

The Monocacy MONOCLE

Keeping An Eye On Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

November 2, 2007

Volume IV, Number 14.



Early morning at the Monocacy Wild Animal Preserve? Not quite. See The Garden on Page 5.



A homecoming princess, but a Falcon through and through. See more PHS Homecoming pictures in Family Album on Page 2.



Alivia Tetlow climbs the Chesapeake Challenge. See School News on Page 11.



Kristyn Kirschbaum, Devin Hamberger, and Erin Knuth of the Poolesville High School Cross Country team. Read all about them in Youth Sports on Page 14.

Deadly Strain of Staph Hits Close to Home

By Kristen Milton

With potentially deadly staph infections on the news and in area schools, parents and administrators are taking steps to protect students from the all-too-common bacteria.

"This is no longer about my son John and how's he doing, is he going to be well," said Marci Callentonio of Poolesville, whose fourteen-year-old spent a week in the hospital fighting the drug-resistant bacterial strain that killed a fellow high school football player in Virginia. "It's about advocating... Our most effective tool is to be educated."

Callentonio believes her twenty-five years as a medical transcriptionist gave her the background she needed to request tests that identified the Poolesville High School freshman's methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). "I saved my son's life," Callentonio said, "and the mother in Bedford [County, Va.] didn't know... didn't have a chance to save her son."

According to an October 17 letter from Superintendent Jerry West, thirteen Montgomery County students have been diagnosed with the antibiotic-resistant staph infection. Others have been diagnosed with staph infections that respond more easily to treatment. The MRSA cases were found in five high schools and two elementary

schools.

"The only thing that's consistent is that these are mostly student athletes," said Kate Harrison, a spokeswoman for Montgomery County Public Schools. The first reported MRSA case appeared at Sherwood High School in late August, she said. Callentonio is the only case of MRSA at Poolesville High School thus far, Principal Deena Levine said, and no other staph infections had been confirmed. Clarksburg High had four cases of staph infections among its student athletes as of October 24; however, none appear to be MRSA, Principal James Koutsos noted.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, most MRSA infections are skin infections that resemble pimples or boils and are found near the site of scrapes or other skin traumas; however, bloodstream or bone infections are also possible.

Callentonio said John, who was working out in the weight room and playing football over the summer, had scraped knees and elbows from a recent scrimmage when he woke August 29 feeling unwell but showing no evidence of skin infection. Initially sent away with the diagnosis of a virus, Callentonio said John's high fever, listlessness, and other symptoms led her to insist on a blood test which found the infec-

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services says you can help prevent the spread of MRSA through these good hygiene practices:

1. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.
2. Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
3. Avoid contact with other people's wounds and bandages.
4. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, razors, and personal sports equipment.
5. Wipe surfaces of exercise equipment with disinfectants before and after use.
6. Shower after physical activity.
7. In the event of an active wound, consult with your trainer and/or physician.

tion. John Callentonio spent a week in Children's Hospital and a month later is still taking medications three times

-Continued on page 22.

Renaissance Man

By Dominique Agnew

Enter the offices of Phoenix Systems in Poolesville, Maryland, and it won't take long for your eye to rest on the numerous artifacts: a collection of antique audio-visual gear from the turn of the twentieth century. Brian Gross, founder and owner of Phoenix Systems, has quite a collection of pieces: microphones dating back to 1908, electrical measuring devices from the 1910s to the 1930s, and a collection of Edison wax cylinders which he can play on a refurbished—by himself—wax Dictaphone made by

Edison. Edison, unfortunately, in the creation of the Dictaphone and the phonograph, never realized the potential these inventions would have for recording music; whereas, through his experiences in the world of music, Brian has made a name for himself in the world of audio-visual technology. What a visitor to Phoenix Systems's offices doesn't see is Brian's collection of roughly



Brian Gross in a recent performance.

-Continued on page 16.

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David Thierrault of Alden Farms greets Lisa Guertin and Leigh Haggmann on the Countryside Artisan Tour.



The Twelfth Annual Barnesville Basement Indoor Yard Sale at the Barnesville School (in Barnesville) was, for the twelfth time, a huge success.



Bishop John Bryson Chane of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington blesses the new nursery at St. Peter's Parish during the October 21 dedication of the church's new building.



Anna Helwig, Sasha Trope, Abbe Guertin: Freshman Princesses of the Poolesville High School homecoming court.

The Monocacy
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Keeping An Eye On Local News

A MONOCACY MOMENT

Endless Summer weather

What a Day for a Sunday Drive!



Photograph by Hilary Schwab Photography



Kaitlyn Scott, Dakota Bierly, Kelly Rosenberg were homecoming princesses.



Queen Lisa Trope and King Wences Shaw-Cortez

Local History

The Rock Creek Park Murders

By Jack Toomey

No one who reads this story needs a refresher course on the sniper killings that terrorized the Washington area in 2002—but who knows that in 1938, a similar series of killings caused people in the lower part of Montgomery County to be terrorized for months?

In 1938, lower Montgomery County was still rather rural in some areas. Jones Mill Road, Grubb Road, and portions of Beach Drive were dirt roads. It was not unusual for motorists to become stuck in the mud on roads that today carry thousands of cars every day.

On the evening of November 9, 1938, thirty-three-year-old John Clements was parked in a car with a female companion at Brookeville Road and Curtis Street in Chevy Chase. Suddenly a man appeared and fired eight shots into the car critically injuring Clements. The woman was also injured. On November 10, Edward Roper and a woman were parked in

a car at Rockwood Parkway and 51st Street, Northwest Washington, which is very close to the border with Montgomery County. A man approached the car and fired several shots into the car killing Roper and seriously injuring the woman. Tests concluded that the assailant used a .32 caliber pistol in both attacks.

On the night November 17, 1938, Peter Murray, age 66, was driving with a woman on East West Highway near Grubb Road. When he stopped for a stop sign, a man came out of the bushes and got into the car and forced Murray to drive to a secluded part of Jones Mill Road where he robbed Murray and then fired eleven shots killing Murray and leaving the woman lying wounded in the road. Amazingly, it took an hour for another car to drive by, and the occupants drove her to Georgetown University Hospital.

The next day, Montgomery County Police Chief William Garrett and the Washington chief announced that officers would “forget about the line” and cross boundary lines at will in an effort to find the man who had shot four people, killing two, in a very small area. They said in a statement released to the press that the “sniper would be caught dead



Rock Creek Park, circa 1938

or alive.” Seventy-five officers from both departments were assigned to the case. Police officers were assigned to patrol the secluded areas of Rock Creek Park and nearby neighborhoods and warn people who were parked to move on. Hysteria seemed to take over. That evening, a man living on Florida Street in Chevy Chase got out a handgun and instructed his wife on how to use it. He put the gun on a shelf, and shortly afterwards, his twelve-year-old son accidentally shot his sister. The report of shots being fired on Tuscarawas Road on the west side of Bethesda brought every patrol

car working in Bethesda.

Despite the increased police patrols, another incident happened. Two seventeen-year-old girls were driving back from a movie in Washington when a man jumped onto their running board just over the Maryland line. The driver pressed down on the accelerator throwing the man off the car. In all of the cases, the victims described the suspect as a shabbily-dressed, light-skinned black man.

On December 4, 1938, a car containing two women broke down on

-Continued on Page 23.



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Commentary

The Nuts and Bolts of the Ag Reserve

By John Clayton

Elsewhere in the *Monocle* today, Maureen O'Connell covers the 2007 Royce Hanson Award ceremonies. This award is presented by the Montgomery Countryside Alliance, and the event was hosted by Gene Kingsbury on the Kingsbury family farm, which is a stellar example of what can be accomplished when agricultural land is protected by the regulations of the Agricultural Reserve.

Two of the issues mentioned in Maureen's article will have a profound effect on the future of open space in the Ag Reserve. The first and perhaps lesser issue is "tot lots." (The tot lot issue was covered in our October 5 issue: "Tot Lots—Or Not" by Kristen Milton.) The tot lot rule allows property owners to establish small lots on their farms for their children, thereby helping to continue family farming in the county. Unfortunately, many believe this has been abused as a way for farmland to be developed for sale to others. The Maryland-Capital Area Park and Planning Commission (headed by the aforementioned Royce Hanson) is working with this issue, and a recommendation is on the table from the Ad Hoc Agricultural Policy Working Group that would allow the provision to operate in accordance with its original intent while hopefully curtailing any abuse. Slow fragmentation by small developments remains a significant threat to the Ag Reserve.

The other issue, sand mound septic systems, potentially poses a larger development threat to the Ag Reserve. Normal septic systems depend on the ability of ground to absorb waste water, or percolate. Montgomery County soil often does not percolate, and this has inhibited development in the Ag Reserve where people are dependent on septic systems. However, in a sand mound system, a percolating structure (a mound of sand) is built and the capabilities of the soil are no longer an issue, and also no longer a de facto restraint on development. Using sand mounds, much of the Up County could be divided into twenty-five acre parcels while remaining within the guidelines of the Ag Reserve.

I have spoken to people who

would be quite happy if there was no further development at all, and I have spoken to people who believe that, armed with sand mound technology, they should be free to develop as many twenty-five acre lots (or maybe even five acre tot lots) as they can sell. The truth, as usual, resides somewhere in the middle of all the extremes. I fall more into the preservationist camp myself, and I am eager to see the things I valued in moving out here preserved, but I am realistic about the pressures that will mount if the lack of developable land in the county really begins to affect economic growth.

I would encourage anyone in our reading area to learn more about these issues. There is a wealth of information on the internet, from the Montgomery County website, where the final report of the Ad Hoc Agricultural Policy Working Group can be found, and from advocacy group websites such as the Montgomery Countryside Alliance and The Sugarloaf Citizens Association. If you can find one site, it will lead you to others. You could be the first person on your block to be conversant with the Building Lot Termination Program.

(I realize these are all preservation-oriented groups, but if I've neglected any pave-it-all sites, please let me know and I'll mention them in a later issue.)

Get educated and learn what you want to know from your County Council candidates the next time an election rolls around. Many committed people are working hard to hammer out these issues in an equitable manner. They're doing the heavy lifting; the rest of us should at least try and keep up a little.

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P.O. Box 175
Poolesville MD 20837

editor@MonocacyMonocle.com

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Published and Edited by
John Clayton and Rande Davis

John Clayton
Production
Financial
301-349-0071

jclayton@monocacymonocle.com

Rande Davis
Advertising
Circulation
301-349-0070

rdavis@monocacymonocle.com

Dominique Agnew
Copyediting
dagnew@intairnet.com

Departments
editor@monocacymonocle.com
advertising@monocacymonocle.com

Monocacy Press, LLC
John Clayton, President
Rande Davis, Vice President
P.O. Box 175
Poolesville, MD 20837
301 349-0071 • FAX 301 349-5646

Contributing Writers
Dominique Agnew
dagnew@intairnet.com
Debby Lynn

debbylynn@comcast.net
Maureen O'Connell
mafoconnell@msn.com

Curtis Osborne
cptoz@aol.com

Jack Toomey
jackt21262@aol.com

Contributing Photographer
Hilary Schwab

hiliary@hschwabphotography.com
Graphics

WhipSmart Graphics
Karie@WhipSmartGraphics.com

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Garden

A Small Glimpse of the Flora and Fauna of Kenya

By Maureen O'Connell

I recently visited the southern part of Kenya, Africa. After arriving late in the night in the capital city, Nairobi, I started my safari—which, in Swahili, means journey—at 6:30 the next morning. My daughter and I flew in a twelve-seat, twin engine plane to Elsa's Kopje in the Meru National Park. It is a seven-hour trip by car or a forty-five-minute plane ride. We landed on a small, red dirt runway in the middle of a vast savanna. Our camp for the next four days was the site of the home of Elsa, the lion that Joy and George Adamson reared, and eventually returned to the wild. This story was made famous in the book and movie *Born Free*. Kopje means "small hill" in Swahili. The camp consists of nine stone and thatched cottages built into the natural rock outcroppings of the hill. The owners of this lodge are very conscious of their responsibility for being good stewards of the surrounding ecosystem. All the buildings of this small compound blend in with the countryside and its residents, both flora and fauna. The safari trips are designed to preserve and foster both the wildlife and the local culture in



The acacia tree it is usually associated with Kenya.

the area.

We rose every morning at 6:00 for tea or coffee, and by 6:30, we were in our open-roofed, four-wheel-drive Land Rover, hoping to catch a sighting of the many animals coming out to feed on the grasses, leaves, and branches of the many indigenous trees and shrubs, and to drink—hopefully without crocodiles—at the numerous small streams that crisscrossed the vast plains. We also saw the carni-

vores—the lions, the cheetahs, the leopards, the hyenas, the jackals, the crocodiles, and the vultures—who were finishing off last night's kill, or waiting to stalk a new kill. Everyone on a safari hopes to see Africa's Big Five: the elephant, rhinoceros, lion, leopard, and buffalo. The idea of a "Big Five" dates from the days when white hunters led safaris whose principle objective was to shoot wild beasts for trophies. Some creatures were considered more desirable targets than others, reflecting the skill it took to track them, the risk involved in confronting them, and the quality of the trophy retrieved from a successful kill. Over time, the five above-mentioned mammals qualified on all counts. Today, hunting is outlawed in Kenya and strictly controlled in other parts of Africa, but the Big Five still have their cachet. Today, thankfully, the idea of a safari is shooting with a camera and not a rifle. All of the spectacular animals that I had the privilege to observe in their natural habitat have natural predators—except for the lion, the "king of beasts"—but man remains their biggest enemy. Poaching is still a problem in many areas of Africa. Conservation and preservation programs are increasing steadily, and there are many national parks and reserves in Kenya. The age old problems of greed and finding a balance between the needs of man's growing population and the indigenous animals make the animals' future in the wild precarious at best.

Our lodge, Elsa's Kopje, is located in the Meru National Park, which has a very old and tragic history. In the early- and mid-1900s, the Meru was a popular spot for hunters, and animal life was plentiful. What the hunters on organized shooting safaris didn't kill, eventually the poachers did. By 1959, most game had virtually vanished. The generation who followed this time owes its thanks to the Wameru tribe, who seized the initiative from the Colonial Government and designated the area for conservation and rehabilitation. The black rhinoceros became almost extinct. Through the efforts of several conservation groups,

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-Continued on Page 18.

Local News

A Dual Awards Event at Kingsbury's Orchard

By Maureen O'Connell

Saturday, October 20 was a brilliant, crisp fall day—a perfect day to celebrate the glories of the countryside in Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve. Kingsbury's Orchard on Peachtree Road in Dickerson and the Montgomery Countryside Alliance hosted the celebration of the 2007 Royce Hanson Award and the hundredth anniversary of the Kingsbury Family Farm. Over 120 people turned out for the event. While listening to country music, they enjoyed barbecue and all the fixings supplied by the Kingsburys, and desserts donated by Whole Foods. They enjoyed picking their own Fuji apples and sampling freshly-made apple butter.

Melane Kinney Hoffmann, a member of the Board of the Montgomery Countryside Alliance (MCA), opened the presentation by thanking the Kingsburys for their hospitality. She pointed out the appropriateness of the glorious weather to showcase what we hold so dearly in the Agricultural Reserve. When the naysayers

back in 1980 said the Upper County and its family farms and horse farms would be eventually paved over, there were enough persuasive and determined people who had the vision of another future for the region. Melane thanked the people in the audience for their continuing hard work to keep



Royce Hanson and George Kephart are in the center, holding the map. To Mr. Hanson's right, Mike Rubin (in sunglasses) and Councilman Nancy Floreen to his right. To Mr. Kephart's left, Gene Kingsbury and Julie Kingsbury (in the hat).

the Agricultural Reserve a reality. She introduced Gene Kingsbury of Kingsbury's Orchard, the 2006 recipient of the Royce Hanson Award. Gene remarked that he was proud to be part of the family farm, which was started in 1907, and was confident that his ancestors would be equally proud

of the responsible stewardship that enabled these treasured farms and the protected countryside to exist today. Gene introduced Royce Hanson, the Chairman of the Montgomery County Planning Board and Vice Chairman of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

The Upper County owes a great debt of thanks to Mr. Hanson, for there would be no Agricultural Reserve without him. In 1980, he was the guiding light and visionary who put the wheels in motion to create the county's 93,000-acre Agricultural Reserve. Twenty-seven years later, this reserve is widely recognized as the nation's most successful effort at land conservation on the urban fringe. He commented that we are now in an important time in the Reserve's history. Our work is not over. There are issues of sand-mound septic systems, kid lots, and other concerns that demand our vigilant attention. He encouraged all to be aware of problems that impact our area and to invite council members out to our country so they can see firsthand what we so vigorously are trying to protect.

Mr. Hanson was honored to announce the 2007 recipients of the Royce Hanson Award—Minnie Pohlmann and George Kephart. Minny is an environmental advocate who provided the nudge and the hard work to make the Agricultural Reserve a reality. Mr. Kephart was a colleague of Royce Hanson on the Board. He is remembered for his crucial role in the Reserve by casting the "third vote" which created the Reserve. Both Minny and George continue to work to protect this valuable land that we call the Upper County. Mike Rubin, President of the Montgomery Countryside Alliance, thanked everyone for attending and encouraged all to continue to fight for what we so treasure—our land. When it is gone, there is no going back.

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M&T Bank put out a national customer satisfaction survey gauging the level of customer satisfaction. To foster a strong response, they offered a drawing for \$1,000.00 from those submitting survey responses. The incentive proved to be effective since the bank received back more than thirteen thousand questionnaires. Thomas Austin St. Clair, who banks at

the Poolesville branch, submitted his survey with little expectation of winning. Needless to say, he was thrilled and shocked to find that he was the winner. St. Clair told the bank employees, "I have been wanting to buy a new computer, so this will go a long way toward getting one."

Dennis Conni, Poolesville Branch manager, found the survey to be very helpful in their efforts to focus on customer satisfaction and was especially pleased to have the grand prize winner be one of their customers. With a smile on his face, Mr. Conni voiced the opinion that this "proves it pays to bank at M&T."



Bank customer Thomas Austin St. Clair won \$1,000 in a drawing at M&T Bank. Pictured with him are Amy Zapp (M&T Marketing), George Martin (M&T Regional Manager), Dennis Conni (Poolesville Branch Manager), and Caryn Kuster (M&T Operations).

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School News

New Head of School At Seneca Academy

The administration, staff, and parents of Seneca Academy/The Circle School recently held an official reception to welcome the school's new head of school, Dr. E. Brooke Carroll. Dr. Carroll joins Seneca Academy after a seven-year association at the Sandy Spring Friends School as director of residential life. The Sandy Spring Friends School is a co-educational college preparatory school (pre-K to 12) that offers five- or seven-day boarding facilities.

Dr. Carroll earned her degree from the University of Minnesota in educational psychology. She is also an undergraduate from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine where she studied psychology. She has taken the reins from school founder and current president of the Board of Directors, Jodi Thurmond. Dr. Carroll told the Monocle that her task is to "keep the ship moving in the same direction by emphasizing the school's experiential educational philosophy." This approach emphasizes a hands-on personal experience in education as a primary

educational tool. A good example of this approach is in the school's role as a wildlife habitat recognized through the National Wildlife Foundation where students study nature and the environment through outdoor activities on their six-and-a-half-acre site.

Seneca Academy has classes from kindergarten through eighth grade with around one hundred students and has a teacher-to-student ratio of one to twelve, "one of the key attractions by parents to the school." The Circle School is for pre-kindergarten students. "We are also strong promoters of social education practices which emphasize problem solving, tolerance, and friendship skills, and anti-bullying programs."

As part of her short-term goals, she hopes to augment the school's band and chorus programs. The Carroll family resides in Gaithersburg, and Dr. Carroll's two children, Molly and Andrew, attend the school. Seneca Academy will be holding an open house on November 4 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Robots Take Over Barnesville School

On October 15, Jack Burrus brought the highly-acclaimed World of Robots school assembly to the Barnes-

ville School. This entertaining and educational program featured a talking, moving advanced-computer-programmable robot with an arm, wrist, and hand that grabbed the attention of the student audience.

The World of Robots was designed to help students better understand how robots are used today and what role they will play in our future. Through captivating images and interactive demonstrations, Mr. Burrus reinforced the importance of science, math, and reading in our everyday lives.

Burrus is a professional educational speaker with a true gift for translating technical concepts into understandable ideas. With his advanced robots, he has traveled to thousands of schools throughout fifteen states, engaging students of all ages. The World of Robots is developed and presented by Burrus Research Associates, Inc., a national leader in science and technology education serving schools, businesses, and international corporations for over two decades.

St. Thomas More Academy to Hold Its Sixth Annual Holiday Celebration Fundraiser

Buckeystown's St. Thomas More Academy is holding its annual holiday fundraiser with the theme, "The

Journey Continues," on Saturday, November 17 from 5:30 p.m. until midnight at the Lynfield Event Complex in Frederick, Maryland. This fundraising event includes silent and live auctions, games, multi-draw raffle, dancing, and catering by Dutch's Daughter. Silent auction bidding begins at 5:30 p.m. with the live auction following at 9:30 p.m.

The event benefits St. Thomas More Academy's building fund for the expansion of the unfinished side of the school as well as contributes to the overall budget to enable the school to offer affordable tuition rates to families. Once again, a special "Auction Angel Project" will be included in the live auction event to raise funds to provide additional playground equipment for the students. Last year's Auction Angel Project was the school kitchen which is in the process of being completed this fall.

This event is rapidly becoming known as one of the largest and most entertaining auction events in Frederick. Anyone interested in joining for a fabulous evening of food and fun should contact the school at 301-874-9014 or via email to fundraising@stmamd.org. Tickets are \$80 each or \$75 each when you book a table of eight or more.

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Local News

Local Historian Publishes New Book

By Rande Davis

Robert J. Kapsch, through West Virginia University, has published his latest history book: *The Potomac Canal: George Washington and the Waterway West*. This is the history of the new nation's first effort to link the rich western agricultural lands with the coastal port cities of the east.

Doctor Kapsch holds doctorates in American studies, engineering, and architecture, as well as master's degrees in historic preservation and management. He is the author of several books on historic architecture and engineering, including *Canals* (W.W. Norton, 2004), an illustrated history of the American canals.

His latest offering tells the story of the Potomac Canal Company which was founded in 1785 and was active until it was taken over by the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company in 1828. During its operation, the canal system was used to ship flour from mills in the foothills of Appalachia to the tidewater of the Chesapeake, from

where the flour was transshipped to the Caribbean as trade for sugar and other goods. This trade soon became the basis of agricultural wealth in West Virginia's eastern panhandle and throughout the Appalachian Piedmont. Coal was also shipped via the canal system from the upper reaches of the Potomac River to workshops at Harper's Ferry and beyond. This industrial trade route laid the foundation for what would eventually become the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. *The Potomac Canal: George Washington and the Waterway West* presents a chronological narrative that covers the early proposals (1755 to 1775), George Washington and the canal system's early development (1785 to 1790), Little Falls and Great Falls (1790 to 1802), the Shenandoah and other lateral canals (1802 to 1812), operation (1802 to 1828), and demise of the canal (1819 to 1828). He also presents information on interesting individuals such as Captain George Pointer (a slave who bought his freedom and became a company engineer), and the workmen from various countries. Despite the Potomac Canal's instrumental role in the development of our nation, no book has detailed its history or fully illustrated its routes.

The Potomac Canal brings to light the rich history of this important transportation system and its impact on the region and the country. Kapsch discusses not only the canal's economic impacts but also its significance in the lives of the men and women who contributed to the canal's construction and operation. The book is locally available through the Historic Medley District, Inc. at the John Poole House and general store in Poolesville.

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A Night at the Opera (1935)/A Day at the Races (1937)

Groucho, Chico, and Harpo steal the screen in these two Marx Brothers' classics on November 2 at 8:00 p.m. at the Weinberg Center for the Arts. Tickets are \$6.00 for adults and \$4.00 for seniors, students, and children. For more information, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-600-2828.

Let the Holidays Begin

The annual Christmas Bazaar at Poolesville's United Memorial Methodist Church is a special event that marks the beginning of the holiday season in the area. There will be specialty and craft vendors on hand to display and sell their work and items, a silent auction, holiday gifts, and a luncheon put on by the Crafty Ladies and Gents. Come early and stay for lunch. The time will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on November 3.

Rainbow Fish

Marcus Pfister's beloved bestseller comes to life on stage at the Weinberg Center for the Arts in this delightful musical. The one-of-a-kind Rainbow Fish doesn't want to share her shimmering scales but comes to realize the true meaning of friendship and the joy that comes with sharing. November 3 at 11:00 a.m., ticket prices range from \$5.00 to \$10.00. For more information, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-600-2828.

Meet Tinker Bell for a Great Cause

The renowned voice-over actor, Margaret Kerry, who is most famous for her role as Tinker Bell in Disney's Peter Pan, is in the metropolitan area helping to raise money for the American Cancer Society. As a houseguest of Poolesville's Mark Kuhn, she has agreed to make an appearance at Jo's Frame Shop on Fisher Avenue on November 3 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. where she will autograph pictures for \$20.00. Bring the kids and help fight cancer while meeting this very special lady and movie star.

Brunch with the Ponies

Note: this event will not be at Whole Foods as reported in the October 19 issue. The Monocle apologizes for the error.

Brunch with the Ponies will be at 17401 Conoy Road in Barnesville (just off Barnesville Road) from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. There will be pony activities, air brush tattoos, and a magician. The food will be donated by Whole Foods and Panera. The event is open to everyone, and admission is free. Personal Ponies is a 501c3 non profit organization that provides small UK Shetland ponies to children that are differently able. The organization is dedicated to the belief that the life of a child with disabilities is immeasurably enriched by having a tiny pony to love and care for. The interaction and bonding that occurs between a tiny pony and a child with disabilities is nothing less than magic.

Julius Caesar

A must-see production! Political intrigue, ambition, betrayal, envy, honor—it's all here in the first of Shakespeare's Roman plays, brilliantly adapted by Aquila, the country's foremost producer of touring classical theatre. The talented troupe of British and American actors brings Shakespeare's epic tale to life with fresh insights for today's audiences. On stage at the Weinberg Center for the Arts on November 4 at 2:00 p.m., ticket prices range from \$15.00 to \$22.00. For more information, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-600-2828.

Prepare for the Flu Season

St. Peter's Parish is conducting its annual Flu Shot Clinic on Monday, November 5, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The clinic will be conducted in the new parish hall of the recently-completed building. Flu shots are \$25.00 and pneumonia shots are \$30.00, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Medicare Part B cardholders will receive their shots for free. Receipts will be provided for health insurance reimbursement. For more information please call 301-349-2073.

Kephart and Brown to be Honored by HMD

The Historic Medley District, Inc. will present its highest honor, the Founder's Award, to Mary Ann Kephart and Winsome Brown, two original founding members of the preservation organization. The ceremony will take place at their annual meeting on November 11 at 4:00 p.m. at their Poolesville Museum at the old Town Hall. Whole Foods in Kentland's has graciously agreed to provide appetizers for the occasion. The general public is invited to the presentation and

encouraged to come and learn more about HMD, their accomplishments, and their plans. Interested people may also visit their website at www.historicmedley.org.

Are You Hungry Yet?

We hope so since there are two upcoming dinners you won't want to miss. The first is in Adamstown at the Trinity E & R Church on November 10. They are holding their Beef and Ham Dinner that will have a variety of side dishes, drinks, and desserts. The cost is \$13.00 for adults and \$6.50 for children aged six to ten. Those under six years of age eat free. They will be serving from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Then on November 17 the Knights of Columbus will have their German Dinner at St. Mary's Pavilion in Barnesville, and it will be "wunderbar!" They will serve bratwurst and knockwurst along with German (of course) potato salad, sauerkraut, salad, and dessert. For the little ones, they will have hot dogs and beans on hand. The cost for adults will be \$8.00; for children six to twelve \$4.00; for seniors (who admit they are) \$5.00; and for all families the price is capped at \$25.00 – so bring Aunt Bessie, Uncle Ralph, and all thirteen grandkids. Just kidding, folks.

Elena Baksht in Concert

Spend an enchanting Sunday afternoon with this gifted young pianist from Russia at the Weinberg Center for the Arts on November 11 at 2:00 p.m. At the age of eleven, Elena Baksht performed her first solo with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra and has continued to captivate audiences at concert halls around the world. A master's graduate from the Julliard School of Music, Baksht won both the Artists International Competition and the Hélène and Jerome Dreskin Foundation Career Grant in 1998. She currently teaches piano at the Michigan State University School of Music. Ticket prices range from \$10.00 to \$25.00. For more information, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-600-2828.

Winterglow 2007

The Art League of Germantown presents its Annual Winter Fine Arts and Crafts Show at the BlackRock Center for the Arts, 12901 Town Commons Drive, Germantown, Maryland. Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, November 16 and 17; and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 18, there will be an artist's reception from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 18 with live music by violin duo, Violinsanity. Admission is free.

Maryland Symphony Orchestra

Experience Western Maryland's only professional orchestra on Friday, November 16 at 8:00 p.m. Under the direction of Elizabeth Schulze, the orchestra welcomes acclaimed violinist Timothy Fain, named last year as one of Symphony Magazine's "Up-and-Coming Young Musicians." The concert program includes Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto No. 1* and selections from Handel's *Water Music* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 8*. Ticket prices are \$25.00 for adults and \$10.00 for students; special group rates are available. For more information, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-600-2828.

Holiday Deals You Won't Believe

Plus, a place where can you find that vintage ornament or a brand new one. Do you collect Santas, snowmen, or nativities? Just come to St. Peter's, Poolesville for their Christmas Attic Sale on Saturday, November 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All year around, St. Peter's collects Christmas and Holiday decorations, ornaments, lights, candles, greens, linens, holiday clothing, Christmas cards, artificial trees, lawn ornaments, plush animals—anything to do with Christmas. St. Peter's Christmas Attic has been wonderfully successful because they have many items for sale that are one of a kind and previously loved; however, there is always plenty of "new in the box" available as well. Prices are low; you can decorate a whole tree for just a few dollars. They will also have fresh-shelled pecans and walnuts by the bag for sale as well as a Bake Sale, just in time for Thanksgiving.

Pet Portraits at Old Town Hall

On Saturday, November 17, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Pet Portraits will be taken by Hilary Schwab Photography. The sitting fee is only \$20.00, and fifty percent of that will be donated to the Historic Medley District, Inc. Call 301-349-2322 or email hilary@hschwabphotography.com now to set up an appointment. Walk-ins are also welcome. You can bring your kids to be photographed with your pets if you like. Online secure ordering of prints, calendars, and holiday cards (sold separately).

From the Food and Gifts to Spiritual

With all the pre-holiday food events and gift sales, there is one very special event that will really help prepare you for the holidays, and that is the annual ecumenical Thanksgiving service sponsored by area churches. This is a wonderful time to join with your neighbors in giving thanks for all that we share through prayers and songs of gratitude. Area churches will come together at Our Lady of the Presentation Catholic Church at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 18. The atmosphere is friendly, warm, and casual. This community worship service will be dedicated to WUMCO Help and proceeds from donations by attendees will be given to this local social services organization to use toward their holiday expenses.

Education Discussion

The Freedom School is hosting a discussion with Jim Reitmulder, founder and staff member of The Circle School at the Urbana Regional Library in the Urbana Community Room on 9020 Amelung Street, at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 15. The Circle School is a democratic, student-directed school in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania based on The Sudbury Valley Model. The Freedom School is a learning co-op in Barnesville based on the same principles with plans of being full time in 2008. Jim will share over twenty years of experience and give examples of how this educational model can work for children in the 21st century. Please contact Denise Chasin at The Freedom School with any questions at 301-349-2161 or at dchasin@hotmail.com



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School News

Down by the Bay

By Dominique Agnew

**What did you do in school today?
I went snorkeling.
I caught crabs.
I went climbing.
I piloted my boat out on the
Chesapeake Bay.**

What kind of elementary school is this where the kids get to do exciting activities along the Chesapeake Bay? It must be Monocacy Element-

tary School's P.E. class under the tutelage of Debbie Summers, and the Bay must be her transformed gymnasium.

Although Debbie Summers has been a P.E. teacher for twenty-three years, the last twelve of them at Monocacy, it wasn't until the early 1990s that she began creating different worlds in the gymnasium that incorporate physical fitness with themed activities, cutting across disciplines to include reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Her first theme was Scooter City, inspired by a teacher in Howard County. Mrs. Summers put together a city de-

signed to teach students how to read road signs and to stay on the correct side of the road, all while driving scooters through the streets of the make-believe city which included a grocery store, school, playground, and other typical city landmarks.

Now, every year at the Monocacy Elementary gym, the walls and floor become transformed into four different worlds. Every fall, the theme is rotated. This is the third time that the gym has become the Chesapeake Bay, the idea conceived by Mrs. Summers, complete with a map on the floor, and the various geographic landmarks of the Bay and accompanying activities. Mrs. Summers has also converted the gym into a rainforest, a theme she developed with teacher, Carol Winkler, at Stone Mill Elementary. When it's an Olympic year, there is an Olympic theme, and, of course, Scooter City. Before winter break, the gym becomes a winter wonderland; spring brings an eighteen-hole golf course; and, at the end of the year, the students get to have a beach party.

Before each theme, Mrs. Summers comes in the weekend before and spends four hours setting everything up. The theme stays in place

for two weeks, and all students of all grades participate, letting their imaginations take over while using skills like map reading, reading, writing, throwing, balancing, jumping, and climbing—all in a day's work...Down by the Bay.

These themes are just the tip of the iceberg. "Mrs. Summers does so much here," says Robin O'Connell, parent and health room technician. She runs the juggling club that has performed at Frederick Keys baseball games. When the fifth graders went to Cumberland last year to complete their studies on the C&O Canal, Mrs. Summers spent a weekend biking the towpath to Cumberland so she could provide the students with interesting facts about the canal, the lives of canal boat families, and Cumberland. She organizes a C&O Canal bike ride for students and their families, and she organizes P.E. Partnership, partnering older and younger students, and Jump Rope for Heart.



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Things to Do

November 2

A Night at the Opera; A Day at the Races

Weinberg Center for the Arts
Marx Brothers' Classics
8:00 p.m.

November 3

2007 Christmas Bazaar

Poolesville Memorial Methodist Church
Silent auction, lunch, Holiday gifts and decorations, many vendors
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Tinker Bell in Poolesville

Voice of Disney's Renowned Cartoon Star
Appears at Jo's Frame Shop – Poolesville
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Rainbow Fish

Weinberg Center for the Arts
Marcus Pfister's bestseller comes to life
11:00 a.m.

November 4

Open House

Seneca Academy/The Circle School
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Shakespeare's Julius Caesar
Weinberg Center for the Arts
Political intrigue, ambition, betrayal, envy, honor
2:00 p.m.

November 5

Annual Flu Shot Program

St. Peter's Church
5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

November 7

St. Peter's Pre-School

Bible Study
1:00 p.m.

November 9

UMCVFD Basket Bingo

Beallsville Fire hall
Doors: 5:30 p.m.
Games: 7:00 p.m.

November 10

Beef and Ham Dinner

Trinity E & R Church – Adamstown
1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

November 11

Elena Baksht in Concert

Weinberg Center for the Arts
World-renowned pianist
2:00 p.m.

November 16

K of C German Dinner

St. Mary's Pavilion – Barnesville
5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

MSO Concert

Weinberg Center for the Arts
Maryland Symphony Orchestra
Guest violinist Timothy Fain
8:00 p.m.

Winterglow

BlackRock Center for the Arts
ALOG Art Show
Friday and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.;
Sunday, meet artists 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

November 17

6th Annual Holiday Celebration

Fundraiser

St. Thomas More Academy
Lynfield Events Complex,
Frederick
5:30 p.m. to midnight

November 18

Christmas Attic Sale
Holiday decorations and crafts
Pecans, baked goods
St. Peter's Church
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

Our Lady of the Presentation Catholic Church
Area churches give thanks together
7:00 p.m.

Varsity Sport Home Games

PHS: Football: November 9, 6:30 p.m. – MD School for the Deaf
CHS: Football: November 9, 6:30 p.m. – Watkins Mill

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Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

Montgomery County police report that there have been over five thousand incidents of thefts from parked cars during 2007. Items such as GPS systems, iPods, cell phones, satellite radios, and purses have been stolen. In September, sixty percent of the cases involved unlocked vehicles. Police urge residents to remove anything of value and to lock the vehicle before leaving it.

Present

October 6 Residential burglary, 19700 block of Selby Avenue, Poolesville. Forced entry to the residence, victim saw the suspect who was driving a red 2000 Chevrolet S-10 truck.

Past

November 2, 1886 The election in Montgomery County caused much excitement, but the residents of Germantown were not prepared for the incident that happened on the night of the election. George Smith had been threatened after he announced that he

was voting for the Democratic Party. Later that night, his barn was burned to the ground.

November 6, 1954 An American Airlines airliner took off from the Washington airport when the pilot realized that the landing gear was defective. The plane, en route to New York, then circled Montgomery County, burning up fuel, until it safely landed at Washington.

November 12, 1907 Doctor Elijah White of Poolesville, one of the most prominent physicians in Montgomery County, was accidentally shot by his brother while the two were hunting. Benjamin White, of Baltimore, was on one side of a thicket and did not see his brother when he fired. Dr. White was taken to the hospital in Baltimore for treatment.

November 14, 1900 It was reported that safecrackers blew open the safe at the general merchandise store of Mr. Jones and Mr. Robinson at Brunswick, Maryland. It was said that the burglars stole about \$350 in cash.

November 14, 1906 Mr. and Mrs.

Charles Webster of Adamstown were on the way to Frederick when they reached the Mickell farm near Lime Kiln. Their horse became frightened by a passing automobile and ran into a fence throwing Mrs. Webster to the ground. The buggy was badly damaged and was taken to Frederick for repairs.



Youth Sports Clarksburg Girls Volleyball Looking To Earn Respect

By Jeff Stuart

Respect: that's what the Clarksburg High School Girls' Volleyball team is looking for after learning much but winning just a single match in their inaugural 2006 season. They worked hard in the off season. Two attended camps, two played on a club team, and others worked out on their own at home. "Five varsity players came to voluntary summer workouts at the school, and the rest were incoming eighth graders which was nice to see," said Head Coach Terri Tippet. "It shows we are building the interest at the middle school level."

Those off-season efforts may be paying dividends. Because the Coyotes are off to a good start, they defeated Seneca Valley, posting their first-ever home win on Monday, September 10. The game scores against the Screaming Eagles were 19-25, 25-13, 20-25, 25-21, and 15-13 in the tie breaker. That came after a disappointing opener at Northwood on September 5. Northwood won in three games: 25-13, 25-13, and 25-14. "We did not play well at Northwood," said Coach Tippet. "We did not communicate. We were so nervous. We didn't do the little things we can do. Our passing was horrible."

Nonetheless, Northwood coach Ray Trail was complimentary. "Both teams

have made significant improvements in the last year," said Trail. "Clarksburg will be a winning program within another year or so. They have the foundations of a good program developing which starts with the coaching staff. You can tell the coaches really care about the girls and the school. It has taken us four years here at Northwood to develop a winning attitude and to acquire girls with the ability to put together a winning team."

"I think we are tremendously improved this year," said Coach Tippet, "but we are still young. That's something I have to keep in mind. There are two seniors starters, but the rest are sophomores." Seniors Lena Kem and Jen Nguyen lead the team. Sophomore Angelica Quetell returns from last year's varsity team as a starter. Other starting sophomores include: Taylor Randall, the setter, and Cynthia Alfaro, who have moved up from last year's JV team. The fourth starting sophomore and newcomer to the team is Tia Johnson, a starting guard on last year's varsity basketball squad. Still other sophomores on the varsity roster are Charney Ryland, a JV basketball player last year, and Cinthya Alavarez and Irene Burgus, who have moved up from last year's JV team.

"Against Seneca Valley, we talked, passed better, and got eighty-seven percent of our serves in. Our goal was ninety percent. We did a good job of containing Seneca Valley's outstanding senior captain, Lauren Green, an awesome talent."

As with any young team, there will be ups and downs, and the Coyotes still have a ways to go.

MONOCACY CRITTERS

Serendipitous Pet and Animal Pictures



Local reptile takes it slow.

Photograph courtesy of Hilary Schwab Photography

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PHS Cross Country

By Jack Toomey

Imagine participating in a sport where you routinely have car horns blown at you by friends, have to run through the streets in searing heat and humidity, and once in a great while, get chased by dogs—and that is just a description of the practices. The competitions require running up steep hills in all sorts of weather, through the woods, and occasionally plodding through swampy fields. Of all of the fall sports that are offered to students, cross country could easily be selected as the sport that requires the most dedication and causes the greatest stress on the body of the athlete.

The Poolesville High School cross country team is made up of about twenty-five athletes. Every school day, they gather in the stadium for instructions from Coach Jim Vollmer who has been the coach for seventeen years. Recently, a *Monocle* reporter caught up with the team as they prepared for a practice run. Kristyn Kirschbaum and Devin Hamberger, both eleventh

graders, are the co-captains of the girls' team. Kirschbaum has been on the team for three years and led the team to the division title in early October when she finished first in the girls' division. Her best time in a competition is just a few seconds over twenty-three minutes. She said, "I love cross country. It is relaxing, and I love the competition." Hamberger, who takes an advanced placement class and six other honors courses, stressed the comradeship that exists on the team, "I think that our team is so close, they are my family; our coach has a [saying] that we are going to make it to the top of the water tower." She also gave some insight into the closeness of the girls' team, "We have team bonding activities [like] sleepovers and making T-shirts." Erin Knuth is a ninth grader who was pointed out by Coach Vollmer as a promising prospect. Her best running time is only twenty seconds behind her older teammates. She takes six honors classes, and, remarking on her team, she said, "It has been a friendly environment."

The boys' team was led by sophomore David Wilson. David explained that he became interested in cross country because his older brother participated. "A lot of commitment [is required]," he said. "In order to improve, you have

to work very hard and push yourself every day." David recently ran a course in just under eighteen minutes. Brian Dresser is one of only two seniors on the team. He has been participating on the team for four years and takes four AP classes. He hopes to continue his



*The Poolesville High School
Cross Country team hams it up
before practice.*

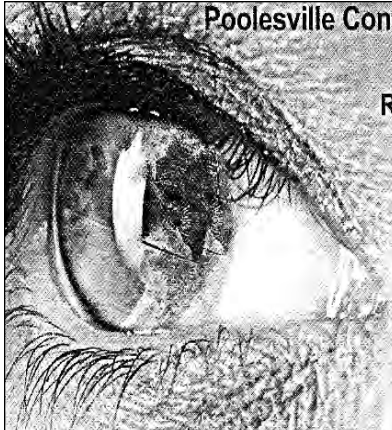
education next year in the biotech field of study. Looking back at his career at Poolesville, he said that his biggest thrill was when he recorded his best time in the county region competition in eleventh grade.

Coach Vollmer, who teaches at the county's Thomas Edison School of Technology, said that he was pleased by the team's performance and work ethic. Vollmer said, "We are still a young

team and [occasionally] take a beating because we are such a small school and the talent pool is reduced." He stressed that it takes a special kind of athlete to develop the work ethic that it takes to participate in the sport. Vollmer added that the team has been plagued by various injuries this year such as shin splints, sprained ankles, and hip problems. He pointed out Joseph Aryankalayial, Hunter Hegmann, Phillip Kuldell, and Sabrina Richter as promising athletes who have helped the team this year and will be back next year as more experienced runners. Vollmer is looking forward to next year when almost the entire team will return including his key runners.

On October 2, the Falcons won the Montgomery County Division IV title, and David Wilson set a new home course record. On October 20, the team competed in the county meet at Gaithersburg High School. Competing against every school in the county, the team still managed to finish in the middle of the pack and distinguished themselves as competitive runners. Next year, almost every runner will return, and a bright future is certainly in store for the Poolesville cross country team.

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"Brian Gross" Continued From Page 1.

forty guitars or evidence that Brian is an accomplished musician. Hopefully, you've had a chance to see him perform at the concert on Whalen Commons following Poolesville Day or at the Music Appreciation Tea held just this past Sunday, October 28, if not, keep your eyes peeled for his next appearance.

Brian probably could have been considered a child prodigy on the guitar, except that he didn't start playing the guitar until he was nearly an adult. During middle school and high school he was "very much a geek"—in the kindest sense of the term. He was born in L.A., but moved with his family to Bethesda when he was five. "I was the kid in high school who pushed the projector around," he says. He loved every aspect of technology. "I was always fascinated by mechanical, electrical things." This fascination led him to be involved as much as possible with school theater sound and lighting, from elementary to high school.

His senior year of high school brought a cataclysmic change in Brian's life. Where once he was a very visible student at Walt Whitman High School, he was suddenly the single

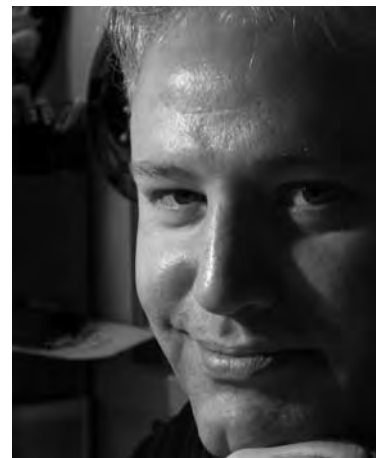
new student in a class of eighteen hundred students in Philadelphia where his family moved. As it happened, during English class one day, the student in front of him, Mark Weaver (who would become and remain his friend to this day), asked, "Do you play guitar?" Brian, who had never played guitar before in his life but was desperate for communication, answered, "Yes, I do"—cataclysm, indeed.

He went home that day, found his father's old guitar, managed to tune it, found Mel Bay's guitar method book, and learned "Father and Son" by Cat Stevens. "That's when the thunderbolt hit," he says. "I knew I'd found what I wanted to do." From that day on, he practiced three to four hours per night, and eventually began singing, as well.

Although he came from a musical family, his mother was a professional singer in a female barbershop group, the Sweet Adelines, and his father was a master metallurgist and horologist (watchmaker), he wasn't encouraged in his pursuit of the guitar. In his childhood household, music was



Brian Gross Then.



Brian Gross Now.

pursuit of the technical side led him to go on tour with numerous big-name bands including: Hall and Oates, Heart, and U2, among others. Of course, the more he became involved with being on the road and building this career, the less he played the guitar. Also, as he came to know some of these rock stars—he mentions the old adage, "Be careful what you wish for"—he began to find them and their lifestyle undesirable.

"Some of these people," he says, "are miserable, horrible people...It changed my attitude on what was important." This epiphany came after two years of working in the recording industry and touring—and he had fallen in love. Enter the woman who would become his wife, Sherri. He wanted to get married and knew he "had to get off the road."

The year was 1985. Brian cut his hair and answered an ad for a salesperson in an audio-design company. "I made the leap from touring engineer to someone who wasn't on the bus," he says. He entered a whole new area of the technical world—and excelled. "It was," he adds, "in a lot of ways, my calling." He quickly moved to designing systems and says he was lucky to have the skill set to both design and sell realistic, good systems. "I was, and still am, wildly successful," he says. Bigger and broader companies noticed him, and he started being recruited by them; then he joined Acom where, under his role as executive, the company grew from \$3 million in revenue to \$60 million. Unfortunately, it was the 1990s, and merger mania had arrived on the scene. Foreign investors bought in and "ripped the company to shreds."

Disillusioned with the merger/acquisition situation, Brian started a company, Wavecrest, with three former employees in 1999. "I've always been extremely comfortable with risk," he says. The company grew quickly and well, but there was disagreement about the role of the owners. On May 12, 2003, the other owners exploited a loophole and bought him out. On May 13, 2003, Phoenix Systems was born, mythological symbolism and everything.

-Continued on Page 23.

considered a frivolity, and his parents pushed very hard for him to pursue engineering. He got on waiting lists at Bucknell University and Lehigh University but didn't want to wait. He discovered that Ithaca College in New York had excellent business and science programs—and a "killer music program." Pursuing a degree in business at Ithaca, Brian was also able to earn a degree in electro-mechanical engineering through a program of study at nearby Cornell University, all while indulging in his passion for music.

It was at Ithaca that Brian discovered he had a beautiful voice, but not a beautiful tenor voice, he says. "I've never liked my voice," he laments. As a business student, he was winning auditions for vocal jazz ensembles and madrigals because of his "magnificent bass/baritone voice." Brian says that directors would say they "need that voice" and would attach a music student to him to be sure he learned the music perfectly because he didn't at the time know how to read music well enough.

During those college years, Brian put all of his effort into playing the guitar. He played everywhere he could. He started bands, composed music, and played all different kinds of music including an interest in jazz—"honing [his] ability to play live." In the early 1980s, while still in college, he was making \$300 a week playing four days a week—good money whether in school or not.

He decided to continue in the music business after college by learning the technical side of the recording industry, "preparing to be a rock star," he says modestly. With his business, engineering, and musical background, he found it easy to blend both the technical side and the creative sides of music, and he could work effectively with both sets of people. The



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"Kenya" Continued From Page 5.

one black and a number of white rhino were recently relocated to the Meru. I visited the sanctuary that has been set up for their survival. This very large tract of land is enclosed with high electrified fences and is patrolled by government rangers. The threat of poaching is still very much alive. Because of the lack of wildlife, the Meru has been off the beaten "safari trail." Now the herds of animals are slowly being built up. The upside of this situation is the ability for a visitor like me to see animals at a very close range without ten or twelve other Land Rovers filled with tourists parked beside you. Each day, my daughter and I drove with a very knowledgeable guide for six to eight hours through the grasslands and woods without seeing another vehicle or person, save for a lone ranger patrolling for poachers.

After four days in the Meru, I flew on another very small plane to the Masai Mara. The Mara Game Reserve, covering an area of about 720 square miles, is a natural continuation of the famous Serengeti Plain. It has undulating grasslands, dramatic escarpments, beautiful acacia forests—and

the greatest wildlife show on Earth. The most spectacular time to visit this area is between June and early October, when the annual Migration takes place. Over 1.4 million wildebeests, 550,000 gazelles, 200,000 zebras, and 64,000 impalas make the journey across the short grasslands of the Serengeti in neighboring Tanzania to the wide open, tall grassy areas of the Mara in search of grass and water. It is a long and dangerous journey, and at least twenty-five percent of the herds do not survive the trip for the Mara's grass is tall and gives camouflage to the lions, cheetahs, and leopards; and the winding rivers with their high banks hide the crocodiles—all waiting for dinner. Flying into the area, you can look out the little plane's windows and see long columns of thousands of wildebeests following their leader into broad lines of march. From the air, they look like columns of ants.

Besides the visiting herds, the Mara is home to elephants, lions, cheetahs, leopards, rhino, hippopotamuses, giraffes, zebras, gazelles, impalas, monkeys, baboons, mongoose, jackals, crocodiles, ostriches, buffalos, antelopes, kudus hyenas, warthogs, and thousands of exotic birds. The animals in the park are used to tourists and their Land Rovers observing them at

very close range. Some are very shy, while the kingly lion regally stares right back at you. As quiet and unobtrusive as my daughter and I tried to be, I often felt that I was intruding into their lives. I cannot adequately describe the feeling of having the privilege of witnessing this slice of nature, with all its beauty, sensitivity, and sometimes cruel reality. You are transported to another world, where you become a very small and insignificant participant.

Kenya, along with other East African countries, is one of the richest areas on the African continent in terms of flora. This diversity reflects the country's wide range of ecological and climatic conditions. Two major factors affecting the distribution of growth of different species of flora are rainfall and altitude. The two areas that I visited supported different plants, trees, and shrubs. We all understand the meaning of an ecosystem—all the organisms in a particular region and the environment in which they live—and we recognize that the elements of an ecosystem interact with each other, either directly or indirectly, but it is no more self-evident than in the African bush. When on a game drive, the first thing that your guide tells you is, "Don't get out of the Land Rover, unless I say that it is safe. While in the vehicle, the animals do

not feel threatened by your presence. Once on the ground, you become part of their ecosystem and fair targets for their next dinner."

Up until the early Middle Ages, man grew plants, trees, and shrubs for food and medicinal uses. Only the nobles had pleasure gardens. As society changed, more people of lesser means wanted gardens as parks or places of relaxation. Today, we do not directly use plants for medicinal uses. Some of the drugs we get from the local pharmacy might have been produced from plants, but we do not come in contact with the plants in their natural habitat. In Kenya, with its astonishing variety of flora, medicinal plants are an important part of the daily lives and the cultural heritage of many people. These same plants provide food, shelter, and healing properties to a wide range of animals.

The tree that most visitors to the Meru, the Mara, and the Serengeti notice is the umbrella thorn (*Acacia tortillas*). All parts of the trees are useful to man and animals. Its hardy red wood makes excellent fuel (wood and charcoal) and timber. The flowers are eaten by baboons and monkeys, elephants prefer the bark, giraffes

-Continued on Page 19.




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**"Kenya" Continued From
Page 18.**

browse its leaves, and its fallen seed pods are a favorite of impalas. The sausage tree (*Kigelia africana*) is another common tree on the savanna. It has huge sausage-shaped fruit which baboons and hippos eat. The giraffe chews the young fruit like a huge piece of chewing gum. The pips of the fruit are used to make a commercial skin cancer prevention lotion. The whistling thorn (*Acacia drepanolobium*) is a shrub or small tree that is a good example of a symbiotic relationship between plants and insects. The galls of the tree are habited by a small species of stinging ant. The plant offers a living environment and food—the nectar at the base of its flowers on which the ants feed—and the ants protect the tree from browsers. The baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) tree is central to many African legends, and it is a very bizarre tree. One of the longest-lived trees in the world, its trunk can grow up to thirty feet in diameter. Its thick branches do not grow in proportion, and being bare of leaves most of the year, they look more like roots. Viewed from afar, it looks like it is growing upside-down. Its longevity is remarkable. There are baobabs growing today that were young trees at the time of Christ. There

are myths of several tribes that tell of the first humans descending from a baobab—the tree where man was born. Their leaves appear right before the start of the rainy season. While out on a game drive one morning, I noticed that the many lions we saw were often resting under the shade of one particular small shrub. The guide said that the shrub was an orange-leaf croton. Its leaves and bark provide a natural insect repellent. The lions stay near it to keep the flies away, and the local Masai people build their homes with its branches and trunk. Its repellency lasts for three to five years.

Many of the annuals and perennials that we grow in our gardens are wild flowers in East Africa and have great medicinal value for man and ani-

mals. Growing wild on the savanna and in the woods were hibiscus, cornflowers, morning glory, clematis, geranium, poinsettia, delphinium, jasmine, lantana, aloe, gladiolus, and black-eyed Susan.

Kenya is a magical place. While in the bush, one forgets time. Your mind, eyes, and ears are treated to emotions, sights, and sounds that you never before experienced. Of all the animals I saw, my favorite was the giraffe. Standing eighteen feet tall with soft brown eyes and a patchwork coat of cream and rich terra cotta lines, he looks like he could walk with the dinosaurs. If you ever get a chance, visit Kenya. It is a trip you will never forget.

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Youth Sports United to Excel

By Curtis A. Osborne

Fall is here and soccer is in full swing. Professional, collegiate, and scholastic teams are now midway through their seasons with playoff hopes and aspirations on the line. Major League Soccer (MLS) has recently enjoyed a huge surge in popularity, some of it due to the rock-star-like atmosphere surrounding one Mr. David "Posh Spice" Beckham, the international soccer icon with a movie named after him. His arrival in MLS, though a dud on the field due to lingering injuries, was a bonanza to the gate receipts wherever his team played, including his stop here against a D.C. United team that is playing well right now. With negotiations ongoing between Washington, D.C. and other local jurisdictions to build a soccer only stadium complex, and with the Baltimore Blast just opening its professional indoor soccer season with a victory over the Philadelphia Kixx to kick off the Major Indoor Soccer League (MISL) season, professional soccer has become a strong draw for the local dollar.

Both leagues hope to see themselves

grow in the coming decades and give America long-lasting, self-sustaining professional leagues so that homegrown talent will not always choose to play overseas in order to play professional soccer. They hope to one day be mentioned in the same sentence as the NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL. Though they have a long way to go, they are on the right path, moving forward with prudent financial and marketing plans.

With the millions of kids participating in youth leagues across the country, America is looking to groom its own homegrown talent and its own future superstars. The youth leagues are aiming to be the major talent supplier to these adult leagues and act as a national feeder system, which in fact they are. FC Frederick is a soccer organization in Frederick County that is well on its way to being a feeder system not only to the local high schools, but to colleges, national teams, and the professional leagues as well.

"FC Frederick is a nonprofit soccer club that seeks to develop soccer athletes in a positive environment that challenges each player at [his or her] highest level," states Jeff Sill, Director of Facilities for the organization. They plan to achieve these goals through "fair and open evaluation and team assignment, professional administration and coaching, and high-level

competition in league and tournament play." Jeff is also a former player and coach for the organization, which was formed from an alliance of two clubs, Frederick Excel and Frederick United. Excel was an all-boys club formed in 1989 by Roelkey Meyers, and United was an all-girls club formed in 1996 by Mark Wolcott, Brian Parker, Chuck Nichols, and Bob Scheffler. "So we like to say that FC Frederick was founded in 1989 and we are 'United to Excel'" says Jeff of their catchy slogan. The conjoined organization is run by President Dave Jones and Vice President Bo Eskay.

FCF is the third largest club in the state with approximately 750 kids participating this year. They are a full-service club with a full time Director of Coaching, over fifty coaches, and a full academy program. Several of the coaches hold a "C" license or above. In many other organizations, the best players will skip playing for their high school teams and instead opt strictly to play for their club team due to competition and travel. Many are even encouraged to do this, but not FCF players. Most of the kids play for their high schools, which can only make the school teams better and more attractive to future players. They will want to wear their school colors and represent them with pride in competi-

tion.

Jeff thinks that the state of soccer is "very, very good" in the county. "Quality soccer is on the upswing in Frederick and will continue to rise for many years to come," he adds. "FCF is giving the kids the tools they need to play at the next level and this helps because good soccer players get scholarship money, in turn, a good education." They must be doing things right because parents universally have nothing but positive things to say about the organization, that they do things the "right way," and that they are very structured and run an outstanding program.

As one can expect, there have been several success stories to emerge from the organization. The most recent is a player named Jackson Eskay. According to Jeff, Jackson is a "U-13 boy that has more moves with a ball than you can imagine." Jackson played in the U.S. National U-14 Identification program, where the top 120 kids play in an all-expense paid showcase, an impressive feat. To ensure its future success, after playing many years at various city and county facilities, FCF is currently constructing an eleven-acre complex to be its new home. It is scheduled to open by spring 2008. Obviously, this group Excels in soccer.



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"Staph" Continued From Page 1.

daily with weekly hospital visits.

Marci Callentonio worries that the information sent home to parents from the school system focuses too much on the skin manifestations of the bacteria and not the other potential infections such as her son's. "I want people to know the full scope of MRSA," she said. "People's fears are being allayed, and I don't like that; I'm not comfortable with that."

Staph bacteria, found on the skin and in the nose of healthy people, are one of the most common causes of skin infections in the United States, according to the CDC website. The drug-resistant MRSA strain is usually transmitted by skin-to-skin contact or contact with items and surfaces that have touched an infection.

Schools where the bacteria have been identified are required to use a "hospital grade" bleach solution to clean "areas where the likelihood [of transmission] is greater" such as weight and locker rooms daily, Harrison said. This will continue indefinitely. Football players or others with wounds are asked to keep them bandaged, Harrison said. "We want everyone to be a partner in keeping this from spreading."

Levine said that in addition to following the county's instructions, the school's Booster Club has provided "a year's supply" of sanitizing wipes for the weight room, and a media campaign by the school's television and journalism students was planned. A coach will also monitor locker rooms after practices to insure that athletes take uniforms home to be laundered, she said.

Callentonio said while the school system's measures were a good start, she would like to see a multi-level approach to the problem which could include increased availability of common products like hand sanitizer as well as usage of products like StaphAseptic,

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a new wound treatment that protects against MRSA. "It's not the school's fault that [the bacteria] is there," she said, but all steps should be taken to protect students.

About thirteen Poolesville High School parents attended an October 22 meeting on MRSA in a private home, and a guest speaker on the subject is being considered for an upcoming PTA meeting, Levine said. Koutsos said Clarksburg High was fielding calls and addressing questions individually, and no meetings were planned.



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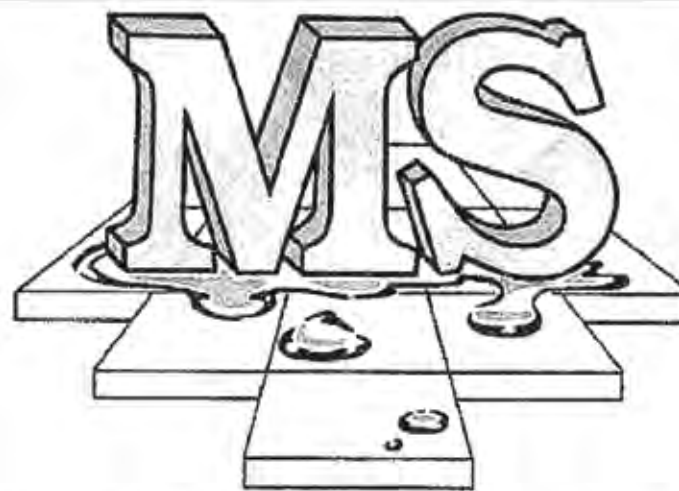
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"Rock Creek Park Murders"
Continued From Page 3.

Easy West Highway near Meadowbrook Lane. A passerby noticed a man peering out of the woods watching the two women. He drove until he found the nearest police officer, and Silver Spring officers responded and captured the man who was hiding in the woods behind the Meadowbrook Riding Club. He was held at the Silver Spring police station until the next day but refused to answer questions and was released.

Just as fast as the shootings began, they stopped. For almost a year, there

were no incidents, and the cases remained open. Then on December 22, 1939, a woman was walking on Hillcrest Place in Chevy Chase. Suddenly, a man came out of some bushes and dragged her to the grounds of the Chevy Chase Elementary School where he attempted to rape her. Later, another woman reported that a man had robbed her about three blocks away. In Washington, a similar incident happened, and Jesse Paul Parker, 25, was arrested. He immediately became a suspect in the 1938 murders because of his physical build which included, as described by officers at that time, having a "pineapple shaped

head." Parker was tried for the Chevy Chase attacks and was convicted and sent to the State Hospital for The Criminally Insane at Crownsville. He was never charged for the 1938 shootings.

In May 1949, a park police officer arrested a man who was lurking in the woods in Rock Creek Park. He gave a false name, but it was determined that he was Jesse Paul Parker. Parker had escaped from Crownsville Hospital in 1941, but the escape had never been reported to the authorities. During the next eight years,

Parker was arrested twelve times, but since there was no record of his escape, he appeared in court, served short jail sentences, and was released.

The 1938 Rock Creek murders have never been solved. Although they were labeled as "sniper shootings" by the press, it is most likely that the motive of the suspect was robbery.

"Brian Gross" Continued From
Page 16.

On May 14, 2003, Brian began playing the guitar again. "I just started practicing in the woodshed," he says simply.

With Phoenix Systems, Brian has nine employees—"brilliant people"—and the company draws revenues of about \$5 million per year from projects all over the world: the new audio systems in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol building, the 350-degree cinema system for Jamestown's 400th anniversary, the Griffon roller coaster attraction at Busch Gardens, and sound systems for the Fountains

at Bellagio and the Pirate Battle Show outside of Treasure Island, both in Las Vegas. Of his business, Brian says there are not many people doing it, and his company is one of the notable. He encourages kids who have a creative and/or technical side to give the industry a look. There are "a lot of tools, but not a lot of rules."

Musically, Brian has started moving away from jazz. He decided to learn how to play the blues. "I wanted to bend the strings and make it howl," he says. He has also dabbled in acoustic fingerstyle and alternate tuning, and this has just expanded his versatility as a musician. He has a

very good understanding of chords, voicings, and how chords are spelled, he says, but "I would not call myself a brilliant lead guitarist." What does he do with forty guitars? On the one hand, he collects them (he claims to have only two vices: collecting guitars and motorcycles), but he also listens to what they have to say to him. "Guitars have a real personality that you can feel," he explains. "Whenever I play them, they reveal something subtly different." His different guitars will lead him to explore their tonalities inviting him to play them accordingly, drawing on and accentuating that sound the instrument reveals.

Many of those who live in the Poolesville area, have been affected by Brian's work, whether they realize it or not, because he's always ready to lend a helping hand, and it's always behind the scenes. For the last two Sandy Cameron concerts, Phoenix Systems enhanced the audio-visual needs of the performance. Phoenix Systems was able to design a state-of-the-art sound system for the PHS auditorium on a budget in 2005. Brian helped with the Christmas pageant on Whalen Commons. Many of the performers on Whalen Commons had sound systems set up by Brian (usually a number of hours of setup).

Whether he's performing or enhancing others' performances, Brian has a joy and passion for what he does which he's happy to share. "I found this beautiful career where I can create these wild things that don't exist with one half of my brain, and the other half of my brain gets to draft, design, and build this complex thing that makes an amazing sound."


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