

# The Monocacy MONOCLE

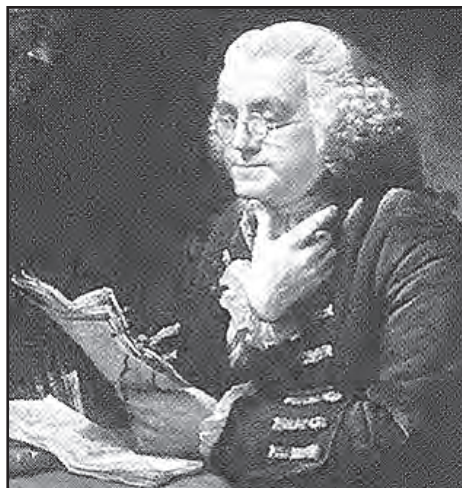
*Keeping An Eye On Local News*

A Biweekly Newspaper

March 24, 2006

Volume III, Number 2

## Inside the Monocle



*Ben Franklin in Monocacy country? A Daytripper to Philly? Not exactly. See our Report from London on page 14.*



*Focus on Business on Page 9.*



*I hear the train a comin'; It's rollin' round the bend..." Read about the Railfan on Page 8.*



*Hilary Schwab*

*All tuned up and ready to play. Center Stage on Page 13.*

## Action to Be Taken on Air Quality Concerns at PHS

By Rande Davis

After concern over air quality and potential ill effects of mold growth at Poolesville High School was raised by a group of area citizens, the Montgomery County Public Schools has agreed to a comprehensive testing of the building.

Last fall, Poolesville's Mike Young and Lynn Rolls, along with other residents, formed a committee called Healthy Air Coalition (HAC). Their concern was sparked by reports from friends and neighbors of an increase in asthmatic conditions and hives that were said to be experienced only while within the building by some area residents.

On March 10, high school principal, Ms. Deena Levine, convened

a special meeting including environmental experts from the county, Healthy Air Coalition representatives, and other school officials to discuss the problem and formulate a plan to address the concerns over air quality at the school.

Attending the meeting from PHS were Ms. Deena Levine and Bernie King, business manager. Also in attendance were: Dr. LaVerne Kimball, Community Superintendent; Mr. Richard Hawes, Director of Facilities Management; Mr. Sean Yarup, Environmental Safety Coordinator; Mr. Richard Cox, Environmental Safety Coordinator; Mr. James Bailey, Mechanical Engineer for Building Dynamics, LLC; Mr. Michael Clouse, Construction Specialist; and Mr. Bruce

Grey, HVAC Specialist.

Representing the parents were Mike Young and Lynn Rolls.

Mr. Hawes shared past actions MCPS has taken (2002-2006) to address the mold and air quality concerns at the high school. It was also reported that MCPS has contracted an outside consulting company to investigate air quality concerns at PHS. The results of the investigation should be complete by the end of April with recommendations for action to be taken.

Mr. Young requested and received approval on his suggestion to have another group of independent contractors conduct a simultaneous study which will also conclude at the end of April. Mr. Young stated that the

—Continued on Page 16.

## Who Killed James Essel?

By Jack Toomey

The small white building at the corner of Comus Road and Old Hundred Road has a closed sign in the window. The gas pumps have been removed, and there is very little activity around the store. A gentleman from Germantown uses the place for flower arrangements, but it is no longer a retail establishment. In the past, the building was used as a general store and a lawnmower repair shop. In 1990, James Essel, an immigrant from Ghana who had come to the United States in 1959, leased the property and opened the Sugarloaf Mountain Market. Essel, after arriving in the United States, had obtained degrees in accounting and business administration and worked for the First National Bank of Washington for twenty years. In those days of the proliferation of convenience stores, he wanted to keep the establishment as a handy spot to drop in for a cup of coffee,

a cold drink, or a few essentials. His customers ranged from nearby residents to those on their way to somewhere else. Essel usually worked from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., but most agreed that he enjoyed the human contact with his customers. In the two years that he had owned the store, Essel had made many friends and was willing to extend credit to people he knew. Ironically, he chose the site because he wanted to escape the crime of the city.

March 22, 1992 was a snowy Sun-

day in upper Montgomery County. The wet snow covered the fields, lawns, and trees, but driving wasn't much of a problem. Essel had called a friend at about 5:00 p.m., and the conversation was unremarkable. At about 6:00 p.m., a customer came into the store and, for a second, thought that the place was closed. Then he saw the body of James Essel lying on the floor behind the counter. He had been murdered. The police was called, and an extensive investigation began. Detectives determined that Essel had been stabbed a number of times and struck with a bottle of wine. The cash register was open, and money was missing. Thirteen years have gone by since the murder of James Essel, and the case remains unsolved.

Recently *The Monocle* visited the Major Crimes Unit of the Montgomery County Police Department. Sgt. Roger Thomson, a thirty-three-year veteran of the department, now oversees a squad of homicide detectives. He had investigated



*The Sugarloaf Mountain Market, in a recent phot.*

—Continued on Page 20.

**Family Album**



Volunteers from Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church Rebuild Together.



Woody Rupp and Steve Poteat (back left and center) and their families at the Knights of Columbus crab cakes and fish dinner.

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Pam and Jerry Klobukowski, Skip Etheridge and an unidentified parent at the Poolesville Boosters Spring Gala.



Over twenty parents came to Principal Deena Levine's breakfast meeting to discuss issues including the new PHS Magnet Program.



PHS Boosters' Spring Gala



Ruth Rosfeld, of Curves Exercise for Women in Poolesville collects for WUMCO.

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## School News

### All FCPS students

March 30 has a teacher work session, schools close two hours early.

March 31 is a professional development day, school will be closed for all students.

### Frederick County Public Schools Annual Science Fair

The Frederick Jaycees, in partnership with Frederick County Public Schools, will host the 2006 Frederick County Science and Engineering Fair at Walkersville High School on Friday, March 24 (4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.) and Saturday, March 25, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

### All MCPS students

March 31 is a professional day, school will be closed for all students.  
MCPS Elementary Schools

Believe it or not, it's that time of year when we begin counting students for the 2006-2007 school year. If you have a child who will enroll in our kindergarten next fall (five years old

by September 1, 2006) please call the school office at 301-972-7990. Registration packets will be sent out later in the spring. Families may attend Kindergarten Orientation at both schools before making a final decision. Kindergarten Orientation will be held at Monocacy ES on Friday, April 21.

In the meantime, we need to prepare an accurate count of students in our attendance area and the Poolesville Elementary attendance area who will attend Monocacy Elementary School in the fall. Please remember that you must file a transfer at Poolesville Elementary School even if you have older siblings already enrolled at Monocacy Elementary School. The transfer season runs officially from February 1, 2006 through April 1, 2006. Please call Mrs. Lineberry or Mrs. Baker if you have any questions about the process.

### Student Transfer Season

Montgomery County parents who wish to request a change in school assignment for their children from their home school may begin the process during the upcoming transfer season, February 1 through April 1, 2006.

Except for students in the Northeast Consortium (NEC), Downcounty Consortium (DCC), and Middle School Magnet Consortium (MSMC)

—Continued on Page 20.



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The staff is knowledgeable about the science of fitness, understands the need to make the most of every workout, and is able to adapt to every individual's fitness goals. No matter where you are in a training program and no matter what your fitness goals, everybody feels welcome and motivated. For me, Healthworks has been a key part of maintaining cardiovascular health in my 40s and sustaining a commitment to healthy living.

A big thanks to everyone at Healthworks for all that you do!  
*Andrew S. Gilmour, Poolesville*

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# Easter should satisfy your soul. Not just your sweet tooth.



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Please Join Us for Easter Sunday Worship, April 16  
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- 8:00AM Holy Eucharist    • 9:15AM Family Service
- 10:30AM Easter Egg Hunts
- 11:15AM Festival of the Holy Eucharist

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## An Editorial Note

By John Clayton

In our last issue I wrote an appreciation for the contributions of our writers, copyeditor, and photographer. It was our second anniversary, and it needed to be said. Rande Davis and I work with a talented and refreshingly dedicated group of people, and without them this would be, to state the obvious, an inferior publication.

Several people commented positively on that piece. It was particularly gratifying to receive praise for a topic that was both easy and enjoyable to write about.

Unfortunately, I did not do it particularly well. I relayed the truth that we receive more comments and praise for our historical pieces than for any other type of story or column. That being said, I mentioned Rande’s “Mystery Histories,” but managed not to mention the many other historical pieces have been written so well by Jack Toomey. Jack writes other fine articles for us, too; for example, “Police Blotter Past and Present” and a “Profile” appear in this very issue. But it is those local history pieces that have truly captured the hearts of our readers. In fact, our most effective bit

of market penetration research was when I neglected to complete the continuation of one of his “Local History” pieces. The uproar abated only when the complete article was printed in the next issue. I was never so glad to see the next issue arrive.

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## The Monocacy MONOCLE

*Keeping An Eye On Local News*

John Clayton

President and Publisher

Managing Editor

(301) 349-0071

[jclayton@monocacymonocle.com](mailto:jclayton@monocacymonocle.com)

Rande Davis

Vice President

Publisher and Editor

Advertising and Circulation

(301) 349-0070

[rdavis@monocacymonocle.com](mailto:rdavis@monocacymonocle.com)

*Copyediting*

Dominique Agnew

*Contributing Writers*

Dominique Agnew

Maureen O’Connell

Marcie Gross

Debby Lynn

Jack Toomey

*Contributing Photographer*

Hilary Schwab

**Other Departments**

[editor@monocacymonocle.com](mailto:editor@monocacymonocle.com)

[advertising@monocacymonocle.com](mailto:advertising@monocacymonocle.com)

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...so we, though many, are one body in Christ and  
 individually parts of one another.  
 Romans 12: 5

**Holy Week Schedule**

**April 9:**  
 Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion  
 4:00 - 4:45 pm (Saturday) – Confession  
 5:30 pm (Saturday) – Mass  
 8:00, 10:45 am – Mass

**April 10:**  
 Monday of Holy Week  
 8:30 am – Mass

**April 11:**  
 Tuesday of Holy Week  
 8:30 am – Mass

**April 12:**  
 Wednesday of Holy Week  
 8:30 am – Mass

**April 13:**  
 Holy Thursday  
 8:00 pm – Mass of the Lord's Supper  
 Until midnight – Adoration

**April 14:**  
 Good Friday  
 12 noon – Stations of the Cross  
 8:00 pm – Liturgy of the Lord's Passion

**April 15:**  
 Holy Saturday  
 11:00 am – Blessing of Food for the  
 First Meal of Easter  
 4:00 - 4:45 pm – Confessions  
 8:00 pm – Easter Vigil

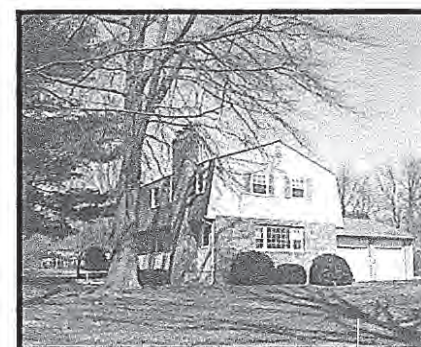
**April 16:**  
 Easter Sunday  
 8:00, 9:30, 10:45 am – Mass

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2006 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULES

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301-972-8151  
Website:  
[www.poolesvillebaptist.com](http://www.poolesvillebaptist.com)

### April 9: Palm Sunday

9:15 am Sunday School/  
Bible Study  
10:30 am Worship  
Sermon Title:  
"What A Donkey Can  
Teach Us."

**April 13: Maundy Thursday**  
7:00 pm Worship

### April 16: Easter Sunday

9:15 am Sunday School/  
Bible Study  
10:30 am Worship  
Sermon Title:  
"He Is Not Here"

[www.poolesvillebaptist.com](http://www.poolesvillebaptist.com)

## EPISCOPAL

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[www.saintpetersepiscopal.org](http://www.saintpetersepiscopal.org)

### April 9: Palm Sunday

8:15 am Solemn Eucharist  
10:30 am Palm/Passion Sunday  
Festival Eucharist

### April 13: Maundy Thursday

6:30 pm Seder Dinner  
Reservations:  
301-349-2073

### April 14: Good Friday

4:30 pm Children's Walk Through  
Holy Week  
7:30 pm Good Friday Liturgy

### April 16: Easter Sunday

8:00 am Solemn Eucharist  
9:15 am Family Eucharist and  
Egg Hunt  
11:15 am Festival Eucharist  
and choir

[www.saintpetersepiscopal.org](http://www.saintpetersepiscopal.org)

## METHODIST

**Memorial United  
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17821 Elgin Road  
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Website: [www.pmunio.org](http://www.pmunio.org)

### April 2: Sunday

11:00 am Canceled Choir cantata,  
"A Tale of the Three Trees"  
5:30 pm The Colors of Easter  
(children's program)  
6:30 pm Celebrating Grace  
(contemporary worship)

### April 9: Palm/Passion Sunday

11:00 am Communion Service

### April 13: Holy Thursday

7:30 pm Communion Service

### April 14: Good Friday

7:30 pm Service

### April 16: Easter Sunday

6:30 am Ecumenical Easter  
Sunrise Service  
East Overlook/  
Sugarloaf Mountain  
8:30 am Communion Service  
11:00 am Communion Service

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## PRESBYTERIAN

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### April 9: Palm/Passion Sunday

9:45 am Sunday School (all ages)  
11:00 am Worship  
(brief, dramatic  
presentation and  
communion)

### April 13: Maundy Thursday

7:30 pm Worship  
(family-oriented service  
incorporating the  
elements of a Seder)

### April 16: Easter Sunday

9:30 am Potluck Breakfast  
11:00 am Worship  
Choir cantata,  
"The Resurrection  
According to Nicodemus"

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### April 9: Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

4:00 - 4:45 pm (Saturday)  
Confession  
5:30 pm (Saturday) Mass  
8:00, 10:45 am Mass

### April 10: Monday of Holy Week

8:30 am Mass

### April 11: Tuesday of Holy Week

8:30 am Mass

### April 12: Wednesday of Holy Week

8:30 am Mass

### April 13: Holy Thursday

8:00 pm Mass of the Lord's  
Supper Until midnight  
Adoration

### April 14: Good Friday

12 noon Stations of the Cross  
8:00 pm Liturgy of the Lord's  
Passion

### April 15: Holy Saturday

11:00 am Blessing of Food for  
the First Meal of Easter  
4:00 - 4:45 pm Confessions  
8:00 pm Easter Vigil

**April 16: Easter Sunday**  
8:00, 9:30, 10:45 am Mass

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*...so we, though many, are one body*

*in Christ and individually*

*parts of one another.*

*Romans 12: 5*

## Local News

### Public Turns Out for Budget Hearings

The public hearing on Poolesville's town budgets for the 2007 fiscal year (July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007) had nineteen residents attending with nine commenting on the budget.

Both the General Fund and Water and Wastewater Fund (WWF) FY07 budgets are proposed with no deficits. Revenue from town property taxes is projected to remain the same from last year by staying within the "constant yield." While property assessments will increase reflecting current market trends, the commissioners are proposing to decrease the tax rate from \$0.22.1 to \$0.20 per \$100.00 so as to maintain a constant yield.

While over half of the speakers were critical of the budget, Tom Kettler, immediate past president of the Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce complimented the commissioners. "I have looked at town budgets for the past fifteen years and you have done an enormous job in trying to make it more transparent and understandable."

The town expects to provide an \$80,000 grant from its own general fund to keep the WWF in balance. Town resident Bob Roit argued against implementing a water rate increase (suggested by another speaker) to offset the \$80,000 unless there was an offsetting reduction in taxes to keep the impact on taxpayers neutral. While there is no proposal on the table to increase water rates, the commissioners seemed to agree with Mr. Roit.

Things heated up when Commissioner Roy Johnson challenged Stan Janet, publisher of the *Western Montgomery Bulletin*, on his public accusation that the town is planning to spend \$2,000,000 on a new town hall. Mr. Johnson pointed out that "you (Mr. Janet) exaggerate every number that this body ever talks about to the point of ridiculousness." The current projection is to try to keep the cost of a new town hall close to the monies that have already been set aside since 1991 (over \$850,000), plus funds from a \$275,000 state grant, and the expectation of additional monies from the sale of the old town hall.

There was also discussion on a possible town police department or

—Continued on Page 24..



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#### LOTS AND LAND

**Poolesville:** Surrounded by farmland with pastoral views, this 13.5 ac. building lot has an approved sound mound perc to service a 5 bedroom residence. Partially wooded with a stream, this lot is approx. 5 miles from the Town of Poolesville, and 14 miles from Potomac Village. MLS # MC5528055. Offered at \$750,000.00

**Barnesville/Dickerson:** This 6 ac. building lot offers the best of both worlds: a totally private, wooded setting with a stream and close proximity to the MARC train station and State Route 28. Approved sound mound perc to service a 5 bedroom residence. MLS#MC5547275. Offered at \$550,000.00

**Dickerson:** Wooded 4 ac. building lot with stream adj. 700 acs. of parkland. County approved perc test. Well on property. MLS#MC5432488. Offered at \$299,000.00

**Dickerson:** 18.71 acs. currently being utilized as a tree nursery, this property consist of 2 lots with one approved perc. Lovely homesite on a high elevation. Easily accessible to the Frederick area and Gaithersburg/Rockville. MLS#MC5308569. Offered at \$550,000.00

**Dickerson:** 5.85 ac. non-buildable lot conveniently located of State Route 28. Potential uses include hunting and numerous recreational uses. Offered at \$125,000.00

**Poolesville:** 25 ac. building lot with County approved septic system for a 5 bedroom residence. Surrounded by farmland, this level lot is within and mile of State Route 28 and approx 7 miles from White's Ferry and the C & O Canal. MLS#MC5389405. Offered at \$750,000.00



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# Profiles

## Railfan

By Jack Toomey

Passersby who notice him might think of him as the guy with the camera or the man who sits in his truck by the railroad tracks most of the time, but to a small group of railroad enthusiasts, he is a railfan, a person who has an interest in observing, photographing, or recording the movements of trains. In the United States, there are tens of thousands of railfans who devote their free time to the hobby of train watching.

Sidney Earle, who lives in Barnesville, has been watching trains since he was a small boy living in College Park during the late 1940s. He lived within a block of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad tracks for his entire childhood, and while still a small boy, he would take his primitive Brownie camera and stand by the tracks waiting for the chance to photograph a steam engine pulling a train. Mr. Earle got to know the station agent and started helping out around the College Park station when he was fourteen. He recalls waiting at the station and hopping aboard the last local train of the evening, riding to Laurel, hopping off, and running to the Little Tavern for a piece of pie, and then getting back on the train for the trip back to College Park. When he was seventeen, he was hired by Railway Express, the forerunner of United Parcel, and would pick up packages at the railroad station and deliver them to customers in the College Park area. Earle became a volunteer firefighter at the Branchville station in 1954, and joined the Montgomery County Fire Department in 1957. During his career, he was stationed at Chevy Chase and Cabin John and was a volunteer at the Beallsville station.

Sid, as he is known to his friends, renewed his interest in railroading in the 1970s after he moved to Barnesville. He began taking short trips to Pennsylvania and West Virginia to photograph trains, but some of his longest trips were in the future. After his retirement from the fire service, Sid had more time to pursue his hobby. He has taken trips to far flung places such as California, British Columbia, the Southwest, Chicago,

Nebraska, and Wyoming. He is most proud of his photography and estimates that he has taken over twenty-five thousand photos during his train watching career. Incredibly, he has only owned three cameras since the late 1940s and graduated from his Brownie camera and black and white

home where all of this data is stored. When the railroad industry began using radio communication in the 1970s, Sid purchased his first radio scanner. From his home in Barnesville, he can pick up railroad communications as far west as Martinsburg, West Virginia.



Sidney Earle

photos, to color prints, and now color slides. Sid has had several photographs published in *Trains Magazine* and *Model Railroading Magazine*. He is presently collaborating with a friend who is writing a book on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

Sid was asked about a typical day of train watching and he said, "You try to get out early, set up your locations, something conducive to good photography." He knows which roads follow the train tracks and he will occasionally follow a train for many miles and then will photograph the train from different places. Sid said, "The hobby is something that agrees with me, it's handy, and I like seeing the changes, the progression of the industry, I continue to enjoy it." Earle added that he actually had planned to go to work for the railroad, but there was a recession and the railroad was not hiring. Usually, he stays fairly close to home to pursue his hobby, and his favorite locations to photograph trains are Barnesville, Gaithersburg, Point of Rocks, and Brunswick. Sid makes meticulous records of the trains he photographs and records the date, time, and location of every train he sees. He has a master logbook at

Sid has photographed some of the most spectacular train wrecks that have occurred in our area including one in College Park in 1952 that closed the railroad for three days, those in Rockville and Boyds, and the infamous Amtrak accident at Chase, Maryland. In 1999, he was sitting in his truck at the Barnesville parking lot when a trailer train was passing through. Suddenly, a trailer broke free from its railroad car and went skidding across the opposite end of the parking lot. Fortunately, it was a weekend, so there were no injuries or property damage.

In his spare time, Earle reads about railroad history and catalogs his photographs. While waiting for a train, he reads, talks to other train watchers, and listens to fire calls on his scanner. When asked about his favorite pastime, Sid replied, "Sitting by the railroad with a camera is like a fisherman sitting by the river with his pole. I have no intention of giving up this hobby." After spending an afternoon with Sidney Earle, it is evident that this gentleman enjoys this pastime very much.

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## Focus on Business

### L’Nora: Serving Food From the Heart

By Marcie Gross

Time flies when you’re having fun. This saying rings true for Khalad Shahin, manager of L’Nora restaurant in Poolesville. L’Nora is currently celebrating its first anniversary, and Shahin wants to thank his loyal customers and invite the rest of the community to give L’Nora a chance by trying their food and customer service.

Shahin is not only the manager/owner of L’Nora but the heart and soul of this business. The restaurant’s name means “for my Nora,” Shahin’s two-and-a-half-year-old daughter’s name. Shahin does all of the cooking by himself. He says, “My theme is if I won’t serve it (the food) to someone I love, I wouldn’t serve it here.” Shahin’s foodservice experience comes from many places. He has worked in his family’s many restaurants from New York to Virginia. He even learned about gyros from his uncle when living in Greece.

Khalad is one of ten children in the Shahin family. They are of both Lebanese and Greek origin. He received a degree from George Mason University in computers, but that



Khalad Shahin

didn’t end up being his cup of tea. “I really love the restaurant business. I had my first restaurant in Prince George’s county, Italiano, for two and a half years. My family lives in Germantown, so it was a long commute. I had driven through Poolesville in the past and found it to be a nice, quiet



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small town, and I liked it,” says Shahin. He continued, “I heard about an opportunity in Poolesville in early 2004, and I decided to take it.” Since opening, Shahin has joined the local Poolesville Chamber of Commerce and has tried to offer Poolesville something different from the rest of the town’s competition.

When I asked him what makes L’Nora unique in Poolesville, he said they use a brick stone oven. “It makes the food taste different, better, and I wouldn’t cook any other way,” says Shahin. The menu is quite diverse, too. L’Nora offers authentic New York-

style Italian as well as Greek dishes. Shahin takes great pride in his menu. “We offer dinners that no one else has in town, both Italian and Greek, in addition to many specialty pizzas, signature sandwiches, calzones, salads, and, of course, a kid’s menu,

—Continued on Page 16.

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## Things to Do

### March 23

Poolesville Public Library  
Three to Six Storytime  
Stories, fingerplays, music. 10:30 a.m.

### March 25

FCPS Annual Science Fair  
Walkersville High School  
10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

### Maryland Day

No known local observations. Sorry.

### March 27

Poolesville Library  
Book Discussion Group  
Ian McEwan's *The Atonement*. 7:30p.m.

### March 28

Poolesville Library  
Storytime – Under six  
Finger play, stories, music. 7:00 p.m.

### March 29

St. Peter's Preschool Bible Program  
Music, Bible stories, crafts. 7:00 p.m.

### March 30, 31, and April 1

PHS Musical *Oklahoma!*  
School Auditorium  
7:30 p.m. all three nights  
2:00 p.m. matinee on April 1

### St. Peter's Spring Rummage Sale

March 30: 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
March 31: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
April 1: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### April 2 through April 6

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Scholastic Book Fair. Damascus,  
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### April 3

Relay for Life  
Dining Out Night  
Five Guys Restaurant in Kentlands  
Proceeds from dinner help RFL

## Tributes

### PHS Senior Recognized for Volunteer Service

Poolesville High School senior Zainab Najati has been honored for her exemplary volunteer service by receiving the President's Volunteer Service Award.

The award, which recognizes Americans of all ages who have volunteered significant amounts of their time to serve their communities and their country, was presented by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program on behalf of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation.

Ms. Najati rep-



Zainab Najati

resented Roots & Shoots (an environmental and humanitarian club sponsored by the Jane Goodwell Institute) last fall at the U.N. International Day of Peace where she spoke about the Roots & Shoots effect. She is a member of the National Youth Leadership Council for Roots & Shoots where she helps to support the efforts of Roots

& Shoots International. Ms. Najati has organized numerous activities for her group including raising money for TEWA Wildlife Conservancy program, raising funds to assist a young Tanzanian girl to secondary school, collecting patron letters in support of a variety of environmental issues, and other environmental projects.

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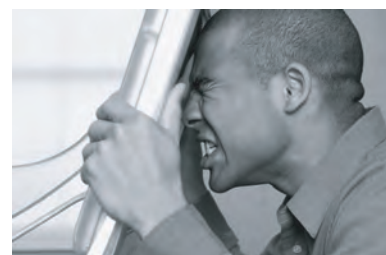
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## Local News

### Town Meeting Has a Surprising Ending

By Rande Davis

It wasn't exactly a half court shot at the sound of the buzzer, but the impact was nearly the same.

The Poolesville Town Commissioners had organized a special meeting with Montgomery County Councilman Michael Knapp, the leadership of area PTAs, and school administrators to talk about school issues. They also wanted to find out how to get the final funding for a long and hard-fought effort by parents for a new



PHS PTA president Roger Hayden, Lynn Rolls, Healthy Air Coalition, Rick Bishop, principal JPMS, Richard Hawes, MCPS Director, Facilities Management Services, Sarah Defnet, PTA president JPMS, and Deena Levine, principal PHS.

playground at Poolesville Elementary School.

PHS principal Deena Levine and Richard Hawes, MCPS Director of Facilities Management, reported the successful outcome of a meeting regarding public concerns about air quality issues at the high school. (Please see our related article on the front page of this issue.)

Poolesville Elementary School PTA president Lisa Dominici had approached the town commissioners on various occasions to seek financial support for the playground. The problem had reached a critical stage. The PTA was facing a tight timeline that did not seem to allow

for the county to budget a new playground and still get it built this year. The commissioners thought that if the county would commit to reimbursing the town at a later date, the town would provide the final \$5,000 in the interim.

Mrs. Dominici outlined how the community came together to raise \$15,000 of

the anticipated \$20,000 for the playground. She had readied herself for a detailed effort to "make her case" to



Councilman Mike Knapp, Commission President Ed Kuhlman, Roy Johnson, and Jerry Klobukowski

gain the county's cooperation in the plan put forth by the commissioners. Everyone was expecting a somewhat drawn out discussion on how the whole thing could work.

Instead, Richard Hawes, upon realizing how much money the com-

munity had come up with on its own, immediately committed to the county putting forth the remaining money,

with no unnecessary delay in building the playground.

"With the community raising \$15,000 of the \$20,000, this is a deal I can accept any time" he said to the instant relief and amazement of everyone present. "It's a good thing I am not a poker player," said Mrs. Dominici, "I know I

must have had a shocked expression on my face."

The PTA will present the options on the playground to its members at their first meeting in April.

The meeting, which had started out on a point of how nice everyone

in the upcounty is, ended with quite a few pats on the back for the down-county representatives. Everyone was nearly as amazed that a town meeting with so many people in attendance could be over and done with in a half hour.

The PTA would like to acknowledge the following corporate donors who assisted in the funding of the playground project: Complete Building Services, Winchester Homes, Kettler Forlines Homes, Hoffacker's Air Conditioning & Heating, Corporate Network Services, Gail Lee of W.C. & A.N. Miller Realtors, Colonial Opticians, Delta T Concepts, Construction Applicators, Peachtree Veterinary Clinic, and Lewis Orchards)

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## Center Stage

### Violinsanity: A Respite from All the Noise

By Rande Davis

If someone did a movie of your life, what would the background music be like? Your answer to that question may tell more about you than you might otherwise prefer.

For Dominique Agnew and Becky Ross, who began a friendship based on both being crazy about classical music, their movie score surely would be classical elegance with some Celtic fiddle thrown in. These two accomplished violinists were parishioners at St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Gaithersburg, in the late 1990s when Dominique first approached Becky with the thought of getting together to “fiddle around.” A few years later, they decided to become a little more dedicated and provide chamber music for special events. Appreciating the calming effect of violins playing in the background, the performance name they selected was perfect – Violinsanity. It is through Violinsanity that Dominique, a mother of six, finds a bit of time and quiet to herself.

Dominique is married to former Poolesville teacher and current soccer and wrestling coach, Mark Agnew. Through her duet gig, violin teaching, role as a freelance writer, copy editor, and sometime translator of French, she is able to stay at home and still help out financially with the couple's children: Eric, nineteen, Alicia, seventeen, Gisèle, sixteen, Chantal, twelve, André, ten, and Dmitri, nine.

For Dominique Agnew, the notion

of Violinsanity was the natural extension of her early childhood interest in the violin. Beginning her lessons at age eight in public school, she also studied privately with Angelo Gatto. Mr. Gatto obtained his Master's degree from Instituto Artistico Musicale in Milano, where he was a student of the eminent conductor Victor De Sabata. Intensely active in the Pittsburgh area, Angelo Gatto played with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, hosted his own weekly radio program, and conducted and played chamber music on WQED television. His twenty-two-member Pittsburgh



Dominique Agnew and Becky Ross—Violinsanity.

Strings achieved national prominence and were approved to tour abroad under President Eisenhower's special International Program.

As she entered middle school, she joined the Maryland Youth Symphony Orchestra under conductor Angelo Gatto's leadership. She also played with the Maryland Symphonette, a now-defunct professional chamber group, for three seasons also under Angelo Gatto's baton.

For Becky Ross, Violinsanity

brought her back to her classical roots. Like her partner, she too began at eight years old and is a product of the public school system. Through her high school years in Iowa, she was classically trained on the violin as a member of the school youth orchestra. Becky graduated from Bryn Mawr University with a degree in physics during which time she left her violin at home. However, after being away from music awhile, she took her interest in the violin in a different direction from her classical roots, she rediscovered her musical passion through Celtic fiddle music. For the past ten

years, she has performed with several Celtic groups in the Washington, D.C. area and plays regularly for English and Scottish Country Dances. One of her favorite locations to perform is at Mt. Vernon. She and

her husband, Bill Mitchell, have also joined together to form a Celtic duet called Peat and Barley. Becky has expanded her performance menu to include the hammered dulcimer, and she also enjoys giving fiddling lessons.

The standard venues for Violinsanity include weddings, receptions, private parties, fundraisers, and special events. They have also performed for tea parties at selected bed and breakfasts and historic sites. Sometimes their appearances can be rather

challenging.

One time at a bed and breakfast holiday theme dinner, as the dinner guests sat down for their meal and entertainment, the paid actors and actresses entered the room and began their presentation of a Dickens story. At one point, totally unbeknownst to our violinists, the lead actor turned to the duet and ordered them to “play our favorite song.” The ladies did not know whether this was a pre-planned request, but no one had thought to tell them which song to play or if it was just a spontaneous gesture on the part of the actor. Regardless, they were taken completely by surprise. Without missing a beat, they broke into a classical arrangement of everyone's favorite, the Chipmunk's Christmas song. Needless to say, the actors were surprised, but the audience loved it.

Taking popular music and arranging it in a classical style is one of the unique talents of Violinsanity. This technique is particularly appreciated at weddings when the bride and groom get to hear “their song” played as classical chamber music.

We have been especially pleased to turn the tables on Violinsanity's Dominique Agnew in this issue of the *Monocle*. Our readers will recognize her as one of our talented writers whose special “beat” is Center Stage, a column focusing on talented artists and performers in our area. She also contributes with school news and other special articles as the occasion arises. The newspaper also benefits from her copy editing services, since she proofs almost all our articles prior to printing.

We think if you ever do decide what the background music of your life should be, you won't go wrong if it is the peaceful, relaxing, and sometimes, unique arrangements of Violinsanity. (If you want to hear a sample of their work, log on to <http://violinsanity.peatandbarley.com>)

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## Monocacy International A City of Museums

By Maureen O'Connell

London is a city of museums, having more than three hundred permanent museums and galleries, large and small, general and specialist. There is the renowned British Museum, the wonderfully diverse Victoria and Albert Museum, and the sensational Tate Gallery of Modern Art, ingeniously housed in a cathedral-like former brick power station on the Thames, directly across from St. Paul's Cathedral. There are also many smaller, lesser known specialty museums, such as the Cat Museum, the Toy Museum, and a Fan Museum. On January 17 of this year, a new one has been added to this eclectic mix, Benjamin Franklin's London residence at number 36 Craven Street.

A block away from Trafalgar Square, tucked behind Charing Cross train station, and away from the bus and taxi traffic of the Strand, you'll find little Craven Street. Today, there is little street life, but in the London of the 1700s, the area was full of pubs and restaurants. For much of the past century, this small Georgian house was a hotel, office space for a bird-watching society, and various non-profit organizations. By the 1980s, the house was derelict and home to rats and squatters. At that time, several people, realizing its historical importance, became interested in restoring it. Mary Ponsonby, the American wife of the Earl of Bessborough, was instrumental in setting up a trust to raise the 5.5 million needed for renovation. It took twenty years of hard work and cajoling and a 2.7 million grant from the government-run British Heritage Lottery Fund to give daylight to this dream.

Benjamin Franklin lived during the turbulent and volatile years when the young colonists examined their Anglo-American relations. He was Deputy Postmaster General for North America and commercial agent for several of the colonies. Though he was born in Boston in 1706, he had a great love for England and its people. He lived in London from July 26, 1757 to 1773. While he deeply missed his wife Deborah and their children, he understood and accepted the need for his presence in London at this difficult time for the American colonies. There

was much traffic between representatives of the colonies and the King in London. The magnitude of their task was not lost on any of these men. They were to decide the future of these small and growing colonies of the new world. Many historians have said that indeed, it could be said that the United States was born on Craven Street., London. In March 1763,



*Ben Franklin's Home in London*

Franklin wrote: "Of all the enviable things England has, I envy most its people. Why should that pretty island, which compared to America is but like a stepping-stone in a brook, scarce enough of it above water to keep one's shoes dry; why, I say, should that little island enjoy in almost every neighborhood more sensible, virtuous, and elegant minds than we can collect in ranging a hundred leagues of our vast forests?"

Franklin was a philosopher and scientist. He received many visitors to his home on Craven Street, James Boswell, biographer of Dr. Samuel Johnson, and scientist and philosopher Joseph Priestly. He was interested in all facets of life and spent many days debating with his friends the topics of the day. It is to him that we owe the stove that bears his name, the lightning rod, bifocals, a circulating library and mail delivery. But, what troubled him the most, was the gradually deteriorating union between the Crown and the Colonies. The role of American patriot and Anglophile weighted deeply on his heart. This hope of reconciliation between the two was irrevocably destroyed by what Franklin referred to "the affair of tea," the tax on the colonists' tea and the subse-

quent dumping of it in the Boston harbor. With heavy heart, he returned to Philadelphia in 1775. He spent his last day in Craven Street with his friend Joseph Priestly. He knew what he had to do, but it was not easy.

This museum is totally unique. Unlike the historic homes in Williamsburg, it is not furnished as in its resident's time. The rooms are bare, save for a simple table or desk and all the walls are painted pale green, as they probably were in Franklin's time. An actress, portraying Polly Stevenson Hewson, the daughter of Franklin's land lady, greets Franklin's guests and escorts them through the various rooms of the house. You are "the guests." Each room "speaks" of a different aspect of Franklin's life in London. There are recorded excerpts from Franklin's writings, dialogues with friends and speeches by opposition parliamentary leaders. Images of Franklin and guests are beamed onto the barren walls by ceiling mounted cameras. Craven Street house is not a silent, motionless museum; it is a museum as "theatre." When I visited it, there were only four other "visitors." I don't know if such a dramatic effect could be achieved with a larger audience. I felt I had stepped back in time in history and witnessed the events

like a ghost. If you have a chance to visit London soon, take the time to visit this moving museum I think that you will find it very meaningful, and it will give you an appreciation for the men who did so much and felt so deeply about the creation of a united states of America. We have much to thank for Benjamin Franklin.

### *The Birds of London*

Fear of the avian flu has hit the streets and historic sites of London. The Tower of London has brought its precious ravens indoors to protect them from the flu. Anyone who has visited the Tower will remember the striking black birds, hopping around the Tower Green in front of the Chapel of Saint Peter-ad-vinctula, under the watchful eyes of the Yeoman Wardens, nicknamed Beefeaters.

The ravens have a long and interesting history. The Tower was built by William the Conqueror in 1100 to keep an eye on the City. Being beheaded at Tower Hill was a privilege of nobility. Being beheaded behind on Tower Green, away from the jeering crowds, was an "honor" bestowed on just seven people, among them several of Henry VIII's "friends," Anne Boleyn

—Continued on Page 22.

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## School News

### Butler School: Following the Child

By Dominique Agnew

Nestled among rolling hills, Butler School hides from vehicles on the road. Traveling on Route 118 near Route 28, you see the sign for the school. Upon entering the drive, you see grazing pastures and some horses—but no school. Continue down the drive and around the curve, the hills are dotted with a few barns, more grazing pastures, and a house hidden in the trees (it's part of the school, but



you would never know). Where is the school? Continue to follow the drive to the end, and the roof of the school pops up just behind a hill, and all around are more pastures, fields, and woods. With the hustle and bustle just around the corners in Darnestown, Gaithersburg, and Germantown, Butler School seems like an oasis of tranquility, and everything about it confirms the initial impression.

Butler School has celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary this past school year. In October, the school had a birthday party, and all the children and staff members received special anniversary sweatshirts that say, "Following the child for 35 years."

The school didn't begin as Butler School. In 1970, Rilla Spellman founded the Montessori

Country School located in Fairhaven Methodist Church in Darnestown. Initially, the school offered primary school which, in Montessori terms, covers ages three to six. Then it quickly expanded to offer elementary school which covers ages six through twelve.

In 1983, the first building was constructed on the present site on Route 118, and the name changed to Butler School, in memory of Rilla Spellman's grandmother. At this time, the elementary-aged children attended the



Butler Head Cheryl Rowe and Natalie Reich chatting.

new school while the primary ages continued to attend at the church location. This would continue until the late nineties even though the school was expanded to teach the intermediate age, the equivalent of seventh and eighth grades, during the 1995-1996 school year. Finally, in the 1997-1998 school year, the primary children were brought to the main campus, and "they lived happily ever after," jokes Loraine Koepenick, financial head.

Although the school changed names from Montessori Country School to Butler School, it has remained an A.M.I. Montessori School, making it an authentic Association Montessori Internationale institution. There may be schools out there calling themselves Montessori, but many are not certified as A.M.I. The true Montessori theory embraces an individualized program for each student. The children advance at their own capabilities while developing confidence and independence in who they are. Cheryl Rowe, Head of School since Rilla Spellman's retirement in 1999, says, "There is special respect given to children by everyone. The children are not uncomfortable around adults."

—Continued on Page 19.



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**"Mold at PHS" Continued From Page 1—**

HAC team would come for a team of experts they will put together from those living in the area. Both studies will be used by MCPS to develop a plan of action.

MCPS committed to making all appropriate corrective actions. The meeting concluded with all agreeing that the indoor air quality for the students and staff at PHS is a top priority.

Mr. Young reported back to the parental group that Mr. Hawes stated that MCPS would immediately disperse funding for possible needed corrective actions.

Additionally, the concern will not in any way affect the plans for the Math and Science Magnet Program that is slated to begin this fall. Mr. Hawes had also reported that any repairs that may be needed at PHS as a result of the studies would not, in any way, delay the renovation schedule for Poolesville High School. Finally, when the HVAC system is replaced at PHS, the replacement will follow a recently adopted and revamped MCPS procedure. This new procedure learns from many past mistakes (including the recent mistakes in the HVAC replacement at Poolesville Elementary). Some

highlights of the new procedure include new ways of handling the entire process from design to installation using pre-screened contractors.

Results of this meeting was also presented to Councilman Michael Knapp at a previously scheduled joint meeting at town hall with town commissioners, school principals, PTA leadership, and representatives of the Healthy Air Coalition.

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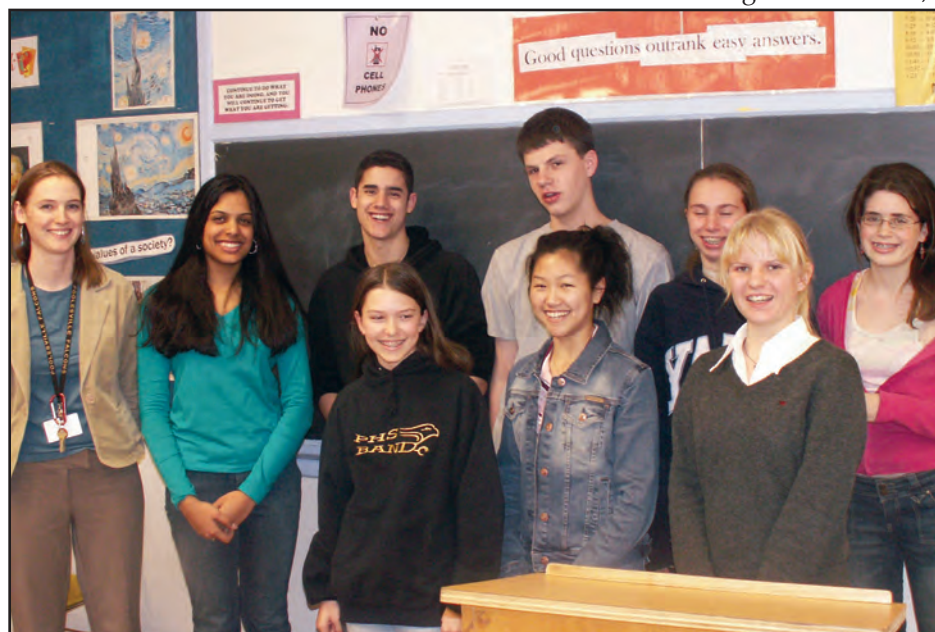
**"Food From the Heart" Continued From Page 9—**

something for everyone," says Shahin. You've got to check out this mouth-watering menu! L'Nora has various weekly specials including a large cheese pizza for \$5.99 on Mondays, and for their first anniversary, you can get a free medium cheese pizza when you buy a specialty pizza. Shahin says, "I like to give back to this community that supports me." So stop by L'Nora and meet Khalad. He's there six days a week. "We're closed on Sundays," says Shahin. "It's a family day, and I like to recharge on Sundays so the service during the week remains the same high quality." Shahin serves his food from the heart and welcomes the community to give L'Nora the opportunity to enjoy his home-style cooking and warm hospitality.

**School News**  
*Arguing for Justice*

By Marcie Gross

High school presents students with wonderful opportunities to learn and expand their minds not only through academic classes, but also through extra-curricular activities. Poolesville High School (PHS) offers a wide variety of activities that are both sports related and academic. One of the more unusual extra-curricular activities to be found at PHS is the Mock Trial Team.



Mrs. Jessica Douglas, Bhumi Patel, Michael Diskin, Rachel Kenigsberg, David Carr, Victoria Hawkins, Jackie Carpenter, Barbara Zemskona, Carley Gayle.

The PHS Mock Trial Team is currently made up of ten students ranging in grade from freshman to senior. At the beginning of the school year, all students with a 2.0 average or better are invited to try out to be on the team to serve as a lawyer or a witness, either on the prosecution side or the defense. At the tryouts, students prepare an opening statement for a

case to become a lawyer for the team while those students who want to be witnesses need to memorize an affidavit and answer questions. At each "trial," the team tries each case before a lawyer who acts as a judge. There is no jury. The lawyer/judge scores each team lawyer and witness on his or her performance.

The team participates in the Maryland State Bar Association Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition. In February, the team took part in the local circuit competitions. Our circuit includes Montgomery and Frederick counties. It is a four-week-long process in which during the first week,

PHS was the plaintiff, the second week, the defendant, the third week, the plaintiff again, and on the fourth week, defense side again. Each team in the circuit tries the case four times, twice as the plaintiff and twice as defendant. As the plaintiff, the team has three plaintiff lawyers and three plaintiff witnesses, and, according to Coach

—Continued on Page 23.

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## In the Garden

### The Turning Tide

By Maureen O'Connell

In the ancient Roman calendar, we have escaped the Ides of March, and as we approach the last days of the month, a subtle change creeps into our gardens. We wake up to different sounds outside. As more birds start to return to the garden, their lively chirping becomes more noticeable. The days are lengthening and the rays of the sun are growing warmer. Buds on the lilac trees and blueberry and raspberry bushes are starting to swell. If I get down on the ground and scrape away some mulch, I can see the emerging red tips of the peonies. In the shady beds, hosta, ferns, Jack-in-the-Pulpit and Lily-of-the-Valley are still sleeping. But next to them, the splendid, late winter flowering Lenten Rose (*Helleborous x hybrids*) is just getting ready to open its pendulous blooms in shades of cream and rich, dusty rose, with just a hint of green.

Nature is telling us that it is time to stop planning and working on our gardens from the comfort of our big, cozy chair by the fireplace. Get out your garden gloves, shovels, trowels and pruning shears. There is work to be done in the garden.

My plan of attack usually follows this order: cut back the spent stems of last year's perennials to make way for the new growth to come, rake out all debris, lift out and divide overgrown plants, prune the roses and shrubs, fertilize and finally add a topping of mulch.

In the fall, I leave the sedum plants alone; their dried flower heads

add interest to the barren winter garden. My lavender plants remain fairly green most of the winter. Do not cut them back to the ground now. Lightly prune or clip, before the new growth starts, to encourage bushiness and maintain a desired height and shape. If you haven't trimmed off the flowered stems after late summer bloom, do it now. This will give the plant a neater appearance. Perennial herbs that kept their leaves over the winter, such as rosemary, thyme and oregano, can do well with a little haircut. Trim any blackened leaves, and for stronger renewed growth, cut back about one-quarter of the plant.

Pay attention to any weed seedlings that are just starting to germinate. Early eradication will prevent them from getting a good hold in your garden. Weed killers are not as effective at this time of the year; hand weeding is the best method. As the soil gets warmer and remains moist, it is easy to pull up the young weeds. After you've weeded and cut back everything that needed it, rake out of the garden's last year's mulch and any decaying debris that might harbor diseases and weed seeds.

Pruning is an essential chore of good gardening. Without it, plants would rapidly outgrow their allotted space. It is also necessary to maintain the plant's health and encourage productive growth and a better shape. Before tackling this job, make sure that you have good, sharp, clean pruning shears. I clean my Felco #2 clippers with alcohol, and oil and sharpen the blades. Do this periodically during the

summer to keep them in top shape.

Prune Hybrid Tea roses, Floribundas, English, Grandifloras and other modern shrub types now, before there is substantial growth. There are two schools of thought about the proper time to prune. I usually pick Saint Patrick's Day as my target date, depending upon the weather. Some gardeners prefer to prune during the winter, while the plants are dormant. Trouble with this method is that you often have to prune several times, if there is additional winter kill. I always prune in mid-March; it seems to work



Ready or not, spring is on the way.

best for our area. Remove any dead, weak or old wood. I cut back the Hybrid Teas, Floribundas and Grandifloras to about 2/3 to 1/2 their length. For my David Austin roses, I selectively prune the old, diseased woody canes, but I cut back less, in order to maintain the English Rose's bushy, taller shrub-like form. Climbers should be pruned to remove only the older, thicker canes that no longer flower well. The remaining canes can be lightly pruned for shaping as needed. Old-fashioned types that don't re-bloom should only be pruned in mid-

summer after the flowers fade. You can't kill a rose by too much pruning. You will, though, reduce the number of canes and blooms it will produce that season. The one exception I have noticed in my garden are the Rugosa Roses. They are the hallmarks of indisputable hardiness. The first year I severely pruned them, I feared that their growth and flowering would be reduced the following year. To my delight, they came back even stronger and more prolific than ever.

Don't forget to examine your fruit shrubs now. Blueberries are borne on thick, vigorous shoots, produced the previous spring. After the initial pruning at planting time, they need little pruning for the first couple of years. Cut back any long, lanky shoots to maintain a good shape. From the third year of growth, aim to produce an opened centered bush. Remove any branches that are weak, damaged or close to the ground.

Raspberries have more of a rambling growth pattern, so they need more pruning to keep them inbounds. Red raspberries should be grown in hedgerows not over one foot in width. After the first fruiting season, prune out the canes which have borne fruit, leaving the new canes to produce fruit the following year. These new canes should be thinned now, cutting the weaker canes back to ground level and keeping the strongest, which should be tied on to a support structure. Raspberries are famous for sending up a multitude of suckers. Unless they are cut back to the ground, a veritable thicket will result.

If you have any Butterfly Bushes (*Buddleia davidii*), and the butterflies hope you do, now is the time to cut them back to the ground to encourage

—Continued on Page 24.

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## The Humble Chef



### To Hell or Connaught

By Maureen O'Connell

After Charles I of England was executed in 1649, Oliver Cromwell ruled England, Scotland and Ireland from 1653 to his death in 1658. In his efforts to banish the Irish, especially the Catholics, to the far, isolated and unfertile lands of Northwestern Ireland, he declared on May 1, 1654 that all Irish landowners must leave their homes and lands and relocate to areas west of the Shannon River. He said, "To Hell or Connaught." He was referring to the ancient province of Connaught. In his mind, Connaught and Hell were equal. This area on the western coast of Ireland is epitomized in the wild landscapes of Connemara, and the islands battered by the fierce Atlantic Ocean. The province stretches from the long estuary of the Shannon River in the south to the beautiful Sligo Bay in the north and eastwards as far as Shannon. Off the coast are numerous wind and wave swept islands from the Arann Islands off Galway Bay and north to the desolate island Inis Boffin.

Today if you offered someone the choice of Hell or Connaught, they wouldn't put both on equal footing, especially if your reference to Connaught was the Connaught Hotel in London's Mayfair. It is surrounded by gardens, private, well landscaped squares and antique shops, and is one of the most distinguished and discreet five star hotels in the world. Popular with film stars and international travelers, it is famous for its majestic, mahogany staircase and impeccable service. This "country manor" in the heart of London has a long and interesting history.

It was first opened as a hotel in 1803 by Alexander Grillon on Albemarle Street in Mayfair. Over the next one hundred years, it changed ownership, locations and remodelings, and eventually settled in on Carlos Place. In 1897 it was the Coburg Hotel, named after Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg. It was renamed the Connaught in 1917, after Queen Victoria's third son, Prince Arthur, the first Duke of Connaught. Rudolph Richard, a young Swiss hotelier, became the general manager in 1935. Through his

hard work, he created the ambience of highest standards, comfort and service, for which the hotel is known for today.

For more than a century, the Connaught was the bastion of Britishness, and its Michelin-starred restaurant had a long line of male chefs. In 2002, Angela Hartnett, a protégé of celebrated chef Gordon Ramsey, was appointed Chef Patron of the Connaught. She is only the sixth chef in the hotel's proud history. She combines great British cuisine with a modern European influence.

I recently had the pleasure of enjoying a Sunday lunch at Angels Hartnett's Menu, one of the hotel's two, small, intimate restaurants. The richly paneled room with crisp, white, linen tablecloths is warmed by two softly glowing fireplaces. It seats only seventy guests, so there is a feeling of being in a private dining room. The large wait staff is not haughty or "hovering," and the service is unobtrusively personable.

The eclectic menu offered starters of Jerusalem artichoke soup with artichoke confit, pappardelle with herbs and prosciutto and foie gras. Main courses included roast lamb with tomato compote and baby fennel and black olive jus, braised halibut with herb gnocchi in crab and lemon grass broth, and caramelized Moulard duck breast with spiced red cabbage. Interspersed throughout the meal were little "tidbits from the Chef," tapenade with olive oil and rosemary breadsticks, demitasse of cream of celeriac soup, and before desert and coffee, little thimbles of tiramisu.

Unlike many "chic" restaurants, there were no skyscrapers on plates or other monstrosities, no tall grass flopping out of your goat cheese salad, and no Picasso-like drizzlings on square, white plates. While beautifully presented, the food looked and tasted like food, and not a work of art.

Do not go to Angela Hartnett's restaurant unless you have at least two hours to enjoy the wonderful food and the ambience. On my last visit there with friends, it was a delightful way to spend a rainy Sunday afternoon in London.

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**"Butler School" Continued From Page 15—**

There is a contentment that permeates the air, and Loraine describes the growth of the students as a joyful transition. "They're having fun along the way, they love their work," she says. It is not enough to say the children love to come school, their return from winter break is a moment of exuberance, "the children come bursting through the doors" knowing what they want to do.

The students aren't the only happy workers; much of the staff has been at Butler for a long time, and many were parents of students before joining the staff. Sometimes, the parents become office staff while others become teachers, but to be a Montessori teacher, one must first attend Montessori training. Cheryl Rowe taught at Butler for fourteen years before becoming the Head of School. She emphasizes repeatedly, "Nothing that we do here is traditional." To become a teacher, Cheryl spent one academic year studying at the Montessori training center affiliated with Loyola College in Columbia, Maryland. During these nine months of intense study, teachers create albums of lesson plans and assignments written and illustrated by themselves. To a Montessori teacher, these albums are his or her most important professional possession.

Much of the teacher's job is more than simply presenting lessons. The teachers spend quite a bit of their time observing the students "figuring out who they are as a learner and as a person." The students have access to many modalities to explore topics, and they are involved in a lot of arts.

"The work of the hand is what sets the mind," says Cheryl. Watching the children in their work and in their interactions helps the teacher. In essence, the child will lead. This explains the theme of the anniversary celebration, "Following the child."

The classrooms are also big on freedom and responsibility to enhance the experiential aspect of learning. If the teacher or the students decide on going for a walk to expand upon a lesson or to look for subjects of nature, they do it, and the grounds of Butler School are very conducive to these nature walks. The school owns twenty-two acres, and it leases thirty-five acres as well as seven acres plus a park house from the Department of Natural Resources, all adjacent to the school grounds.

With all this freedom, did I mention there are no grades or tests at the elementary level? Don't think for a moment it means the program doesn't provide a challenge. A mother wrote to say, "Butler was the school that was willing to take a chance on [our son]... who struggled academically...The lack of grades and tests...allowed him to confidently build his skills at his own rate, so that he can now master the challenging intermediate program." She also had this to say, "The education is top-rate — the intermediates are using resources I used in high school AP classes and at Georgetown University."

In addition to the Montessori education, Butler School also provides an equestrian camp and a summer camp that are open to the community. The school is in the process of integrating an equestrian program with what is already offered.





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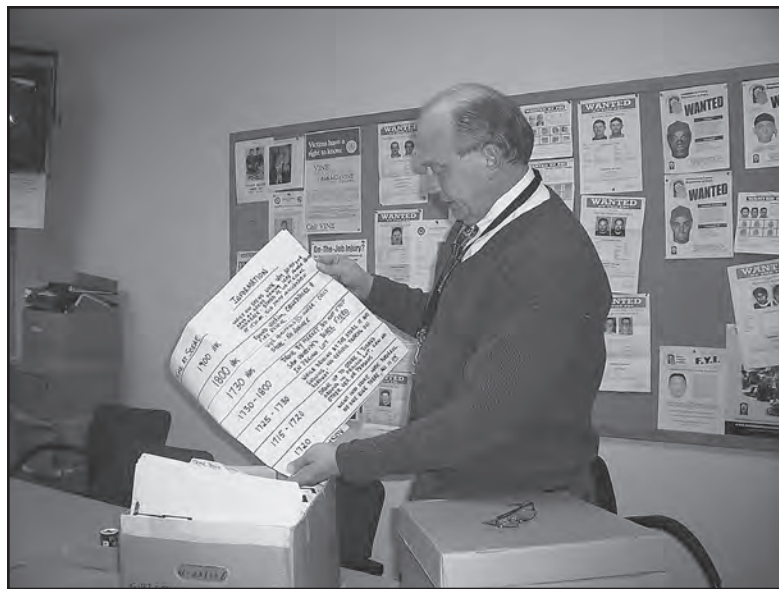





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**"Who Killed James Essel?"**  
Continued From Page 1—

thousands of violent crimes during his career, including the Bradford Bishop family murder case, and he was an important part of the sniper task force. In 1992, he and Detective Luis Hurtado were assigned to investigate the death of Essel. Initially, seven detectives worked on the case with the support of many others who ran down leads. Thomson said that an off-duty officer who lived nearby heard the call on his police radio and raced to the scene and found Essel dead. There had been a tremendous struggle, and Sgt. Thomson believes that the suspect had entered the building with the intention of robbing the store, and when Essel intervened, he was killed. Thomson said, "Basically, Mr. Essel was fighting for his life." Crime scene photos shown to a *Monocle* reporter showed that the counter had been



*Det/Sgt. Roger Thomson reviewing the case file.*

knocked out of place, merchandise was on the floor, and broken glass was evident. A detailed time line of Essel's last hours was compiled and numerous customers and passersby were

interviewed. Several persons of interest were also interviewed but eliminated as suspects. Thomson said that he was able to determine that the suspect was also injured in the struggle and left his bloodstains by the front door. DNA was obtained and is now stored in a nationwide database for comparison in the event that a suspect is found.

Thomson reminisced about the case and said, "I personally remember going door to door to see if anyone saw a car in the parking lot." What has never been reported before is that police located a witness who had seen a black Pontiac Fiero parked in front of the store at about the time that Essel was murdered. Despite an extensive search, no such car was ever located.

Thirteen years later, the unsolved case preys on Thomson's mind. No clues have recently come in, but the sergeant remains optimistic saying, "We know from working cold cases that time is in our favor. Relationships crumble, people get back at each other, and (former) loved ones keep information for a long time." Reward money is still available if it leads to the arrest of the killer. Anonymous calls can be made to Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS.

Someone out there knows who killed James Essel.

**"School News" Continued From**  
Page 3—

areas, students in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are assigned to a school on the basis of their place of residence and are expected to attend their home school. Assignment changes of students from one school to another are permitted under the following limited circumstances:

- Older sibling in the requested school.
- Continuation in a feeder pattern from middle school to high school, except when affected by boundary changes.
- A documented hardship situation.

The transfer process begins in the home school, where parents may request an assignment change form and the Change of School Assignment Information Booklet that describes the process and provides useful information. Assignment change forms and the information booklets will be available in schools beginning the first week of February and on the school system website at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org) shortly thereafter. The booklet will be available in both English and Spanish. Special Programs that do not fall under the transfer guidelines are listed in the information booklet. Every effort will be made to notify parents of the assignment decision by May 15, 2006.

For more information about the transfer process, parents are asked to contact the principal of their home school. Non-English-speaking parents may receive more information by calling the Spanish Hotline at 301-230-3073 or the ESOL Parent Center

at 301-230-0674. Language Lines also are available to leave a message for someone to return the call. They are: Spanish, 301-230-5403; Cambodian, 301-230-5427; Chinese, 301-230-5428; French, 301-230-5429; Korean, 301-230-5430; and Vietnamese, 301-230-5432.

For information about assignments for students residing in the NEC, DCC, or MSMC areas, call 301-649-8081.

*Monocacy Elementary School*  
*Building a Canal Boat*

The SGA is joining the C&O Canal Association and the Friends of Great Falls, both nonprofits, in their fundraising efforts to build a new canal boat to run on the canal at Great Falls. The last running canal boat has been out of commission for several years due to several leaks. The SGA will be selling T-shirts with a C&O Canal Association-approved design drawn by Emily Durr. The shirts will sell for just \$10.00 each and are available in adult small, medium, large, and extra large. The SGA hopes to sell all 120 shirts ordered. For more information, call the school at 301-972-7990.

*Juggling Alumni?*

Former alumni jugglers are being sought for a juggling reunion on Sunday, May 21 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Monocacy Elementary.

*Charlotte's Web Play*

On March 30, the drama club at Monocacy will present the classic *Charlotte's Web* before the school at 1:45 p.m. and again for family, friends, and the community at 7:00 p.m.

*Poolesville Elementary School*  
*Fully Funded Playground*

PTA president, Lisa Dominici, is elated that the last \$5,000 needed to fund the new playground has been donated by the county. She sincerely thanks all the donors and volunteers for their help. (For details, see article in Local News about the town meeting with the surprise ending.)

*John Poole Middle School*

Congratulations to Roxanne Pourshoushtari on having her artwork displayed in the state buildings in Annapolis.

*Poolesville High School*  
*Oklahoma!*

The Midnight Players will be presenting the musical *Oklahoma!* March 30, 31, and April 1. Show times will be 7:30 each night and one 2:00 p.m. showing on Saturday, April 1.  
*Save the Date: May 25, 2006*

PHS's own violin prodigy, Sandy Cameron, will be returning to her hometown to perform the third annual benefit concert. Proceeds will go towards the music programs of all the schools in the Poolesville cluster. Don't miss the exciting concert and amazing Silent Auction.



*Spring. School. It's all about the kids.*

## Equestrian

### Calleva's Grand Opening

By Debby Lynn

On a recent, blustery Saturday in March, Calleva Outdoors unveiled its new riding program. Locals have known and loved Calleva's summer camp riding program for years, but as of this spring, anyone interested in horses, from seasoned equestrians to those completely unexposed to horses, will find a Calleva program to suit his or her needs.

The centerpiece of the expanded Calleva Equestrian Education Program is a new barn and covered arena complex. The arena is unique in that it provides all the benefits of an indoor facility, great footing, lights, the safety of an enclosed ring, and shelter from the elements, while at the same time admitting all the pleasures of the great outdoors. During the open house, sunshine flowed through the arena in bright bands, and blue sky provided a cheerful backdrop for a hubbub of activity in the arena.

The open house featured free pony rides and a quadrille team in the arena plus guided tours of the new barn. There are fourteen stalls attached to the arena to house both school horses and boarders. The barn area is laid out beautifully, complete with hot and cold water wash stalls. Wrapping around a set of heated bleachers is a spacious and airy viewing room. This is a climate-controlled area with large windows overlooking the arena. Future plans will incorporate a library and video center, classroom, yoga mats for rider fitness programs, a snack bar, and even a kid's corner where little ones can play safely and comfortably while waiting for older siblings to ride. The Calleva vision provides a family-friendly facility, sort of an equestrian community center. There will even be arrangements for growing kids to swap outgrown riding gear for someone else's outgrown gear.

The scope of programs available should please everyone. One of their most innovative programs for those dabbling in horses for the first time is the Saturday Club. It's a pay as you go, no appointment needed, first come, first served introduction to horses and riding. Just show up and join the group. The first hour teaches

general information on horsemanship and stable management. The second hour is spent on Calleva's trusty school horses for some trail riding, mounted games, or casual riding in the ring. This program is for folks contemplating getting a backyard horse or pony or for those who want to see if they like the sport before making a commitment to a lesson program.

They also run a regular lesson program, with twenty-plus reliable school horses on hand. The emphasis in this, as in all their programs, is safety, fun, and education. All of their instructors are certified. Jill Knudson, Calleva's very capable Director of Equestrian Programs is ARICP certified at level three, the highest level



Next?

granted. Jill hails from British Columbia and spent her childhood whizzing around on ponies, foxhunting, and competing in events. There are an additional four to five certified instructors. The lesson program emphasizes horsemanship, rather than just riding. Don't expect your horse to be brought out to you all tacked up and groomed. Calleva students pride themselves on their ability to manage all aspects of horsemanship. They catch, groom, tack, and generally look after their mounts. For young people, this provides invaluable lessons in responsibility and respect for animals.

If eventing or cross country riding is your interest, you will be lucky enough to find yourself on Calleva's brand new cross country course which Jill has brilliantly designed to teach both green horses and new riders the various job skills to successfully negotiate a cross country course. Jill's concept is to teach these skills by engaging the brain, rather than just pushing horses and riders over higher and higher obstacles. The focus is on a technical solution. For instance, an uphill grid of logs is spaced just

right to help green horses discover the best and most comfortable takeoff spot. Young horses jump a little more proficiently each time they go through without the stress of coping with intimidating heights.

If the lesson program is too ambitious for you, Calleva offers a rare opportunity to simply trail ride. The public may go out on safe, guided trail rides to enjoy the splendor of Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve.

As always, birthday parties are a favorite offering at Calleva. You can opt either for the pony rides and part games package or the pony rides and rock climbing package. Either way, use of the party room is included.

Book early, as slots fill quickly.

Perhaps the most exciting new development at Calleva is the new United States Pony Club program. Pony Club is a well-established youth group with goals similar to those of scouting programs. Besides teaching riding and horsemanship skills, Pony Club strives

— Continued on Page 27.

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**"Birds of London" Continued**  
From Page 14—

(Henry's second wife), Catherine Howard (fifth wife) and Sir Thomas Moore.

In 1235, the Holy Roman Emperor gave three leopards to Henry III. There was a leopard keeper paid six pence a day for the leopard's sustenance and one pence for himself. They were put on public display and the number of animals grew: elephants from the King of France, polar bears from the King of Norway, eagles, owls, mountain cats, jackals, and bears. Fights between the animals were staged, until, in 1609, a bear killed a child. The animals remained at the Tower Green, until 1831, when they were transferred to the newly founded London Zoo. The only ones left were the ravens, descendents of early scavengers of waste from the tower's kitchens. The ravens were protected by royal decree since the reign of Charles II (1660-1685). Their wings are clipped so they can't fly away. Legends say that the Tower (and therefore the Kingdom) will fall if they do. The Tower has only been raven-less once — during World War II. They live today in coops on a southern wall. They still have time during the day to hop around on the Tower Green. They have individual names, their own graveyard and Raven Master.

### **The Pigeons of Trafalgar Square**

For years Lord Nelson's square has been ankle deep in pigeons. Vendors sold peanuts to tourists to feed the pigeons. Several years ago, for hygienic reasons, there has been a campaign to rid the square of these pesky birds. Some days, the square is a shot out of Alfred Hitchcock's scary file, "The Birds." Now, for fear of the flu, Harris Hawks have been hired to scare pigeons away from the square. The hawks make regular patrols of the square, "for the time being."

From the number of swarming pigeons I saw the other day, I think that they have to increase the number of hawk patrols. As I didn't see any swooping hawks, I presume that they "do their job" during non-tourist time. The sight of hawks dive bombing pigeons would not do much for the tourist trade. While not on patrol, they are kept in coops in Essex. May the better bird win!

## **At Your Service**

### **Laura McAtee**

By Jack Toomey

Montgomery County started its crossing guard program in 1947. Three men were hired to assist children crossing the street in front of elementary schools in Bethesda and Silver Spring. The first crossing guard ever to stand post in Montgomery County was Gus Holzner, a man who refused to reveal his age but was believed to be eighty years old and an army veteran who had served during the Boxer Rebellion. By 1950, thirty guards had been hired and eighteen were women. No child has ever been killed at an intersection or post where a school crossing guard or student patrol has been on duty. For the last three school years, in rain or wind, in biting cold or blistering hot weather, one of these dedicated crossing guards has been a fixture near Poolesville Elementary School guiding children safely across Fisher Avenue.

Laura McAtee was born in Columbus, Ohio, and her family moved to Montgomery County in 1963. She attended schools in the Wheaton area and graduated from Wheaton High School. After graduation, Laura was hired by the Montgomery County Police Department as a civilian radio dispatcher. After a year, she was transferred and became a police service aid, a person who performs a multitude of tasks inside the police station. Her husband, Frank, is a corporal with the Montgomery County Police Department and currently heads the Peer Support Team. They moved to Poolesville in 1981.

In 2003, Laura decided to return to the employment of Montgomery County and accepted a position as a crossing guard assigned to the hazardous intersection of Fisher and Wootton Avenues. McAtee told the *Monocle*, "It is a dangerous intersection, they have talked about a four-way stop and roundabouts." She has two student safety patrols assigned to her post, and it is obvious that she maintains a professional yet friendly relationship with them. Laura said, "You can be close to them, yet you can't be too close because you have to keep an eye out for what is going on." By the very nature of her assignment, McAtee must work in all kinds of weather. She has worked in torrential rain and days when the wind chill factor was below zero. Her scariest moment happened

in 2004 when a series of small tornadoes moved through town. She was on duty when she saw a small tornado moving towards the school. Laura sent the crossing guards for cover and watched the twister move across Fisher Avenue and damage some trees on the school property.

Mrs. McAtee has some pet peeves

Every day, McAtee sees the same children and has watched them grow up. On Halloween and Christmas, she gives a treat bag with candy to each child. She remarked, "I like knowing that the kids are getting across safely and being a positive influence at the same time." Laura enjoys the flexible hours, and she said that the



*Laura McAtee*

and one is the prevalence of adults who pass her post not wearing their safety belts or using child restraint seats when driving their own children. She estimates that at least fifty percent of the drivers she sees are violating the law. Her students tell her that their parents have the attitude that they don't need to worry about safety belts since most trips are just around town or to school. McAtee also has noticed that some drivers don't realize that the crossing guard is the primary traffic control person present. She added, "I can't see four different directions at once." She frequently sees traffic violations, and if the offense is serious enough, she has the power and obligation to call the on-duty police officer in the area who will issue a citation to the driver. Occasionally, a child will misbehave and McAtee will have to meet with the principal; however, this only happens two or three times a year. Principal Darlyne McEleney told *The Monocle*, "Commitment and thoroughness are two words that immediately come to mind. She has always given her all to whatever she is involved in — whether it is the school book fair, volunteering, parenting, or serving as our crossing guard. She knows our children and I know that they will get to and from school safely because she is there."

advantages are that she can "be home to help (her children) study and to be involved in their activities."

McAtee is also a volunteer in the police department's Peer Support Team that is headed by her husband. When a police officer is in a crisis situation such as a death in the family, a traumatic incident, or needs emotional support, she is on call and assists with a variety of tasks involving supporting the family in crisis.

Laura McAtee lives in Poolesville with her husband Frank, her daughter Caitlin, a senior at Poolesville High, and her son Devin who is in ninth grade. The community is fortunate to have such an experienced, dedicated, and professional lady protecting our children.

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**"Mock Trial Team" Continued  
From Page 16—**

Jessica Douglass, "the same holds true for the defense side as well."

This is Douglass's first year as the team's coach, and she is very proud of their accomplishments this year. The case they worked on for this year's circuit competition was based on a child-snatching story. Douglass explains, "The defense is asking the court to quash the subpoena of a newspaper reporter. The reporter wrote a story on a woman who snatched her child from her ex-husband. The reporter granted the mother confidentiality for her story, but the plaintiff, the father, wants the reporter to be ordered to reveal his source. Thus, the plaintiff must prove that the reporter has information that is necessary to protect constitutional interest, while the defense needs to prove that the reporter does not need to reveal his source." Unfortunately, PHS didn't win during the season overall; however, each trial was close. Douglass says, "This is my first experience with any sort of trial competition, and the kids have done quite well for having such a new coach." She said that senior Stephanie Reio was a big help this year in help-

ing with the rules and organization of the team.

Here's a little more about the Mock Trial coach. This is Jessica Douglass's second year at PHS. She is from Altoona, Pennsylvania and graduated from Penn State in 2003. At Penn State, she met her husband who is an English teacher at Blair High School. They are still newlyweds, married this past July. After working as a teacher in Altoona, Douglass came to PHS. She became the Debate Team coach, and when the Mock Trial team coach's position became available, she was happy to take over. In addition to teaching English and coaching both the Debate and Mock Trial teams, Douglass is pursuing a degree in Health and Human Development at the University of Maryland grad school. Congratulations to Jessica and the students of the PHS Mock Trial Team for a great learning season.

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**"The Turning Tide" Continued**  
From Page 17—

vigorous spring growth. They break dormancy late in the spring, so don't think that they are dead. With the onset of warm weather, they will grow rapidly.

After their long winter sleep, many plants are in need of food to support their new spring growth. There are many fertilizers on the market. For all-round feeding, I use a 5-10-5. For my roses, I use Rose Tone. I start feeding them now and continue until the end of August. Raspberries could use an application of 10-10-10 to encourage fruit production. Don't apply any more, especially late in the season. This will produce soft growth, which will be susceptible to winter injury. Use a fertilizer for acid-loving plants, such as azaleas, hydrangeas and rhododendrons.

Now that our flower beds have been raked clean, debris removed, weeds pulled and plants fed, it is time to lay down their summer duvet of mulch. This will leave your gardens looking tucked in and turned down, ready and waiting for the great burst of spring. Mulching provides vital protection for the soil, which is the foundation of the garden. During the hot days of summer, it will keep the soil cool and discourage pesky weed seedlings from germinating.

There are several kinds of mulches available at garden centers. I feel that organic mulches, such as pine bark and shredded wood chips are good for our soil and look very attractive. They improve the soil by adding nutrients as they decompose. If you have a small garden area, bagged mulch is convenient and easy to use. If your area is larger, bulk mulch is more economical. It is usually sold by the cubic yard. If you are as mathematical as I, you will be scratching your head when trying to figure out how much to buy. Here is a guide:

1. Find out the size of the garden in square feet: multiply the length by the width.
2. Decide how deep you want the mulch to be- a couple of inches is sufficient.
3. Now multiply the size of the garden in square feet by the depth of the mulch.
4. Divide the number you get by 324. This is the number of cubic yards you will need to cover your garden.

Your garden should now be ready to welcome spring.

## Police Blotter Past and Present



By Jack Toomey

### Present

Three Montgomery County Police Canine teams were recently awarded top prizes in the United States Police Canine Association competition. Officer Mary Davis and canine dog Tonka, Corporal Paul Kukucka and Koda, and Officer Tom Kelly and Kenny. All received awards.

February 27. Commercial burglary. Germantown Cycles, 12615 Wisteria Drive. Forced entry to a business, property taken.

Police are seeking the public's help in identifying this subject who stole a woman's wallet in an office building



in Rockville and then used her credit card at a nearby store. If you can identify this suspect, call the Rockville station detectives at 301-279-1602.

Montgomery County Police are asking for help in identifying a



woman who used a stolen credit card shortly after it was taken from the cafeteria at Shady Grove Adventist Hos-

pital. Police said that the credit card was stolen on March 16<sup>th</sup> and used later that day at stores on Randolph Road and Rockville Pike. Anyone with information can call detectives at 301-840-2590.

Police are also asking for help in identifying these suspects who obtained thousands of dollars by using stolen checks and credit cards at various Chevy Chase Bank locations in Montgomery County. Anyone who can identify either suspect is asked to call Bethesda detectives at 301-657-0112.



Detectives from the Montgomery County Police Retail Theft Unit arrested Claude Alexander Allen, age 45, of Gaithersburg and charged him with a continuing retail theft scheme. Police said that earlier this year, Allen was observed selecting items from a Target store in Gaithersburg and putting them into an empty bag. He then went to the customer service desk, presented a receipt, and received a refund. A police investigation revealed that Allen had been receiving refunds in an amount exceeding \$5,000 during the last year from various Target and Hecht stores. It is alleged that Allen would buy items, take them to his car, and then return to the store with the receipt and would select the same items that he had just purchased and return them for a refund. He is known to have conducted at least twenty-five of these transactions.

### Past

March 24, 1905. Lula Ingram, the daughter of Thomas Ingram, has regained consciousness after being frightened into convulsions upon finding a man in her bedroom. The intruder was frightened away by Lula's screams which alerted other neighbors in the village of Point of Rocks. It is reported that her condition is critical.

March 25, 1933. Indictments charging State Senator Emory L. Coblentz of Frederick, president of the Central Trust Company of Maryland, with three different offenses against state banking laws were returned by the Montgomery County grand jury. The indictments alleged that Coblentz violated the law in accepting deposits at the Poolesville branch of the bank when he was aware that the bank was insolvent. The Poolesville branch failed to open in September 1931, and many people lost their savings.

March 27, 1935. A four-year search for "Diamond-Tooth" Claude Countee of Frederick, who escaped from the Frederick jail while awaiting trial, ended with his arrest in Chicago. Countee was awaiting trial for robbery when he escaped from jail in 1931.

April 1, 1957. A seventeen-year-old-boy from Boyds was run over and killed while lying in the roadway about 2:45 a.m. Police said that the young man was apparently lying on Barnesville Road near Boyds when he was run over by a car operated by a Dickerson man who told police that he saw the youth too late to avoid hitting him.

April 3, 1973. A two-year-old Poolesville boy drowned when he fell into a rain-swollen stream while playing near his rural Montgomery County home.

April 4, 1896. The cemetery house at Monocacy Cemetery in Beallsville caught fire and was completely destroyed.. Sparks from the burning building set fire to several other buildings that were close by.

### "Town Budget Meeting" Continued From Page 7—

supplementary police program. The concept is purely exploratory and has significant public resistance, considering the comments heard at the meeting. The earliest possible date to implement any plan would be 2010.

The commissioners will now begin a series of executive work sessions prior to presenting a final budget for approval that needs to be completed by April 17, 2006.



## Rebuilding Together

By Ralph Hitchens

Every spring, people from various churches and community organizations come together on a Saturday to swing a hammer, saw some boards, or paint walls, and together refurbish a house belonging to a senior citizen or needy family. Over the years, a lot of area residents have donated their time to Christmas in April, and the tradition continues in 2006 with a work day scheduled for Saturday, April 29 in Poolesville. A couple of years ago,



*Poolesville commissioner Link Hoewing, an accomplished carpenter, is a regular volunteer for Rebuilding Together.*

the Christmas theme was dropped — sounds too much like a “big box store” advertising campaign — and the program is now officially known as Rebuilding Together.

This was never a local initiative, by the way. It’s a nationwide nonprofit volunteer organization working with communities to help elderly and/or disabled low-income homeowners and families with children through home renovation and repair. This covers the waterfront from routine maintenance to specialized modifications such as the installation of wheelchair ramps and grab bars for improved safety and accessibility. Where necessary, the organization provides

referrals to social service providers to address other issues the homeowner may be experiencing. All services are provided free of charge to eligible homeowners.

The local chapter, Rebuilding Together Montgomery County, has been in existence since 1989 and brought together something like forty thousand volunteers to rebuild over a thousand homes across the county. Participating organizations include any number of churches along with civic groups and corporations. In the greater Poolesville metropolitan area, the effort over the last several years has involved the Monocacy Lions Club and four churches: Memorial United Methodist, St. Peter’s Episcopal, Poolesville Presbyterian, and St. Mary’s Catholic Parish of Barnesville. This year the Hosanna Worship Center on White’s Ferry Road joins the coalition. Collectively, these organizations contribute funds to Rebuilding Together Montgomery County which identifies one or more houses in our area and, after an inspection to determine what needs to be done, provides funding vouchers at local hardware stores for the necessary supplies such as paint, lumber, hardware, etc. They also furnish a dumpster and a portable toilet for the worksite. The local coordinator (yours truly) and the “house captain” in charge of the actual work take care of everything else:

manpower, tools, coffee and donuts in the morning, and subs or pizza for lunch plus sodas, cookies, etc. Nobody will

go thirsty or hungry, and everybody earns a complementary T-shirt at the end of the day.

Who can volunteer? Any and all adults and high school kids are welcome. (They will receive community



*Rebuilding Together volunteers Bob Cline, Ken Koeser, and Joe Grubb painted a basement on last year’s workday, April 30th 2005.*

service credit for hours worked.) Some of the labor needed for the project is specialized. The homes being refurbished may need roof repair, plumbing or electrical upgrades, new tile or carpet on floors, installing an attic lad-

der, you name it. Rebuilding Together has had pretty good luck mobilizing a few skilled roofers, painters, electricians, what have you, to supervise and assist those of us who are “entry-level.”

So mark the workday on your calendar: Saturday, April 29. This year, the house captain, Dave Johnson, assisted by Chris Giarratano, will lead the work on two small homes off Jerusalem Road. Some roof repair, power washing, interior and exterior painting, minor carpentry and plumbing, installation of grab bars, and exterior cleanup are on the agenda. Rebuilding Together needs at least forty volunteers to make this all happen. Many will come from the participating churches and the Lions Club, but all are welcome. No skill or specialized tools are needed: like Woody Allen said, eighty-five percent of success is just showing up. Wear old clothes that can handle some paint drips, bring work gloves if you have some, maybe a rake or some other favorite tools (although all necessary tools, paintbrushes, etc. will be provided).

If you are interested in being part of this worthwhile community service project, contact the Poolesville coordinator, Ralph Hitchens, at 301-903-1324 (weekdays), 240-687-5246 (evenings and weekends), or preferably via e-mail, rjee@earthlink.net.

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## Youth Sports

### Falcons Winning in the Water

By Dominique Agnew

The Poolesville High School varsity swim and dive team, coached by Jon Leong and Ericka Waters, had another successful year. The girls' record was four wins and one loss, and the boys were 3-3. The most exciting part was that the girls won the division III championships for the third year in a row.

This year's team boasted seventy-eight members making it the largest winter sport at PHS. The team increased by almost twenty members over last year's team. Coach Leong expects another large team for next year as there are only seven seniors leaving: Brian Fejka, Jennifer Kierce, Samantha Klein, Greg Nielson, Samantha Roser, Elizabeth Wolfinger, and Laura Wolford.

It might be nice to have a large team, but Coach Leong describes the girls' team as a coach's dream. "The girls had talent and depth," he says, "they were fast, and a lot of them were fast." The boys' record may not seem as great as the girls', but Coach Leong points out that division III was very competitive and all the meets were very close, sometimes as close as a difference of only a few points between the winning team and the losing team. The boys showed "much improvement from last year."

Worth noting, all the relays for the boys and girls achieved qualifying times for the Metro Swim Championship meet covering the whole Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Also, junior Kirk Jackson placed fifth

in both the 200 yard freestyle and the 100 yard freestyle, and freshman Devan Maneely placed sixth in the 100 yard breast competition at Metros. Coach Leong was especially proud of the relay teams that swam the 200 free and the 4x100 free. "They may not have won, but they did their personal best. [At the end of the race], all the girls could practically not even breathe they were that tired," adds Coach Leong.

The team is large, the members can swim, the members can swim fast, and they're intelligent. The bulk of the team was made up of scholar athletes. Eighty percent had a 3.3 grade point average or better, ninety-five percent had 3.0 GPA or better, and twenty percent had a 4.0 GPA or better. There is some sadness in the world of water, however. Longtime coach Ericka Waters will be leaving Poolesville to go to the new Clarksburg High School. Coach Leong says, "She will leave a huge hole and big shoes to fill." While the team is disappointed in her leaving, the members are excited she got the position she wanted. Coach Leong adds, "We will miss Ms. Waters."

Next year, the team will compete in division III again. Coach Leong's goal is for the girls to win four out of four meets and the division title again. He also expects the boys to "pick up the slack." With the new Germantown pool (in Boyds), he hopes his swimmers will have more opportunities to swim year-round. "All in all, it was a great season," says Coach Leong. "I'm really looking forward to next year."

### The Poolesville Athletic Association Wrestling Results

On Sunday, February 26, these wrestlers placed in the top six in the DSAWL Championship. 1<sup>st</sup> place: Jake Armstrong, Tyler Giarratano (also won the award for the most pins in the least amount of time.)

2<sup>nd</sup> place: Dmitri Agnew, Justin Hansen, Joey Jones, Michael McDonald.

3<sup>rd</sup> place: Sam Bellet, Colin Fisher, Jordan Marceron, Brittany Trent.

4<sup>th</sup> place: Max Fogel, AJ Gross, Jesse Krasner, Anthony Mediate, Luke Terrell, Brian Truppo.

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> place: Ryan Brooks, Austin Bupp, Tommy Coombs, Nick Fisher, Mickey Gross, Jake Johnson, CJ Lee, Trevor Magaha, Ryan Olsen, Colby Shriver, and Thomas Young.

Those who placed 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> qualified to compete in the Mid-Maryland Regional Wrestling Championship on Sunday, March 5.

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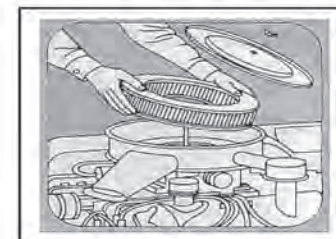
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### Changes at CMAA

By Curtis A. Osborne

Several exciting changes are taking place with the Carroll Manor Athletic Association, and they are moving the organization in new directions. The CMAA is no longer a small community organization but a mid-sized one with over 450 participants in all sports. In the spring, tentatively in April, there will be a general election for the board, and there are a few vacant slots available, though the majority of board members are running for their positions again.

Dennis Bendorf, the CMAA President for the past four years, is

stepping down this spring. During his watch, with the help of many dedicated volunteers, the association initiated a girls' softball program, a boys' and girls' basketball clinic, and a soccer clinic. His relentless dedication to the association and the kids will be missed, but he will still be involved with CMAA. He is contemplating running for the vacant Basketball Commissioner position, a sport for which he has a lot of passion. He is also an accomplished soccer and basketball coach. Dennis has put in a lot of blood, sweat, and tears, and his efforts are definitely appreciated by the organization.

Perry Perret is Dennis's likely successor. Perry is a dedicated board

member, a well-liked and respected soccer and basketball coach, as well as community activist. His positive and knowledgeable approach makes kids and parents alike loyal to him. He understands the mission of recreational youth athletics in a time when things are becoming increasingly competitive. Perry is dedicated to whatever is best for the kids. "I am not bringing an agenda to the table," says Perry. "I really want more input from the parents in our organization, and in order to see our organization grow, the spirit of volunteerism must grow proportionally."

Some of the changes at CMAA are structural. Last summer, the decision

was made to separate boys' baseball and girls' softball. Up until then, both sports fell under the Baseball Commissioner. In order for softball to get the same amount of care and attention as baseball, something the organization believed in, the two were separated. This was done to make sure that girls' sports in the organization were not an afterthought. Girls' softball is now under Softball Commissioner Lewis Hill who has done a tremendous job so far. Under his guidance, the program has grown tremendously, and this summer, he will have about seventy-three players. Lewis has put forth a lot of effort in promoting the

—Continued on Page 27.

**"CMAA" Continued From Page 26—**

sport, increasing the number of participants, and getting quality coaches. He has fought passionately, vigorously, and sometimes loudly for the girls' program, and in doing so, has been able to obtain additional field space for the girls.

Dave Willis has taken over the Baseball Commissioner position and has presided over growth in the program. The program had been stagnant for a while and had been losing participants, but with his vision, he was able to reignite some interest in the program, and they now have about 108 players on board for this spring which is better than it has been in a few years.

In the very near future, CMAA plans to offer a golf program, directed by Mickey Zimmer, a long-time advocate for children's sports and recreation. Mickey brings to the table a wealth of experience, knowledge, and contacts — not to mention passion and a "can do" attitude. So, of course,

the program will be top notch. He has already planned fundraisers and other revenue-generating ideas to fund the program.

Perhaps the most exciting change that will affect CMAA is the decision by EastAlco to donate twenty-seven acres of land. Field space is an issue for almost all athletic associations in the area, including CMAA, and this donation will help them continue to have quality recreational opportunities for the kids. Through the efforts of the Carroll Manor Volunteer Coalition, which is made up of local Adamstown civic organizations headed by Eddie Arnold, the now-closed plant was persuaded to donate all of those acres for a community park for the citizens of Adamstown. Some of these acres will benefit CMAA, the rest the community at large. Soccer, baseball, football, softball, and multipurpose fields are planned at the sight for CMAA, as well as open park areas and a swimming pool and tennis courts for the neighborhood residents. It is a true partnership.

**"Calleva" Continued From Page 21—**

to "promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship, and loyalty, and to create strength of character and self discipline" (quoted from the Pony Club charter.) In the past, only children who owned or leased their own horse or pony could participate. The United States Pony Club is implementing a new program where young people who don't own their own pony can be members through area Pony Club Centers. Calleva is in the process of being confirmed as one of these centers which will open up Pony Club participation to many youngsters who would love to belong but don't own a horse.

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