

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Monthly Newspaper

December 2023 • Volume XIX, Number 10



'Tis the season for cheerily-decorated homes. See more in Family Album on page 2.



Falcon Olivia Cong has done it for three years in a row. Find out what she did in School News on page 11.



These girl scouts read a very special poem on a very special day. Learn more on page 16.



The town Christmas tree is bigger than ever! See more photos of the Holiday Lighting Festival on page 24.



Family Album



*Winter Lights
of Poolesville*



This is Norman Rockwell's original painting called Santa's Surprise. We thank the Rojas family, Cynthia, Jorge, and Leo, of Poolesville for doing a magnificent recreation of the painting.

Town Government

Commissioners Hear Report on Performance of Well System

By Link Hoewing

At their regular November 6 meeting, the commissioners of the Town of Poolesville heard a major report on the performance of the town's well system concerning the levels of PFAS (scientific name per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), so-called "forever chemicals" in the water. There are thousands of PFAS that are used in everything from various household chemicals to pesticides. They are human-made chemicals known for their persistence and bioaccumulation, and there is growing concern about their health effects. The town has moved aggressively to test various means of removing these chemicals from the wells. The report, prepared by the staff and presented by Town Manager Wade Yost, provided an overview of the level of PFAS in various wells and approaches to eliminate them.

Before Yost's report, several local citizens appeared to express support for the town's decision to "opt in" to Montgomery County's relatively new pesticide law. The three women—stressing that they are both local citizens and mothers—said they were pleased that the town had opted into the county's ordinance. They said they grew concerned about the issue when they heard testimony at the October 16 town meeting from J. D. and Julie Kuhlman, owners of a local landscaping company. The Kuhlman's had appeared to criticize what they had said was the "lack of transparency" in how the town adopted the new policy, the lack of an education program for local citizens and businesses about the policy and what it means, and what they say is excessive and redundant regulation by the county given the already extensive state and federal agency oversight of pesticides and their application and use.

The three citizens, Samra Saric, Lauren Maragh, and Cristine Holland, said that we should "always think about the children" in areas like this. They pointed out that there is ample evidence that artificial pesticides are dangerous, and they worried about how their use is "affecting our water system." They wondered "why this decision is so controversial" and urged the commissioners not to act to reverse it. They said they had "no idea" Poolesville is the only jurisdiction that had not taken this action.

Commissioner Sarah Paksima commented that the commissioners have made no decision to "... revisit the action we took. We are simply holding an open hearing to get input from all parties."

Commissioner Edward Reed said, "We need to get to the facts. Opinions are useful, but not all opinions are facts."

Commission President Jim Brown welcomed the input but said, "We have the most-tested water system of any municipality. We are also at the forefront of PFAS mitigation," and it is important to ensure our water system is as clean and safe as possible.

The commissioners invited the citizens to come back to the open hearing which is scheduled for November 20 to testify and hear some experts offer thoughts as well.

Yost opened his presentation by explaining that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is in the process of adopting rules that would limit PFAS to four parts per trillion in water. Yost said six of the town's ten operating wells contain some level of PFAS. Most are at very low single-digit levels but two, Wells 2 and 3, exceed twenty parts per trillion. The town has been aware of this problem for some time and already installed special filtering devices using carbon granules that has so far eliminated all PFAS from Well 3. The town's tests so far show the filters last about six months before needing to be changed. Based on this analysis, the cost of replacing filtering "media" (charcoal) twice a year would be about \$42,000.

Yost added that these two wells are among the best producing wells in the entire system. One of the challenges in installing filtering systems is that many of the existing well houses do not have enough space to allow for the placement of the relatively large equipment that is involved. For example, one well is between two houses and as a result has a very small well house.

Given these facts and the costs of both the filtering equipment and the operating costs of changing out the media regularly, it is not yet known how much it will cost to install needed filtering technology. Yost said it is assumed we may need to retrofit all wells, but as of now, some of the wells operate at levels of PFAS that are below the EPA limits.

Continued on page 12.

**From our Family to Yours...
Happy Holidays!
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in 2024!
Gail and Maureen**



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Rande(m) Thoughts Tidbits of Hope: Reflections on Our Simple Joys

By Rande Davis

Hope is only experienced in the future tense. As such, its full essence is dependent on a better tomorrow, and a better tomorrow is the purview of the young. As we enter this season of profound hope, even in these most chaotic of times, my heart has been restored, not by big, monumental events, but recently by seemingly trivial moments, things experienced or expressed of little consequence but offering glimpses of joy beyond their surface value. Like the little lights on a Christmas tree, these recent tidbits of hope have brightened my days in surprising ways.

The first occurred during my participation with Poolesville's Post 247 American Legion at the final home football game this past October. This was the second year the legion carried a rolled-up garrison flag (20' x 38') to the fifty-yard line prior to the singing of our national anthem. As the music began, a group of over thirty flag-holders slowly unfurled the flag so that its full beauty unraveled before the anticipating crowd. As the anthem played, we shook the flag, emulating a waving star-spangled banner. This year, though, was a bit different from last year. My generation of vets was short of personnel, so members of the poms and other students jumped in to help us. The emotional impact of the symbolism of passing this legacy from the old to the young was palpable, and when it was over, something one of the senior boys said stirred my heart the most. As we marched off the field, he beamed with pride and said to no one in particular, "This is the coolest thing I have done as a senior." Yeah, this boy gets it.

A bit later, our young people came through again. The event of unfolding the flag gave special honor to Marine Gunny Richard Remp, a three-war vet (World War II, Korea, and Vietnam). His story of devotion to America was broadcast to the crowd just prior to the national anthem. Afterwards, Gunny stayed to watch some of the game, sitting on his rollator, on the sidelines at midfield. When he decided to leave,

he tried to quietly slip away by being wheeled off the field toward his car. Then it happened. Without a cue or direction from anyone, as he was rolling away, the crowd spontaneously rose and gave him a final rousing burst of farewell cheer, expressing admiration for an old marine. Yeah, these young people really do get it.

For the last three years, Heritage Montgomery has been working with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to enhance teacher understanding of local heritage, cultural, and natural resources and to connect school curriculum to our area sites and museums linking county museums, exhibits, and programs with the Standards of Learning used by MCPS.

It was just a few years ago that Poolesville Elementary principal, Doug Robbins, joined me in helping to make sure our PES students take a day trip the Seneca Schoolhouse by the fourth grade each year. This one-room schoolhouse experience requires each visiting student to assume the persona of a young person from Poolesville's past who attended the school. Many of their family names are our street and road names today. While thousands of students from the region had visited this living history experience, mostly from private schools, our own public school students had not. Now they do. Important lessons to be learned. Yeah, Mr. Robbins and our PES students get it.

Recently, my wife said to me, "Do you want to take a W?" The simple joy that expression exudes for us would escape understanding by anyone else. For us, it reflected a moment of remembrance for the joy our pet beagle brought us when she was alive. You see, she knew the word "walk" but not that "W" meant "walk." If we were trying to sneak out for a walk without her, we would not say the word walk out loud. Using W now triggers thoughts of simple joy from the past.

All these reflections of hope and joy bring me to one last simple, yet very profound joy experienced for Christians this season. For Christians, this season of immense joy and hope comes not from a profound or earth-shattering event but from the simple birth of an infant. Reflecting on the babe in a manger, as simple as that is, brings us thoughts of hope and joy exponentially greater than its seeming simplicity.

Local News

Local Nonprofit Offers Fresh Veggie Drive

Food plays an important role in this season of harvests and holidays. By January, we may find there's been too much. Unfortunately, for some of our neighbors, there will have been too little. This year, Community FarmShare, a Poolesville-based nonprofit supporting local farmers and addressing nutrition insecurity, has launched a novel food-drive concept with their Fresh Veggie Drive.

Fresh produce is growing ever more expensive for families facing food insecurity, and it is the most requested food at food pantries. Community FarmShare has leveraged its partnerships with Montgomery County farmers and food pantries by building an online platform where donors can select fresh, hyper-local vegetables and direct their donation to WUMCO, the Little Free Pantry, or other local food assistance providers. In conjunction with the many programs that collect canned and nonperishable foods at this time of year, the Fresh

Veggie Drive brings a nutritional bonus to families in need.

"We realized we are well-positioned to fill an essential dietary need for some of our less fortunate neighbors," said Community FarmShare Executive Director Jennifer Freeman. "Since we began local farm produce food assistance three years ago, we have worked exclusively with local produce farmers to bring the freshest, most nutritious fruits and vegetables to Montgomery County food pantries and to families that struggle to make ends meet. As our May to October programs were wrapping up this year, it became clear that the farmers are still harvesting their fresh fall crops of broccoli, cabbage, spinach, potatoes, and squash, so we built the Fresh Veggie Drive to offer a fresh supplement to the traditional canned food programs."

Donors can shop for fresh veggies to donate at www.communityfarmshare.org/freshveggiedrive, selecting the produce that the farmers have posted for that week. There is an option to select one of four food pantries before checking out with a preferred payment method.

Hoang Edullantes, the Operations Manager at Community FarmShare, emphasized the importance of healthy

Continued on page 9.

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Do you have an interesting story to share?
Send it along to editor@monocacymonocle.com

Tidbits

Poolesville Town Clerk Retires

After serving the people of Poolesville for over forty years, Bobbie Evans will be officially retiring as of December 31 from her position as town clerk. Megan Leibrand, who has been deputy town clerk, will become the new town clerk. Town manager Wade Yost read and presented the official Town Proclamation which, in part, declared December 4 Bobbie Evans Day. She was recognized for her unwavering service and dedication, and for her personal honesty and service to the town government and the residents of Poolesville.



Commission President Jim Brown and Town Manager Wade Yost presented a town proclamation declaring December 4, 2023 officially Bobbie Evans Day.

Bobbie followed another long-term Town Clerk, Nancy Fost.

Bobbie served through four decades of remarkable change and progress for the town that continue to emphasize the values of small town living. During a tumultuous period of uncertainty, she even served as the acting town manager until the issues concerning a rough transition were resolved.

Bobbie will soon be headed to a well-deserved cruise to the Bahamas.

The Tradition of Community Band Returns to Poolesville

The Reserve Wind Ensemble is a brand-new community band that was organized through the Riverworks Arts Program. Already having more than a dozen performers, they have scheduled a December 20 performance at the Poolesville Baptist Church at 6:00 p.m. of holiday classics.

Michelle Palmer, of Yunique Music school, said that if you've ever played a wind instrument at least at a high-school level, she hopes you join them as they form a community band. They practice every Wednesday (7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) at Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms, 19215 Beallsville Rd., in Beallsville. For details or questions, email the director at Michelle@riverworksart.org.

Historic World War I Photo Displayed on Veterans Day

During this year's Poolesville Veterans Day ceremony, Poolesville's Timothy Weigner presented a panoramic photo of the U.S. Marine Corps 13th Regiment that has been passed down in the family for display. Although the 13th Regiment did not engage in combat, it was assigned to provide service of supply and perform guard duties in areas of combat with members scattered throughout western France.



Historic photograph displayed on Veterans Day.

Massive Magic Trick Makes Town Water Tower Disappear

Okay, we're just kidding! When the curtain is dropped, it will still be there, but it will have a brand-new coat of paint.

Markoff's Haunted Forest Location for New Horror Film

WTOP reported on a movie that was filmed at Markoff's Haunted Forest this past month. The feature-length indie horror flick, The Haunted Forest, just wrapped eighteen days of filming Monday night at Markoff's Haunted Forest in Dickerson, Maryland, where the story is set.



Poolesville's water tower is undergoing a facelift.

Continued on page 26.

Merry
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Senior News

Poolesville Seniors Presents Virtual and In-Person Programs

Are you looking for activities that stretch your mind, renew your body, and lift your spirits? Then visit the website for Poolesville Seniors, poolesvilleseniors.org, or call 301-875-7701 to register for a wide variety of virtual and in person events. **Registration is required, but all events are open to the community.** Most in-person events are located at Speer Hall at Poolesville Presbyterian Church, 17800 Elgin Road (Route 109).

December 8

Line Dancing with Ashley Kelch

Whatever your experience, join Ashley for line dancing. Beginning with instruction and practice, come out to join the fun and meet new people. Attendance is limited. Please register early for this in-person event. Snacks provided. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m.

December 12

Seneca Creek State Park Trail Hike

Join Gwen Haney and Karen Dansby for a trail hike in Seneca Creek State Park. The roundtrip hike is five miles long and takes about two hours. The trail is packed dirt with tree roots. Boots are recommended. Water and a snack are advised. Some up and down hills, no rock scrambles, easy to moderate hike. *Kingfisher Overlook parking*. 10:30 a.m.

December 15

Friday Movie Night

Join us for the Friday Movie Night feature, *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*. This highly-anticipated final installment of the iconic franchise is a big, globe-trotting, rip-roaring adventure! Action, adventure. PG-13. Please pre-register for this in-person event. Snacks provided. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m.

December 18

PS Book Club: *The Art Thief*

Join the PS Book Club for a discussion of the December selection, *The Art Thief*, by Michael Finkel, the true story of Stéphane Breitwieser, the world's

most prolific art thief. Nonfiction. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

December 19

Holiday Bingo

Bring a friend or neighbor for an afternoon filled with holiday and regular bingo, congenial conversation, competition, refreshments, and of course, prizes! Wear your favorite fun holiday sweater or hat! You won't want to miss the fun. Open to all ages. *Speer Hall*. 1:00 p.m.

December 21

Historic Ag Reserve Properties with Kenny Sholes

Explore the next historic Ag Reserve Properties with local historian Kenny Sholes who brings us the stories of an array of impressive historic homes, of those who built and lived in them, and the important role they played in American history for centuries. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

Weekly Events

Mondays

Ping Pong Afternoon

Speer Hall. 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

Pickleball. *Poolesville Baptist Church*. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Tuesdays

Tai-Chi with Maureen Ivusic. *Speer Hall* and virtual. 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

Bridge. Snacks provided. Registration required. *Speer Hall*. 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wednesdays

Zumba Gold with Karen McPhatter. *Speer Hall*. 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

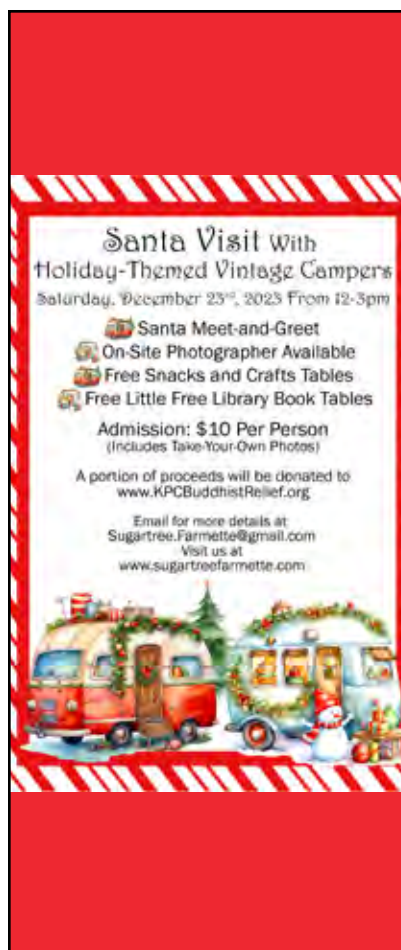
Trivia Game Night

If you love Trivia, come join a team with Poolesville Seniors. For more information, email info@poolesvilleseniors.org. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

Thursdays

Mahjong with Joyce Kral. Beginner and seasoned players are welcome. *Speer Hall*. 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For more information or to register for any of the programs listed here, visit the Poolesville Seniors website: poolesvilleseniors.org.



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Local News

Largest Crowd Ever Comes Together to Honor Veterans

By Rande Davis

With more than seventy participants, the 2023 Veterans Day observance at Whalen Commons had its largest attendance ever. Originally called Armistice Day, the event was established to honor veterans of World War I. The peace agreement (armistice) of that war was signed on November 11 in the early hours and came into force at 11:00 a.m. (the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month), and even after expanding the holiday to include all wars and the name being changed in 1954 to Veterans Day, the tradition has always been for an observance on that day at this exact time.

Commander Julien Singh, Daniel-Jeffers Post 247 American Legion, hosted this day of observance at Whalen Commons. Surrounding the American flag were banners picturing current members of the local legion at the time of their service. The legion, with the much-appreciated cooperation of town staff, also places service banners of local vets on telephone poles around Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

The traditional poem by John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields," written in remembrance of those killed in World War I, was read by local girl scouts, Samantha Posner and Sophie Davies. Nancy Curington graced the participants with her rendition of the national anthem.

Manny and Carroll Thompson, two World War I veterans, were given special honor and remembrance at this year's event. These two men, ancestors of Poolsville's Thompson-Copeland families, did not get the recognition they deserved when returning home from World War I. To rectify that oversight, the two soldiers were officially welcomed home and recognized for their brave service to the nation by Post 247. A copy of the book, Scott's Official History of the American Negro in World War I, was presented to the Copeland family by Glenn Norris, a

Continued on page 11.

Charles H. Jamison
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Garden

Winter Greens For Wildlife

By Maureen O'Connell

Although monarch butterflies and hummingbirds have headed south for the winter, there is still a spectacular world of winter wildlife right outside your window. Many gardeners carefully plan for birds, butterflies, insects, and small mammals with food and shelter during the warm months of the year; they diligently seek the best plants for pollinators.

What happens in your backyard in December, January, February, and March to help wildlife survive the cold? You can hang multiple birdfeeders from trees, but there is more to their survival than food alone. They need water and shelter from harsh winter winds, sleet, and snow. The spring garden catalogues will soon be crowding your mailbox. Now is the time to plan on selecting trees and shrubs to plant this spring to help wildlife make it through the winter. As always, I only recommend plants that do well in my backyard for they can also do well in your Monocacy yard.

In the winter, your best choice is evergreens. Besides brightening the winter landscape, they are valuable sources of food and shelter for birds and other wildlife. Choose native plants as they save money and water, have better resistance to local weather conditions, demand less maintenance, and help restore natural habitats. Animals need plants in all stages all year: live and dead, green and brown, upright and fallen. Don't forget to provide leafy blankets. I don't like the seemingly-innocuous leafblowers; besides their loud noise and inefficient gas engines, they generate large amounts of air pollution and particulate matter. If you feel that you must rid your yard of leaves, use a rake. For the leaves on your grass areas, use the lawnmower to grind them up and then add it to your gardens as a wonderful garden soil amendment. Bumblebees, hummingbirds, moths, caterpillars, and toads need protective layers of decaying plants to keep them warm and protected all winter. That is why I don't completely clean my garden beds in the fall. That can wait until springcleaning time. Leaves around trees, shrubs, and perennials provide winter refuge for rabbits and foraging birds. Listed below are some of my favorite hardy evergreens that grow very well in our Monocacy area.

American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)

There are about twenty native species and more than one hundred exotic hollies. Evergreen hollies are especially good shelter for many birds and small mammals. Mockingbirds, bluebirds, and Cedar Waxwings are especially fond of holly berries. In our area, the American holly does very well. The stout, stiff branches of this pyramidal evergreen bear dark green, non-glossy, spine-tipped leaves. It ranges in height from twenty-five feet to as tall as sixty feet. Hollies are dioecious, meaning that they need male and female plants in order to produce seeds, which are their bright red berries, so if some of your hollybushes do not have berries, they may be male and simply cannot produce berries. Your tree needs a female.

Northern Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*)

Bayberry is an upright, rounded, dense shrub with semi-evergreen dark green, leathery leaves. It has small waxy, persistent blue-gray fruit, which adds winter interest and attracts many species of birds, while it provides them food and shelter.

The seed-filled cones of spruces, firs, pines, and many others appeal to nuthatches, finches, grosbeaks, chickadees, and other seed-eating birds. Junipers and yews also provide a feast of berrylike cones for species like waxwings, robins, bluebirds, and sparrows. Some of these birds might not be around during the colder winter months, but they will appreciate any extra food during the other months. Many trees and shrubs have pros and cons. Do some research before you purchase any of them to be sure that they will fit into your landscape



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Continued from page 4.

Local Nonprofit Offers Fresh Veggie Drive

food options: "We know that without fresh fruits and vegetables in the diet, there's a high chance chronic health issues can develop, and this is a big problem, even here in Montgomery County. The locally-grown food we pack each week is helping to fill a gap for the families we serve."

Continued from page 8.

Winter Greens for Wildlife

and satisfy your needs. The right plant in the right place is my best advice.

The American Pussywillow (*Salix discolor*)

When gardeners think of the first flowers of spring, they think of snowdrops, crocus, and daffodils, but in our area, they don't even come close in bloom season as the earliest bloomers of all: the pussywillow. This wonderful tree is a great example of how a native plant provides habitat and supports native wildlife. It is also dioecious. The males have the larger showier catkins, while the female catkin is smaller and greenish. The catkins are the flowering parts of the plant. The fuzzy "fur coats" keep the reproductive parts of the plant warm. Some birds, especially hummingbirds, use the fuzzy softness to line their nests. Depending on where you live, pussywillows can bloom from January to May. I have one that is twenty years old, twenty feet tall, and is now in bloom with hundreds of grayish-white catkins which will last well into February and early March. The March catkins provide one of the first-of-the-season nectars for pollinators. The insects, in turn, provide a feast for songbirds, especially chickadees and goldfinches. Douglas Tallamy, author and professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, ranks the native pussywillow second only to oaks as the best host plant for moths and butterflies.

Take a walk around your yard today. Where would be the best place to plant some native trees and shrubs this spring? Besides beautifying your yard, you will help wildlife live longer lives and do your small part to protect the environment.

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Center Stage

Dancing through the Holidays

By Jeff Jones

It's that time of year—and for the cast and crew at Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theatre, all thoughts are on rehearsals and costume fittings.

On December 16, Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theatre (HGCBT) will present: *A Winter's Eve*. This production will feature excerpts from "The Nutcracker," and will introduce an original performance based on Raymond Briggs's "The Snowman."

HGCBT supports the staff and dancers of Poolesville's Essence Studios. For the first time, dance auditions for the show were opened to the community, making for a larger and more diverse cast. The primary concept and staging is by Claire Jones, owner and artistic director of Essence Studios and artistic director of HGCBT. Additionally, four regional choreographers worked with the dancers to create culturally-authentic dances from multiple traditions.



This year's Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theatre will present A Winter's Eve. The production will feature excerpts from The Nutcracker and will introduce an original performance based on Raymond Briggs's "The Snowman."

The first act of *A Winter's Eve* is "The Snowman," featuring a young boy who discovers his snowman has come to life. The boy welcomes the Snowman into his home, and the Snowman reciprocates by transporting the boy on the wind, visiting several communities around the world. They arrive in India to observe lively dancers celebrating Diwali, the celebration of lights. They next venture to Israel, to see the famous Hava Nagila dance in celebration of Hannukah. Finally, they travel to the United States and are mesmerized as a group celebrates Kwanzaa with a lively African dance.

Act Two features variations from the world's most famous ballet, "The Nutcracker." Multiple dances, celebrating the season from multiple cultures, show off the ballet skills for which Essence Studios and HGCBT are so well known.

This visually-stunning and culturally-rich show, featuring young dancers from the Poolesville area, is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the holidays for the entire family. *A Winter's Eve* will be presented twice on December 16, at 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., at the Kreeger Auditorium at the Bender JCC of Greater Washington on Montrose Road in Rockville. Tickets are \$27. Running time is ninety minutes, including a fifteen-minute intermission. For tickets, visit HopeGardenCBT.org.

Fun Fact...

losgatosballet.org

The first production of *The Nutcracker* was to a sold out show on December 18, 1892 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia. The first complete performance of *The Nutcracker* outside of Russia was not until 1934 and took place in England. Tchaikovsky used an instrument called a *celesta*, or *bell-piano*, for the *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* to create the unique bell sound. Created in Paris in 1886, he smuggled the new instrument into Russia because of its unique sound. The *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* was the first music ever written for the celesta. Tchaikovsky died less than one year after the first production of *The Nutcracker* in Russia and did not live to see the ballet's success. Audiences in the U.S. were first introduced to *The Nutcracker* music score in Disney's 1940 film *Fantasia*.



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School News

Poolesville's Cong Wins Third Straight State Golfing Title

Senior golfer Olivia Cong captured her third straight Maryland Class 2A/1A individual state title, leading the Falcons to a State Finalist (runner-up) trophy at the MPSSAA state tournament on a frigid University of Maryland golf course.

After shooting even par 71 on day one into a tie with Glenelg's Megan Kirkpatrick, Cong posted a five-under 66 on day two to seal the title, while the team of Cong, Kinley Stokes, Noah Naing, and Ryan Liang combined for a score of 658 behind state champion South Carroll's 633.

Newly-Created SGA at PES Initiates Donation Drive for WUMCO

Poolesville Elementary School's (PES) newly-established student government association (SGA) ran its very first event: a WUMCO drive. PES donated over 1,100 items to WUMCO. They spent seven days collecting cleaning and toiletry supplies from the students at PES.

The class in each grade level with the most donations won a class prize, like extra recess or a movie and popcorn. It was a huge success, and the SGA officers came together to bring the items to the WUMCO office and to take a picture together.



SGA coaches, Clair Ketchum and Rebecca Fisher; Austin Elliott (Treasurer); Ian Sproat, (Vice President); Ciera Layne (President); and, in front, Ava Baker (Secretary).

Continued from page 7.

Largest Crowd Ever Comes Together to Honor Veterans

member of Hosanna Worship. The book was signed by members of the legion signifying the post's appreciation of the family and their ancestors' service.

In presenting the book to the family, Glenn said, "As veterans we all love each other, race or creed does not matter, we all spilled the same blood, we all fought together side by side." Representing the Thompson family, the Rev. Chuck Copeland accepted the books and noted, "Their military service is something our family is highly proud of, and our family is so grateful today that our ancestors are being honored because even we don't know all they went through. They never told us. I pray that my family is fulfilled by what has happened here today."

Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theatre,
Essence Studios, and Riverworks Art Center present

A "The Snowman" Winter's "The Nutcracker" Eve



December 16, 2pm and 6pm

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Continued from page 3.

Commissioners Hear Report on Performance of Well System

Yost commented that the town has some previous experience with filtering technology. Many years ago, Wells 8 and 9 began to show relatively-high levels of radioisotopes. The town's aquifer runs over very hard rock substrate. As rock ages, it naturally produces radioisotopes of various kinds, including radon which often shows up in the basements of area homes. It is believed that the radiation that appeared in Wells 8 and 9 is a natural outgrowth of this rock aging process. At the time, the costs of installing the necessary filtering technology came to \$1.25 million.

In terms of paying for the installation of the new filtering technology, Yost said it will depend on factors such as whether all the wells need to have the filtering systems and whether the existing piping systems can be reconfigured to allow for some wells to be served at the same time by one filtering unit. The town's existing well system consists of wells scattered throughout town that pump water to the two water towers. One tower holds about five hundred thousand gallons and the other holds close to a million. Once in the towers, gravity feeds the water at uniform pressure to homes throughout town. There are a few points where well lines come together, but for the most part, all wells operate separately.

Yost remarked that the county is conducting a study of water systems and is going to look at whether running a line from WSSC's system in Darnestown out to Poolesville is feasible. There are several issues regarding this approach including the fact that it might increase pressures for development, and WSSC water comes from the Potomac and must be heavily filtered and chemically treated in order to be drinkable.

Finally, Yost, in response to a question, explained that because our aquifer flows largely over and through cracks in rock underlying the soil layers, it is more vulnerable to infiltration from above. Water systems like those on the Eastern Shore run deep down under hundreds of feet of loam, sand, and soil which filters water coming down from above. While filtering does occur in our aquifer, it is more susceptible to damage due to much thinner layers of soil above it.

Yost asked the commissioners to approve a \$100,000 budget to prepare a strategic plan for installing the new filtering technology. The vote to approve was unanimous.

At the November 20 commissioners' meeting, the bulk of the time was given over to a public hearing on the decision by the town to opt in to recently-adopted Montgomery County pesticide rules that essentially ban the use of synthetic pesticides on lawns by professional landscaping companies. The law still allows the sale of such pesticides in hardware stores and allows private homeowners to apply them as they see fit.

In opening the session, Commission President Jim Brown said, "We don't take this lightly. There is no more valuable resource to us than our water." He then invited three experts to testify about the county's rules and the town's decision to opt in to using them.

Mary Travaglina from the Montgomery County Environmental Protection Department said that she has worked in the landscaping field and has a pesticide application license herself. She said that while the county pesticide law was new, it has had pesticide laws in place for decades. The new law largely adds a new provision banning the use of synthetic pesticides by professional firms on lawns but exempts some uses such as on farmland, golf courses, and on areas with mulching. She said twice as much land in the county is used for lawns as for agriculture. Twelve percent of the land in the county is impervious, meaning it is paved or covered by buildings or homes.

She explained that the new law does not ban the use of organic pesticides, and the county is working to help companies adopt effective strategies to treat lawns using organics. While synthetic herbicides are also a problem, they are not used anywhere nearly as extensively as pesticides. The county acted in part because research has shown that children living in homes and neighborhoods where pesticides are used extensively have much higher levels of such diseases as leukemia. There are also known effects on the endocrine and hormonal systems of children. She pointed out, too, that Poolesville's aquifer is vulnerable to pesticide infiltration.

Bernie Mihm, the owner of local landscaping company, Fine Earth, expressed skepticism that pesticides on lawns contribute as heavily to impacts on aquifers as does farming or the use of pesticides on golf courses. He said that after initial treatments, most pesticide use on lawns by professional firms involves "spot" treatments in areas of the yard that remain infested. Entire lawns are rarely treated.

Keir Soderberg of S.S. Papadopoulos and Associates, Inc., a groundwater and hydrogeology consulting services company specializing in helping municipalities manage groundwater resources, said that "Poolesville has a high-quality water system and takes care of its system." His firm specializes in looking at how pesticides and other chemical contaminants move around water systems. Poolesville does continuous testing of its water and worked very quickly to try and address the incursion of PFAS, which are a component of many pesticides, once they were detected. He thinks Poolesville does not have a significant pesticide problem in its water system at this juncture and believes its actions will help ensure the water continues to remain very high quality. He pointed to studies that detected some pesticides in the town's water in 2013, but more recent studies show no pesticide incursion.

Dr. Jennifer Sass of the Natural Resources Defense Council said that while use on agriculture fields of pesticides is a known factor in water contamination, "We also know that use on urban lawns does have measurable impacts on tapwater quality." Use of pesticides on lawns has increased by multiples of levels over the years since WWII. While pesticides are regulated heavily by the Environmental Protection Agency, they do not really investigate each newly-approved pesticide very closely. Each year, the EPA approves up to seven hundred new pesticides, and she claimed that much of the study and analysis done to demonstrate the utility and safety of these chemicals is supplied by the companies making the pesticides. The EPA does almost no study or testing work on its own. U.S. laws regarding pesticides and PFAS are more lax than those in Europe. This is evident in the fact that PFAS collected in Europe are being sent back to the U.S. for processing.

After the expert presentations, citizens were allowed to comment. Bernie Mihm again offered some observations. He said that the way he sees it, "We have two choices: to rely on EPA and Maryland Department of the Environment regulation or defer some of the oversight to the much smaller staff in Montgomery County." He said that he thinks the law was implemented too hastily in Poolesville and that Montgomery County, not Poolesville, is the outlier in the State of Maryland. He said it was once true that big companies like ChemLawn did treat large areas of lawns, but that is no longer how the industry works.

Several residents then spoke up about the need to keep the "opt in" in place to help "keep us safer." They also remarked that almost nothing had been done to educate the public and the local industry about the new town policies, to encourage residents not to overtreat their lawns, and to educate residents about how to use pesticides safely. Some encouraged the town to also consider mandating that residents be required to place signs on their lawns like professional companies do to help notify others that a lawn has been treated. Questions were also raised about whether the town itself uses pesticides on its parks and on places like Whalen Commons.

The commissioners did not provide any specific ideas about what may come out of the hearing. It does appear, based on the exchanges, that there is an acknowledgement by the town that it should have done a better job of implementing the new law, including helping educate the public about its intent and the options for homeowners.

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Business Briefs

Poolesville Chamber Celebrates the Reopening of Bassett's



PACC'S Tom Kettler and Erika Myers cut the ribbon for the grand reopening of Bassett's Restaurant.

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce (PACC) likes to promote new businesses in town through an official ribbon-cutting ceremony. When Bassett's beloved owner Erika Myers reopened Bassett's after renovations from the fire, the group decided it was deserving of an official ribbon-cutting ceremony. The PACC just really likes to party, and what better place than the restaurant?

In case you didn't know, PACC is headed by President Tom Kettler from Kettler Forlines Homes, Vice President Dr. Tim Pike (Pike and Valega, DDS), Hilary

Schwab (Hilary Schwab Photography), Jeff McCloskey (Truist Investment Services), and board of directors members, Olivia Murphy (Calleva), Katie Horan (Sweet Lemon Gift Shop), Cheryl Kenley (M&T Bank), Jeff Eck (Firefighter Video Production), Julie Kuhlman (Kuhlman Landscape), and David Meyers (Rescue One).

Sweet Lemon Sponsors Fundraiser for American Legion

Katie Horan, owner of the Sweet Lemon Gift Shop, hosted a knife-sharpening event for the convenience of her customers and to benefit the local American Legion Post 247. Jim Cappuccilli, a trained craftsman in knife sharpening, along with the legion's Nick Markoff offered the service to customers of the gift shop on two days last month. Patrons made donations to the veterans which was to the benefit of the local Daniel-Jeffers Post 247.



Jim Cappuccilli and Nick Markoff, both from the Poolesville American Legion, with Sweet Lemon's Katie Horan.

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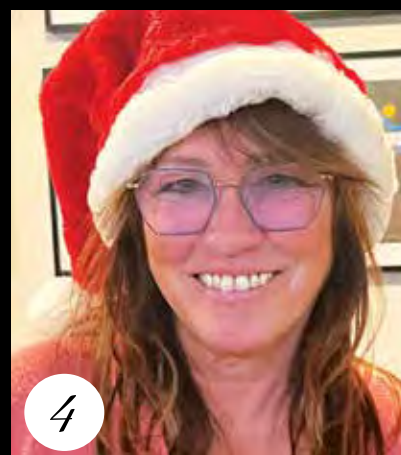
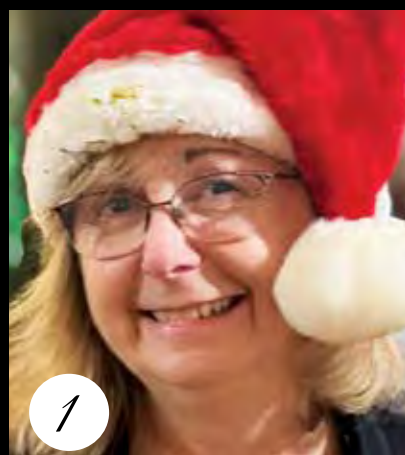


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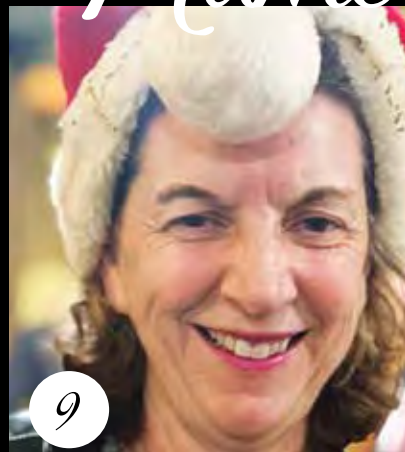
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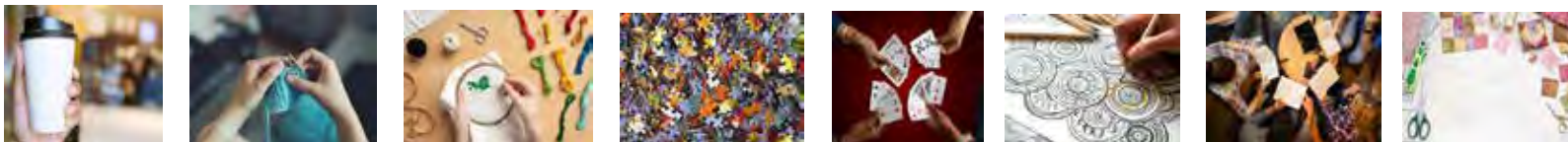
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If you have any questions, please contact Marie Allnut at mallnut@hotmail.com or call 301-385-3503.

Please join us and nurture your personal faith journey on Sunday mornings at 10am, in-person or on Zoom at: <https://bit.ly/3h8917D>.

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PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball versus B-CC. 7:15 p.m.

December 11

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball versus Quince Orchard. 7:15 p.m.

December 13

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball versus Wheaton. 7:15 p.m.

December 15

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball versus Whitman. 7:15 p.m.

December 18

Poolesville Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:00 p.m.

Continued on page 21.

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Youth Sports

For PHS Cross Country Runners, An Exuberant Restart

By Jeff Stuart

A year after the Poolesville High School boys' cross country team won county and state titles and the girls won the states, a lot changed. Key seniors graduated, and there were unexpected departures of other quality runners. You might have expected a down sea-son, but, buoyed by incoming talent, it was not.

"The boys' team did really well," said Coach Prasad Gerard. "We were a young team. We had some freshmen that have moved into the ranks. Some of the sophomores and juniors as well. We have only a couple of seniors, and on the girls' side, we have four dynamite freshmen that have come along really well and moved onto the varsity squad. The kids have had a really good attitude for the whole season. They did really well in the county championships. The girls finished seventh out of twenty-two teams which is good. They are all bigger schools.

"The boys finished tenth out of twenty-four teams. We qualified for the states and did well there. Ava Wagner and Natalia Vazquez are two of our senior leaders. On the boys' side, senior Anil Ghosh has really helped this team a lot. He has been support-ive of everyone, and senior Sam Forcey as well. Both set season's bests at the county championship. Ben Savino is another senior. He set a PR at the county meet."

The state meet was at Hereford High School on November 11. The Hereford course with the infamous dip is not conducive to setting personal bests, though many of the girls and boys had set personal bests at the 2A West Region Championship the week before at Middletown High School. State finishers for the girls, who finished fifth with 149 points, were: junior Roma Diak, sophomore Ruby Mercer, freshman Bhavya Chid-ambaranathan, sophomore Anna McCrae, freshman Erica Millin, Wagner, and junior Zia Elam.

Continued on page 34.



Sam Forcey, Caleb Bodmer, Ava Wagner, and Roma Diak of the PHS cross country team.

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w/Communion

7pm - Christmas Eve Worship Service

w/Candlelight

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In Your Own Backyard

Seneca Schoolhouse Photo (Part 5)

By Jon Wolz

This is the final part of the story that began in August about the 1899 class photo from the Seneca Schoolhouse. The first four parts can be read at MonocacyMonocle.com.

In researching the teacher and students, I found that they lived a varied life after their schoolhouse days. Some stayed locally, some moved to Washington, D.C., and others moved far away from their Seneca beginnings.

In the class photo, brothers Joseph Jennings, Jr. (1885-1931) and Charles



Standing behind William Ernest Berry is Charles Jennings.

Jennings (1888-1971) are identified. They were sons of Joseph, Sr. and Katie Jennings. The elder Joseph was a clerk at a market in Washington, D.C. Son Joseph was born in Washington, D.C., and son Charles was born in Takoma Park. Joseph, Sr. and Katie had three children together. The oldest was Clara Jennings (1881-1970). Joseph, Sr. died in 1890. In 1892, the widow Katie married William Schaeffer. They had a daughter together in 1896. In 1900, William Schaeffer, his wife Katie, and four children were living in Darnestown where William was a farmer. Joseph and Charles were attending school. By 1908, Joseph was living in Philadelphia and had married Florence Roeder. In 1909, Joseph E. Jennings, III (1909-1988) was born. In 1910, the family rented their home in Philadelphia. Joseph, Jr. was a clerk for a railroad. Joseph, Jr.'s oldest sister was living with them. In 1911, son Wilson Jennings (1911-2008) was born. In 1914, wife Florence died of pneumonia. In 1920, Joseph, Jr. was a bookkeeper for an insurance company. His two sons were living with him in a rented home as well as his widowed mother-in-law in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. By 1930, Joseph, Jr. had remarried a widow, Priscilla Irwin (1884-1962), and Joseph, Jr.'s two sons were living in the home owned by the family in Lansdale. The value of the home was \$15,000. Joseph, Jr. was a credit manager for the Maryland Casualty Company in Norristown, Pennsylvania. Joseph, Jr. died of heart failure in 1931. He is buried at the Charles Evans Cemetery in Reading, Pennsylvania with his second wife Priscilla.

In 1910, Charles Jennings was a farm laborer living with his stepfather William Schaeffer, his mother Katie,



Joe Jennings.

stepsister Bertha, and Katie's mother, Sarah Jones. In 1914, Katie Schaeffer died and was buried at the Monocacy Cemetery with her husband Joseph Jennings, Sr. They both have gravestones. On Charles's World War I draft registration card, he was single and claimed an exemption from service because of a physical disability. He was identified as Caucasian of medium height and build with brown eyes and black hair. In 1920, Charles was still living with his stepfather, mother, a two-year-old stepsister, and a seventy-year-old farm laborer, Nonpfer Johnson, who was identified as Black. Charles Jennings disappears from written records until his 1942 draft registration card. He was living with his stepfather and his mother in Seneca. He was 5'11", 185 pounds, he was identified as Negro, brown eyes, black hair, and having a light brown complexion. Charles's parents and siblings, as well as available census records, identified the Jennings family as White. In 1942, Charles was identified as having a rupture on his right side. Charles died in Bethesda in 1971 at age 83. He is buried at the Monocacy Cemetery with his parents and sister, Clara Jennings. They both have gravestones.

In the class photo, Ernest Berry is identified. His full name is William Ernest Berry. William was born in 1890. He had a fifth-grade education. His parents were Thomas (1853-1939) and Ella (1868-1971). In 1900, father Thomas was a fisherman. Living with Thomas and Ella in 1900 were their son William and seven-year-old Lottie (1893-1980). Thomas and Ella would have two more children, Mattie

(1901-1993) and Thomas (1905-1907). In the 1900 census, it has William E. Berry and not Ernest. There was no occupation identified for William.

By 1910, father Thomas owned his home and was a farm laborer along with son William Ernest Berry. The 1910 census, showed Ernest instead of William. Prior to 1917, William married Marguerite M. Peter. On William's World War I draft registration card, he requested to be exempt from the draft because he was caring for an invalid wife. On his registration card, William had written his name as "W. Ernest Berry." He was a farm laborer working for Carrol Walters near Seneca. He was identified as Caucasian, tall, medium build, gray eyes, and light brown hair. In 1918, Marguerite died of tuberculosis in a state sanatorium in Frederick County. William never remarried. In 1920, William E. Berry owned his home and was a farm laborer in the Seneca area. In 1940, William E. was a carpenter and living with him was his mother. On his 1942 draft registration card, it showed William Ernest Berry, and he was living in Seneca. He was 5'7" tall, weighing 183 pounds, with gray hair and a dark complexion. His race was identified as White. Also, he had no regular employment. In 1950, he was a caretaker of a farm and the census had his name as "W. Ernest Berry." Living with him was his mother Ella on River Road in Seneca. William Ernest Berry died at age 96 in 1986. He is buried at the Darnestown Presbyterian Church Cemetery along with his wife. They share a gravestone. For William's name on the Berry stone, it has "WM. ERNEST."

Continued from page 19.

Things to Do

December 20

PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling versus Wheaton. 6:15 p.m.

December 21

PHS Varsity Home Games

Boys' basketball versus Whitman. 5:30 p.m.

Girls' basketball versus Damascus. 7:15 p.m.



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Youth Sports

Falcon Football 2023: A Last Friday Night Lights to Remember

By Jeff Stuart

On Friday, October 27, the Falcons football home season ended on Senior Night. The fans, who had remained loyal all season, wanted something to celebrate. The seniors wanted to win in their final game at Poolesville, and the many underclassmen wanted to win their first game ever and point to the future. All three missions were accomplished. Poolesville defeated Watkins Mill, 15-0.

"The game was really fun," said senior captain and defensive end Leo Szego. "It was good to finally get a win. I feel like our defense played well. We didn't give up any points. We kept them bottled up on the goal line early and got the safety. That was really nice. The Wolverines got a long return on the opening kickoff, but we stopped them and drove down to the one-yard line. We did not score. We kept them bottled up on the goal line early and got a safety. Right before the half we just drove down the field little by little. It was a nine-play drive. Dylan Hopkins, a sophomore, scored the touchdown. They blocked well on that play. We had opportunities before that, but we finally got to the end zone. It felt nice. Aiden Kang and Dashawn Stanton, both juniors, played well in the secondary. They had a couple of interceptions. Overall, I think we grew a lot. We improved, and it was fun playing. It was great to win our last game and finally see the crowd react to us. No better feeling."

"It was fun playing with my best friends. Tyler Shefter, a senior captain and our quarterback, played well. He is competitive. Arman Akdag, a senior kicker, did well. This was his first year on varsity. Tyler and Dashawn had a serious impact—so did senior Seth LeMarr before he got hurt."

"It was good to get a win going into the playoffs," said senior captain Terrell Luster, a running back, defensive end, and captain. His fumble recovery ended the first Watkins Mill drive. "I think we are becoming a solid team. We have fast guys in the secondary. Dashawn is really good at bringing the ball back once he gets it. There are a lot of things we could have worked on to win more games. The season might have been tough, but we had a lot of fun. My shoutouts go Ethan Schlosburg, a sophomore defensive end. He is always disrupting things in the backfield, and Kojo Ankrah, a junior guard and defensive tackle. He has a lot to work on, but once he gets there, he will be a dominant player."

"I was very happy with senior night," said Shefter. "We started out slow in the first half, but in the second half, we came out and picked it up. We were able to hold them scoreless, and we scored again. I was patient and followed my blockers and was able to score. I was 0-4 in attempts to score in goal line situations in the first half. The stadium crowd, the town, and the community are a big part of the football experience here in Poolesville. They support us and help to keep our energy up no matter what is happening on the field or what the score is. We appreciate that. I want to give my first shoutout to players that I have grown up with and played with, Leo and senior Andrew Fraser. The younger kids, Dashawn and Carter Rice are juniors, Dylan and Justin Pawlowski are sophomores; they helped form a team that I was satisfied with at the end of the season."

"Last year was fun," said LeMarr. "We won seven games. This year has been rough, so winning that last game at home was great. We have a lot of young kids, but we came out and prepared for that game on Friday. The first half was a little rough, but we toughed it out. We ran it down their throats. We are a running team. That is what we do. I got Tyler behind me in the backfield. He can run over people and get the ball down the field. We just had a great game to finish it out. I want to give a shoutout to Leo. He played baseball here at Poolesville. This is his first year playing football. He did great."

"The difference between this year and last year is we just haven't found that bond. We lost seventeen seniors out of twenty-four players last year. I played with a lot of those guys from little league through high school. There's a big turnover. I haven't really played with a lot of these new guys who got moved up, so the timing and team chemistry is different. We started to bond towards the end of the season. That's how we won that game against Watkins Mill."

"We drew a very difficult schedule this season," said Coach Brian Tupa. "We only had two returning seniors from last year's team with any playing experience, so we had a lot of work to do from day one. I was extremely proud of the four captains who stepped up this year. Two of the captains had never played



Maverick Trone, Andrew Fraser, Aatish Valaparla, Leo Szego, Seth LeMarr, Tyler Shefter, Terrel Luster, Connor Shelburne, and Arman Akdag of the PHS football team.

varsity football before, and one had never played football. Tyler did a great job of taking over at quarterback.

"The win at home on Senior Night against Watkins Mill, a much-improved team from last year, was our best overall game of the season. The interception and sixty-five-yard return by sophomore Dylan and the long sixty-yard QB draw by Tyler were probably the two biggest plays of the game. Junior Kage Tupa came back from injury after missing the first seven games and really played well defensively. I am extremely proud of the work this team put in this year."

Other seniors are Maverick Trone, Connor Shelburne, Arman Akdag, and Aatish Valaparla.

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Poolesville Green

How the Spread of Electric Vehicles Will Change the Way We Live

By Doug Boucher, Retired Scientist and President of Poolesville Green

As electric vehicles (EVs) become more and more common on our roads and their prices keep dropping, we can start to see that they will lead to some important changes in how we live. Some of these changes are already pretty obvious. Since EVs cost considerably less to run and to repair than gasoline- or diesel-powered cars and trucks, they'll leave their owners with more money in their pockets. Other changes might be quite surprising, bringing benefits even to those who never buy a car.

We're accustomed to having our car trips punctuated by stops at gas stations. We'd never imagine that we might gas up at our house or at our workplace, but with EVs, those are exactly the places where we'll do most of our charging. The estimates are that seventy-five percent or more of EV charging will take place overnight at home, and another ten or fifteen percent during the workday while our cars are parked. That means that only a small fraction of EV charging will have to be done at the electrical equivalent of today's gas stations. Installing chargers will certainly be a critical element of the EV transitions—but putting those chargers along the interstates and at the parking spots for people who live in apartments and townhouses will be key. Additionally, the signs showing the price of gas in big numbers—our society's shorthand for whether inflation is a problem or not—may become as obsolete as dial telephones.

Once there are a lot of EVs being charged while parked overnight, there'll be another change that has no parallel in today's gas-powered world. The flow of electricity between the grid and car batteries will be able to go both ways, so that when the demand for electricity is high, we'll be able to sell the excess amounts stored in our EV batteries back to the grid. Storage is one of the best ways to deal with the variability of solar and wind energy, and when a lot of EVs are plugged in, they can effectively function as a giant storage battery for the whole grid.

The growth of the EV fleet will also impact farm production and land use because about a third of the corn that the U.S. produces is turned into ethanol which is added to gasoline. Likewise, some of the soybean crop is converted into biodiesel, which is added to diesel fuel. With electric vehicles, there's no liquid fuel, so ethanol and biodiesel are no longer needed. This means that the two crops that occupy the most acreage in our country (and in our county), will have an appreciable drop in demand. The implications for agricultural land use could be quite substantial.

Two other impacts of the spread of EVs are predictable, but it's unsure whether we'll notice them. They're both due to the inefficiency of the internal combustion engine, which generates a lot of noise and releases a lot of heat as it runs. Thomas Edison said in 1910, "The scheme of combustion in order to get power makes me sick to think of—it is so wasteful."

Electric motors, because of their higher efficiency, are both quieter and cooler, so both traffic noise and urban heat will be reduced as EVs replace fossil fuel vehicles. Whether the reductions will be substantial enough to make a perceptible difference is uncertain, since there are other sources of traffic noise (e.g., brakes, tires, wind) and urban heat (e.g., buildings), but the possibility of an improvement in the soundscapes and microclimates of cities is something worth seeking.

Thus, we can anticipate that some things we now take for granted will become more and more unusual as EVs become widespread. Twenty years ago, when I first bought a hybrid car (a 2004 Honda Civic), what impressed me the most about it was how "normal" it seemed. It drove just like the gasoline-powered Civic I had owned beforehand, and the main difference was fewer stops at the gas station (and more dollars left in my wallet). With the growth of EVs, that won't be the case anymore. There'll be a new—and mostly better—normal.

Fun Fact...

[energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)

In the U.S., the first successful electric car made its debut around 1890 thanks to William Morrison, a chemist who lived in Des Moines, Iowa. His six-passenger vehicle capable of a top speed of fourteen miles per hour was little more than an electrified wagon, but it helped spark interest in electric vehicles.



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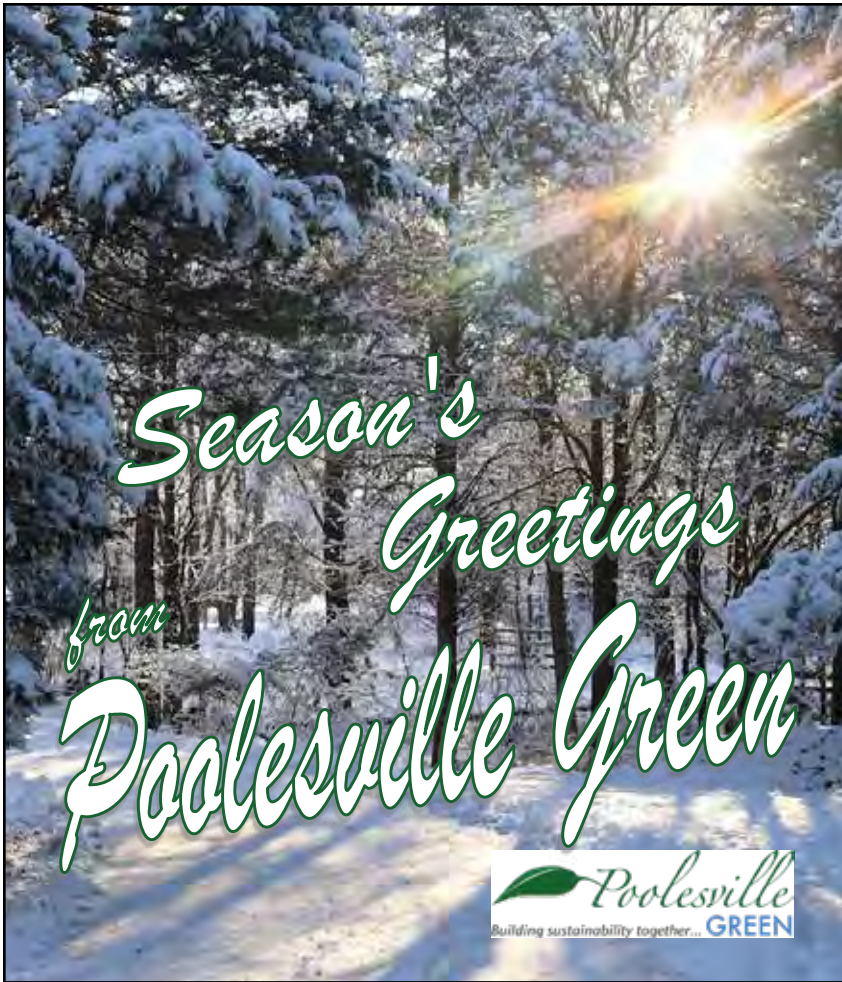
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*Poolesville
Holiday Lighting Festival*





Continued from page 5.

Tidbits

"It's basically this high school kid, he's obsessed with Halloween. He loves horror movies, and he gets an opportunity to work at the Haunted Forest," writer and director Keith Boynton told WTOG.

Boynton added that his dad is from Silver Spring and is a cousin of the Markoffs who run Markoff's Haunted Forest.

"I came here with my brother probably nine years ago now, and we were just blown away by this place. It's amazing. It's so elaborate, it's so beautiful, and we just knew we had to shoot here. I've never seen a location like it, and we got a really good deal on it."

Raised in Connecticut, Boynton is a self-taught filmmaker whose most recent film, the romantic drama *The Winter House* (2021), starred three-time Emmy nominee Lili Taylor (*Six Feet Under*, *The Conjuring*). It's currently streaming on Peacock, or you can rent it for \$1.99 on Amazon

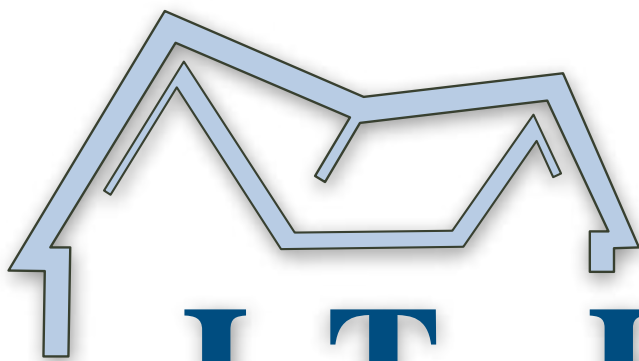
It Really Is a Small World

Even halfway across the globe we can find connections to Poolesville. Brigadier Gen. Sean Davis, currently posted in Kuwait, was flown from Baghdad to Kuwait by pilot Chief Mark Kennedy. Chief Mark Kennedy's dad is Larry Kennedy who lives on Spurrier Avenue in Poolesville. Coincidentally, Chief Mark Kennedy is a 1996 graduate of Quince Orchard High School, Davis graduated from PHS in 1989. Davis's parents, also residents of Poolesville, are Rande and Laura Davis.



Brigadier General Davis and Chief Warrant Officer Kennedy found a connection from home—even in the Middle East.

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Christmas Services at Poolsville Presbyterian Church

Worship services on December 24

- Sunday morning service at 10:30am
- Christmas Eve service at 7:00pm
(Candlelight service with the Christmas story and lots of music)

Join us!

In person: 17800 Elgin Road
Online: Facebook or poolpres.com

Lodging on Farms Proposed for the Ag Reserve

A zoning proposal before the Montgomery County Council would allow farmers in the Ag Reserve to construct dwellings for overnight stays. The proposal aims to boost agritourism. SCA supports agritourism, which can enhance farm income and foster public understanding and enjoyment of agriculture.



Concerns have arisen about the proposal, however. It would add "incidental outdoor stays" to the list of activities a farm can engage in, and permit up to 10 permanent or semi-permanent "structures" to be built with running water and bathrooms.

Among the concerns:

- What are the definitions of "outdoor" and "structure?"
- How big could the structures be?
- What size farms would be permitted to have overnight lodging?
- What are the well and septic implications?
- How would farms with agricultural easements be affected?

In years to come, might farmers find it more profitable to cut back on farming and grow their agritourism business instead? On the other hand, agritourism done right could help preserve and enhance farming in the county.

The proposal deserves wide public debate. Consideration of it should be paused until a stakeholder group is convened to provide feedback. Visit SCA's website for continually updated information on this proposal.

ONGOING SCA INITIATIVES

- ✓ Promoting regenerative agriculture and table crop farming
- ✓ Improving waste management in Montgomery County
- ✓ Supporting the judicious expansion of solar energy
- ✓ Fostering community dialogue on key Ag Reserve issues

Help us advocate on behalf of the Ag Reserve. Consider becoming an SCA member and supporter. For more information, visit sugarloaforcitizens.org or email us at info@sugarloaforcitizens.org



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Local Arts

Riverworks Events

Local arts events take place at Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms, 19215 Beallsville Rd., Beallsville; Locals Farm Market, 19929 Fisher Ave., Poolesville; or Riverworks Outdoor Stage, 17617 W. Willard Rd., Poolesville.

Ongoing Events:

Fridays

Jam Sessions

Bring your instrument and voice and join Brian Jamison as he leads these jam sessions. Free. *Locals Farm Market*. 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Tuesdays and Fridays

Open Studio

Bring a project and share time and space with others working on their projects in the studio. Free. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; Fridays, 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wednesdays

The Reserve Wind Ensemble

If you've ever played a wind instrument at least at a high-school level, join us as we form a community band! This program is led by Michelle Palmer of Yunique Music School. Direct any questions to Michelle@riverworksart.org. Free. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Afro Fusion and

Mindfulness Dance Class

Instructor Angela Gonzales invites you to heal your heart and body

through learning the history and art of dance, including a variety of Afro-Latin styles. \$20 per session. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. 6:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

First Friday of Every Month

Made in Studio

This month, paint what you see in an afternoon with Betsy Casaleno. \$20. To sign up: riverworksart.org/made-in-studio. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Events Calendar:

December 10

Hamell on Trial Live at Locals

James Ed Hammel has been making anti-folk punk rock since the 1980s, creating an extensive discography of over a dozen albums in the past thirty years. Ages 18-plus. Limited tickets available. \$25. www.riverworksart.org/events. *Locals Farm Market*. 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

December 20

Reserve Wind Ensemble Holiday Extravaganza

The Reserve Wind Ensemble is giving an hour-long holiday music performance. Free. *Poolesville Baptist Church*, 17550 W Willard Rd. 7:00 p.m.

Now to December 31

Artist in the House Gallery Exhibit Sheryl Massaro: "Of the Angels"

With visions of celestial beings, flashes of nature, and everyday scenes both dream-like and real, Sheryl Massaro connects the cosmic with the commonplace in "Of the Angels," visually translating the work of Austrian Poet Rainer Rilke to make his poems more accessible to the modern onlooker. Free. *Upstairs gallery at Locals Farm Market* (accessible only by stairs).



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NTS3: **Melissa Widenhofer:**
Board Member of WUMCO

NTS4: **Cathy Bupp:**
Director of Events,
Town of Poolesville

NTS5: **Dale Nestor:**
Recently deceased, Founder of
Helping Hands, leader of the
Lions and the Odd Fellows

NTS6: **Julien Singh:**
Poolesville American Legion
Post 247

NTS7: **Link Hoewing:**
Chairman, Fair Access Committee

NTS8: **Doug Boucher:**
Poolesville Green

NTS9: **Maria Briançon:**
Poolesville Seniors

NTS10: **Maureen O'Connell:**
Historic Medley District

NTS11: **Roger Brenholtz:**
Monocacy Lions Club

NTS12: **Spencer Schmidt:**
Odd Fellows International

NTS13: **Olivia Murphy:**
PACC Board of Directors

NTS14: **Jeff McCloskey:**
PACC Board of Directors

NTS15: **Lynne Rolls:**
Upcounty Prevention Network

NTS16: **Charlotte Boucher:**
founder of Upcounty
Prevention Network



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Christmas Cantata
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Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Sunday, Dec. 24 at 6:00 pm

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Remembrance

Dale Nestor

Beallsville's Dale Nestor, 95, passed away on November 25 after struggling with health problems for the last few years. He was a patient at Frederick Memorial Hospital when he passed.

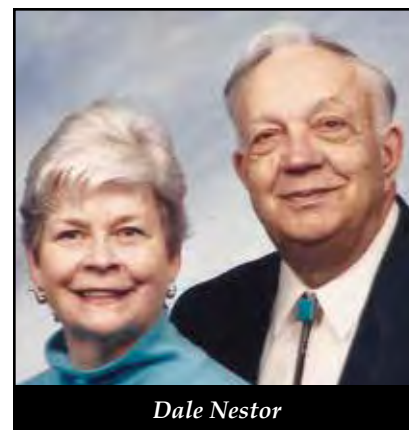
Dale's legacy will be forever entwined with agriculture and education. Born and educated in West Virginia, Dale joined the Poolesville High School faculty in 1959 as an agriculture teacher in the school's once-robust vocational training program.

In his twenty-eight years of teaching, the reason for the popularity of his courses among the students is easy to understand after hearing Dale reminisce about the "old days." Imagine the fun of a school program that didn't just talk about the value of animals but raised cows, cattle, swine, rabbits, and even a duck. He joked that the duck was as much of a mascot as anything else. "It used to show up at the Selby home so much, that Roy once told me that Betty Jean wanted me to either get control of it or get some diapers on him." Horticulture was a big part of the program, and the students learned to raise vegetables as well as flowering plants. The school greenhouse was used as a greenhouse. Contests were held, and crops and animals were sold. Classes were not just a dull forty-five minutes of review of information from a book, but boasted a real life, hands-on exposure, get-your-hands-dirty experience.

His life beyond the classroom has been a remarkable contribution to the community since he was a founder of Helping Hands, an organization he and Dr. Todd organized over two decades ago. Most people in the area have met Dale at one time or another because, as part of his two decades of service through the Odd Fellows, he was the leader of its annual fruit sales fundraiser. No citrus fruit has ever been more deliciously described than through the words of Dale's baritone voice. His service didn't stop there as he has put in decades of community service through the American Legion and Monocacy Lions Club. While rheumatic fever prevented his entry into World War II, he later joined the army to become a military policeman.

As a Lion, he served the club in many leadership positions, including board member, secretary, treasurer, and president. In recognition of his service to Lionism, Lion Dale was awarded numerous Certificate of Service Awards, Lion of the Year Award, Lions of the Years Award, and a Melvin Jones Fellowship.

There will be a memorial service in the spring.



Dale Nestor

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An Interview

I sat with chill December
 Beside the evening fire.
 "And what do you remember,"
 I ventured to inquire,

"Of seasons long forsaken?"
 He answered in amaze,
 "My age you have mistaken;
 I've lived but thirty days."

— John B. Tabb

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Remembrance

Rita Ellen O'Donnell Mills

Rita Ellen O'Donnell Mills, 80, of Poolesville, a former resident of Chicora, Pennsylvania, unexpectedly passed away on November 7, 2023, at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital.

Rita spent most of her career working for the National-Capital Park and Planning Commission as an assistant to the division chief. Rita and her late husband Greg were lifetime members of the Chesapeake Yacht Club in Shady Side, Maryland. They enjoyed spending time on the water together and traveling to new areas along the bay.

Rita's greatest love was her quilting. Rita took up this hobby shortly after retirement. She was a very active member of her Village Piecemakers Quilt Guild in Poolesville. The philanthropic work of the guild was one of the highlights for her. Her quilts have been shared with many members of her community and family, each stitched and shared with much love.

Rita was preceded in death by her loving husband, R. Gregory Mills. She was the mother of two children, Linda Mills-Lough (Tim) and Jason Mills (Lauren). She was the best GiGi to her three wonderful grandsons, Ryan, Jack, and Braeden.

Rita was the youngest child of the late Daniel and Mary O'Donnell. She is survived by three of her seven siblings, Mary Anne Schaffler of Riverside, California, Jeanne Shawhan (Larry South) of Annapolis, and Robert O'Donnell (Carole) of Montrose, Colorado; her dear sisters-in-law, Judith D. Street, Mary Ann O'Donnell, Judy O'Donnell, and Dorothy O'Donnell; and several nieces and nephews. Rita was preceded in death by her siblings, Edward O'Donnell (Winsome), Joseph O'Donnell, Gertrude Blair, and Kenneth O'Donnell.

In lieu of flowers, the family is asking that donations be mailed to her quilt guild in her honor at: Village Piecemakers Quilt Guild, c/o Chris Shanholtzer, 17021 Tom Fox Avenue, Poolesville, MD 20837.



Rita Ellen O'Donnell Mills



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Regular Weekly Schedule

SAT	4pm	Confessions
	5 ³⁰ pm	Sunday Vigil Mass
SUN	8am	Sunday Mass
	10 ⁴⁵ am	Sunday Mass
MON	8 ³⁰ am	Daily Mass
-TUE		
WED	7 ³⁰ pm	Daily Mass
	8pm	Eucharistic Adoration
	-9pm	w/ Confessions
THU	8 ³⁰ am	Daily Mass
-SAT		

Special Christmas Week Schedule

12/23	..... SAT	..... 4pm	..... Confessions
		5 ³⁰ pm	..... Sunday Vigil Mass
12/24	..... SUN	..... 9am	..... Sunday Mass
		4pm	..... Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
			w/ Children's Pageant
		6pm	..... Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
12/25	..... MON	..... 10am	..... Christmas Day Mass
12/26-30	..... TUE-SAT	10am	..... Daily Mass
12/30	..... SAT	..... 4pm	..... Confessions
		5 ³⁰ pm	..... Sunday Vigil
12/31	..... SUN	..... 8am	..... Sunday Mass
		10 ⁴⁵ am	..... Sunday Mass



Christmas Tree Sale and Festival

12/1	FRI	4pm-6pm	Christmas Tree Sales
12/2	SAT	10am-7pm	Christmas Tree Sales
		10am-2pm	Christmas Festival
12/3	SUN	12pm-4pm	Christmas Tree Sales



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Remembrances

Margaret Anne Beliveau

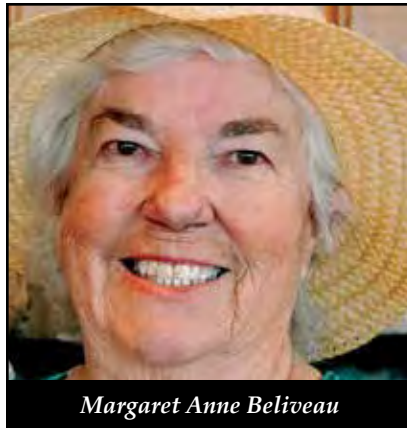
Margaret Anne Beliveau, 78, of Poolesville, passed away on November 20.

Born on January 29, 1945, in England, she was the daughter of the late Ambrose and Florence (Collins) Marshall.

At eighteen, Anne emigrated to the United States and pursued various vocations, culminating in a distinguished career at United Airlines with over thirty years of service. She moved to Poolesville eight years ago to live with her son and his family. A beloved member of the Poolesville Seniors, Anne played pickleball, bridge, and mahjong, and marched with the seniors in the Poolesville Day Parade. In between cups of tea, she enjoyed gardening, reading, feeding the birds, watching her favorite tennis players, soccer teams, and Jeopardy, and listening to "The Big Broadcast." She had a sharp intellect and a big, generous heart. She volunteered her time as a WUMCO driver, served in the Poolesville Community Garden, and rescued several stray cats. Anne also expressed her love and compassion for both people and animals by supporting many charities, including WUMCO Help, DC Central Kitchen, Salvation Army, and the SPCA.

Anne was a loving mother to her son, Robert Beliveau, and daughter-in-law, Catherine Beliveau; and an adoring grandmother to her grandchildren, Mary Beliveau (Joseph Benedick, Michael Beliveau, and Kevin Beliveau. She is also survived by her brother, Michael Marshall, and was preceded in death by her brother, Kevin Marshall.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in her memory to WUMCO Help or to Poplar Springs Animal Sanctuary.



Margaret Anne Beliveau

Arlene DeEtte Luhn

Arlene DeEtte Luhn, 90, of Poolesville, passed away peacefully at the home of her daughter in Beallsville, surrounded by her family, on November 22, 2023.

She was the loving wife of the late Junior Luhn.

Born on March 9, 1933 in Washington, D.C., she was the daughter of the late Charles William, Sr. and Vera DeEtte (Dahl) Norris.

She was a 1952 graduate of Poolesville High School. She married

"the boy next door" in 1954. After being a stay-at-home mom, she went to work as an instructional assistant at Poolesville High School, retiring after twenty-three years of service. She loved trees, reading, watching her favorite shows on PBS, volunteering for Hospice of Frederick County, and spending time with her family, especially at the family home in Ocean City. She was a member of the Barnesville Baptist Church.

Arlene is survived by her children, Kevin Luhn, Ellen Williams (Ed), and Laura Hiatt (Rodger); three grandchildren, Lara Saylor, Megan McCall, and April Kroboth; three great-grandchildren, Zain Malik, Aleena Malik, and Kaycee Saylor; and a niece, a nephew, and three great-nephews.

Arlene will also be remembered by Brenda Cross and family. The family is very grateful to Brenda and her family for the loving care and companionship given to Arlene and Junior for many years.

She was preceded in death by one brother, Chuck Norris.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 22 at Barnesville Baptist Church, 17917 Barnesville Rd, Barnesville. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in her memory to the Barnesville Baptist Church.



Arlene DeEtte Luhn



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<p>LESSONS AND CAROLS December 15 6:30pm</p>	<p>CHRISTMAS EVE Family Service 5:00pm</p>
<p>CHRISTMAS PAGEANT December 24 Before the Family Service</p>	<p>CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 11:00PM Carol singing begins at 10:30pm</p>

Remembrances

Andrew Wesley Goodwin

Andrew Wesley Goodwin, of Poolesville, passed away unexpectedly on November 4 at the age of 36.

He was born in Denver, Colorado on July 18, 1987 to Wesley Lee Goodwin and Jacqueline Wallace Goodwin. He lost his beloved mother, Jackie, in 2002.

Andrew leaves behind his wife, Emily Marie Goodwin, and three young children, Moriah Jacqueline (4), Elias Russell (2), and Judah Wesley Harris (4 months). He was a man of steadfast faith and put Christ first above all else. He loved his family and was an incredibly involved father and devoted and supportive husband.

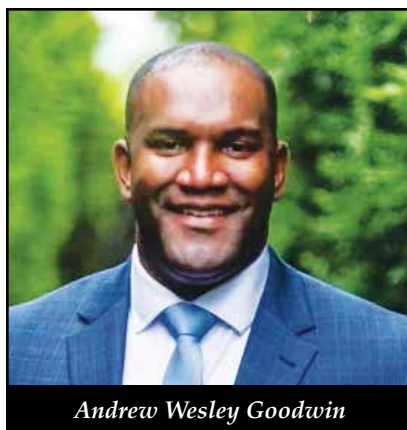
He was raised in Aurora, Colorado with his sister, Kathryn Goodwin. Andrew attended Smoky Hill High School and then Hastings College in Hastings, Nevada where he played football and ran track. He also founded the fraternity, Tau Beta Alpha. He received the key to the city of Hastings for his efforts and was awarded the prestigious Broncos Award. He received his master's in communication studies from Kansas State and became a lifelong Wildcats fan. Andrew spent a summer in Chicago working for the Rev. Jessie Jackson where he developed a passion for justice.

He played semiprofessional football for the Denver Titans before moving to Washington, D.C. where he worked for Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee and later Rep. Barbara Lee. He spent time working in health policy with a focus on health disparities before transitioning to campaigns where he worked on President Barack Obama's reelection campaign and Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring's successful campaign complete with a recount. After a time in politics and government, he transitioned to finance. He was passionate about helping people and preparing them for financial success. He worked for Charles Schwab as Vice President – Financial Consultant and was proud to be a Certified Financial Planner (CFP). He served on the board of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth after being appointed by both Governors Terry McAuliffe and Ralph Northam.

Andrew met his wife Emily (née Whiteman) while playing flag football in Washington, D.C. They shared a love of football and travel and visited Uganda, Ireland, and Israel together as well as driving cross country from California to D.C. Emily and Andrew were married on May 18, 2019, in Middleburg, Virginia. Shortly after, they welcomed their first child, Moriah in 2020, followed by Elias in 2021 and Judah in 2023. They lived in Takoma Park before moving to their dream home in Poolesville in 2022. They enjoyed visiting the local wineries, breweries, and farms with their children. Andrew loved making their house a home.

He gained Russell and Rachel Whiteman as loving parents and Anna Whiteman, Claire and Josh Limon, and Rose Whiteman as siblings through his marriage to Emily. Andrew also gained a loving stepmom, Janet Goodwin, and siblings Remington, Taylor, and Chandler Dunham. He loved his nieces and nephews, Isaiah Trott, Jeffrey Bragg, and Josie and Lucas Limon.

Andrew was a member of the District Church and a resident of Poolesville. He leaves behind a legacy of love and faith that will live on through his wife and children. Prayers are requested or to open yourself to a connection with God as a way to honor Andrew's memory.



Andrew Wesley Goodwin

Sandra Yeary Bennett

Sandra Yeary Bennett (née Bauman), 62, of Lumberton, North Carolina, beloved wife of Stephen Ray Bennett, passed away Saturday, November 11, 2023 from a tragic car accident while in the process of moving to her new home in Raeford, North Carolina.

Born in Maryland, daughter of the late Mahlon and Betty Bauman (née Garrett), she spent most of her life growing up and living in Maryland before moving to North Carolina in 2015.

While living in Maryland, Sandra met and fell in love with her first husband, James Yeary. They spent many years together building a life filled with much happiness and love from one another. They were married until his unfortunate passing in 2000. During their time together, they were blessed with two wonderful daughters. Both Lisa and Sabrina were the light of Sandra's life. Lisa and Sabrina not only encompass the humor and love that made Sandra a friend to many people, but they also exemplify her strength and resiliency to make it through the toughest times life can present.

Sandra gained many friends while working at Bechtel in Maryland. Throughout her many years there, her hard work and warm personality made a huge impact on many.

Sandra was also a woman of strong faith, and a huge part of her life involved prayer. She would often turn to her friends in time of need when she needed prayers for those around her, and she was also extremely grateful for the times in her life when she felt most blessed. The thoughts and prayers of so many of her friends near and far, through good times and bad times, meant everything to her.

Besides her husband, Ray, Sandra leaves two daughters, Lisa Rineheart of Delaware, and Sabrina Yeary, Sabrina's fiancé Michael Edwards, and his father Thomas Edwards of Connecticut; one stepdaughter, Jordan Sambroak (Dennis) of South Carolina; two grandchildren, Elaina and Justin; one brother, Marvin Lee Bauman (Cindy) of Poolesville; one sister Rosemarie Griffith (Sonny) of Poolesville; several nieces and nephews, including Jennifer, John, Katie, and Michael and their loving families; and her best friend Gary Wass of Plymouth, Massachusetts.

She was predeceased by her sister, Kathleen.



Sandra Yeary Bennett

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Winter Dawn

The trees are still; the bare cold
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Against a waiting sky.
Light everywhere, but ghostly light
that seems
The cast-off robe of dreams;

And everywhere a hush that seems
to hark
At the doorway of the dark.
O fields, white-sheeted, desolate
and dumb,—
If you knew what's to come!

— Amos Russel Wells

Continued from page 20.

For PHS Cross Country Runners, An Exuberant Restart

State finishers for the boys, who finished sixth with 168 points were: Junior Connor Kohne, who placed eighth, junior Caleb Bodmer, freshman Ethan Dimmerling, who placed fourth, and sophomores, Alex Daniels, Garrett Simons, and Jack Partain.

Finishing at the 2A West Region Championship and not at the state meet was junior Miles Kreske.

The girls finishing at the 2A West Region Championship and not at the state meet were freshmen, Layla Swyndle and Kylie Zhang. At the county meet, Diak finished twentieth to lead the girls, and Kohne led the boys, finishing twelfth.

"We have had a great season," said Wagner, a senior captain. "We have had a lot of people rise to the occasion. We have had a bunch of great meets. The Keyser Invitational at Boonsboro on October 17 was really fun. Both the girls and the boys finished third. My shoutouts go to Adrianna Carrillo. She is so supportive of everyone on the team and such a great team leader, always pushing us to do our best and running the team every day, and to Caleb and Connor. They are the top two guys on the team. They have pushed the whole team to work harder and push themselves to get better."

"The Oatlands Invitational on September 23 in Virginia was a lot of fun," said Bodmer, a senior captain. "The temperature was in the fifties. It was rainy and muddy, bad conditions, but we made a lot of good memories and had a lot of

fun. I had a good meet at the Keyser. It is a fast course. I set a PR. It is a three-mile course. A lot of my teammates had fast times as well. All the freshmen who came in this year have given the team a positive attitude. After losing so many seniors last year, it was nice that we had this new group of people come in and help us make some new traditions and memories."

"As a team, our best meet was the county," said Diak, a senior captain. "A lot of us had really good times there at Bohrer Park. We worked hard, and it was the end of the sea-son, and there were a lot of great races. My personal best was at the region meet. I set a PR and finished fourth. It was a great atmosphere and a great course. I think we peaked at the right time. I think a lot of the junior and senior captains have been awe-some in leading this team this year. We lost a lot of seniors last year. We needed a fresh restart, and they have really done a good job of filling that role."

"The Bretton Woods meet, near Seneca was very good," said Forcey, a senior captain. "It was a difficult course that we had not run on before. It was a pretty confusing lay-out, but I pushed through it, worked hard, and did really well. I finished sixth. The Poolesville Day 5K was a highlight for me. I prepared and pushed myself before the race. It was rainy and cool. I finished fifth. I really appreciate everyone who is into the sport who came out for the first time this year, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. It is a tough sport. It requires a lot of effort, endurance, and determination. It was fun to see them develop. They all worked hard. We had fun."

The other captains are Ghosh, Savino, Faith Nah, Sheila Meyer, and Colin Svedberg.

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Celebrating 34 Years of Service

Tips and Thoughts for Calming Your Pets' Holiday Stress

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

The Holidays are a time to be thankful, indulge in delicious food, and gather with friends and family, but our pets may find the holidays stressful if they suddenly find themselves surrounded by a large group of unfamiliar humans and/or other pets.

Here are some thoughts and tips that you should keep in mind to ensure your pets and the humans you invite to celebrate the holidays with you have a stress-free time except for the gifts you got them.

Introducing pets to new guests

The key thing to remember when introducing your furry pets to new visitors is that pets should be allowed to meet people on their own terms. If your pet shows they are happy where they are, let them stay there. Your mantra for your guests, "Please keep all hands and feet to yourself at all times during animal visits."

We all know pets have a variety of responses to new people and things. Some animals are very eager to meet guests and will willingly approach them, but you may need to help calm your overly-excited pet to keep it from jumping on someone. You know your furry friends' likely response if it's a small kid or a frailer guest, so be proactive. On the other hand, pets that are more cautious around people they don't know will need to be approached slowly or not at all. Consider discussing this with your veterinarian so you can use your best pre-eggog judgement when your guests arrive.

Providing treats to your pets

One way you can help your pets adjust to guests is by providing your own treats.

If your furry pals are excellent treat takers, you can give your guests some treats from your own supply to share with your pet as encouragement. If your pet does not want to interact with someone, it should never be forced. Some pets may be happier with a special treat or new toy in a quieter part of the home where they can avoid the festivities and strange humans

Avoid giving table food to your pet

Stick with treats that your animals normally enjoy and have no gastrointestinal issues over. Sharing your holiday foods with your pets is usually not a good idea. Foods that should not be fed to pets include anything containing onions, garlic, grapes, raisins, walnuts, chocolate, or xylitol (which can be very toxic) which is typically found in baked desserts and sugarless goods. Owners should avoid giving anything that is rich, seasoned, or alcoholic as well. Never offer fruit cake to anyone.

If you feel you must share some holiday foods with your furry buddies, a couple bites of turkey with the skin removed and no gravy, some plain green beans, or a bite of bread can be fine. This is as long as they have not shown any allergies to these foods.

Signs Of a Stressed Pet

It is important to check that your pets may not be easily adjusting to holiday crowds. A pet trying to hide or leave the home is a clear sign of negative stress on them, so beware of doors that are left open as people enter and exit your home. Dogs may also show stress by trembling, licking their lips, yawning, or avoiding people and activities. Cats get low, flatten their ears, and dilate their pupils.

If your pet is not feeling the holiday cheer the way your guests are, it's important for you and your guests to not overwhelm them with attention, as it can lead to negative reactions on both sides.

If your guests persist in giving unwanted attention to pets, they may growl, hiss, bark, bite or scratch them in an effort to remove what they feel is a perceived threat.

Pets with high stress levels may need to be placed in a quieter part of the house where they won't have to interact with guests. If you know your furry friend is very stressed by holiday events, they may be happier staying elsewhere, such as a boarding facility or at a friend's home. If your pets have mild stress during parties or social gatherings, speak with your veterinarian about what they would recommend to reduce the stress. Using a short-acting medication prescribed by your veterinarian to alleviate the anxiety may be needed.

Prepare your pets ahead of time

Taking your dog on a long walk before guests arrive can be a great way to tire your dog and minimize stress for both of you. If your cat likes to chase a laser pointer or other toys, you can do that before guests arrive as well. During the event, you can give your pet a long-lasting treat you know they do well with or new toy they cannot swallow to occupy their attention for a while. Make sure there are no small humans nearby that may try to take the treat or toy.

Familiarizing your pets with guests who may visit during the holidays before the big day can also help pets more easily adjust to the festivities. If they live near you, short visits before the big parties can really reduce stress for your pets.

With a little bit of common sense, preparation, and attention, you and your furry friends can have a healthy, happy, and stress-free holiday surrounded by those you love.



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