

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

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Who was that masked man? Check them out on page 2.



The ruins of the Richard Dawson home. Read about it in Foundations on page 4.



In days of old, we had sports champs. See who in Tidbits on page 5.



There is always a light at the end of the tunnel. Details on page 12.

Town Commission Votes Cook as New President

By Link Hoewing

The Town of Poolesville's commission's vote to replace Commissioner Jerry Klobukowski as president followed a discussion about his repeated refusal to adhere to the requirements of a new temporary ordinance that limits the amount of time any commissioner can spend in town hall to two hours during any business day. That ordinance was approved by the commission in a 4-0 vote (Klobukowski abstained) in an effort to reduce distractions for new town manager Seth Rivard as he became familiar with his new duties.

Commissioner Valaree Dickerson, who sponsored the original proposal, opened the discussion by saying that all commissioners had taken an oath to uphold the laws of the town and of the State of Maryland. She said, "I want a leader who will uphold our charter" and noted that this policy had been continuously violated by only one commissioner: Jerry Klobukowski. She was "saddened to have to address

this issue over and over again." Compounding the issue was that, as president of the commission, Klobukowski had originally refused to even allow further discussion of his violation of the matter on the evening's agenda. In an April 3 letter to the editor of the *Monocacy Monocle*, Dickerson addressed his blockage of the matter on the agenda, stating that "no commissioner should ever be denied the request for a public agenda item to be discussed at a meeting."

Commissioner Klobukowski said that while he has occasionally stayed too long in town hall in violation of the policy, he has significant duties as president that he needs to fulfill. He pointed particularly to major efforts he undertook to help get the county to put Poolesville on the list of places where FARM meals for needy schoolchildren would be distributed. He also said that, as President of the Montgomery Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League, he has had to do more to help support its work because



New Town of Poolesville Commission president, Kerri Cook.

Continued on page 7.

Seneca Academy Announces Decision to Close Amid COVID-19 Woes

By Rande Davis

On April 9, 2020, Seneca Academy unexpectedly announced it was closing.

The announcement explained that due to unanticipated withdrawals and financial pressures from the COVID-19 crisis, the Darnestown school made the difficult decision to close at the end of the current school year, rather than risk closing unexpectedly the following school year. The decision was timed to enable students and faculty the opportunity to plan ahead.

Immediately upon making the announcement, a group for friends, family and alumni joined to try to save the institution. A strategic team quickly formed, pooling time and expertise to raise the funds needed. Parent



Darnestown's Seneca Academy scheduled to close.

representatives met with the school's board and outlined an ambitious plan to raise awareness and to reach out to potential donors.

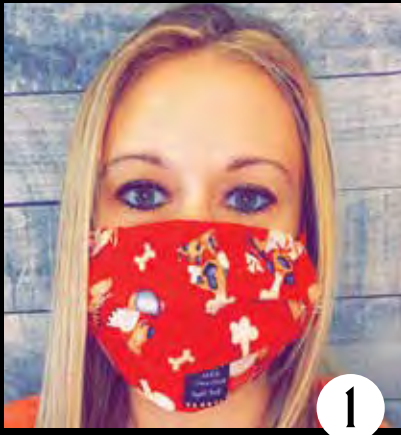
For the group, the question wasn't if the school should be saved, but

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Family Album

Name the Masked Face Legend

ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 15.



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Town Government

Town Commissioners Grapple with Budget And Economic Issues in Meetings

By Link Hoewing

At their April 6 and April 20 meetings, the Town of Poolesville commissioners, meeting via Zoom, were confronted with significant budget issues as the pandemic begins to affect the local economy.

Town Manager Seth Rivard offered an overview of the town's fiscal situation in light of the significant economic impacts of the pandemic at the April 6 meeting. In opening his remarks, Rivard explained that the town had taken a number of steps to keep both town employees and residents safe. Town hall and all town parks have been closed to public access. Staff have been put on a "rotational schedule" so that fewer employees are on duty and in close proximity at the same time. Bulk trash collection has been put on hold and all town events—and advisory board meetings—have been put on hold until at least May 30.

In terms of the budget, Rivard remarked that the public hearing on it must be held by May 18, and it must be adopted by June 1. Due to the impacts of the pandemic on some town revenue flows, such as receipts from the State of Maryland, he is projecting a shortfall at this stage of about \$450,000. To make up this shortfall, Rivard proposed a series of cuts in various planned purchases (for such items as new trucks and other equipment) and an allocation of \$133,000 from the so-called "rainy day" or unrestricted funds in the budget. The proposals would result in some delays in sidewalk repairs and in some road projects (including along Fisher Avenue) and the elimination of performance bonuses for staff.

In making these proposals, Rivard added that Christmas bonuses would still be paid to staff, and all healthcare for staff would continue to be paid. He also said that while staff are on rotation, meaning that only a portion of all staff work on any given day, all employees are continuing to receive their full pay each week.

A continuing—and growing—problem for the town is the shortfall in total payments received for sewer and water services versus the amount of funding needed to support these services. The shortfall is made up by monies taken from general revenues, and the gap continues to grow. Local governments generally try to manage sewer and water operations so that they generate enough revenues from fees to cover their costs. The reason for this is that unlike many town services, such as parks, the costs of providing sewer and water services are dependent on how much any individual uses. When a resident uses a lot of water, he/she is expected to pay more than those who use less.

Rivard suggested that the town must look to a different future going forward because most of its major developments are nearing their ends. These developments have generated lots of funding in the form of impact fees levied on each new house sold. As the number of new homes goes down, the level of impact fees does, too. The town has a large base of infrastructure in the form of roads, sidewalks, and parks, and these all need to be maintained. Impact fees devoted to such things as road maintenance are no longer going to be available in the not-too-distant future, and the town must find new ways to support these assets.

During their April 20 meeting, the first under new commission president, Commissioner Kerri Cook, significant amounts of time were devoted to discussing the impacts of the pandemic on the local economy and what local government can do to help. Cook and Commissioner Valaree Dickerson discussed a recent call they had with members of the Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce regarding actions that could be taken to help support local businesses. Ideas discussed included making and posting videos boosting local businesses and enhancing and updating a centralized listing of businesses that are open and what they are offering.

Town Manager Seth Rivard offered a very high-level overview of the upcoming budget and the process that will be used to adopt it. He once again noted that some reductions will be needed to meet potential shortfalls and that he is working on developing an online process that will allow for public comment on the budget. He is also working on plans to allow the town's advisory boards and committees, such as the Planning Commission, to meet virtually. None of these entities have met since the state imposed stay-at-home orders.



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Rande(m) Thoughts

Selecting a New Commission President: The Full Story

By Rande Davis

The recent vote to replace Commissioner Jerry Klobukowski as the president of the Town of Poolesville Commission has resulted in many readers having many questions surrounding this decision. Needless to say, there have been many uninformed opinions voiced elsewhere resulting in public confusion. Hopefully, I can clear up much of the confusion here.

First of all, Jerry Klobukowski still remains as a commissioner available for reelection this coming November.

Before venturing into the explanation as to how the commissioners reached their decision, I want to first point out that Jerry Klobukowski, who may very well be the longest-serving commissioner in the town's history, has also been one of the most hard-working as well. While a volunteer, he has approached his role as he would a job—but without compensation. I am certain nearly all would agree that he always has the best interests of Poolesville and the surrounding area in his heart. For that, he should receive the gratitude of all residents of the town.

Having said that, the result of the decision made by the town commissioners was correct and came from his misjudging the situation, defying the decisions made by fellow commissioners, and misunderstanding his role in setting the agenda for town meetings. Clearly, effective leaders must always decide wisely in choosing which battles to fight and which battles to let go. Choosing to confront the other commissioners over the use of town hall as office space was not the best decision on his part.

The problem began when Klobukowski continued to use town hall as his office space on a near-daily basis even after the other commissioners collectively voted to restrict commissioner usage to no more than two hours a day during official office hours. Long before the vote, Commissioner Klobukowski had become accustomed to using a small office located just a few feet from the entrance to the town manager's office on a regular basis. This situation becomes an intrusion into the new town manager's ability to hold private conversations and phone calls unless doors are closed.

The commissioners voted to close that office for auxiliary workspace. After this, Klobukowski began to use the general conference room instead. As a side note, when the town hall was in the planning stages, the commissioners at that time had entertained the notion of offices for each commissioner upstairs; however, due to ongoing criticism from *The Bulletin*—at the time a weekly newspaper for the area which railed on an ongoing basis against the very notion of a town hall, much less one two-stories tall—and the estimated additional cost, and the general agreement that commissioners did not need personal office space, the commissioners did not pursue a second floor. Since no commissioner was given his/her own space, it was understood that each would work elsewhere, coming to the town hall only for official meetings. Just consider how disruptive it would be if all five commissioners used town hall as their workspace without restriction without a room set aside for each.

Due to various complaints of his excessive presence in town hall with its unavoidable imposition into the work routine of town hall employees, the commissioners decided to set a standard that no commissioner would spend more than two hours a day within the facility. There was no restriction on use of the town hall by a commissioner in the evening or on weekends. While the restriction was set as a formal ordinance, it was to be temporary while the new town manager got a foothold on his new position. When that temporary ordinance was repeatedly violated and not recognized by Klobukowski as valid (decided by a 4-0 vote), the commissioners were then forced to use regular town meeting time to request that he cease violating the ordinance. While initially agreeing to adhere to the new rule, he nevertheless began to come into the facility beyond the restrictions, forcing the hand of the commission to enforce or ignore the very rule for which they had voted.

Prior to the April 6 meeting, a request was made to add his continued use of town hall to the town agenda. As president of the commission, Klobukowski sets the agenda. A request to add discussion to the agenda was made, but he was reluctant to do so. He challenged the commission with the admonition that if they did not agree with his use of town hall, they could always vote to remove him as president.

After going public about his refusal in a letter to the editor in the April 3

Continued on page 18.

Foundations

A Survey of Our Inheritance: Robert Dawson's Stone House

By Kenneth Sholes

A few months ago while looking through some old photos of historic homes in the area, I came across a picture from the early 1980s of a stone house in a ruinous state located near the Sugarland community (close to where Sugarland Road crosses the Dry Seneca Creek). Curious to know more about the home's history, I began further research and learned that the home had been built by Robert Dawson around 1808.

Robert Dawson was born in Dawsonville in 1758. He joined the Army in 1776 after raising the heels of his boots to meet the height requirements. Robert fought in some of the biggest engagements of the Revolutionary War, including the Battles of Long Island, Cowpens, and Germantown (where he was severely wounded).

Following the war, Robert married Sarah Newton Chiswell (the daughter

of Stephen Newton Chiswell, builder of Chiswell's Inheritance) in 1781. Between 1781 and 1806, when Sarah died, the couple raised eleven children. It's a bit unclear where they were living during this period, but there are some indications there was a modest home located near the site of the large, 4,000-square-foot stone home Robert later built in 1808.

It's this 1808 stone home that is incredibly interesting. As the story goes, the home was built for Robert's second wife, Henrietta. That said, the two weren't married until 1811, when the home appears to have been three years old. According to legend (mostly passed down through stories), the couple never lived in the home, but nobody knows for sure why. One theory is that Robert's children from his first wife (and possibly other members of the Dawson Family) weren't huge fans of Robert's new wife and refused to join them in the new home. For whatever reason, this rift apparently resulted in Robert and Henrietta living elsewhere, where they raised three children.

Purely an observation and open to many interpretations, Robert and his first wife Sarah are buried next to each other at Monocacy Cemetery with their children buried

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Tidbits

RWRC Extends Due Date for Scholarship Applications

Due to the closing of MCPS until at least May 15, the Rural Women’s Republican Club has decided to extend the due date for its annual scholarship to June 1, 2020. The scholarship is for graduating students planning post-high school education in a technical/vocational school or certification or licensing program. The scholarship requires an essay response, the details of which can be obtained from PHS career counselor Rosalei Deoto at Rosalei_A_Deoto@mcpsmd.org.

Let’s Hear It for the DD Falcons



Third grade Falcon champs.

Coaches Dean DePasquale and Jack Litzenberger sent a shout out for the third grade basketball team which won its Montgomery County Recreation Division with a 6-2 record. The boys really played their hearts out but were not able to celebrate as a team due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and they missed their well-deserved season-ending celebration.

With party plans put aside, we wanted to make sure our readers are aware of their terrific season and effort. The players are: Jacob LeClair, John Litzenberger, Landon Publisi, Dean Nicolas, Anthony DePasquale, and Ryan Duncan.

Ordering Groceries for Delivery to Poolesville

John Sapp, a manager for Saval Food Distributors who lives locally, has developed an alternative for home shopping that delivers groceries locally. Saval delivers food wholesale to restaurants in Poolesville, but now has established a retail option for residents of Poolesville.



The grocery distribution team kept a safe distance as they did their work.

Saval has a website that can be used to order food options for residential customers: www.mysaval.store/.

There is a range of food options for residential customers, including fresh and frozen vegetables, fresh and frozen meats, canned and dried foods, milk, juice and bottled water, and hopefully soon, home chemicals and paper goods.

Continued on page 7.



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Garden

The Essential Garden

By Maureen O'Connell

Merriam-Webster describes the word essential as meaning absolutely necessary or extremely important. For the past several months with the coronavirus causing COVID-19 throughout the world, we have seen this word used more frequently than in the past: some people are essential; some retail businesses are essential; some activities are essential; and some things are essential. Under the shelter-at-home guidelines, people may leave their homes to go to grocery stores, pharmacies, liquor stores, garden centers, and hardware and big-box stores such as Lowe's and Home Depot for essential items, while hopefully practicing social distancing, hand washing, and wearing face masks and gloves. Everyone takes the seriousness of the virus to different degrees of acceptance or denial, and each one must take the consequences of his/her actions. I have heard many people question the selection of what is essential or non-essential. Why are liquor stores and garden centers allowed to be open, while other businesses are not? It goes back to one's definition of essential. It may be for your physical health, the sanity of adults and children (of all ages), and the protection of some businesses with perishable items, such as the garden centers. Australia's prime minister Scott Morrison even referred to jigsaw puzzles as essential and allowed people to leave the house to buy them. The farming industry has been particularly hard hit as they have lost deliveries to many of their large accounts with restaurants which are closed. It hurts to see farmers plow under many of their seasonal crops and dairy farmers dumping their milk for lack of sales.

All of us live in different types and sizes of homes. The value of a home garden in these challenging times becomes more "essential" with each passing day. As I walk around my garden with my two sous-gardeners, Labs Spencer and Winston, on a beautiful, sunny spring day, everything looks normal and all is right with the world. Mother Nature is unaware of the pandemic; spring has arrived right on time. The hydrangeas 'Endless Summer' are setting out their bright green leaves; the hostas and ferns under the old white dogwood tree have poked their heads through winter's soil and double in size and beauty every day. The *Rosa rugosa* Roseraie de L'Hay roses are doing their annual "Phoenix" behavior of rising from dead-looking winter limbs to set new green leaves and flower buds which will be a blaze of rich crimson-purple flower all summer. My perennial flowers are marching right along into spring. The garden world looks normal, but the rest of the world and its people are not.

Garden centers are doing a brisk business as people now have time at home to do the things that they normally have no time to do. I have not yet visited any local garden centers; it is too early to plant annuals (I usually do that around Mother's Day), and I have enough reblooming perennials to fill most of my garden plots. If you are reluctant to venture out, other than to grocery stores, and you have an existing perennial garden, now is a good time to divide them. You can multiply your plants without spending any money or wasting gas. You can divide many perennials in spring or fall, but I prefer to do it in the spring. There is usually more rainfall and the temperatures are not too hot for the plants. Very easy perennials to divide and replant are: hosta, ferns, day lilies, coreopsis, *Rudbeckia*, lamb's ear, asters, yarrow, phlox, coral bells, cranesbill, false indigo, speedwell, and shasta daisies.

If you would like to grow some vegetables now, but you don't have the space or inclination for a separate vegetable garden, consider interplanting some small, fast-to-mature vegetables amongst your flowers. I have planted with very good results the following vegetables: spinach (select ones that don't bolt in the heat), swiss chard, peppers (there are many different varieties and shapes, and they are very attractive), cherry tomatoes, baby carrots, dwarf blueberries and wild strawberries, leaf lettuce, and the many wonderful herbs.

Are your children getting bored stuck at home? Take them on a safari. Now the last time I checked, there were no recent sightings of elephants, lions, or zebras in

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Hostas and ferns welcoming spring.

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Continued from page 1.

Town Commission Votes Cook as New President

they lost a key administrative staffer. In later comments, Commissioner Klobukowski said, "I take my job seriously. If I can help staff, why not do it? I don't micromanage."

Commissioner Martin Radigan said that this issue had become a "distraction to the town manager and a problem" and added that other towns have a similar policy.

Commissioner Kerri Cook said of Klobukowski, "I don't question your commitment. I can do my work at home, and you can, too."

In a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner Klobukowski voting no, the commissioners decided to make the policy permanent.

Commissioner Dickerson next said that she is not going to run for reelection in November but said that the leadership issue for the town needs to be addressed. She moved to have Klobukowski removed from his position as president. In doing so, even though she is the vice president, she would not move up to the presidency. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it passed, 4-1, with Klobukowski voting no.

Commissioner Dickerson next moved to make Commissioner Cook the new president. Commissioner Radigan seconded the measure. The motion passed, 4-1, with Commissioner Klobukowski again voting no.

In comments after the vote, incoming President Cook said, "This global and local emergency is unlike any public health, economic, or political issue that any of us have ever seen. Because of that truth, the Town of Poolesville's immediate focus must be the Covid-19 pandemic and its economic impact on our residents and businesses. At the same time, the everyday management of the town is a basic necessity that must continue uninterrupted. I want to thank our former president, Commissioner Klobukowski, for his heartfelt service to our town. Though I ascended into the role of President of the Commission in an unconventional way, my commitment to and passion for Poolesville [are] as strong as ever. I know we will get through this together, and I am committed to helping make it happen."

Continued from page 5.

Tidbits

Customers may order their items from the site and pay for their items online. Customer packages would be transported to the Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church and labeled on Thursdays for distribution.

Pre-packaged orders will be delivered to Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church (PMUMC) at 19821 Elgin Drive. Signs will be posted to help guide cars. Every family/person should write their names on a large piece of paper. Families then must show their names to the staff on site, and staff will put orders in the backs of cars or car trunks to minimize human contact. Everyone in line will remain in their cars until they reach the front of the line.

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Monocacy Wildlife and Nature

The Yellow Birds of Spring

By Susan Petro

March has arrived! Along with longer days and hopes of warmer temperatures, now is the time for both current and future birding enthusiasts to start watching out for returning colorful birds. Some of these brightly-colored birds simply pass through on their way further north, while others make the fields, marshes, and woods of the Agricultural Reserve their homes for the summer. A variety of warblers, orioles, vireos, yellow-bellied sapsuckers, and meadowlarks sport bright yellow plumage to add color to our birding population. Additionally, the area goldfinches are exchanging their drab olive winter plumage for their sunny yellow feathers.

Many of these colorful yellow birds tend to stay in the meadows and woods and aren't a common sight at home feeding stations. To find the biggest variety of these birds, it is best to grab a pair of binoculars, a hat, some bug spray, and head out to where the birds are most likely to be.

Winter for birding enthusiasts means slim pickings on most days when out searching for birds. Many varieties of our local birds headed south towards warmer temperatures during the fall months. Other species like the robins went deeper into the woods, leaving many to speculate that they, too, sought warmer climates.

Some year-round birds like cardinals, woodpeckers, and finches don't migrate and are likely much more plentiful at well-stocked feeders with nearby clean water sources. Winter is an excellent time for bird watching at local feeding stations as the natural foods they rely on become much scarcer in the wild, but the bright yellow birds are mostly gone over the winter, leaving enthusiasts looking forward to spring for their return.

Warblers are some of the prettiest and most exciting yellow birds to pass through the Reserve. There are over fifty species of migrating warblers, many of which can be found passing through in the spring and fall or making their homes here during summer to breed and nest. Warblers don't often come to backyard feeders as they mostly eat insects and nest in thickets and woods near sources of water.

The towpath along the C&O Canal and other trails near streams and creeks are excellent places to find warblers. The prothonotary, hooded, yellow, palm, pine, and yellow-rumped warblers are just a small example of the variety of this species that can be found nearby. They can be distinguished by their color patterns and vocal calls. A good birding book or online resource can help both beginning and expert birders distinguish each variety, some of which look very similar.

Many people associate the Baltimore oriole with the black and orange colorations shown on the attire of our nearby professional baseball team sporting the same name; however, the female Baltimore oriole is covered with orangish-yellow feathers. Orchard oriole females also have beautiful yellow plumage.

Eastern meadowlarks are known to migrate from areas further north of the Agricultural Reserve but can be found here year-round. They are a chunky, medium-sized bird with a yellow front and black V shape on their chest. The breeding ones are brighter yellow than their non-breeding counterparts. The meadowlarks are often found in horse pastures and other farm fields and grasslands. They can be seen sitting on fenceposts or powerlines, serenading their potential mates.

Meadowlarks are classified as a common bird in steep decline which shows how the habitat provided by our open spaces in the Ag Reserve are critical to their continued survival.

Now is the time to throw out the myth that all area birds except perhaps robins, cardinals, and blue jays are adorned with drab brown and gray feathers. As the weather warms, a good motivation to get out on the local trails and fields is to see how many species of yellow birds one can identify along the way.

You'll soon find yourself talking about the brilliant yellow prothonotary warbler you spotted down by the canal, the orchard oriole singing high above the sunflower fields, or the meadowlark you noticed while riding at a nearby horse farm. Of course, you've already added the goldfinch's favorite diet of Niger thistle or black-oiled sunflower seeds to your backyard feeder to watch them right outside your back door.

The yellow birds of spring are coming soon; it's time get out there and see them.



American Goldfinch



Orchard Oriole



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Continued from page 1.

Seneca Academy Announces Decision to Close Amid COVID-19 Woes

how. Parents and alumni viewed the “village of Seneca Academy” as something special that had to be saved.

The Seneca Academy culture emphasizes supporting each other as a “village,” both in and out of the classroom, pulling together to offer whatever assistance is needed. Students are taught to view challenges as “village dilemmas” which they work together to solve. This culture permeates throughout the school. School staff, students, alumni, and parents work tirelessly to collaboratively solve problems.

Reflecting on the possible loss of the school, grandparent Ann Brown stated, the school “challenges my grandson but also gives him the room he needs to learn at his own pace... [it] offers more time for discovery learning, which I consider vital to his mental and emotional wellbeing. This is a school which teaches the whole child, beyond just the academic.”

A spokesperson for the school noted that each child has a unique learning style, and the curriculum at Seneca Academy provides teachers the flexibility to leverage those unique methods, rather than forcing students into a single approach. This includes dynamic classroom setups, collaboration across multiple grades, opportunities for students to serve in leadership roles, frequent field trips to engage in the world around them, and frequent exposure to unstructured time and outdoor learning in a serene, nature-filled setting, among other methods.

At Seneca Academy, the goal is for students to be taught how to learn, not just what to learn. Parent Bianca Finkelstein describes the school as “a place that truly bridges children’s minds and hearts and addresses my daughter’s unique developmental nuances.”

The Save Seneca Academy committee encourages all who want to help to reach out to SaveSenecaAcademy@gmail.com and to follow them at Save Seneca Academy on facebook. They are looking for supporters, whether to pledge a contribution, offer to speak to large donors on their behalf, or even to volunteer assistance. “Every bit helps.”



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Continued from page 4.

A Survey of Our Inheritance: Robert Dawson’s Stone House

nearby; Henrietta and the three children she had with Robert are buried in a separate plot.

When Robert died in 1824, his land holdings (776 acres) and the home were divided among four sons. The sons continued to farm the land, but there’s no clear evidence that any chose to live in the stone home. By 1875, another home north of the stone home had been built by one of Robert’s grandsons (the home is still there today). It appears that this new home was chosen by many members of the Dawson and Allnutt families as their residence over the years.

Did anyone ever live in the stone home built by Robert in 1808? It seems likely that at some point members of the Dawson Family, which was rapidly expanding through the early nineteenth century, would have occupied the home on at least a temporary basis. Additionally, the Sugarland Ethnohistory Project, led by Gwen Reese, has a picture of the home from the 1970s that is labeled as “slave quarters.” It’s also possible that some of the enslaved labor Robert and his sons used to cultivate the 776 acres lived in the home as well.

The greatest details we have on Robert’s home come from a 1936 survey conducted by members of the Works Progress Administration as part of their Historical Records Survey. The WPA also developed architectural drawings of the home, which are pretty awesome in helping to visualize the layout.

Although no longer with us, I’ve been told that at least some of the stones from Robert’s home were used in the construction of a relatively new home (built in the 1980s or 1990s) on the property.

To see more pictures of the home, please visit historicagreserve.wordpress.com.

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In Your Own Backyard

A Visit to the Paw Paw Tunnel

By Jon Wolz

Last December, Pat White of the C&O Canal Association invited me to participate in a hike she was planning on leading on March 4 at the Paw Paw Tunnel along the C&O Canal. The tunnel is located in Maryland across the Potomac River from Paw Paw, West Virginia. The purpose of the hike was to show National Park Service employees of the C&O Canal National Historical Park the five survey stones that were placed in 1836 on top of the mountain in a line to help in the construction of the tunnel. Pat has been leading hikes to this area since the early 1990s and leads other hikes along the canal on behalf of the C&O Canal Association. She would like to pass the baton to me for leading this hike and other canal hikes.

The purpose of the tunnel was to eliminate six miles of winding canal construction along a part of the Potomac River known as the Paw Paw Bends. The morning of March 4 was cool, and I dressed in layers. I was to meet Pat and the other hikers at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot near the tunnel, a two-hour drive from Poolesville which became more and more scenic as I approached Paw Paw. The entrance to the parking lot at the Canal is located near the north entrance of the tunnel and is just beyond the bridge that crosses the Potomac River in Maryland. The north entrance to the tunnel is a half mile downstream from the parking lot and is near milepost 156. The south end is near milepost 155. As I turned into the parking lot, Pat was already there. Eventually, a total of fourteen people arrived to go on the hike. We all had packed lunches and water. The plan was to follow the Tunnel Hill Trail up the mountain and then go off the trail to the top to look for the survey stones. Once we found the last stone, we were to walk back to the end of the steep Tunnel Hill Trail taking it down to the towpath. At the towpath, we were to enter the south entrance of the tunnel and walk through the tunnel back to our vehicles.

At about 10:15 a.m., we began our walk towards the tunnel. Near the north entrance of the tunnel, we veered off the towpath to the mountain trail. This trail is steep and had some switchbacks that made the hiking a little easier. Spring beauties were in bloom in the bright sunshine. I removed a layer of clothing as the day began to warm. Near the top, the views were spectacular looking down at the Potomac River and surrounding mountains. Once we got to the top of the mountain, Pat led us off the trail where we soon found the first of five survey stones. From there we walked up, down, and sideways along hills to each of the remaining stones. Along our walk, we saw earthen mounds with rock rubble that had been left behind by tunnel workers who blasted out the mountain while working on the tunnel. Once we got to the fifth stone, we stopped to have lunch. Also, at this location was a wooden stake in the ground with writing on it that said, "APPROX Shaft A." The trail was very steep and at times narrow; an incorrect step and fall could be hazardous. From the trail, we could see the towpath below us on the south end of the tunnel with waterfalls cascading down the shale rocks into the canal prism. Also, we could see the final resting spot of rockslides on our right and across the canal. The rockslides on the opposite side of the canal left huge rock slabs in the canal prism. Once on the towpath, we headed towards the south tunnel entrance. Inside, I could see the light at the end of the tunnel, and it looked very small. The tunnel is 3,118 feet long and was wide enough for only one canal boat and mules to go through at a time. The cool tunnel became darker and darker as I walked. Periodically, water dripped on me from the ceiling, and I walked through some puddles. The tunnel towpath is uneven at times. I came upon a crop of mushrooms growing in the darkness on the edge of the towpath against the brick wall. I used the light on my cellphone to guide me through the darkness. The wooden railings are original with rope grooves worn into them in places left by the boat towlines. I was glad to get to the other side of the tunnel and back into the sunshine. Our walk lasted about three hours. Walking the Tunnel Hill Trail over the mountain back to the towpath is two miles and is steep and strenuous.

Work started on the tunnel in June 1836, and it was estimated it would take two years to complete. Workers used black powder to blast through rock, used picks and shovels, and hauled out rubble by horse carts. They dug from both ends of the mountain. They also dug vertical shafts from the hilltop down to the



Pat White stands by an 1836 Paw Paw Tunnel survey stone and tells hikers about the history of the construction of the tunnel.

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Continued on page 17.

Continued from page 6.

The Essential Garden

the Monocacy area, but you can take them on a backyard Garden Safari. As our megafauna encounters may have been put on hold, wildlife has not been put on hold. There are creatures outside your back door that find a small flower bed bigger than all the plains of the Serengeti. A wilderness of dangers and delights live on, below or above the soil line. A garden for humans is a place of peace and calm, but for others, it is a daily struggle of the survival of the fittest and smartest. Your backyard can be a jungle for your children to explore. It is the home of butterflies, worms, flies, bumblebees, wasps, hornets, spiders, rabbits, moles, opossums, racoons, groundhogs, foxes, toads, owls, voles (not to be confused with moles), slugs, and birds. Have your children keep a journal of sightings and photos and info on these wonderful critters of the garden and sky. It can be their outdoor real (not virtual) biology and botany lessons.

Now more than ever, we need our gardens for "essential" reasons. Enjoy it now and let us look forward to the return to the normal "essential."

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2. Commissioner Jim Brown
3. Chen, owner of House of Poolesville
4. Commissioner Kerri Cook
5. Eric Rose, owner of Bassett's restaurant
6. Commissioner Martin Radigan
7. Seth Rivard, Poolesville Town Manager
8. Commissioner Val Dickerson



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I wanted to thank the community for the overwhelming support that has been given to Bassett's and the working staff. I cannot appreciate it enough and am grateful for everyone that has and continues to order from us.

I hope that this tough time ends soon, and we can get back to a semi-normal state of affairs. We all miss seeing everyone at the bar and dining in the restaurant.

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Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

Present Crime

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Vandalism: 17500 block of West Willard Road.

Past Crime: 1890 to 1899

Montgomery County was in the midst of a swine flu epidemic that had killed many hogs in the county. It had been rumored that the epidemic had started on the farm of Sheriff John Collier, so scientists from the Agriculture Department paid a visit to his farm. They conducted experiments on nine hogs out of his drove of sixty-four and found that there were signs of the flu, but all of the hogs were improving. The agents declared that they would return to the farm when a vaccine was available.

Citizens of the Burnt Mills area of the county were indignant over the actions of Deputy Sheriff Jones. A holiday picnic had been underway, and during the merriment, two characters from Washington arrived, set up a card table, and began a hell game. After a while, it was apparent that the game was fixed and those who had lost money demanded that the men be arrested. Deputy Jones heard their complaints and investigated. He arrested both men and took them before Magistrate Condiel who was present. Condiel held court on the spot and sentenced the men to a fine of \$54 or a year in jail. When they could not come up with the money, Deputy Jones started out with them for the Rockville jail but decided to stop at a tavern first. He was distracted, and the convicted men made their escape. The High Sheriff was informed the next day and was not pleased.

Services were underway at the Hunting Hill Baptist Church (near Travilah) when two brothers, Collie and Lee Coe, entered the church and began all sorts of mischief described as banging a tambourine on their knee, singing inappropriate songs, and running up and down the aisles. Church members suspected that the brothers were drunk. At the conclusion of the service, the preacher remonstrated with the boys, and the Coe brothers insulted him with foul language. Eventually, the brothers were arrested and released on bond pending trial. When the trial date came, the Coes were not present and a warrant was issued. Finally, they were located in upstate New York, and Sheriff Thompson went to New York to take custody of them.

Considerable excitement spread from Poolesville to Darnestown and eventually to Rockville when the body of Peter Fletcher was found in the C&O Canal. It was stated with much authority that Fletcher's hands and feet were tied together and that an obvious murder had occurred. After, an inquiry by Deputy Embry and Doctor Pratt revealed that a boatman had found the body and had tied it to a tree so it would not float away. There was still money in Fletcher's pants pocket, and it was reported that he had been heavily intoxicated. What had started out as a murder was ruled an accidental death.

Charles Peyton, once a deputy sheriff in Montgomery County, was found in D.C. carrying a pistol. Peyton protested that since he was a deputy sheriff, he had the right to carry the pistol. D.C. police sent a telegram to Sheriff Thompson who replied that Peyton had once been a deputy but had been fired. Peyton was then jailed.

Some of the material in this column was obtained from the archives of the Washington Post.

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Remembrances

Lillian Holt Smith

Lillian Holt Smith "Pinkie" of Adamstown, passed away March 26 at the age of 96. Pinkie was born in Smithfield, Rhode Island and was the oldest and last remaining of the four children of the late Harold and Mabel (Hassum) Holt of Warwick Neck, Rhode Island.

Upon graduation from the Samuel Gorton High School in Providence, she completed her nursing education at the New England Baptist Hospital School of Nursing (Class of 1944) in Boston. Pinkie then joined the Army Nurse Corps "hoping to see the world," but as a highly-valued operating room nurse, her skills kept her stateside working with orthopedic and plastic surgeons doing reconstructive surgery at the Cushing General Hospital in Farmington, Massachusetts, a military hospital for soldiers wounded during

WWII. After the war, she continued OR nursing at the Gallinger Hospital in Washington, D.C. It was there that she met her husband of forty-seven years, the late (1995) Gordon Murdoch Smith, MD, playing in a hospital league baseball game.

Pinkie devoted her early married life to helping her husband establish his family practice in Upper Montgomery County and in raising their two sons, Geoffrey and Timothy, in Barnesville. She was an avid volunteer in the community, serving at the YWCA, the Red Cross, and her favorite, at Frederick Memorial Hospital from 1984 to 2003. She served on the Board of Directors for the Red Cross and was a past president of the Montgomery Co. Medical Aux. She was a member of the Frederick Memorial Hospital Aux and the Frederick Memorial Medical Society. At Buckingham's Choice, where she lived for the past thirteen years, she volunteered in the gift shop, and was the cluster chair for her floor, welcoming new residents. She was an active participant in the Episcopal congregation.

She is survived by her sons, Geoffrey Murdoch Smith (wife Lynn) of Reisterstown and son Timothy Holt Smith (wife Lynn) of Pasadena; grandchildren, Megan Roberts (John), Abigail Tower (Jason), Jared Smith (Beth), Andrew Smith (Tabitha), Patrick Smith (Katelyn), and Jason Langley (Bethany); and ten great-grandchildren. She is also mourned by many friends.

A celebration of her life will be scheduled for a future date at Buckingham's Choice in Adamstown.

If desired, memorial donations can be made in her name to: KAT6A Foundation, 3 Louise Drive, West Nyack, NY 10994.



Lillian Holt Smith

Michele Anne Cropp

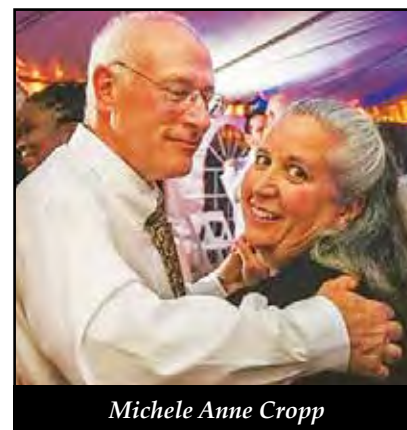
Michele Anne Cropp died suddenly on March 22. Michele was the wife of Dr. Craig Cropp, mother of Michael Cropp and dedicated, loving stepmom to Matthew Cropp. She grew up in Rockville and was a graduate of the University of Maryland.

She is remembered as a strong woman, kind, vibrant, passionate, funny, and totally dedicated to her family. In her personal life as well as her professional life, Michele was a passionate advocate for all children. She had been active with Montgomery County 4-H clubs for over two decades, and for many years, served as a livestock superintendent during the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair. As a much-loved educational consultant, her advocacy for children and their education contributed greatly to bettering the lives of many Montgomery County Public School students. With her husband, Michele dedicated over twenty years to raising Angus cattle on their Cropp Family Farm. She was a resounding voice for agriculture in Montgomery County. She was elected a two-term president of the Montgomery County Farm Bureau, a member of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee, a member of the Montgomery Agriculture Producers, and she was active in the American Angus Association. Her very wise words and ever-sound advice will be missed by the agricultural community.

Michele will remain present in this lovely 2019 urban farming documentary, Losing Ground, which shows her staunch commitment to agriculture.

She is survived by her brothers David and Jim Dubinsky, and her sister Mary Dubinsky Waggoner.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair with a note on the memo line of the check: Michele Cropp. A memorial bench will be placed on the fairgrounds in 2021 to recognize her contributions to the agricultural community and the support she provided to the fair for many years.



Michele Anne Cropp

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Continued from page 12.

A Visit to the Paw Paw Tunnel

tunnel level that provided extra working faces in each direction. Labor disputes, labor violence, funding shortfalls, illness, and work stoppages slowed construction. There was no work done from 1842 to 1847. In November 1848, construction resumed, and in October 1850, the tunnel opened for navigation, ten years behind schedule. The tunnel has a brick interior liner. The tunnel was too narrow and did not allow room for boats to pass. The first boat to arrive at either end had the right of way. Sometimes captains refused to yield. One standoff lasted several days until a canal company employee threw green cornstalks onto a roaring fire at the upwind tunnel end and forced the canal boats in the tunnel out with smoke. The National Park Service has made major repairs to the tunnel over the years allowing for safe passage for visitors. There are interpretive historical signs at the parking lot and near the north entrance of the tunnel. Since my hike, on the heels of stay-at-home directives, the parking lot has been closed, but this would make a nice adventure when things return to normal.

Continued from page 4.

Selecting a New Commission President: The Full Story

Monocacy Monocle by commissioner Val Dickerson, the matter could no longer be simply prevented from discussion by the president, and a discussion ensued to change the restrictive use of town hall by commissioners throughout the working day. By a vote of 4-1, the restriction was passed to permanent status. Subsequently, a motion was then made and seconded to replace Klobukowski as president with Commissioner Kerri Cook named the new president.

Residents should consider this unfortunate series of events in its entirety when determining whether the commissioners were correct in their collective decision.

For not following a town ordinance that was voted on and approved by the majority of the commission and for attempting to restrict public criticism about flouting that rule in an open town meeting, Klobukowski was justly reprimanded, and the commission took the right action.

This report was intended to be a dispassionate recital of events. Simply put: All commissioners must follow all official town ordinances and other rules set by the commission as a group, and no president should be allowed to prevent critical discussion of his role from discussion at a public meeting.

In this case, I believe the commissioners decided appropriately. I end by reiterating that we, as a town, should nevertheless be appreciative of Jerry Klobukowski for his otherwise long and dedicated service.

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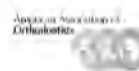
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Celebrating 31 Years of Service

Current COVID-19 Information Regarding Pets and Other Animals

By Peter H. Eeg, BSc, DVM, CVLF

Part of the mission of veterinary medicine is to serve the public good as well as the health and welfare of animals. To this end, we are updating you on current COVID-19 information provided by the AVMA and CDC related to human/animal interactions and COVID-19.

Infection in companion animals and wild animals has been given a significant amount of press over the last weeks. There were documented reports of several tigers and one lion at the Bronx Zoo contracting COVID-19 from an asymptomatic keeper. There have also been reports of COVID-19 being identified in dogs and cats that live with infected owners.

There is evidence that, in large cats, COVID-19 can cause mild clinical signs and reproduce in lung tissue. There is no evidence of transmission from one large cat to another. There is also no evidence that humans can become infected from close interaction with large cats.

Dogs appear to be very poorly infected with little virus replication. Dogs are primarily fomites (carriers of a disease without infection or transmission) where the COVID-19 virus is present on the hair or in the mouth of dogs that live with infected humans. There is no evidence that dogs can infect humans from a limited infection or show clinical signs, so if you have the COVID-19 infection or are in quarantine for suspected exposure, you should keep your animal in quarantine with you and not let others care for, walk, feed, or otherwise interact with your dog until you are found to be clear of COVID-19.

Cats and ferrets appear to be able to acquire mild infections from direct contact with infected humans. They show minimal clinical signs. Cats do appear to shed to other cats in close proximity to them. They are not able to transmit the virus to humans. Cats and ferrets can also be fomites like dogs, so, when humans have COVID-19 or are in quarantine due to potential exposure, they must quarantine their cats and ferrets using the same precautions as are used for dogs.

COVID-19 has been experimentally demonstrated to infect several other species, including Rhesus macaques. The virus did not readily infect pigs, chickens, or ducks.

It remains critical to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds after interacting with a pet that may have been associated with an infected human. The COVID-19 virus appears to survive on dog, cat, and ferret hair for up to 48 hours. Trying to disinfect a pet using one of the commonly-used sprays is not recommended and may injure the pet. Simply limiting contact for 48 hours and maintaining good hygiene should protect.



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