Airy and Frederick, which both closed in 2013).

Said former *Gazette* reporter Josh Kurtz: "*The Gazette* was a hell of a training ground for a lot of people, and they did a lot of excellent work."

County. What's more, the metropolitan reach of *The Post* can't give former *Gazette* advertisers the hyper-local community focus nor the delivery to every doorstep. The postmortem of *The Gazette* has yet to be written and fully understood. For now, its past continues to live online, but Montgomery County residents will have to search for other sources of local news. Those options won't

compare to what *The Gazette* offered for more than half a century.

"We've gotten to a place that matters," Post Communities Media president Chuck Lyons said in 2011. "We're in the community. We're the ones who stay close to every community we serve. As long as we do that well, there will be a need for us to exist."

Apparently, he was wrong. NM



ELIZABETH BORDLEY AND SANDY ROACHFORD (CHOREOGRAPHER) REHEARSE FOR WAR OF THE STARS. By PATRICIA WOOLSEY



The Inclusive Arts

ArtStream's Theater Program Serves Adults with Disabilities

By Lisa Traiger

On top of her homework load, Akilah Hartgrove, a high school senior from Silver Spring, has a slew of activities in her schedule, from school plays to voice, acting and piano lessons to jazz band rehearsals, and, this year, ceramics. But every Tuesday evening from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., she sets aside time to serve as a mentor in ArtStream's Inclusive Theater Program. The Montgomery County-based non-profit provides creative opportunities, classes, a full-fledged theater program and other inclusive and educational services to several thousand adults on the disability and autism spectrum, ranging in age from 21 to mid-50s.

Founded a decade ago by Patricia Woolsey with four like-minded friends – Nicolette Stearns, Emilia O'Connor, Sally Kinka and Patricia Krauss – ArtStream grew out of a kitchen table conversation. "There was wine involved," Woolsey recalls. "Basically, we asked, 'What's your dream? How do you want



< THEARTS >

to interact with the arts and society?” Woolsey, who moved to Washington, D.C., to study theater at Catholic University, became passionate about her work after college with youngsters with disabilities, as did the group’s co-founders. “All of us saw the power of the arts,” Woolsey says, “and we wanted to use (the arts) to move society forward in some way.”

While ArtStream runs programs, seminars and classes beyond Montgomery County in Arlington, Fairfax and North Carolina, the group’s base is Silver Spring. “Montgomery County has been so good to us and has been so supportive of the arts,” Woolsey says. “The arts council is so robust and the state arts council is one of the best in the country. I think our politicians and our communities really get that the arts are important.”

ArtStream’s first gig a decade ago was teaching dance and theater to autistic adults. Soon the Bethesda children’s theater company, now called Imagination Stage, passed on its special needs adult education classes to ArtStream. The group took off. Today, with a \$600,000 annual budget, the organization fields Inclusive Theater Programs in the county, as well as classes and workshops that bring the arts to people with disabilities, those with short- or long-term illnesses, veterans and their families. The arts, Woolsey says, can be transformative in people’s lives. And though she’s leaving her position as executive and artistic director, she says, “I have grown (ArtStream) to the point where I can now hand it over ... it’s time

Learn more about ArtStream, its programs and becoming a volunteer mentor www.artstream.org.



MENTORS JAKE FOLEY-KEENE (LEFT) AND AKILAH HARTGROVE (RIGHT) WORK WITH AARON HYNDMAN IN “WAR OF THE STARS.” BY PATRICK RYAN

“All of us saw the power of the arts, and we wanted to use (the arts) to move society forward in some way.”


– ArtStream founder Patricia Woolsey

for me to return to artmaking.”

Like all its programs, the theater wing is helmed by professional directors, choreographers and designers, but it also relies on volunteers like Hartgrove, who, as mentors to the actors, become an integral part of the creative process by enabling them to become fully integrated into the show. Each performance features an original script written by the group to suit the performers’ abilities and creativity. Hartgrove enthusiastically described her work as a combination acting coach/stage manager/traffic cop and participant. “While (the mentors) are on stage, we’re not really as important as the actors. They’re the celebrities,” she says. Over the spring and summer, the Silver Spring Inclusive Theater Companies created and performed “The War of the Stars” at the Silver Spring Black Box Theater on Colesville Road, a rollicking sci-fi farce about show business.

Woolsey sees how her actors –

while they pay a modest fee to participate, they also sign a contract, just like professionals – become more confident in other areas of their lives. Yet, ArtStream is not therapy, Woolsey is quick to point out. “Our goal is to create art and put on a good show, and we want everybody to have a positive experience. If there are therapeutic outcomes, they are an outgrowth of working hard on the show. We expect professional behavior. It’s a big commitment, but it’s really worth it. It feels great to be on stage in something that you’re really proud of and that you’ve had a big part in creating.”

For Hartgrove, her involvement, which started as a way to fulfill her high school community service hours, has become life changing. She loves when the mentees she works with tell her about their jobs and lives outside of the rehearsal room. “ArtStream has also shaped what I want to do,” she says. “I’m thinking about psychology because I see how the arts and creativity changed their lives.” 

FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

After a Stellar Amateur Career, Golfer Denny McCarthy Eyes the Professional Tour

By Warren Douglas

By most any measuring stick, Denny McCarthy has had a sparkling career, one in which the lowlights would qualify as highlights on most any other golfer's resume.

After an amateur golf career filled with awards and tournament victories, the 22-year-old Rockville resident is ready for the next level - the PGA Tour.

McCarthy hopes an invitation to the 45th Walker Cup, an international team competition similar to the Ryder Cup, will be his last amateur event. It would be a fitting cap on the amateur portion of his career before he tries to make a living competing against the best professional golfers in the world.

His resume is extensive, but some highlights include: twice high school player of the year while at Georgetown Prep; three-time winner of the Maryland Open (including 2015) and two-time Maryland Amateur; seven-time qualifier for the U.S. Amateur (reaching the semi-finals in 2014);



DENNY MCCARTHY AT THE 2015 U.S. OPEN ALONG WITH HIS BROTHER (AND CADDY) RYAN.

four-time All-ACC while at the University of Virginia (including Freshman of the Year); key member of the victorious U.S. World Amateur Team Championship; and a top 15 World Amateur Golf ranking.

As if to prove he is ready for the big stage, McCarthy recently qualified for the U.S. Open, American golf's national championship, where he finished ahead of the likes of Phil Mickelson, Rickie Fowler, Bubba

Watson, Ernie Els and Martin Kaymer and Tiger Woods. He is the area's most accomplished amateur player since Dean Beman, who won two U.S. Amateurs, four PGA Tour events and went onto become golf's commissioner for 20 years.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE PLAYING IN THE U.S. AMATEUR VERSES THE U.S. OPEN?

Definitely, it's the amount of people watching the U.S. Open. You don't see nearly the same size

crowd at the U.S. Amateur. It's almost breathtaking when you step on the course. You can hear the roars of the crowd going around the course. It's surreal, but it's the coolest feeling in the world being out there. In terms of the course set up, there's really not that much difference. The USGA is going to set up the course to be hard and test you anyway they can. You have to find fairways or pay the price and the greens will be fast and firm. Both are very difficult set ups.

HOW IS THE COLLEGE GAME DIFFERENT FROM THE PROFESSIONAL GAME?

The PGA Tour guys are very sharp with their short game and wedge play. There are a lot of good players in college, but you see a lot of mistakes being made, especially in course management. The pros have a game plan for each round and they stick to it. They know how to manage their games so that even if they aren't hitting the ball well or playing their best, they still know how to get it around and score well. They rarely make mistakes with their chip shots or their wedge play. They are very precise and dialed in that way.

WHAT PROFESSIONAL GOLFER DO YOU LOOK UP TO THE MOST AND WHY?

While I really don't have a golfer that I looked up to or a favorite one, I'd say Jordan Spieth. Jordan and I are friends and have competed against each other. Now seeing what he's done this year, winning The Masters and the U.S. Open, I look up to him.

But at the same time, he's given me the confidence and belief that I can be doing the same things he's doing. When we competed against each other, he was always better, but I felt like I could always play with him. It will be fun to chase after him, but he's given me the confidence that I can go out there and do some of the same things.

WHAT'S THE BEST GOLF LESSON YOU EVER RECEIVED?

That's a hard one, but I'd have to say the best lesson I've gotten was one that came off the course and that was when I visited with sports psychologist Dr. Bob Rotella on the mental aspect of the game. In high school, I played other sports as well as golf so my freshman year in college was the first time I played golf year round. I played great in the fall season, but struggled in the spring season. I felt a little burned out. He has an office 20 minutes from the UVA campus and I met with him and we talked for two hours. He was so encouraging golf-wise and on other matters. He was really positive and made me feel comfortable. It stuck with me and I use his positive mental advice to get my mind in the right place.

HOW DO YOU RECOVER OR REFOCUS AFTER BACK-TO-BACK BOGEYS?


You have to get your mind back in the right place very quickly. If you mope and pout when things are going wrong or you're not playing well, things are only going to get worse. If you don't have the grit to fight back and if you can't let a bad swing or bad hole go, it can affect

your entire round. So you just have to stick with it. Golf is a hard game to play so you have to stay positive, fight through it and get to the finish line.

WHAT IS YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THE REST OF THE YEAR AND YOUR TIMELINE FOR TURNING PROFESSIONAL?

After the Maryland Open at Columbia Country Club, I'm playing in the Porter Cup, the Western Amateur, the U.S. Amateur and then hopefully I will make the Walker Cup team and then turn professional. The Walker Cup would be my last event as an amateur and hopefully the Walker Cup would open up some sponsor exemptions to PGA Tour events in the fall. If I played well in those events, it would be a great way to work my way on Tour. It's a hard way, but it's a way. Or there's always Qualifying School, then working my way up the Web.com Tour.

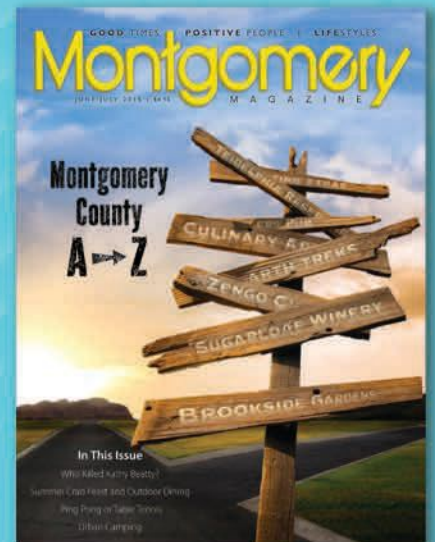
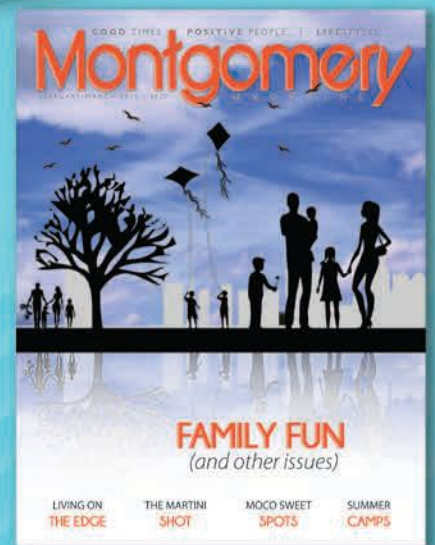
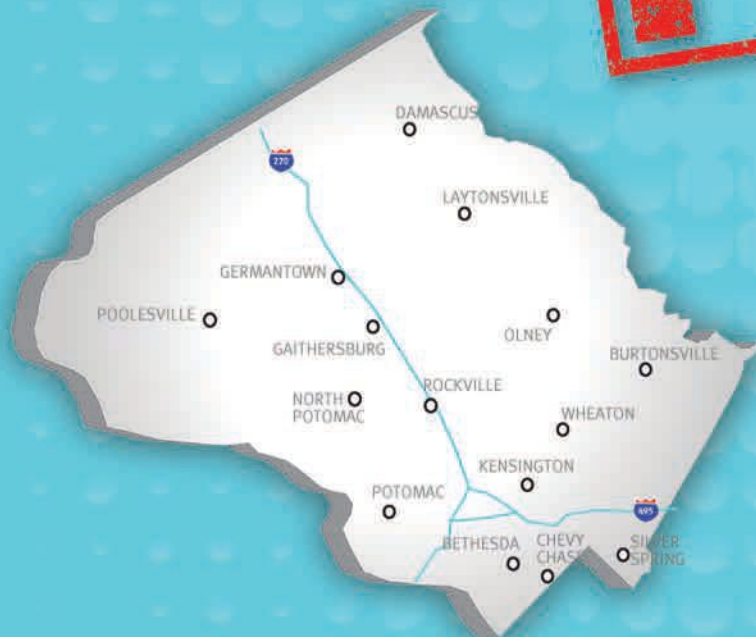
WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR A MIDDLE SCHOOL KID WHO WANTS TO PLAY GOLF IN COLLEGE AND ON THE PGA OR LPGA TOUR?

You can't work on your short game, wedge play and putting enough. There is always room for improvement in those areas. The long game will come and everybody will eventually hit the ball a long way, but you have to develop a strong short game around the greens. You also have to enjoy golf and love what you are doing. Golf is hard and challenging and that's the fun part, but you have to love it everyday. 

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MONTGOMERY MAGAZINE'S GUIDE TO LOCAL HAPPENINGS





Through August 16

Theater | Bethesda

Oliver Presented at Round House Theatre this Adventure Theatre production by director Joseph Ritsch (starring Felicia Curry and Rick Hammerly) tells the Charles



Dickens tale of a young orphan on the streets of London with no friends, no money and nowhere to live. He meets a cheeky pickpocket who shows him a whole new way of life. But as chance would have it, Oliver stumbles upon a gentleman who might just hold the

key to his mysterious past. www.adventuretheatre-mtc.org

August

Music | Glen Echo

Free Summer Concerts Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the bumper car pavilion. August acts include Trio Caliente (August 6), Terraplane (August 13), Quiles & Cloud (August 20) and U.S. Air Force Strings (August 27). www.glenechopark.org

August & September

History | Damascus

Our Town Then & Now A new exhibit at the Damascus Heritage Society Museum (9701 Main Street) features photography and artifacts from years past and the present. www.dhms.org

August 6, 7:30 p.m.

Music | Bethesda

The Outlaws These Southern rock icons, led by founding member and original frontman Henry Paul, are still best known for their 1975 hits “There Goes Another Love Song” and “Green Grass and High Tides.” Paul will be joined by original drummer Monte Yoho in a six-piece lineup that serves up live and loud Dixie rock. www.bethesdabluesandjazz.org

August 7-13

Theater | Gaithersburg

The Wiz In partnership with ANKH Repertory Theatre & The Finest! Performance Foundation Inc., the Gaithersburg Arts Barn presents The Wiz, the musical version of “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” by L. Frank Baum. Winner of seven Tony awards, this beloved Broadway show sets Dorothy’s adventures in the Land of Oz to music in a dazzling, lively mixture of rock, gospel and soul. www.gaithersburgmd.gov

August 14-22

Fair | Gaithersburg

Montgomery County Agricultural Fair

Since 1949 the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair, the largest county fair in Maryland, has been a showcase of farm life in Montgomery County. The nine-day county fair is a family event with carnival rides, live animals, a variety of entertainment, food and fun activities for all ages at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds in Gaithersburg.

August 15

Festival & Music | Silver Spring

Local Brews, Local Grooves The ultimate craft beer and music festival comes to the Fillmore Silver Spring, the day features the best regional breweries, hottest bands and

tastiest food.

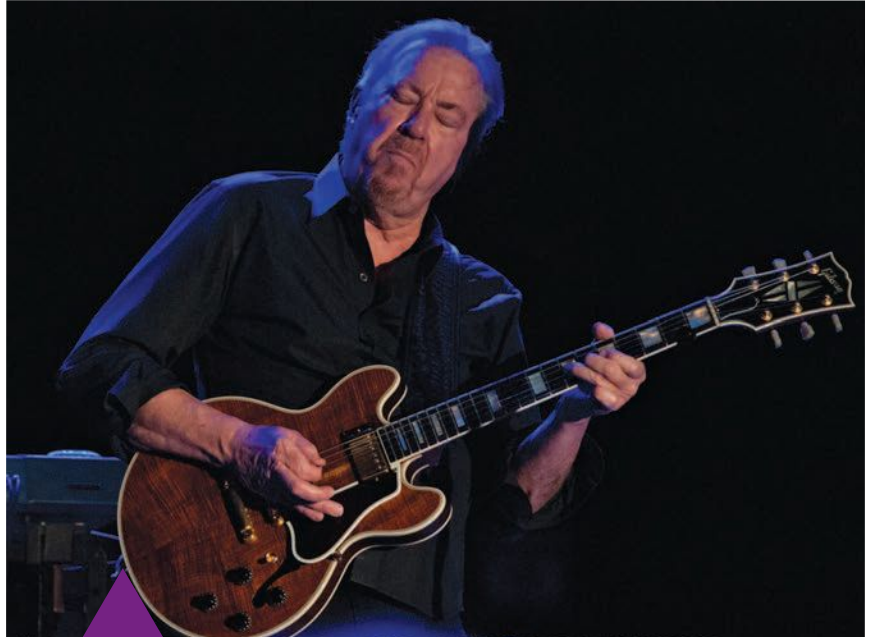
www.fillmoresilverspring.com

August 18 & September 15 Family | Rockville
Mommy & Me (and Daddy, Too) Hosted by Rockville Town Square on the third Tuesday of each month, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., the day includes active learning and creative play at all your favorite stores. There are lunch specials, story time, arts and crafts, sing-alongs, prizes, and a whole lot more.
www.rockvilletownsquare.com

August 20-September 17 Music | Rockville
King Farm Village Center Concerts Free outdoor concerts starting at 5:00 p.m. on the village green at the King Farm Village Center. The concerts feature a variety of local artists from the metropolitan area.
www.kingfarmvillagecenter.com

August 21-23 Film | Rockville
Comcast Outdoor Drive In Film Festival Three nights of feature films and family fun benefitting NIH Children's Charities. The music, movies and games are all free in the parking lot of MCPS on Hungerford Drive.
August 21 *How to Train Your Dragon 2*;
August 22 *Interstellar*; August 23 *Guardians of the Galaxy*. www.filmfestnih.org

August 22-23 Music | Bethesda
Jo Dee Massina The platinum-selling country artist who has scored nine No. 1 Billboard hits takes the stage for two nights to promote her introspective album "ME." Her hits include "Bye Bye," "My Give a Damn's Busted," "I'm Alright" and "Heads Carolina, Tails California."
www.bethesdabluesandjazz.com



August 4, 8:00 p.m.

Music | Bethesda

Boz Scaggs Get the "lowdown" on the master of blue-eyed soul, the iconic American singer, songwriter, and guitarist who helped shaped the sound of the 1970s and '80s. He gained fame in the 1960s as a guitarist and sometime lead singer with the Steve Miller Band, and in the 1970s with several solo Top 20 hit singles in the United States, including "Lowdown" and "Lido Shuffle" from the critically acclaimed album *Silk Degrees* (1976), which peaked at No. 2 on the Billboard 200. Scaggs continues to write, record music, and tour. www.strathmore.org

August 29 Education | Rockville

Back to School Fair The Montgomery County Public Schools annual Back to School Fair includes information about curriculum and programs, resources from government agencies, health screenings and fun for school children. MCPS personnel will be on hand to answer specific questions.
www.mcpsbacktoschoolfair.org

September 5-7

Art | Glen Echo

45th Annual Labor Day Art Show Saturday through Monday from noon to 6:00 p.m. Admission is free. The show features the work of more than 250 artists from the Middle Atlantic region. The show includes works in a wide range of artistic media, including sculpture, painting and drawing, ceramics, glass, jewelry, fiber arts,

August 26, 8:00 p.m.

Music | Bethesda

Melissa Etheridge Academy Award and Grammy winning artist Melissa Etheridge takes the stage to perform songs from her new album, *This is "M.E."*, as well as some of her greatest hits like "Come to My Window," "I'm the Only One," and "I Want to Come Over." Known for her iconic voice, profound lyrics, and riveting stage presence, Etheridge shares personal stories about her remarkable journey through life and the inspiration behind some of her most beloved songs. www.strathmore.org

photography, furniture and works on paper.
www.glenechopark.org

September 8-October 4 Theater | Rockville
Ironbound Up-and-coming playwright
Martyna Majok's new tale of strength and
discovery tells the story of Polish immigrant
Darja, who is done talking about feelings. It's
time to talk money. Over the course of three
relationships spanning 22 years, Darja
negotiates for her future with men who can
offer her love or security, but never both.
www.roundhousetheater.org

September 11 Fundraiser | Gaithersburg
**Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of
Commerce** will hold its 24th Annual Business
Golf Classic at Worthington Manor Golf
Course in Urbana. The tournament offers
enjoyable golf and the opportunity to
network, meet business owners,
representatives and supporters of business.
www.ggchamber.org

September 12-13 Retail | Takoma Park
Sidewalk Sale Visit your favorite stores as
they offer you some of the best bargains of
the year to make room for the fall and
holiday season. www.mainstreettakoma.org

September 15 8:00 p.m. Music | Bethesda
Diana Ross She came to fame in the 1960s
as the lead singer for the hugely successful
Supremes, Motown's all-time best vocal
group. The group scored 12 No. 1 hits,
including the "Where Did Our Love Go,"
"Baby Love," "Stop! In the Name of Love,"
and "You Can't Hurry Love."
www.strathmore.org



September 7 Parade | Gaithersburg
Labor Day Parade The ever-popular Gaithersburg Labor Day Parade returns to the
streets of Olde Towne beginning at 1 p.m. Now in its 77th year, this rain-or-shine
event includes ethnic dance groups, antique cars and fire trucks, clowns, high school
marching bands, and an assortment of community groups, equestrian units and more.
www.gaithersburgmd.gov

September 19-20 Music | Bethesda
The Music of West Side Story The National
Philharmonic kicks off its 2015-16 season at
Strathmore with a celebration of 20th-century
masters George Gershwin and Leonard
Bernstein's "West Side Story", which
reimagines Shakespeare's tragic lovers Romeo
and Juliet in gang-plagued 1950s New York.
www.strathmore.org

Through October Art | Rockville
Sculpture on the Grounds These large-scale
outdoor sculptures are part of the city's Art
In Public Places Program. The exhibit takes
place annually from June through October on
the grounds of Rockville Civic Center Park.
www.rockvillemd.gov



September 11, 8:00 p.m. Music | Silver Spring
Blues Traveler While Blues Traveler is best known among fans for their
improvisational live shows, the general public is most familiar with the
group from their Top 40 singles "Run-Around" and "Hook." Blues
Traveler's most recent studio album "Blow Up the Moon" is their 12th
studio album and was released on April 7, 2015. www.strathmore.org



TO YOUR HEALTH

Places to Go for Quality Care in Montgomery County

In the changing face of American healthcare, it's nice to see a friendly face when you need treatment – no matter what that treatment might be.

Montgomery County has its share of physicians, dentists, chiropractors, physical therapists, optometrists and other practitioners, but you can still get personalized care by a quality medical professional who really does have your best interest at heart.

Whether it's major surgery, dental surgery, senior care or general care, wellness care or healthcare for the

underprivileged, there is no shortage of options in Montgomery County. Here are some professionals that provide outstanding care.

A PLACE FOR MOM

www.aplaceformom.com

As hard as it is to make the decision to place a family member in a senior living facility, it can be just as tough finding the right spot for that loved one.

A Place for Mom helps take a lot of the dread and work out of the process by offering a free service to

connect moms, dads and families to the right senior living facility.

The senior care referral service helps seniors and their family members make informed decisions about senior care and housing options near them. Founded in 2000, A Place for Mom will assess your needs with a local advisor who will research information on senior living options based on your needs. The advisor can also research veterans benefits and payment plans.

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Finding Senior Housing can be complex, but it doesn't have to be.

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– Joan Lunden



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Call: (800) 404-9738

A Place for Mom is the nation's largest senior living referral information service. We do not own, operate, endorse or recommend any senior living community. We are paid by partner communities, so our services are completely free to families.

facilities, A Place for Mom will find the right elder care so you can have peace of mind that you made the right decision. A Place for Mom is able to offer its free services because it is paid by its partner communities only if you or your family member moves in.

MERCY HEALTH CLINIC

www.mercyhealthclinic.org, 240.773.0300

With the advent of the Affordable Care Act, many more Americans have been able to access the services they need to live healthy and productive lives. Even so, Montgomery County officials estimate that there are more than 60,000 adults in our communities who still don't qualify for any coverage. Who are they? Do we know them?

Yes, in both cases. They are the hardworking people who provide childcare and housecleaning, as well as construction workers and others who are in the service industry. These are individuals who are often referred to as the working poor and they have the dignity that comes from earning their own

keep. Unfortunately, they are often uninsured and medical care really isn't within their budgets.

What would you do? Hope nothing happens? When it does, the only choice is often emergency rooms, which are the most expensive level of short-term care. There is an alternative. Mercy Health Clinic in Gaithersburg provides free, high quality healthcare to uninsured and low-income Montgomery County residents. Staffed predominately by volunteer physicians, MHC offers both primary and specialty care free of charge to those in need.

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bodywork since 2000. She also has a Master's degree in acupuncture from Maryland University of Integrated Health (formerly Tai Sophia Institute) and a BA in psychology from The American University.

In addition to acupuncture, Sarlo practices traditional Chinese medicine and techniques in the form of aromatherapy, gua sha, herbal remedies and cupping. Gua sha and cupping are excellent for releasing stored tension and toxins in tight muscles. An ancient healing tradition, acupuncture has a long history of success in helping treat asthma, arthritis, insomnia, anxiety, headaches and shingles. It is holistic, has very few side effects, and treatment can be individualized and preventative.

Sarlo can synthesize a treatment plan based on your healing goals and preferences at her locations in Kensington and Gaithersburg.

DR. CHERYL CALLAHAN, DDS

www.cheryllcallahands.com, 301.948.1212

Dr. Cheryl Callahan has been practicing in Rockville for more than 21 years. She specializes in general dentistry as well as cosmetic dentistry, gum diseases, dental implants and teeth whitening.

She began practicing in Maryland after receiving her dental degree from the University of Michigan in 1987. Dr. Callahan has earned the respect of her patients and colleagues by combining her vast expanse of medical knowledge from her first career as an emergency room nurse with her exceptional skills as a dentist. Dr. Callahan has been included in the *Washingtonian* and *Checkbook Magazine* lists of Top Dentists.

She is a member of the American Dental Association, Southern Maryland Dental Society, Maryland Dental Association, Greater Washington Area of Women Dentists, Cambridge Who's Who, and National Association of Professional and Executive Women.


CASEY HEALTH INSTITUTE

www.caseyhealth.org, 301.664.6464

The mission at the Casey Health Institute is to build a new model of integrative health care, one that transforms the traditional provider/patient relationship by focusing on preventative measures and treating a patient as a whole.

The institute in Gaithersburg recently completed a total renovation of its 72,000-square-foot Eugene B. Casey Building to include the 20,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art primary care, healing and wellness center. The tranquil office setting is designed and decorated to create a peaceful, relaxing atmosphere for patients.

As innovative and integrative doctors and practitioners, the institute looks beyond traditional treatment plans to use less invasive and more cost effective medical care whenever possible. The medical staff is proactive in its advocacy for patients to actively engage in their own well-being through wellness programs, lifestyle changes, healthy exercise and nutrition programs and follow-up care and coaching.

Casey Health also offers chiropractic services, massage therapy, yoga, acupuncture and a center for nutritional cooking classes. 

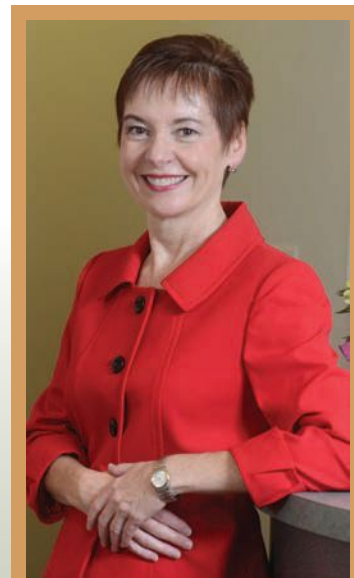


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Poolesville's Newest and Brightest

Regardless of your opinion of Donald Trump, one thing is certain – the guy kills it in real estate.

Since announcing his run for the presidency in 2016, Trump has claimed he's worth more than \$10 billion, in large part to the world-wide real estate holdings by his company The Trump Organization.

While most of us would be happy with a balance sheet four zeroes shy of Trump's net worth, it is true that fortunes can be won (and lost) in the real estate market.

If you search amazon.com for "books on real estate strategies," you

get results for 299 books. There are books describing how to invest in property with no or little money down; IRA strategies for real estate investment; tactics and strategies on how to negotiate for better real estate deals; fixing and flipping strategies for the post-boom real estate era; and how to price your home to sell and make top money.

Of course, for those who want a basic introduction to real estate, there's always "Real Estate Investing for Dummies."

Despite what you hear on the radio or TV or see on a book cover, investing in real estate isn't nearly as

easy as buying a home, slapping on a fresh coat of paint, sprucing up the landscaping, modernizing the kitchen and expecting to make a clear profit. Just the unavoidable taxes and fees associated with buying and selling real estate can quickly consume your expected profit.

In the end, it is good policy to read some self-help books, take some continuing education classes on real estate, talk to your financial planner and interview several respected and local real estate agents instead of trying to make a quick buck in real estate alone.

Because despite his vast fortune,

even Donald Trump knows how fickle the real estate market can be. Here is some advice and information on how to improve your real estate knowledge, some real estate settlement tips and even a new development where the houses are designed with saving you money and improving your resale value through new technology.

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

www.montgomerycollege.edu

With campuses in Germantown, Rockville and Takoma Park, Montgomery College offers continuing education classes for those who want to learn more about real estate or want to make real estate their profession. MC has a near A-Z listing of classes, including licensure, apartment leasing, real estate auctions, how to deal with rentals, renters and landlords, evaluating and financing the fixer-upper, appraisals, ethics, foreclosures, fair housing and lending.

THE RESERVE AT BRIGHTWELL CROSSING

www.brightwellcrossing.com, 301.208.2588


The Reserve at Brightwell Crossing, a Kettler Forlines Homes community in western Montgomery County, has been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Kettler Forlines Homes' commitment to constructing homes with improved indoor air quality through participation in the Indoor airPLUS Program. Kettler Forlines Homes was one of only eight homebuilders nationwide to be honored with a 2015 Indoor airPLUS Leader Award.

"Indoor air quality is becoming increasingly important to homebuyers," says Tom Kettler, president of Kettler Forlines Homes at Brightwell Crossing. "With improvements in home energy efficiency, our homeowners want to know that the air they are breathing is of the highest quality. We are proud to provide our homebuyers with high-performance homes that also offer improved comfort, safety, and peace of mind for their families."


The Reserve features six Energy Star and Indoor airPLUS certified designs – the Ashton, the Kensington, the Seneca, the Montgomery, the Kenwood and the Potomac. Among the new floorplans, the Kenwood and Potomac designs feature a family guest house. Designed to accommodate multi-generational living, this attached guest home features its own living room, kitchenette, bedroom, bathroom, and laundry, plus a private entrance, as well as an entrance to the main house.

COUNSELORS TITLE

www.ctitle.net

When you're in need of a real estate or settlement attorney, Counselors is your best choice because of the services they offer – more experience, more know-how, more personal service and more value. The firm with three county locations provides you the best because it's what they demand of themselves. Counselors has the experience with more than 100 years of combined legal expertise so they know this market and they've built solid relationships with the top underwriters in the industry. The highly trained staff is approachable, willing to help and committed to getting every detail right. When issues come up, Counselors knows how to resolve them smoothly and quickly. 

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GROWLERS PUB IN GAITHERSBURG IS FAMILY FRIENDLY WITH DISHES LIKE BURGERS AND SWEET POTATO FRIES, BUT IT ALSO ACCOMMODATES THE OLDER CROWD WITH A MENU OF CRAFT BEERS THAT FEW OTHERS CAN TOUCH.



On the Growl

There are a lot of reasons to choose a local watering hole, and there are a lot of different options to choose from. Montgomery County boasts bars for singles, marrieds, the after work set, Millennials, middle-aged; you get the idea. And there is also no shortage of restaurants that are suitable for a family night out. It is rare when a single location can offer a welcoming environment for parents and kids while simultaneously offering a playground

for the happy hour set.

At Growlers Brew Pub, the minivan and the miniskirt live in perfect harmony. Located on a quaint but bustling corner in Gaithersburg, Growlers gets its name from the refillable bottles that patrons can use to transport the craft brews that are made right behind the main bar.

After suffering calamitous water damage from frozen pipes last winter, management took the opportunity to renovate and restore the dining



spaces. The results are three levels of tables and bar space, including a covered outdoor deck to catch the evening breeze during the summer.

With so many areas to utilize, Growlers can accommodate several different crowds at the same time. On the night I visited, singles were sipping craft brews and munching wings on the deck and at the main bar while the upstairs bar hosted a crowd of parents and grandparents happily recording a rock and roll recital by students of the music store across the street. Live music is a regular feature at Growlers, along with trivia night and the obligatory karaoke night.

With the name in mind you would expect the beer to be exceptional in quality and selection, and you'd be right. Chalkboard menus boast year-round favorites alongside seasonal specials. Standouts include Diamond American Pale Ale, an appealing

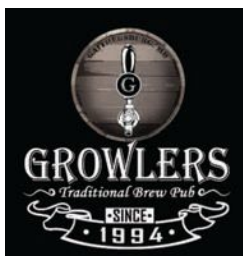
take on the IPA, or India Pale Ales, that are all the rage. Because it is brewed using fewer hops it is not as pushy as an IPA but it still has plenty of personality and punch (6.2% ABV or alcohol by volume).

Another summer star is the Blurred Limes Key Lime Ale (6% ABV). The name suggests a sticky-sweet brew, but the drinker will be pleasantly surprised by a light porter that carries the flavor of the graham cracker crust of the famous dessert. It is refreshing and a solid selection for a pint or two

either on its own or paired with food.

Speaking of food, Growlers features a full slate of solid pub fare that match well with their beers. Standouts include the chorizo slider, a clever take on the mini-burger using spicy Mexican sausage. The chicken wings are meaty and juicy, and are available in seven different varieties. Old Bay wings are a reliable choice, but if you are feeling adventurous try the sticky stout or the "Ouch!" Buffalo-style. Entrees like Chimmichuri steak and fish tacos are sophisticated enough for date night but simple and fulfilling enough for little Johnny and Jane.

Growlers also hosts plenty of celebrations ranging from birthday parties to office parties. With the space, the menu and the atmosphere to satisfy almost any crowd, Growlers is one leopard that can very easily change its spots. [NM](#)



WHERE TO FIND IT: 227 East Diamond Ave., Gaithersburg 20877. **ATMOSPHERE:** Classic pub but certainly not an adults-only one; very family friendly. **CUISINE:** Inspired American dishes with creative takes on classic favorites. **HOURS:** Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dinner: Monday to Thursday 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., Sunday 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. **PRICE:** Shrimp, oysters, clams sold individually from the raw bar; Lunch: Apps from \$8, sandwiches from \$15, entrees from \$18; Dinner: Apps from \$8, salads from \$13, sandwiches from \$15, entrees from \$18. **CONTACT:** 301.519.9400; www.growlersrestaurant.com.



ISLANDS OF THE POTOMAC

By Jeff Thoreson ■ Photography by Bill Kamenjar



The Potomac River belongs to Maryland. **All of it.** Every glistening drop in the stillness of smallmouth bass fishing holes near White's Ferry; **every raging whitewater rapid of Great Falls;**

every cascading ripple through Mather Gorge. It's all Maryland. It's all Montgomery County.

You may think that Virginia owns half the river, as is customary when a river divides two states or that Great Falls is part of Virginia because Great Falls Park occupies some riverside land near the Virginia town of the same name, but each tumbling rapid, sharp rock outcropping and swirling pool belong to Maryland.

It has been this way since the colonists called it the Pattowmack River, having been written into charters issued by King James I as early as the 17th century. Negotiated agreements between the two states in 1785 and again in 1958, as well as an arbitrated agreement in 1877, and multiple Supreme Court decisions have all upheld Maryland's ownership.

So take that, Virginia.

Maryland's ownership of the mighty Potomac leaves the Old Dominion in a constant state of flex, because its border begins only at the ever-changing low-water mark on the riverbank and not a single drop of Potomac water belongs to Virginia.

There are dozens of islands in the Potomac River, all of them property of Maryland. Thirty-eight belong to Montgomery County. Most of

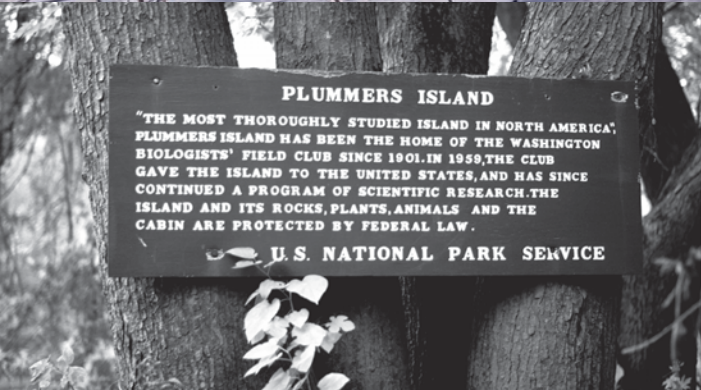
them just sit there, little more than overgrown clumps of rock and soil at the mercy of the mighty flow of the Potomac. Others have interesting stories and histories. But these are the stories and history of Maryland and Montgomery County – not of Virginia.

CALL THE PLUMMERS Hundreds of thousands of people drive by Plummers Island every day (actually they drive almost over it). The American Legion Bridge carries the Capital Beltway over the Potomac and within a few feet of the island.

But what you probably don't know is that Plummers Island is probably the most intensely studied land in the United States on a per-acre basis, says Dr. Matthew Perry of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

Why? The island used to be owned by the Washington Biologists' Field Club, a diverse group of researchers studying the entire expanse of living organisms, and though it is now owned by the National Park Service, the club still has access to the island for its research.

BIOLOGICAL STUDIES HAVE BEEN GOING ON ON PLUMMERS ISLAND FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY. A CABIN WHERE BIOLOGISTS HANG OUT WAS ORIGINALLY BUILT IN 1901, WHEN SCIENTISTS WERE USING A ROPE-PULL FERRY TO GET TO THE ISLAND. Photos courtesy of Dr. Matthew Perry



“One would be hard pressed to find a taxon, from lichens to deer, that has not been studied, along with all the various plants on the island,” says Perry.

Scientific study of Plummers dates back well over a century. Charles Pollard formed the WBFC and leased the island in 1901 for the purpose of biological studies. The club bought the island in 1908.

“We still have many studies going on and as a non-profit society we donate a large sum of money to graduate students and other investigators every year to aid in new studies,” says Perry. “So the large number of studies is based essentially on the diversity of members, the longevity of the club and the financial assistance from the club.”

At the time the American Legion Bridge was built in the late 1950s, the club turned the island over to the National Park Service, but maintained its right to pursue scientific studies. Under the NPS, little has changed on the island. Even the ramshackle cabin built for slightly more than \$200 in 1901 still stands, although fortified and updated over the years.

Twice a year members gather at the cabin – in the spring for a shad bake and in the fall for an oyster roast – both traditions that have been going on since 1901.

“Originally the shad and oysters came from the Potomac,” says Perry. “Now the shad comes from New Jersey and the oysters from Virginia. One year we couldn’t get shad, so we ate salmon. It sure was good, but due to tradition we went back to the bony shad.”

The feasts occur on the Saturday closest to May 1 and November 1, but the rest of the year the most exciting thing that happens at Plummers Island is the pursuit of knowledge. *The Bulletin* of the Biological Society of Washington in 2008 documented 3,012 insect species living on the island, 19 species of freshwater mollusks and 885 plant species.

Despite the PhD type of stuff that goes on at

Plummers Island (13 of the biologists have been so in tune with Plummers that they had their ashes buried there), the public has free access. There are no bridges to the island, but the cabin remains open all year. Visitors must abide by NPS regulations – no overnight camping – and close up if they use the cabin, remove all their trash and treat the cabin and the island with respect – the way the biologists have treated it for more than a century.

ISLAND LIFE ON SYCAMORE When Carol Beehler and her husband moved to lower Montgomery County more than 25 years ago, they put their name on the waiting list to join the Montgomery Sycamore Island Club. But eventually Carol wondered whether it was worth it – the waiting list was years long. “I remember at one point writing to them and asking if my children would even have an opportunity to use it while they were still kids.”

In a county of exclusive private clubs – Burning Tree Club, Congressional Country Club, The Chevy Chase Club, Columbia Country Club – the Sycamore Island Club may be the most difficult of all to become a member. And when you get in, you don’t get a golf course, tennis courts, a swimming pool, fine dining, plush locker rooms or any of the amenities that are generally associated with the lap of luxury. You get the right to use the rudimentary facilities of a heavily wooded island in the Potomac River. Other clubs offer valet parking. Members of the Sycamore Island Club have to pull themselves across a narrow channel of the river on a rope ferry.

“It’s got this whole Huck Finn allure,” says Beehler, whose family was granted membership in time for their children to enjoy.

Once on the island, members enjoy a serenity

SYCAMORE ISLAND MEMBER CAROL BEEHLER ON THE ROPE FERRY HEADED TO THE ISLAND; CARETAKER JOE HAGE WONDERS WHAT A CABLE NOW EMBEDDED IN A SYCAMORE TREE WAS ONCE USED FOR; HAGE IS ALSO THE FERRY OPERATOR; RELAXING ON THE ISLAND’S SWIMMING DOCK.



that simply doesn't exist anywhere else just a mile and a half from the District line. But the fact is, that's about all there is on Sycamore Island to enjoy. There are few amenities of any kind. The ramshackle clubhouse has little more than a great room with a pool table, a Ping Pong table and an old potbelly stove for winter warmth (although the building isn't insulated). There is a kitchen, a bathroom and a few lockers. Outside there are a couple of charcoal grills, picnic tables and a canoe shed.

"It's not at all fancy," says Beehler. "It's like this old, decrepit summer camp."

Yet the allure of the club is perfectly clear. It is the pursuit of solitude in a city consumed by the rat race. Sycamore Island is so overtly different from almost every square inch of the cityscape that straddles the border of Montgomery County and the District of Columbia that people will wait years and years to have their piece of it. It is one of the few settings in this urban madness of traffic and concrete and thousands of people per square mile that can honestly be defined as bucolic and pastoral.

The club's 200 or so members use the island to relax, swim in the river and picnic, but everything that is consumed on the island has to be carried in and the climb down to river level from the parking lot on MacArthur Boulevard is better suited for pack mules than transporting coolers of burgers and sodas (alcohol is not allowed on the island). There is a small swimming dock that accommodates a half-dozen people or so, and an anchored swimming platform a few yards out in the river. The fishing is good and the camaraderie better.

The club has a full-time caretaker, Joe Hage, who lives in an apartment in the clubhouse. But members are expected to assist in the island's upkeep and each spring and fall there are organized workdays to do just that. Members also sign up to fill in for Hage on his days off,

which would be like asking a member at Congressional Country Club to cut the greens to give the maintenance staff a break.

The history of the Sycamore Island Club is longer than any of the county's private clubs, dating to 1885 when a dozen residents of Washington, D.C., with diverse backgrounds met to organize a pleasure club.

They got a lot done that first meeting, electing officers, selecting a name (initially, The Sycamore Island Pleasure Club and now, officially, the Montgomery Sycamore Island Club), writing rules and financing the building of a boat to transport members to the island. In May 1886, the club decided to build the first clubhouse, at a cost of \$232.10. It was little more than a shack. The first real clubhouse was built in 1900 but didn't survive the Great Potomac Flood of 1936. The rebuilt clubhouse, with steel beams anchored in concrete, has been there since.

"Now if the water would ever get that high we'd just open the windows and doors and let it flow through," Hage says, hoping to not see that day. Other floods have come and Hage keeps track on a measuring board – the 2010 melting of February blizzards and Hurricane Isabel in 2003 to name two recent floods.

The club has survived scandal and public criticism. In 1909 the treasurer was caught embezzling, and the early years of the club it was thought to be a rowdy, drunken bunch of men, so alcohol was banned some time around 1914 and has been since.

Now it is a wholesome family club, and island life has endured for more than a century and a quarter – at least for those lucky enough to get a membership.

STILL-NESS ON TENFOOT ISLAND At times the river's border dispute has been a contentious arrangement. The Potomac River Oyster Wars went on for more than two centuries over who had the right to harvest the plentiful mollusks

until President John F. Kennedy signed the Potomac Fisheries Bill creating a bi-state commission to oversee the river.

At other times opportunistic Virginians have taken advantage of the border. In the 1950s, when slot machines were legal in Maryland, a few enterprising Virginians built piers into the river and opened casinos on them. In the Prohibition era, an entrepreneurial Virginian named Earl Batt played the border dispute to his sole advantage, recognizing that if the entire river belonged to Maryland, so did the land above water in the river.

Batt ran moonshine in Loudoun County during Prohibition, a vocation taken up by quite a few in what was then rural Virginia. While most spent considerable effort dodging the law, Batt outsmarted them all by building his still on Tenfoot Island in the Potomac River and transporting his product to Virginia via a small motorboat. Virginia authorities had no jurisdiction on Tenfoot Island, and the Montgomery County sheriff would have to travel 35 miles via Chain Bridge to come after him, far too much effort to chase a single moonshiner selling his white lightning and breaking the law in another state.

On at least one occasion, Batt got wind that the Montgomery County sheriff was sending an arrest warrant to Virginia authorities. He dismantled his still, boated it in from Tenfoot and assumed his legal occupation as a stone mason for the time being.

When Batt's operation was in bloom, he brewed and bottled whiskey on Tenfoot and brought it into Virginia to sell a pint jar for \$2 and a half-gallon for \$3.

SELDEN-SEEN Here in Washington, D.C., we tend to trace our history back about as far as Colonial Williamsburg. Was there life before politics? Well, yes there was, and some of the proof was uncovered on Selden Island just south of Poolesville.

Selden Island is mere feet from the Virginia mainland – so close one could almost jump to the island. Selden is the only Potomac River island in Montgomery County connected to the mainland by an automobile bridge, which connects the island not to Maryland, but to Virginia. Nevertheless, Selden Island belongs to Maryland. And that means its history is the history of Maryland, not Virginia.

Why mention this? On Selden Island what became known as the Walker Prehistoric Village Archeological Site was discovered in 1938.

At the time the land was farmed by a gentleman named Walker, and during an exploration of the river, scientists Richard Slattery and Hugh Stabler were intrigued by the three-mile long island, which Slattery later wrote was “too much land not to pay attention to.” So they crossed the bridge to have a look around.

Almost immediately they began seeing signs of ancient habitation, and upon further inspection uncovered pieces of pottery, worked stone and artifacts common to Native American village sites.

Excavations in the late 1930s and throughout the '40s revealed even more than artifacts, including a section of palisade – a wooden structure used for defense – and shallow oval pits and circular living patterns.

Scientists have traced the Selden Island evidence to the Late Woodland period, meaning life on the island would date to about 1000 BC. The Walker site helped historians understand the development of the Powhatan Confederacy in the Chesapeake region and was key to reconstructing late prehistoric trade networks in the Potomac Valley.

The site was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

A BIG, LOVEABLE BEAR Bear Island is known for the rugged Billy Goat Trail, perhaps the

toughest hike in the Washington area and certainly one of the most scenic. The trail takes you past geological wonders like Mather Gorge, Pothole Alley and Purple Horse Beach, a great place to hang out, but a deadly place to swim. In the summer of 2013, two swimmers drowned in a five-day stretch.

Tens of thousands of people hike the trail each year and you might be one of them. You might also be surprised to know that you're hiking in an ecologically significant natural area. Separated from the Maryland mainland by just the narrow C&O Canal, 96-acre Bear Island is ecologically richer than any other parts of the Potomac Gorge and is a diverse habitat to more than 60 rare plant and animal species.

The island's varying habitats have been created by river flooding over millions of years. Flooding strips away soil at lower elevations, leaving sand, gravel and rock outcroppings. At mid-elevations of the island, floodwater strips away trees, creating prairie and savanna habitats. Floodwater deposits silt and soil rich in nutrients to feed the forest habitat at the island's highest points.

Pay attention while hiking and you might notice six types of swallowtail butterflies, including the tiger, zebra and giant swallowtails. Because these are rare species, it is illegal to catch butterflies on Bear Island.

Pay even closer attention and you might spot a Prickly Pear, the only cactus species that lives in Maryland. From March to May, Virginia bluebells blossom, and then later in the spring field chickweed blooms in the island's sandy soils at lower elevations. Carolina tassel-rue is a western Maryland species carried to the island by floodwaters.

Watch your feet and you might spot a red eft, a newt that lives in the wetter forested uplands of the island. Painted turtles are easily spotted in the shallow ponds throughout the island, and

the wood frog you're more likely to hear than to see. Its hoarse clacking croak emanates from the moist woodlands and ponds.


But you're not a biologist so you're not sure what to look for? No problem. The Potomac Conservancy and National Park Service, which manage the island, have created an audio tour, which you can download to your smartphone. Thirty-four mp3 files correspond to numbered waypoints along the trail and point out things you never would have noticed on your own.

SOME OTHER ISLAND STORIES On Sherwin Island there are several challenging rock-climbing spots. Some climbs are up to 40 feet high, the most significant of them being Cupid's Bower. There are 12 routes there, according to summitpost.org, ranging from one called Elementary to another called Coffin Climb. Proceed at your own risk.

■ Olmstead Island was named for landscape architect and preservationist Frederick Law Olmstead Jr. He was an original member of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and was instrumental in preserving the Great Falls section of the Potomac.

■ If you hike the Billy Goat Trail south from Old Angler's Inn, you will spot, across a narrow divide of the Potomac, Offutt Island. The 10-acre, heavily forested island was privately owned for a long time and once had two cabins and was used as a retreat.

In 2007 the island was donated anonymously by its owner to the Potomac Conservancy, a non-profit that advocates for the health of the river.

Like Bear Island, Offutt is a delicate ecosystem containing more than a dozen rare plants. Unlike Bear Island, visitors are discouraged. Occasionally kayakers will stop by, but there is no access other than via the river. 



Montgomery County
**BUSINESS
HALL
OF FAME**

CLASS OF 2015

The best business people are the ones who, if they can't see the future, can anticipate it. And that's exactly what the four county inductees to the Montgomery County Business Hall of Fame have in common for 2015.

They identified niches in the market and created ideas to fill the void. Then they pursued those ideas with passion and vigor until the businesses they started achieved a level of success worthy of such recognition.

Ron Paul, CEO of EagleBank, Dr. Martine Rothblatt, CEO of United Therapeutics Corp., Kevin Sexton, president and CEO of Holy Cross Health and Jim Sweet, president of Smokey Glen Farm Barbequers will be inducted during the fourth annual MCBHOF ceremony on October 27 at The Universities at Shady Grove (USG).

Since its inception, the hall of fame – created to celebrate business people who have made a substantial impact on the county – has raised over \$430,000 for the USG scholarship fund.

Profiles by Rokia Hassanein

Ronald (Ron) Paul, CEO of EagleBank

As someone who has been involved in community banking for over 28 years, Ron Paul knows a little something about running a successful business. Paul is the chairman of the board of directors and chief executive officer of Eagle Bancorp, Inc. – the largest community bank in the Washington, D.C., area. EagleBank was created in 1998 in Bethesda, with Paul as one of its founding members. Paul has been a resident of Montgomery County for 35 years and describes it as his home. Prior to his work at EagleBank, Paul's career began in real estate in 1980, when he worked as a bookkeeper. Additionally, Paul formed his own investment company, Ronald D. Paul Companies, Inc. in 1987. Paul, who received a B.A. in accounting from the University of Maryland, says he knew early on that he wanted a career in business, but he didn't know where his career would lead. "What I did know is that I would always give it my all, with passion, integrity and a determination to succeed," Paul says. "I am so proud of what EagleBank has done over its 17 years for its shareholders, employees and customers, and for the community at large." On



getting inducted into the Montgomery County Business Hall of Fame, Paul says: "In my real estate career and at EagleBank, giving back to the community is central to how we operate and to our success, so this is very meaningful and humbling to be recognized in this way. I look forward to continuing my commitment to the county and its communities for years to come."

Photo of Ron Paul is courtesy of Jane Cornett, VP & corporate secretary at EagleBank

Dr. Martine Rothblatt, CEO United Therapeutics Corp.

Martine Rothblatt is a woman of many talents. She was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1954 and began working in the Washington, D.C., area as a lawyer at Covington & Burling after she graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with both a law and MBA degree in 1981. Rothblatt founded and is the current CEO of United Therapeutics Corporation, a Silver Spring-based biotechnology company that focuses on addressing the medical needs of people with life-threatening and chronic conditions. Additionally, Rothblatt founded Lung Biotechnology to develop therapies for orphan diseases and in the late 1980s, Rothblatt founded what is known today as Sirius XM Satellite Radio. Her success in business made her both the highest paid female executive in the United States, as well as the highest-



paid transgender person. Her love for technology prompted her to form her own religion called the "Terasem Movement," which combines Judaism as a culture and technology as a deep belief. Rothblatt earned her PhD in medical ethics from the Royal London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary College, University of London. Rothblatt has published numerous books that include "How Geoethics Can Resolve the Conflict Between Public and Private Interests in Xenotransplantation," "From Transgender to Transhuman: A Manifesto on the Freedom of Form," "Unzipped Genes: Taking Charge of Baby-making in "the New Millennium," and "The Apartheid of Sex."

Photo from Getty Images

Kevin Sexton, President and CEO, Holy Cross Health

Kevin Sexton is President and CEO of Holy Cross Health, in Silver Spring, Maryland. Holy Cross Health, a not-for-profit Catholic health system, serves approximately 200,000 patients annually from Montgomery County and Prince George's County. Holy Cross is wide-spread in Maryland and continues to grow locally. In October of 2014, Holy Cross Health opened a new hospital in Germantown, which made it the first new hospital in Montgomery County in 35 years.

Additionally, Holy Cross has centers in Silver Spring, Gaithersburg, Germantown and Aspen Hill. Prior to his work at Holy Cross Health, Sexton received his Master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard University. He was previously the president of MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio, as well as the senior vice president and director of healthcare organization practice at The Lewin Group. In



2011, Sexton received the Distinguished Service Award from the Maryland Hospital Associations. In 2013, Sexton was the only healthcare CEO in Maryland to be nominated for *The Washington Business Journal's* inaugural Most Admired CEO Awards. On getting inducted into the Montgomery County Business Hall of Fame, Sexton says, "I am greatly honored to be inducted into the Montgomery County Business Hall of Fame. I believe it is recognition of the important work of the people of Holy Cross Health over many years and the results we have produced in terms of providing access to great care for everyone, as well as consistent, strong financial performance, nationally and regionally recognized quality and workplace excellence."

Photo of Kevin Sexton is courtesy of Yolanda Gaskins, director media relations at Holy Cross Health



**Jim Sweet, President
Smokey Glen Farm Barbequers**

Jim Sweet is the president and CEO of Smokey Glen Farm, which is a special events venue in the Gaithersburg and Darnestown, Maryland area. The 54-year-old was born and raised in Montgomery County – living in Wheaton and then Gaithersburg. Sweet attended Montgomery College, where he studied business and management. Sweet’s parents, Betty and George, purchased the Smokey Glen Farm in 1958 and

ventured into the barbecue business by starting a barbecue chicken concession at the University of Maryland’s Byrd Stadium in College Park, Maryland. Today, Smokey Glen Farm consists of approximately 30 acres in Christmas trees and five event venues. Smokey Glen Farm is the largest single-unit youth employer in the nation. Sweet says he and his brother Mark are second generation business people, adding that he came into the family business full-time in 1984 and has been president and CEO since 1997. This year marks the family business’ 62nd anniversary. Sweet describes himself as a “total gearhead,” and says he enjoys riding motorcycles, backcountry travel, off-road riding, long-haul touring, and road racing. On getting inducted into the Montgomery County Hall of Fame, Sweet says, “I’m thrilled and deeply honored. I’m just in awe to share the same stage with my fellow awardees. What an amazing group of folks.” [MN](#)

Photo of courtesy of Smokey Glen Farm

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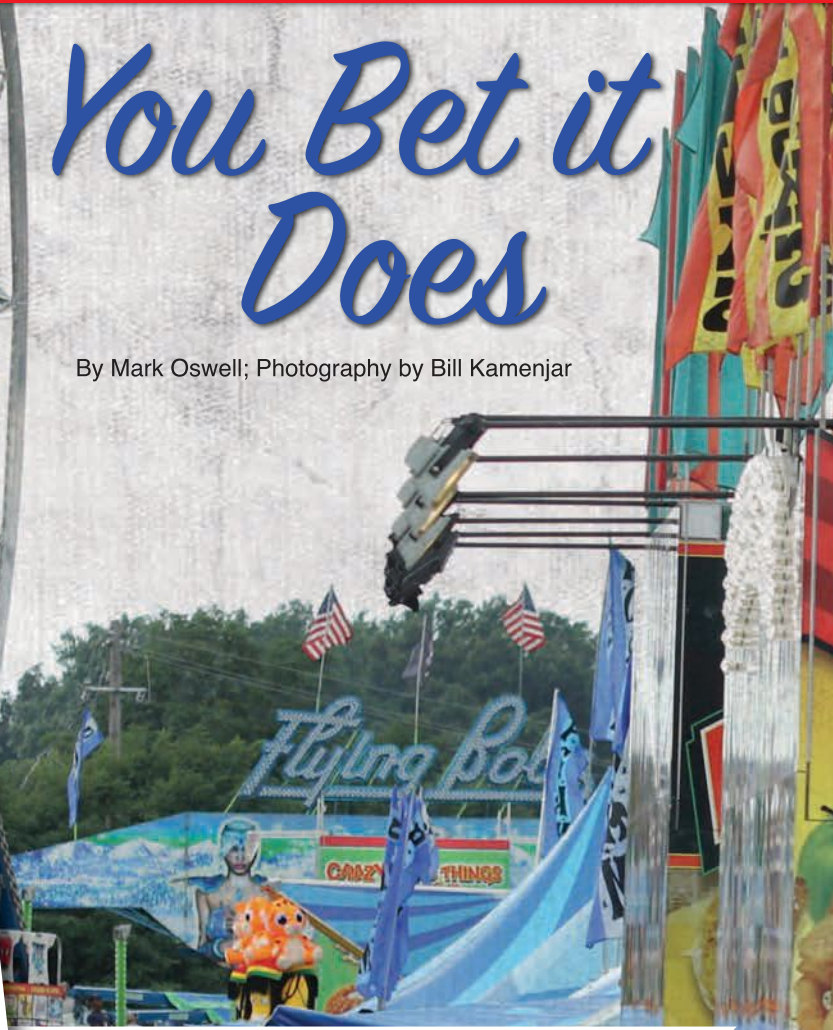
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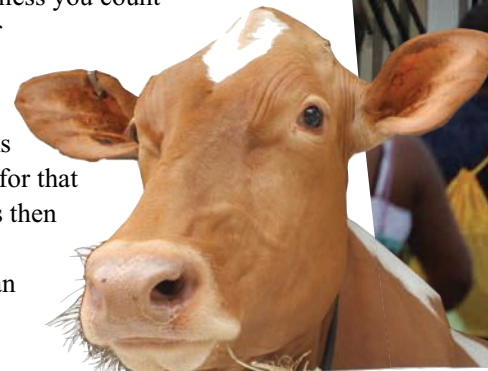
You Bet it Does

By Mark Oswell; Photography by Bill Kamenjar



Deep fried Oreos.
Bear wrestling.
Krispy Kreme burgers.
Carnival rides.
Demolition Derby.

These aren't things that take place on a daily basis in Montgomery County – unless you count the Capital Beltway as a demolition derby. But they highlight a small slice of the hundreds of sights, sounds and tastes of the annual Montgomery County Fair. The county fair celebrates its 66th year in August, and although not the oldest nor largest county fair in the country, the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair remains a key link to the county's heritage. Montgomery County was a very different place for that first fair in 1949, and even though an urbanized county has emerged from what was then largely farmland the county still needs this annual celebration of hogs and heifers, carnies and concessions, Midway lights and monster trucks. After all, where else can we feast on funnel cakes and get up close and personal with livestock?







If Montgomery County is now largely about commutes, kids and the suburban lifestyle, it's nice once a year to remember things weren't always this way. Besides, like the county itself, the county fair has become modernized with everything from French roasted almonds to gravity-defying thrill rides.

TRADITION

As the population of Montgomery County has expanded since 1949, so has the fair. Exhibits have blossomed since that first year when 12,000 patrons were able to see a tad more than 1,300 exhibits. Last year the fair drew nearly 210,000 visitors and had more than 20,000 exhibits.

Since the late 1940s, the county has seen a steady increase in people flowing into the area, swelling Montgomery County to more than one million people. It's easy to imagine as suburban sprawl has spread beyond Silver Spring, Rockville and Gaithersburg that agrarian areas would shrink to near extinction.

However, in the early 1980s, the Montgomery County Council created what is known as the "Agricultural Reserve." Heralded as one of the best examples of land conservation policies in the country, the agricultural 'set-

aside' encompasses 93,000 acres – almost one-third of the county's 314,240 acres – along the county's northern, western, and eastern borders.

This strategic plan along with specific zoning requirements has helped to retain more than 500 farms in Montgomery County. Farms that not only contribute dairy products, fresh eggs and fruits to our diet, but also contribute millions of dollars to the county's economy.

As such, dozens of agrarian families participate at the fair each year, and the official title remains the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair. Many families who are participating in 2015, participated back in 1949.

"Montgomery County has a wonderful, long history as a strong agricultural producer," says Ben Butler, assistant farm manager at Butler's Orchard on the outskirts of

2015 MONTGOMERY COUNTY AGRICULTURAL FAIR

WHEN // August 14 to 22

WHERE // Montgomery County Fairgrounds,
Perry Parkway, Gaithersburg

GENERAL ADMISSION //

- \$10: (children 11 and under free)
- Unlimited Admissions for the Week: \$75
- One-day Megapass for Carnival Rides: \$20

GRANDSTAND ENTERTAINMENT //

- Interstate Truck and Tractor Pull (Aug. 17): \$5
- Monster Truck Madness (Aug. 19 and 20): \$15, children 3 to 11: \$10
- Demolition Derby Night of Destruction (Aug. 21 and 22): \$15, children 3 to 11: \$10



Germantown. “As the years have gone by, the growing city and suburbs have consumed a large percentage of that agricultural land. I feel that the county fair is a great opportunity to connect the newer generation of Montgomery County residents to our rich and very important agricultural history.”

Butler, who has been participating in 4-H since he was eight-years-old says, “Much of the population is removed from our agricultural roots and the fair provides an abundance of educational and interesting exhibits for fairgoers to enjoy and learn from.”

Butler has served in many positions with the fair, including on the board of directors and as the 2006 Fair King. Today, he simply enjoys “watching fairgoers enjoy the many different parts of the fair.”

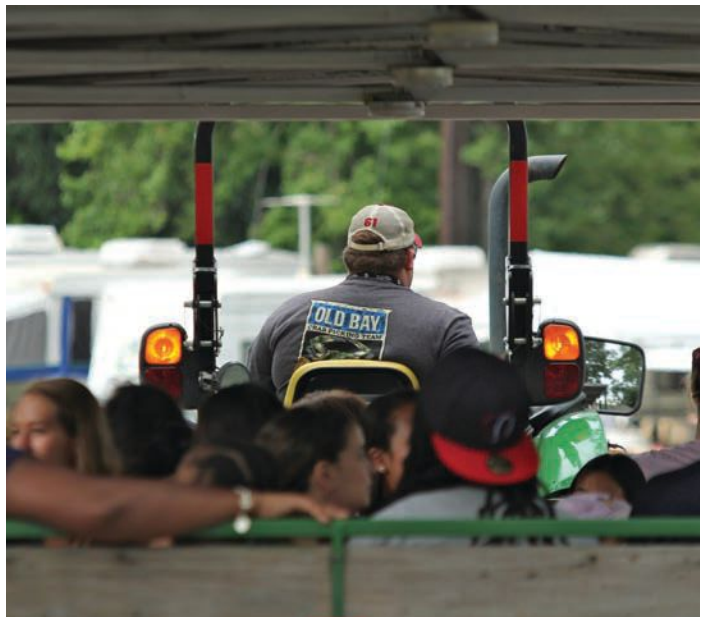


THINGS TO DO

For the thrill-seekers and adventurous types, the county fair offers more than 40 rides, and a Midway full of games and food. Families with younger kids tend to gravitate toward the Montgomery County Police & Fire Department displays and the numerous animal barns.

Marty Svrcek, Montgomery County fair director, says the biggest three draws of the fair remain farm animals, food and rides, with the largest attended entertainment events being the Demolition Derby and Monster Trucks.

Montgomery County resident Robin Ferrier, who has taken her young daughter to the fair twice, concurs that the animals are the best part. “You can pet them and





doing so is free,” she says

Although the fair has maintained its agrarian roots with livestock competitions, it now boasts a giant carnival with more than 25 adult rides, 12 kiddie rides, an arena and dozens of exhibitors.

Two of the more interesting exhibits from last year were the “Chainsaw Chix” who carve giant statues with nothing but a chainsaw, and bear wrestling, which had two large omnivores tussling about in a steel cage.

Food vendors are located throughout the venue, with the grilled cheese sandwiches drawing some of the largest lines. Be mindful that seating may be scarce during peak days. Although not an Oreo fan per se, I do recommend trying the deep fried Oreo cookies – even if only once, and even if it goes against everything healthy on the planet. They’re quite delicious.

MANAGEMENT

Chartered in 1949 as the Montgomery County Agricultural Center Inc., the fair retains a 501(c)3, privately owned corporation status, with the fair being the biggest annual fundraiser for the center.

Fair planning remains a year-round endeavor for the permanent staff of seven that ramps up during the two weeks in August for the actual fair with more than 900 volunteers and 60 event-trained staff.

Planning for this year will pay off in August as the fair will debut several new attractions in 2015 including


Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and ZuZu Acrobats, as well as monster truck fly-over, M-1 tank monster truck conversion “Car Killer.” There are also five new Midway rides.

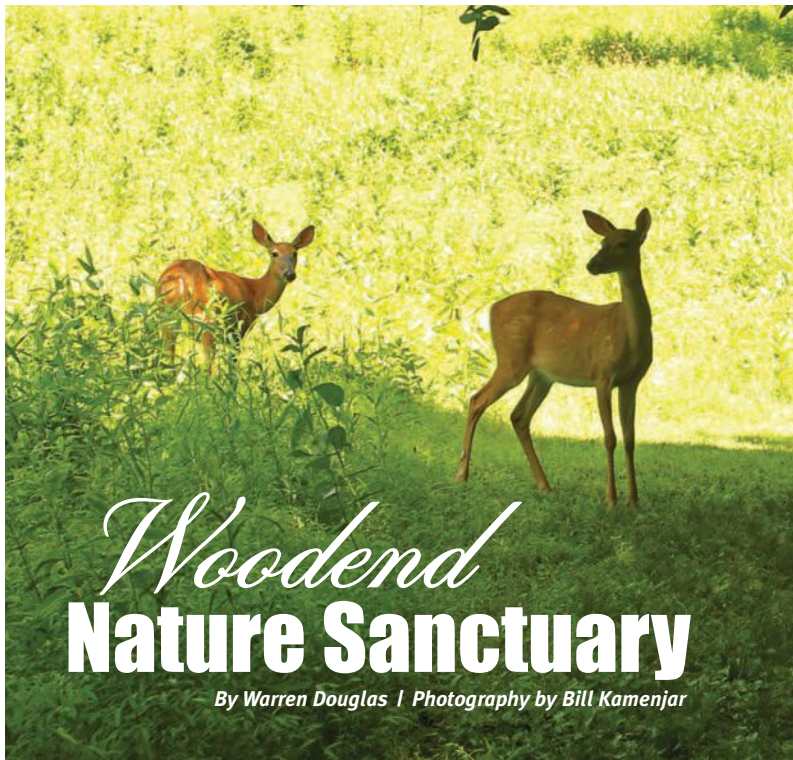
The fair offers free entertainment throughout the day, which is included in the \$10 admission fee, Children 11 and under are free every day. Evening entertainment in the grandstand, such as the Demolition Derby and Monster Truck Madness cost around \$15. Special promotions and discounts can be obtained through the fair’s various social media outlets.

GETTING INVOLVED

For those who want to get more involved with the fair, but don’t have an alpaca at home or a herd of Holsteins in their backyard, there are many non-agricultural opportunities to compete and display. There are ribbons awarded for flower arranging, cheese carving, hermit crab races and even toilet decorating.

The various competitions fall into four major categories: farm and garden, home arts, arts and crafts and old timers. Judging takes place throughout the week. Detailed information about how to enter these competitions can be found on the fair’s robust website, www.mcagfair.com

One of the easiest ways to get involved is simply drive to the fairgrounds, park your vehicle, pay your admission fee and spend a few hours enjoying your county fair. Or you can take the free shuttle from Lakeforest Mall. 



It's a developer's dream – a 40-acre, wooded estate with a Georgian Revival mansion nestled in affluent Chevy Chase.

Were it ever to be turned over to bulldozers and chainsaws, the prized property would likely bring a purchase price of more than \$25 million. But thankfully, the property is not for sale and remains a quiet Audubon Naturalist Society preserve along Jones Bridge Road where visitors can explore nature just three miles from the District line.

Beyond being one of a few nature centers left in Montgomery County, the Woodend Nature Sanctuary is cherished for its history, walking trails, champion tree species and bird watching while the Woodend Mansion is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The grounds of the sanctuary are nicely marked and the hiking trails weave around the site with a recorded history dating back to a 1700 land grant by Lord Baltimore. The 700-acre gift to settlers moving west was named "Clean Drinking" in part due to the natural springs that dotted the property. By the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783, some of the Clean Drinking property had been parceled and much of it cleared for tobacco and other crops, livestock, barns and housing for 10 slaves.

For the early part of the next century, the property had a checkered life as it thrived and floundered as the economy, the War of 1812 and finicky and labor-intensive tobacco crops took their toll on the property. Commercial activity stagnated, especially after it was sold at auction by the Jones family in 1823.

Woodend received new life in 1916 when Chester Wells purchased the 80-acre property and 11 years later



Woodend Nature Sanctuary
8940 Jones Bridge Road, Chevy
Chase, MD 20815; 301.652.9188;
www.anshome.org

The nature sanctuary operates a Naturalist Shop at Woodend Sanctuary with a great selection of birdseed, bird feeders and houses, natural history and environmental books, binoculars, spotting scopes, gifts, jewelry, note cards, coffee, and children's items.

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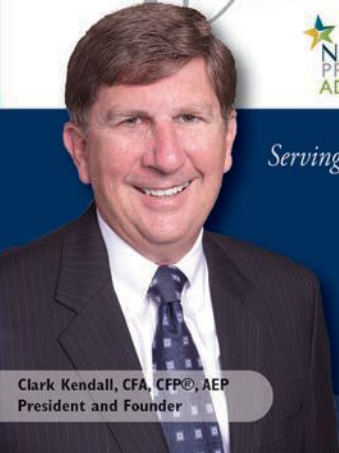
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NBCAP
PREMIER
ADVISOR

commissioned architect John Russell Pope to build Woodend Mansion. Wells' wife Marion selected the name Woodend after a mountain resort in her homeland of Australia. Pope was a significant architect of his time and his works include the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Constitution Hall and the National Gallery of Art.


When Marion Wells died in 1967, the Woodend property was passed to the Audubon Naturalist Society, the oldest independent environmental organization in the area. In addition to Woodend, ANS operates two other wildlife sanctuaries and conducts a variety of natural history classes, outings and trips.

Although only half the property remains and some of Wells' formal gardens have disappeared, Woodend is a treasured piece of land for the safe haven and nesting areas it affords a wide variety of wildlife. There are picnic areas, native plant gardens, wildflower meadows, children's learning center, nature pond and stream.

Tree lovers will revel in the distinctive native and non-native trees across the property, including four very notable trees that are part of the Maryland Big Tree Program: black walnut, blue atlas cedar, English oak and Japanese maple.

Visitors are welcome to hike Woodend's trails from dawn to dusk and admission is free.

Woodend also conducts several natural history field studies courses, including those dealing with bird activity, wildflower identification, wetland ecosystems and biological evolution.

Not surprisingly, the beauty and solitude of Woodend make it a popular setting for weddings and other events. The mansion's Great Hall and tented terrace can accommodate up to 150 guests seated together. 

While You're Out // Manoli Canoli

This fine, family-owned restaurant is small and simple but the Italian and Greek fare is always delicious. The homemade dishes at this popular neighborhood restaurant range from mousaka, marinated grilled lamb chops and kebabs to pasta, pizza and salads. The portions are always generous and the service very friendly. The Manolakos family first started importing olive oil and olives from its family farm in Greece; now those products are sold at Manoli Canoli.

*Manoli Canoli - 8540 Connecticut Avenue,
Chevy Chase, MD 20185; 301.951.1818;
www.manolicanoli.com*



PHOTO BY HILARY SCHWAB

Back row: left to right: Frankie Altemus, Minnie Zdanis, Raphael Zdanis; Front row: left: Lee Myers, right: Caroline Reyda

THE ART OF EDUCATING YOUR CHILD

Another school year begins in just a couple of weeks and that means Montgomery County parents will be entrusting the education of more than 153,000 students to almost 13,000 educators in the county's 203 public schools. There are almost 35,000 students in the county's 186 private schools, so that means a lot of learning will take place over the next 10 months. But what are the keys to success? How

< COVERSTORY >

can you help your child excel in the classroom? Montgomery County Public Schools will spend \$2.32 billion on educating children in the upcoming school year, and you can rest assured that money will be put to good use. The county's record of being one of the best school districts in the nation was not built on wasted money. Among the county's private schools, the average tuition for elementary school is \$12,736 and for high school it's \$21,231. But money never tells the whole story. We could give you a bunch of impressive numbers and flattering quotes from county officials, but you've heard that many times. So we went directly to the people who do the educating and asked seven respected teachers with a variety of experience, including Joseph Gannon Jr., Montgomery County Teacher of the Year, an assortment of questions about the education of your child. Here is what they had to say.

partnership. I try to communicate with parents in multiple ways so that they are constantly receiving feedback, both specifically about their child's progress, but also about what we are learning and doing daily in the classroom. When parents are equipped with information about what is happening in school, it takes the guesswork out of the, 'What did you do in school today?' question. In turn, it also helps me as a teacher to know when something important is happening at home that might be affecting the students in my class. When children know their teachers and parents are on the same page and are working together, it sends a powerful message to them that they have a team in their corner rooting for the best for them in all areas of their life.

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME HE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL? WHY?

"The book that I have used as a read-aloud in my classroom the past few years is "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio. It tells the story of a boy's struggle as he grows up with personal disabilities due to a facial deformity. The book discusses how he and the other people in his life deal with the way he is treated. The story, told from multiple characters' points of view, helps the reader see situations in the story from multiple viewpoints. As I've read it in class, I've watched students have very strong reactions to the story, but have also watched them change their perspectives of the characters and the situations presented. This story opens up the reader's eyes to what others go through, and helps the reader view the world in a

more selfless way. It teaches us to act more kindly to all, which we could all stand to do."

HOW DO YOU ADEQUATELY INDIVIDUALIZE THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR STUDENTS?

"Almost all my instruction is done in small groups. Sometimes my students are grouped by skill level, sometimes by learning style, and sometimes by interest. My groups are not always led by me, but I often give the students a leadership role in the groups as well. Setting up the classroom



ROYANNA FLOWERS

DR. SALLY K. RIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

4TH GRADE: ALL ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

TEACHING FOR 11 YEARS (AT RIDE SINCE 2004)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER?

"What is the best way to communicate with you? Parents and teachers must work together to help students achieve and succeed, and communication is key to creating a collaborative

environment in this way helps me meet the needs of all students every day. I can teach a specific group a particular skill that only those students need or I can teach an enrichment lesson to a group that is ready to move forward and deeper into a subject – even if the rest of the class isn't ready yet. Grouping by learning style helps me teach students in the way in which they excel. One group may use traditional reading and writing to show what they've learned, while another may use music or art, and yet another can show what they know in a more hands-on, practical way. When I group students in interest-based groups, it gives me an opportunity to engage students at a high level because they are learning about a subject they are most interested in.”



WHAT DO STANDARDIZED TESTS AND PROGRAMS LIKE COMMON CORE DO TO YOUR ABILITY TO TEACH STUDENTS?

“I think there has been a need for a standard curriculum such as Common Core for many years. My father was in the Air Force and we moved multiple times throughout my school-age years. Every time I started a new school in a new state, it created academic holes in my learning since every state had different standards. It’s nice to know that now transient students can move from school to school seamlessly. I am also impressed with how much critical thinking and problem solving has been infused in the standards to make sure that students are learning how to think, not just learning what to think. These higher-level thinking skills are what students in Montgomery County will need in order to succeed in a competitive global economy. I also see why standardized testing is important. However, while standardized tests are important as a measurement tool, they also take away from instructional time. Hopefully as we move forward as an educational community, we can construct a way for the tests to collect the data they need to be helpful, while also not taking so much instructional time out of the hands of educators.”

MIKE MASTRANTUONO
THE ACADEMY OF THE HOLY CROSS
9TH-12TH GRADES: SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHING FOR 8 YEARS (FIRST AT HOLY CROSS)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD’S TEACHER?

“There is no question a parent could ask a teacher that is more important than the one they could ask themselves: ‘Is my child setting a goal for this class and putting the effort into achieving that goal?’ In my experience, it’s always important to do introspective before looking externally for answers, especially for a high school student. But, if there’s one they could ask me, as long as it’s anything other than, ‘Why aren’t you giving my kid an A?’ and it pertains to the student’s performance in the classroom, I’m okay with it.”

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME SHE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL?

“All Quiet on the Western Front,” Erich Maria Remarque

WHAT IS THE BEST METHOD TO DETERMINE WHETHER STUDENTS ARE PROGRESSING ADEQUATELY THROUGH REQUIRED CURRICULUM?

“Consistent and varied assessment. This can be done

< COVERSTORY >

informally, through their participation in class or engagement in group discussion, or formally, through standard quizzes and tests. The key is to stay involved and keep a watchful eye on each student.”

HOW DO YOU ACTIVELY ENGAGE YOUR STUDENTS AND KEEP THEIR ATTENTION?

“I think it’s a combination of the material and the teacher’s passion for that material. Students feed off the energy of the teacher, so it’s incumbent upon us to inject that energy into the classroom – especially, I believe, in my field, since the latest research shows that American pupils’ weakest subject now is Social Studies. That gives me extra motivation to bring it every day and in every class. There are two types of history students – those who will love the subject and those who won’t. For those who will, I give everything I have in class so as to foster their love in the subject and hopefully inspire them to continue on learning history in college and beyond. For those who won’t, I give everything I have in class so, at least, they can walk away having heard some fun stories, have a greater appreciation for people and events that came before them, and having learned something about themselves.”

PHILIP E. JACKSON

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MIDDLE SCHOOL

8TH GRADE: U.S. HISTORY

TEACHING FOR 8 YEARS (AT KING SINCE 2007)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD’S TEACHER?

“What can I (we) do to support the learning at home?”

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME HE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL?

“Considering the sheer diversity of cultures being educated in Montgomery County and the certain biases of the education system’s stakeholders, I do not think there is any one book. However, if I had to, I would narrow the choice to some children’s books that attempt to teach universal human values.”

IS THERE A ROLE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA IN TEACHING?

“Of course. With across-the-board, unimpeded access and a rigid structure, students and teachers could communicate at



another level thereby enhancing and deepening learning. However, it must be emphasized that like all technology, social media would be just a tool, and not a giver of knowledge.”

HOW DO YOU ADAPT YOUR INSTRUCTION TO MEET YOUR STUDENTS’ INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

“The first thing that should be noted is that there are really no weaknesses. Students come to school with, and in fact all of us have, preferential styles of learning that they are seeking. So, I try to plan lessons that incorporate different modalities and allow students to demonstrate their learning in more than one way that suits the different modalities.”

WHY IS MONTGOMERY COUNTY CONSISTENTLY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE BETTER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN THE COUNTRY?

“One, the committed financial investment from the county along with the level of spending per pupil. And two, the commitment and interest from the public and various stakeholders.”

WHAT DO STANDARDIZED TESTS AND PROGRAMS LIKE

COMMON CORE DO TO YOUR ABILITY TO TEACH STUDENTS?

“Nothing. And should be nothing. My subject has not been regimented by either, but I think they may limit what or how much of what can be taught, usually at the expense of the student.”



HEIDI JOHNSON

STONE RIDGE SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART

11TH-12TH GRADES:

BIOLOGY AND AP ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

TEACHING FOR 5 YEARS (ALL AT STONE RIDGE)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD’S TEACHER?

“How can I help my child be successful in this class? I often tell parents they can still be appropriately involved at the high school level by asking their daughter about what she’s learning and having her explain it to them clearly. If she struggles with her explanation, then she’ll be more aware she still needs work with the concepts.”

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME SHE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL?

“To Kill a Mockingbird.” It teaches two of life’s most important lessons: reserving judgment and having conviction. If more people practiced both of these ideals, the world would really be an awesome place.”

WHICH PROVIDES BETTER RESULTS – LEARNER-CENTERED CLASSROOMS OR CURRICULUM-CENTERED CLASSROOMS - AND WHY?

“An either-or scenario isn’t as practical as striking a balance – which is why teaching really is an art. However, if I had to prioritize, learner-centered classroom wins. While curriculum is obviously important, some of the most important proficiencies we want 21st century learners to have are skills that go beyond mere data – critical thinking especially for creative solutions to complex problems, and supporting their arguments.”

Many students, myself included, want to have the exact answer before speaking up. In the real world, one-size-fits-all solutions often don’t exist. I find my students are more willing to place themselves in the uncomfortable position of taking risks with their learning when they are truly invested in the topic. This eagerness to know more because they’re fascinated can help them overcome the hurdle of being reluctant to ask a question or propose an answer, even when they aren’t totally sure. Having a learner-centered classroom also enables me to slow down to allow students time to think deeply about topics. With this extra time, I see them offer enlightened and passionate ideas more consistently than when having to rush to cover the required curriculum. This helps reinvigorate the natural curiosity that often subsides as they get older, and helps them remember the excitement of learning, rather than being concerned solely with what will be on the test.

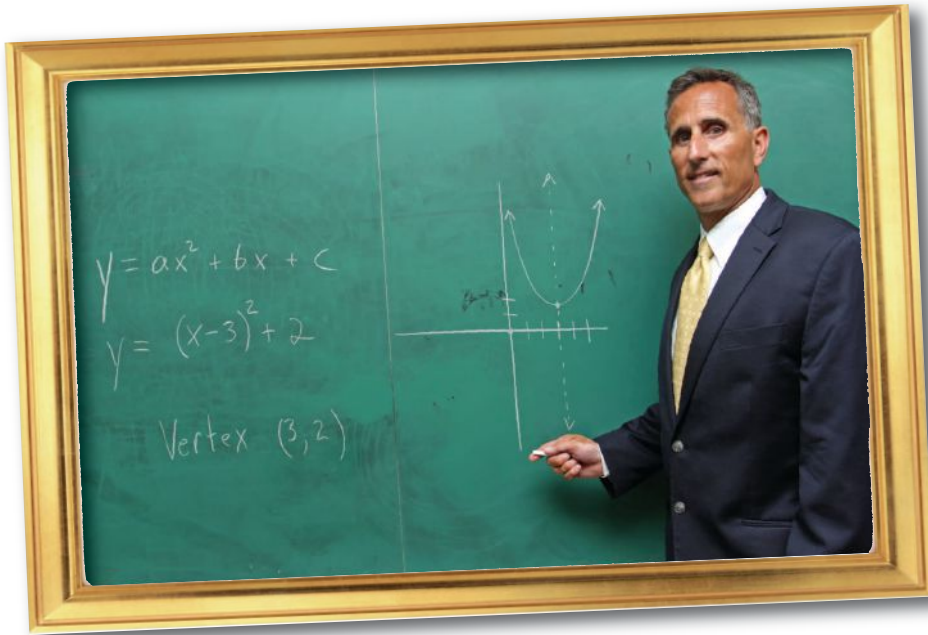
And, honestly, thanks to Google and instant access to information, memorizing facts isn’t as important today, but being able to ask intelligent questions and sift through seemingly contradictory material will always be vital skills.”

WHAT IS THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN CLASSWORK AND HOMEWORK?

“Another tough question I struggle with daily. Letting kids be kids and allowing them to have some free time is so important. Our nation has an epidemic of anxiety-ridden young people who need time to unwind, rather than having every minute of their day scheduled. However, the reality is that the pressure on students – with more AP classes, standardized

< COVERSTORY >

testing, and extracurricular activities – is higher than ever. The adage quality over quantity is what I keep in mind regarding how much homework to assign. I ask myself will this really enhance my students' understanding, and how will it do that? Then, I try to give options on how to complete the assignment so it can cater to different learning styles and help students balance their time after school."



JEFF BELLISTRI, BULLIS SCHOOL

9TH-11TH GRADES: MATH

TEACHING FOR 20 YEARS (AT BULLIS SINCE 2001)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER?

"Parents care the most about their children and are concerned with how an educator is going to interact with their child. Parents should ask how the teacher is going to inspire and motivate their child to learn and to be excited about expanding their knowledge. A teacher's ability to inspire curiosity is one of the most important qualities in a teacher."

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME HE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL?

"There are a number of books that students should read, from American classics such as 'The Great Gatsby,' 'Catcher in the Rye,' and 'To Kill a Mocking Bird' to Shakespeare classics. Students should be aware of current events and regularly read newspapers or magazines and should also read autobiographies and biographies of people who have had a

positive impact on our history. Finally, students should read and be familiar with proper etiquette as a young man or woman."

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE IN PRIVATE SCHOOL EDUCATION TODAY AND WHEN YOU STARTED TEACHING?

"The biggest difference in education over the past 20 years is the advancement of technology. The ability for students to access information instantly with the use of computers, cell phones or tablets has made the learning process efficient and powerful. Students are able to use real data and information to form hypotheses and apply information to reach meaningful conclusions. At the same time, this advancement has presented new challenges to the classroom environment as it has created distractions a teacher has to navigate."

WHAT IS THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN CLASSWORK AND HOMEWORK?

"Trying to find the right balance between classwork and homework can be a difficult task for any educator. I think homework should help reinforce and inform classroom learning rather than be a means to introduce new information to the student. Each student learns differently and the use of both classroom and homework assignments allows the opportunity for students to learn and grow in numerous ways."

NANG TAT WONG, TILDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

7TH-8TH GRADES: SOCIAL STUDIES

TEACHING FOR 11 YEARS (AT TILDEN SINCE 2004)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER?

"Why did you choose education as your profession? It is an easy and direct way to find out a teacher's drive, motivation, and love for teaching. Too often, people are concerned with the whats and hows of education, i.e. how do you manage the classroom environment, what teaching strategies do you have for struggling readers, etc. I believe you have to understand the whys in order to understand the person. After all, teaching is based on relationships; understanding the personnel you are

working with is the most salient ingredient in building these relationships. The question builds rapport with the teacher by getting to know their history and background and letting who they are shine through.”

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME HE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL?

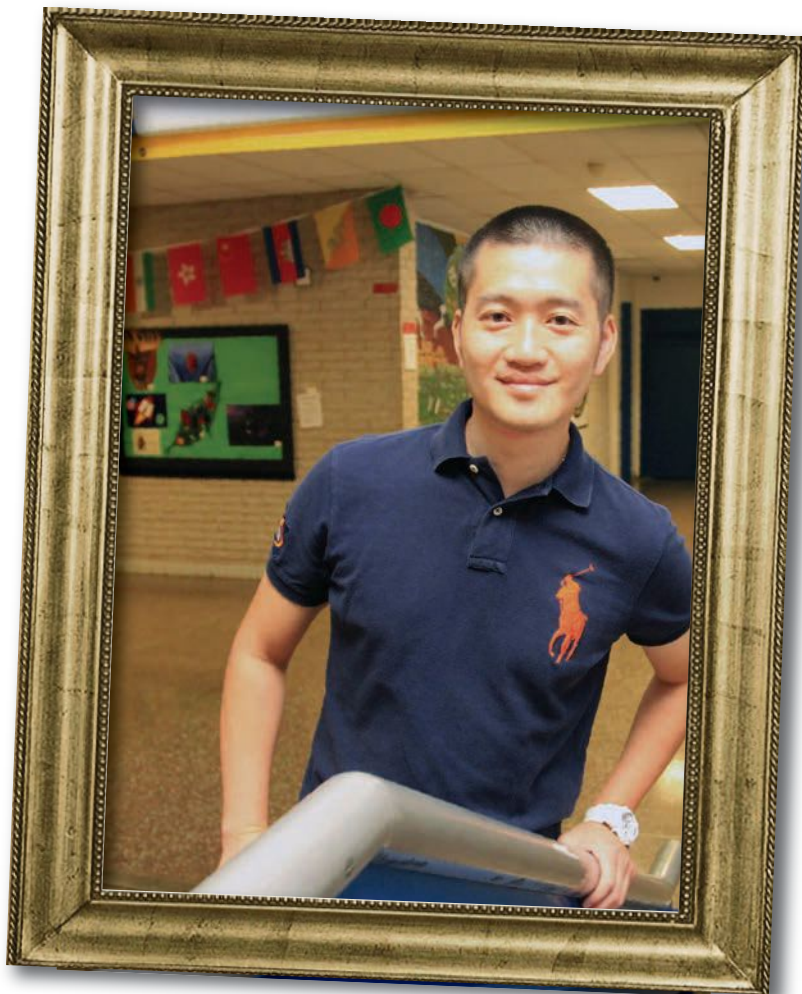
“The book that had the biggest impact on me when I was a high school student was “Night” by Elie Wiesel. It was written beautifully and succinctly about a topic that was so abhorrent and protracted. This glaring contradiction kept me engrossed throughout the whole book. I have never felt more connected to a person through this medium. It was as if he gently sat you down in his living room and shared his hellish story and unforgettable life lessons with you. However, with that being said, I would encourage all of my students to read something they are passionate about. I am more concerned with instilling reading as a lifelong hobby over directing them to just one book. I have a book club page on my teaching website that allows me to share with students books I have read in the past year and books I am currently reading.”

WHY IS MONTGOMERY COUNTY CONSISTENTLY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE BETTER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN THE COUNTRY?

“The dedication of its citizens to fund education, a sustained desire to promote social and economic equality through education led by Dr. Jerry Weast and Dr. Joshua Starr, and ongoing professional development and research-based strategies that are available to staff members. Of course, the hard work by the parents and students to strive for their best is just as important in our success. However, with that said, we still have ways to go in order to make education an endeavor in social justice. The opportunity gap between white and minority students is still sickeningly persistent and far-reaching. Furthermore, education funding has been in decline and we need to put our money where our mouth is, so to speak, in order to make any lasting impact in society.”

HOW DO YOU MEET THE ACADEMIC NEEDS OF DIVERSE LEARNERS?

“Adapting instruction to meet the needs of all students is a



continuous process. It is vital to collaborate with other teachers and specialists in the building and use their expertise when designing and implementing instruction. If I have a student who is not successful in my class but has attained success in other classes, I will ask my peers for advice and input on how to best serve that student. Grade level teams have weekly meetings to discuss evidence-based strategies and best practices for all learners. Additionally, creating lessons with the end in mind by incorporating choice in the modality of learning and the manner in which students demonstrate their learning has allowed students to be successful despite a variety of strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. The incorporation of differentiation and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in designing quality instruction is essential to meeting the needs of diverse students. Consulting with students on a consistent basis through informal dialogue and classroom surveys has allowed me to create lesson plans and assignments that suit the needs and interests of my students. I can’t tell you how valuable student voice data is in teaching. Learning with, and from, my students is the most valuable and rewarding aspect of my profession.”



JOSEPH GANNON, JR.

2015-16 MCPS Teacher of the Year

DAMASCUS HIGH SCHOOL

11TH-12TH GRADES: AP WORLD HISTORY

TEACHING FOR 26 YEARS (AT DAMASCUS SINCE 1996)

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION PARENTS CAN ASK THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER?

"I believe that the parent is there to complement the teacher and that both are important in the education of the student. One of the most important questions a parent can ask is How can I help support what you are doing in the classroom? (The teacher should also ask this question of the parent.)"

WHAT BOOK SHOULD EVERY STUDENT READ BY THE TIME HE GRADUATES HIGH SCHOOL AND WHY?

"If I had to choose only one book it would be "Why Gender Matters" by Dr. Leonard Sax. I also believe every parent and educator should read this book. It details in readable language how boys and girls are different and how we must adjust our teaching to fit these differences. This is important for students as they begin to see how each child is different and can better understand why they struggle in some respects and succeed in others. And it is important for parents and educators for the same reason."

HOW DO YOU MEET THE ACADEMIC NEEDS OF DIVERSE LEARNERS TO KEEP BETTER STUDENTS MOVING FORWARD WHILE NOT LETTING OTHERS FALL BEHIND?

“Mathew Kelly once said, “become the best version of yourself.” When teaching students the first thing I do is reach out to them. I work hard to find out what makes each individual tick. And I make sure my lessons are varied so that all learning styles are reached. In the end, the key is for me to truly recognize and believe that each student can succeed. That each has gifts, and that with a little effort and time, reach out to each student as a unique individual and continually reflect on my practices and adjust them accordingly.”

WHAT DO STANDARDIZED TESTS AND PROGRAMS LIKE COMMON CORE DO TO YOUR ABILITY TO TEACH STUDENTS?

“Because I teach AP, the Common Core per se is not something I have to deal with – at least not yet. However, standardized tests are a double-edged sword. Although necessary and beneficial in some ways, they can be problematic in others.

The curriculum for the AP World History course is excellent. It is filled with higher order thinking and historical themes and skills that are beneficial and necessary to the growth of the student. The AP exam tests these skills in an effective manner. This standardized test is welcome because it is appropriate and it measures what the student has learned or not learned.

Other standardized tests – or too many tests – either don't measure and then take time from class time. They also can force teachers to adapt their lessons and thus “teach to the test, which for the most part, is poor education.”

WHAT SETS MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS APART SO THAT IT IS CONSISTENTLY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE BEST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN THE COUNTRY?

“Support. MCPS has continuously valued education and has put its money where its mouth is, so to speak. I have every resource I need and all the support I ask for. I am encouraged to try new techniques and am applauded when my students succeed. And although a huge, bureaucratic system like MCPS is inevitably going to have problems that typical bureaucracies have, I have found that the ultimate goal of everybody involved in the system is dedicated to first help students learn.”

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS DO TO HELP YOU TEACH THEIR CHILD?

“Communicate. Don't be afraid to communicate. Listen to what we say we are seeing in the classroom. Teachers want your child to succeed. When we challenge them, it is because we know they can do it. And we want them to be prepared for life. As I tell my parents at back to school night, your children are not mine, but that doesn't mean I can't treat them as if they are.” ^{MM}

GUIDE TO TUTORING HELP AND SAT AND ACT PREP

BEST BRAINS Subject tutoring, exam prep, baby genius program, special needs - bestbrains.com

C2 EDUCATION Subject tutoring, exam prep - c2educate.com

CHYTEN CENTER Subject tutoring, exam prep, academic services – chytен.com

HUNTINGTON Academic skills, subject tutoring, exam prep huntingtonhelps.com

JILL BRODER'S TUTORING CENTER Evaluations, subject tutoring, organizational coaching, school placement - illbroderstutoringcenter.com

KUMON Math and reading skills and tutoring kumon.com

MATHNASIUM Math skills and tutoring - mathnasium.com

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TAKING A SHOT AT CONCUSSIONS

Bethesda-based
Brain Sentry is
advancing
technology that will
make high school
sports safer

By Rokia Hassanein

CONCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN A TOPIC of concern for many – especially for high school athletes. After all, high school football alone is responsible for 47 percent of all reported concussions.

Here in Montgomery County, schools and businesses are doing their best to decrease the risk of a concussion and detect head trauma quickly.

One company in particular – Bethesda-based Brain Sentry – has been working with schools and sports leagues since 2011 to help decrease the number of concussions in sports.

Greg Merrill, the co-founder and CEO of Brain Sentry, says his equipment helps players in a couple of ways. Merrill says Brain Sentry sensors aid in identifying players who have been exposed to head trauma to detect their risk factor for a

concussion. Additionally, he says, the sensors track the number of sub-concussive or harder head impacts that a player has experienced for the day, week and for the season.

“By tracking the number of impacts, coaches can objectively determine which players have techniques in hitting that involve excessive head impacts,” Merrill says. “It gives the coaches a tool to monitor head impacts – a critical piece of information for reducing head trauma during the season.”

Whether or not Montgomery County Public Schools use Brain Sentry’s sensors for their athletes hasn’t been determined yet. Merrill says MCPS has looked at their technology and is taking a “wait and see” approach before deciding.

MCPS athletics specialist Jeff Sullivan says the county is committed



BRAIN SENTRY CO-FOUNDER AND CEO GREG MERRIL SHOWS THE SENSOR THAT ATTACHES TO A HELMET TO RECORD HITS AND GAUGE POTENTIAL FOR A CONCUSSION. By GAVIN STERN/Scripps Howard Foundation Wire

to the well-being and safety of their student athletes.

The MCPS athletics' current concussion plan includes baseline testing players every two years, requiring coaches to be trained on head injuries, keeping players informed on health and safety issues and more.

This upcoming academic year, there will be more efforts towards decreasing concussions in MCPS public schools, Sullivan says.


"Following a successful pilot program for athletic trainers, we are excited to officially bring certified athletic trainers to our 25 high schools for the 2015-16 school year," Sullivan says. "We appreciate the board of education's support of the athletic trainer program and look forward to the program supporting our student-athletes and coaches."

Although MCPS is yet to implement Brain Sentry technology in its athletics, the Montgomery County based-technology has users across Maryland high schools and beyond. Merrill says that every player in the Baltimore Touchdown Club High School all-star game is required to use Brain Sentry sensors. The business even reaches schools nationwide. California high schools now require their football players to wear impact sensors and it is now mandatory for all professional Arena Football League players to wear the sensors.

"There is a clear trend toward impact sensors becoming standard equipment for contact sports including football, lacrosse and hockey," Merrill says. "It is important to have this technology because over 50 percent of high school players

have been found to hide their symptoms of concussion to avoid being pulled from the game. Medical researchers have found that a large percentage of sports-related catastrophic brain injury, including death, happens when a player does not come out of a game when they have a concussion – this is often referred to as second impact syndrome."

Merril says that football and other contact sports such as hockey and lacrosse are the major focus of their technology but emphasized that head impacts in other sports need to be monitored.

"We believe that as the sensors become smaller, they can be placed in comfortable hair bands for use in soccer, basketball, cheerleading and other high risk non-helmeted activities," he says. 

Hand to Paw

WHY AND HOW TO RESCUE A PET

BY MOLLY GOLUBCOW



“My goal was to make the adoption process less of a must have requirement and more of a friendly and welcoming process,” Kalina says. “We did not want to turn away people offering good homes who would go away and buy a pet.”

Are you into the tall, dark and handsome type or the playful, loyal or cuddly kind? Looking for a walking companion? Missing a cold snout to wake you in the mornings? Perhaps you’re in need of a four-legged friend. In an effort to make your search easy, affordable and personalized, the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center offers a variety of pet adoption options to meet your needs.

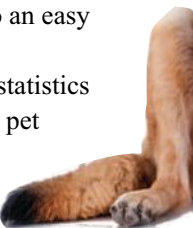
The new 49,000-square-foot Adoption Center in Derwood contains animal holding areas where you may walk through without staff supervision during adoption hours to find the dog, cat, bird, etc. that works for you (and for the pet). The rooms, some called “show case rooms”, are sunny, clean, and open – where you easily can see the pet and how it interacts with others as well as its toys and surroundings.

Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places

Although the Humane Society of the United States discourages purchases from puppy mills for reasons ranging from over-breeding to cruelty, some people still go that route. If that is something that you want to avoid, adoption may work for you as an easy, inexpensive and humane alternative.

In the past, some shelters have been very restrictive, turning away potential pet owners because a fenced yard was not available or the hours they kept were not conducive enough to shelter specifications. At the Montgomery County Adoption Center, the emphasis has moved from an alienating experience for prospective pet parents to an easy and pleasant process.

Center manager Shari Kalina wanted to streamline the adoption process since statistics showed that uber qualifying did not necessarily guarantee a successful match for pet and pet owner. Kalina’s goal has become a reality and the center has less than a



Visit the Adoption Center website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/animalservices/about/contact.html to check out some of the animals currently available and, to speed up the process, take the Meet Your Match survey. Remember, unconditional love is just around the corner off of Muncaster Mill Road.

4 percent return rate.

“My goal was to make the adoption process less of a must have requirement and more of a friendly and welcoming process,” Kalina says. “We did not want to turn away people offering good homes who would go away and buy a pet.”

Matchmaker, Matchmaker Make Me a Match

At times, there can be hundreds of dogs, birds, rabbits and more at the center. So, how do you (the adopting parent) find the right pet for you and your needs?

One of the first steps that you can do is take the Meet Your Match online survey on the adoption center website. Designed by the ASPCA, the survey evaluates each shelter animal’s behavior and personality and matches them to an adopter’s preferences and lifestyle. A Match.com for pets, if you will, where you learn all about the different “Canine-alities” and “Feline-alities” at the shelter from “I’m the Life of the Party” to “I am a Goofball.”

Based on your survey answers, you are matched to one of three color categories. These colors correspond to colors on each shelter animal’s living quarters, making it easy for you to walk around and spot the animals best suited to your lifestyle. Then, you will meet an adoption counselor who will introduce you to your matches and let you visit and play with the animal in meeting rooms.

If you and the pet are a match after meeting and greeting, you actually may be able to walk out of the center hand in paw that day. The fee, quite reasonable compared to purchasing a pet and then veterinary bills, is only \$150 for dogs and \$100 for cats – including microchip, spay/neuter and vaccinations. In addition, the center offers specials throughout the year where fees are discounted or waived depending on the pet and the situation.

And They Call It Puppy Love....

The Bremerman family recently visited the adoption center looking for matches according to the color coded results from their survey. However, fate intervened and the family bumped into Egypt, a pit bull terrier who

loves people with all of her doggie heart.


The chemistry was immediate. Corky Bremerman says, “Egypt was instantly all over us, and it was love at first sight for me (she seemed to feel the same). After we found out she was in the adoption center about a year and was coming to the end of her time, we decided to rescue Egypt and give her a great home. All this in a few hours.”

Although the Bremermans were not initially looking for a pit bull type, Egypt convinced them otherwise and fit into the family from day one teaching the family that her breed’s bad reputation is unfounded. In addition to Egypt’s convincing love and licks, the adoption center evaluates each dog prior to the adoption process to ensure that the animal is suitable for adoption by a staff behaviorist who works with animals to ascertain their personalities and if needed, use positive reinforcement training to correct any behavioral problems and ready the pet for its new home.

The center finds homes for about 5,000 pets per year. The staff and volunteers consist of “good people” that are dedicated to helping an animal in-between homes – nursing newborns, walking, petting, feeding – and loving them as unconditionally as they love us.

Kalina proudly shares. “Our facility works really hard to give each animal every possible chance to find a suitable home – much more than other shelters. Whether placing the pet ourselves or partnering with rescue groups, our goal is to match every shelter pet to a good home.”

Who Let the Dogs Out?

So, if you are you ready to adopt a dog, cat, bird, turtle, iguana, rabbit, hamster or guinea pig, it may be worth your while to visit the Montgomery County Animal Adoption Center. From purebred cats and dogs to exotic snakes and small mammals, you never know what you will find at any given day. Remember, there’s a paw out there waiting to shake your hand and steal your heart. 



Mom's Worry-Free Retirement

As a financial advisor serving the middle class millionaires of Montgomery County, I am seeing an increasing number of people age 70 to 80 years old walking into my office with \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in investable assets and homes valued between \$300,000 and \$700,000.

More and more of these folks are worried about running out of money during retirement and having to declare bankruptcy. The last thing you want for mom and dad in retirement is for them to be bankrupt and living hand to mouth.

Statistically, there is an 8 to 1 chance that a husband will die before his wife. That is why this article is going to focus on the retirement planning needs of your aging mom.

There are many “what ifs” related to retirement planning. What if mom has existing health concerns? What if she lives past 80, 85 or even 90?

For an aging parent, perhaps the biggest “what if” is: what if I have to go into a nursing home? The likelihood of spending some time in a nursing home is relatively high, according to Health Services Research journal published by the U.S. National Library of Medicine. Once a person reaches age 65, there is a 40 percent chance he will spend time in a nursing home prior to death. Once a person enters a nursing home, government statistics show that there is a 90 percent chance that he will stay five years or less.

In the Washington, D.C. metro area, most nursing homes cost between \$8,000 and \$12,000 per month – a total annual expense of almost \$120,000. If mom is going to spend up to five years in a nursing home at \$120,000 per year, the worst case scenario is that she will need \$600,000 to meet that expense.

How is mom going to come up with the \$120,000 annual cost of the nursing home? Most middle class millionaires can expect between \$2,000 and \$3,500 per month in Social Security benefits or

about \$40,000 per year. So mom will need about \$80,000 a year in additional income to meet the cost of her nursing home stay – a total of \$400,000 over five years.

One of the most common ways to come up with additional nursing home money is by selling mom’s primary residence. Doing this not only eliminates the costs of owning the home, which include real estate taxes, utility bills, lawn care and other upkeep expenses, but the principal from the sale can be used to fund the cost of staying in the nursing home.

Here is a quick primer on the fundamental rules of financial planning for retirement.

FINANCIAL PLANNING HELPS DEFINE MOM’S RETIREMENT GOALS.

Whether your mom wants to lie on the beach during retirement or spend her time antiquing and playing golf, she needs to define her goal. Once it is defined, then the cost of reaching that goal can be quantified.

FINANCIAL PLANNING HELPS MOM FIGURE OUT THE RIGHT WAY TO SPEND HER RETIREMENT MONEY.

How mom spends money in retirement is just as important as how she saves money for retirement. A spending plan will enable her to meet day-to-day expenses, while retaining enough asset liquidity to meet emergency needs.

FINANCIAL PLANNING HELPS ADDRESS THE “BUCKET” ISSUE – PUTTING MOM’S RETIREMENT SAVINGS INTO THE RIGHT BUCKETS AND SPENDING MONEY OUT OF THE RIGHT BUCKETS.

Let’s say mom needs to save \$25,000 a year to meet her retirement goals. Financial planning helps put her savings in the right “bucket” from an income tax standpoint. These include:

- Traditional pre-tax IRA or 401(k) accounts (in which taxes are deferred on retirement savings until



they are distributed).

- Roth retirement accounts (in which savings are allowed to grow tax-free and are also tax-free when distributions are taken in retirement).

- Taxable accounts.


But financial planning is also needed in retirement to make sure mom is spending money out of the right bucket or buckets. As a general rule, she should spend taxable money first, pre-tax (traditional 401(k) or IRA money) second and Roth money last.

FINANCIAL PLANNING HELPS CALIBRATE THE RIGHT ASSET ALLOCATION MIX COVERING SHORT-TERM LIQUIDITY, INTERMEDIATE CASH FLOW AND LONG-TERM PURCHASING POWER.

In the short term, one to three years out, mom needs highly secure investments with predictable return on principal. Four to 10 years out, in the intermediate term, she needs to be looking for higher yield. Ten years and beyond, her number one priority should be maintaining long term purchasing power.

The value of financial planning for mom's retirement is indisputable. It opens the door to retirement happiness and satisfaction by helping mom define her goals, save enough money and save it in the right accounts. Once she retires, financial planning also determines the right amount of money to spend each year and how to spend it.

Final action tip: If you're worried about mom potentially running out of funds during retirement, you should have an honest discussion with her. Dad may have controlled the family finances and she may

have no concept of what assets are owned or how the family money has been spent. Find out what assets she does have, how much (if any) pension income she has, and do what you can to make sure she lives within her means. The sooner you do this, the better. 

Clark Kendall, founder of Kendall Capital Management in Rockville, Maryland, has more than 30 years of

experience in investment management and wealth management strategies. He has earned the triple designations of Chartered Financial Analyst(CFA), Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and Accredited Estate Planner(AEP). Kendall focuses on providing independent financial direction to middle-class millionaires in and around the greater Washington, D.C. area.

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Where Are You?

“Doc” Brown sent Marty McFly “Back to the Future” via a storm brewing over a clocktower. This clocktower and brewing thunderstorm won’t get you 30 years ahead, but could win you a framed print if you know where the clocktower is.

Enter the contest at montgomerymag.com and win a framed print of this picture. One winner will be randomly selected from all correct answers received by September 10. See Web site for rules. *Photography by Bill Kamenjar*

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John Pobiak of Potomac identified the field of buttercups at the intersection of Piney Meetinghouse Road and Glen Road in Potomac. He wins the framed print.



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NEW LOCATION: 15620 Columbia Pike (near Giant)240-773-2007

CHEVY CHASE

11 Wisconsin Circle (near Friendship Heights Metro)240-773-2009

CLARKSBURG

12051 Chestnut Branch Way (near Harris Teeter).....240-773-2011

DARNESTOWN

12155 Darnestown Road240-773-2028

GAITHERSBURG

866 Muddy Branch Road.....240-773-2057
16535 South Frederick Rd (Walnut Hill).....240-773-2004

GERMANTOWN

18323 Leaman Farm Road (Kingsview)240-773-2014
20946 Frederick Road (Milestone).....240-773-2016
20650 Seneca Meadows Pkwy (near Wegman's)240-773-2022

KENSINGTON

3733 University Blvd. (near China Gourmet).....240-773-2013

MONTGOMERY VILLAGE/GOSHEN

20004 Goshen Road (near Giant)240-773-2017

OLNEY

17825 Georgia Avenue (near Safeway)240-773-2019

POTOMAC

11301 Seven Locks Road (Cabin John Mall)240-773-2005
10132 River Road (intersection of Falls Rd. and River Rd.)240-773-2020

ROCKVILLE

832-836 Rockville Pike240-773-2055
14937 Shady Grove Road (Falls Grove).....240-773-2018
12015 Rockville Pike (Montrose Center)240-773-2003

SILVER SPRING/WHEATON

15517 New Hampshire (Cloverly)240-773-2010
8706-B Flower Avenue240-773-2056
8715 Colesville Road (downtown Silver Spring).....240-773-2021
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