

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Monthly Newspaper

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Taps was played for over four hundred local vets. See where and when in Family Album on page 2.



When you are an entrepreneur, you have to do it all. See who this is in Focus on Business on page 5.



MES students found time to give to others this holiday season. See how in School News on page 8.



Dan Yates, William Price, and Roger Brenholtz gave Santa a helping hand. Find out how in Tidbits on page 10.

Commissioners Finalize New Pesticide Rules

By Link Hoewing

The Town of Poolesville commissioners finalized the pesticide rules they have been considering for the last few months. The rules were first put in place by Montgomery County, and the town had decided to adopt and incorporate them into its code. In brief, the county's pesticide law restricts the use of most synthetic pesticides on private lawns, playgrounds, mulched recreation areas, and childcare facilities. The rules do not apply to use on farms or golf courses. Under the rules, the county urges homeowners to practice organic lawn care. The law requires local landscaping companies and other licensed applicators to switch from synthetic pesticides to organic pesticides to treat lawns as well.

In opening the December 4 commissioners' meeting, Commission President Jim Brown said, "We've

given a lot of thought, heard from the scientists and experts, businesses, and the public about this issue. We've all had a chance to consider what we have heard." He noted that while the issue received more attention only recently, the rules had been under consideration at various points since 2015. The basic issue is "whether we are going to open it up again or not," meaning: Would the commissioners decide to stick with their initial decision to adopt the county's rules?

Commissioner Jeff Eck said, "The number one issue for me is the quality of the water we have, and we sit right on top of it." He said he was concerned about pesticides getting into the aquifer. He went on to say that he was not in favor of overturning the decision at this point. "We did not make the wrong decision even though we have been criticized regarding the process."

Town Manager Wade Yost said there have been pesticides detected in the wells, but "pesticides come and go," and the levels of the chemicals have not remained stable. He said the town's water is tested, but it must be done in a long-term manner to have value and show trends. Testing is done by the Maryland Department of Environmental Services, and the town pays for it.

Commissioner Sarah Paksima said, "I agree we did not share enough information from the first meeting we had" on this issue. She said that all the evidence "we have been presented with is that the pesticide problem is real." Use on residential homes appears to be a "substantial contributor" to pesticide incursion into the aquifer. She said the commissioners need to talk about how we help businesses transition

Continued on page 20.

Poolesville's Irv Smith Dreamed Big

By Jeff Stuart

Forty years ago, on Saturday, November 19, 1983, the Poolesville Indians football team beat Southern Garrett, 20-8, at Poolesville to qualify for the Class C State Championship. A fourth quarter interception by Ralph Helms with the Rams at the Poolesville sixteen-yard line helped seal the victory (a week later, the Indians would lose to J.M. Bennett in the championship game at the University of Maryland), but on this day, the star of the game was Poolesville's Irvin Smith who rushed for 173 yards. On the second play of the second half, he broke loose on a pitchout for a sixty-four-yard touchdown. "All I saw was a lot of daylight," he said, "and I just went for it." That gave the Indians a 14-8 lead. Smith was Montgomery County's leading rusher with 1,443 yards.

"He has been our mainstay," said Coach Ernie Cecatto at the time. "He has great speed and quickness. You

give him the ball, and he can run over or around somebody."

"It was one of the biggest games I have played in," said Smith. "I still hold it dear to my heart. It was the first time a small school in Montgomery County got this much attention. They brought in extra bleachers—portable—just for that game. It was quite an event. Signs were up all over town supporting us. All businesses in the town were shut down. The whole town was behind us. Walking in the stadium for the pregame warmups was eye opening for us. We had never seen that many people in the stands before. It was a Saturday afternoon game. Seneca Valley was the only school in the county that had lights at that time, so there were no Friday night games anywhere else. I remember going down there to watch Friday night games.

Continued on page 9.



Irv Smith with his high school football coach, Ernie Cecatto.

Family Album

WREATHS across AMERICA

Right: Jonathan Beall Benson, a veteran of the War of 1812.



The wreath for navy vets.



The honor guard from Seneca Valley High School's Junior ROTC.



The wreath for marines vets.



The wreath for army vets.



The wreath for coast guard vets.



The wreath for air force vets.

Local News

County Executive to Include Community Center Funding in Proposed Capital Budget

By Link Hoewing

In a major development, County Executive Marc Elrich has told the Fair Access Committee (FAC) and other community members that he is including in his budget funding to build the community center that the committee has been seeking. In part, Elrich said, "As you may be aware, I am working with the Office of Management and Budget and other staff to evaluate new projects for recommendation to be included in the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program. We will face many challenges and difficult decisions in developing the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program. I will be including this project when I send it over to the council. I certainly understand the importance that our neighborhood centers play in the quality of life provided for our residents."

The proposal for a community center is among a number of initiatives that FAC has been pushing in its campaign to ensure residents of the Upcounty are treated equitably when it comes to county and state services, facilities, and programming. Initially, in a white paper released in 2018, FAC had proposed that the county rebuild and modernize the outdated Poolesville High School and build a community center that would be co-located on school grounds. The county school system has identified a piece of land near what is now the school's library where a co-located facility could be built.

Since that time, FAC, Town of Poolesville commissioners, and community members have been pushing the county executive and the council to fund the community center. During that time, WUMCO received an initial grant to begin working to address the serious health needs that have been ignored in the Upcounty. A county study a few years ago found that the Poolesville zip code (other nearby zip codes were not included in the study) has the worst health outcomes of the thirty-six zip codes studied throughout the county. WUMCO has been using grant money and county funding to offer health clinics of various kinds to residents who either can't afford healthcare or have a difficult time getting to doctors often located far away.

The healthcare needs WUMCO has helped identify prompted FAC to push to include clinic space that could be used to offer more robust healthcare services to the needy as part of the community center. Last year, money was secured to undertake a study called a Program of Requirements or POR the county uses to identify and prioritize major capital projects. The POR is nearly complete and, while not released publicly, FAC has been told clinic space is included in the proposal for the community center.

The inclusion of capital funding to build the community center by the county executive in his FY 25-26 capital spending plan to be released in January is a major step forward. This is only the first step in a very tough budget process, and the support of at least six out of the eleven councilmembers will be needed to make the project a reality. There are no guarantees that the council will choose to fund the community center given the many other projects they have before them. Without the county executive's support, the idea would have no chance of success because councilmembers cannot propose major new capital funding proposals on their own. Hearings on the proposal start in February, and the community's support will be crucial as it was when pushing for funding for the high school.

"If there was ever evidence that letters to county and state leaders make a difference, this is it," said Link Hoewing, Chair of FAC. "Through our Muster Email system, we reached out to the community to send emails to the county executive supporting a community center. He clearly heard those who responded, many of whom got notes back from him on the issue. We will need the community's support in the long fight ahead to get council approval for the community center's funding."

Do you or someone you know have a special announcement, or milestone you would like to share with our readers?

The Monocle welcomes your contribution.

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Rande(m) Thoughts The Sinking of White's Ferry: The End of a Great Era

By Rande Davis

As we begin a new year, I am afraid we also have come to an end of an era. The iconic White's Ferry and all it represents and means to this town is unlikely to operate again. I have been hopeful, even optimistic, throughout this ordeal that a solution could be found, but at this junction, I only see one path to opening the service again, and it is a very narrow path at that.

The *Monocle* published an exhaustive 2,600-word historical recollection of the legal establishment of the ferry from 1871 (it is believed to have originally opened in the late 1700s) to today. No repeating of that record is necessary here. If you really want a complete understanding of this issue, you can find and read our November 2023 issue online.

Both our Town Commission President Jim Brown and Link Hoewing, chairman of the Fair Access Committee, recently announced their conclusion and fear that the ferry will not open. Both gentlemen deserve praise for their exhaustive efforts to find a solution and to motivate all involved both in the public and private sectors. I can also praise our government officials, both elected and appointed, who have so diligently worked to find a way forward.

Jim Brown recently stated online: "It's time for the two private owners to reach an agreement and end this farce of a stalemate. More of our time, as elected officials, spent trying to get the two owners to agree to a solution means less time spent on other real issues that affect our region. We'll always want White's Ferry to return to service, but it's time to move on, unfortunately."

We have been discouraged that, with virtually everyone in agreement the ferry should open, no resolution has been made. One might ask: How can that happen?

I do not agree with the conclusion of some others who find equal fault by both private landowners or who also criticize the lack of creativity on the part of government officials for the demise of the ferry. It is my opinion that it is the irrational intransigence of Rockland Farm that sank the ferry.

First, I want to make clear that Rockland deserves a reasonable compensation for the use of the otherwise

unusable part of their property. The roadblock to the reopening of the ferry is their insistence only on a per-car fee solution. It is not the amount of the fee (fifty cents) that is the problem. On the surface it sounds reasonable and fair. It's the process, not the amount. Let me explain.

Such an arrangement has raised a host of concerns held by both owners of the ferry, Ed Brown family and Chuck Kuhn. One thing is certain, no one loved, cared for, or wanted this ferry open more than the late Ed Brown. He saved the ferry once at great risk from permanent closure after he returned home from World War II as a young man and nurtured it through the ups and downs of over seventy years of operation. Chuck Kuhn, a very successful businessman did not buy the ferry from the Brown family to make huge profits. The money Mr. Kuhn could have made from the money he has poured into the ferry through other investments these past three years dwarfs the economic gains ever expected from running a costly, very risky ferry operation. His record of purchasing historical property and preserving it in Virginia is unassailable. He bought the ferry as one more preservation project, expecting to be able to get it open and make profits enough to justify his expenditure—not to lose money. With these two parties so devoted to the notion of keeping the ferry open, one wonders why the demands of Rockland Farm could not be accommodated by either person. It is not simple greed on their part. Maybe they understand the nature and costs of the ferry better than the general public. Perhaps they really do know more about the ferry operation than Rockland Farm.

All businesses face the uncertainty of risks, and the goal for any business is to minimize and manage those risks. Even if the landing rights are purchased outright, the uncertainty of the success of the ferry remains. How many cars will use it? What if COVID and the resulting lifestyle changes cause a huge reduction in travelers? What if traffic is reduced by half? The essential key is commuter usage. That is what has allowed the ferry to remain open and made possible the weekend tourist trade these past many decades. Remember, commuters paid a much lower rate, and the fifty cents is a much greater cut into that part of the revenue. Diminished commuter usage could eventually result in the loss of enough revenue to force the ferry to close regardless of how all this turns out.

To raise the cost of the ferry can only reduce usage, not increase it, raising the questions: To what degree does

traffic diminish? How elastic is the price for use of the ferry? It is clear the price of using the ferry will have to go up to cover so many years of lost income in addition to covering the heavy cost to keep it ready to open quickly in the event of a settlement. If usage goes down, would Rockland agree to a lower fee? Purchasing the use of the landing outright at least provides a level of certainty and makes judgments on further investment into the operation safer and more manageable.

The other concern is that the per-car fee arrangement establishes a pseudo-partnership. Both ferry owners determined early on that the owners of Rockland Farm were not suitable partners. Both parties concluded they could not work with Rockland in an ongoing relationship. Besides, no business owner would have a small partner having such power held over them. Forcing the ferry owners into an arrangement they do not want is like a forced marriage, and the owners should not be criticized if they do not believe they can work with the owners of Rockland Farm.

It is also suggested that the government could buy the ferry, but the county has made it clear they, too, are not interested in a per-car fee arrangement as it does not work with the governmental budgeting process.

Through it all, there does remain a solution. All that is needed is for Rockland Farm to set a price of the purchase of perpetual landing rights. From there, negotiations can at least truly begin. I previously reported that Peter Brown, the largest shareholder of Rockland Farm, once stated to the Ed Brown family that those rights were worth two million dollars. He called me to dispute this reporting. He denied having said that and is not involved in this issue; only his sister is in charge. Herb Brown now confirms Peter Brown's position but continues to stand by his position that the two-million-dollar figure was stated by Rockland Farm very early in the original negotiations.

One thing is certain, without an agreed-upon one-time price to perpetually use the landing, the ferry will not ever open. All Rockland has to do is agree to a price that is reasonable. At this point, Rockland has left 1.25 million dollars on the table. Could they get more? Maybe, maybe not, but there are limits. After three years, we have all found a way to live and prosper without the ferry. It's time for us to move on and sadly remember the nostalgic good old days of how nice and important the ferry was to us.

Libby Devlin once told the press that she now enjoys the quiet of the river

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Focus on Business

Anytime Fitness: A Joyful Health Option

By Rande Davis

Now that the holiday season has past, many of us will once again focus on our health and fitness goals for 2024, and we are fortunate to have a first-rate professional facility to help us in that mission. Poolesville's Anytime Fitness really is there for us anytime, day or night. It is well equipped to meet the needs of a wide range of prospective clients from young folks to seniors, and from those who want to lose weight to those wanting to gain muscle mass. We think that for all it has to offer, it is their leadership and staff that really make all the real difference.

I won't recite the technical information about Anytime Fitness that is readily available on its website, you can do that for yourself. Suffice it to say that they specialize in cardio, strength, functional training, and coaching services. We thought it would be more valuable to help you get to know more about the culture and the leadership of the club so vital to your hoped-for success.

Joy Hallfors is not only the manager, but in 2019, she was asked to join their ownership team, making her one of many businesses in the Poolesville area owned/operated by women.

Joy is from Mt. Airy and is a 2013 graduate of Linganore High School. She holds a health sciences degree from Gettysburg College. While there, she was a dual-sport athlete as a centerfielder on the school's softball team and on their indoor track team. She broke the school's total hits record and still holds top ten places in several offensive categories.

Uncertain about exactly which career direction she wanted to follow after graduation, she decided to become a personal trainer while she sorted out her options. "I was attracted to the health sciences as I wanted to do something that could really help people," she explained. She is very grateful to her parents because, as a collage graduation gift, they sponsored her personal training certification. She became a fully certified trainer through the National Academy of Sports Medicine and was soon hired by Spring Ridge Anytime Fitness in Frederick in October 2013. Just after two months of personal training there, the manager left, and Joy stepped up to fill that position. Soon after, she met Laura Burstein, who owned and managed the then-new Poolesville location, and was asked by Burstein to join her and the group in Poolesville.

Anytime Fitness in Poolesville has a staff of eight people that includes four personal trainers and three office personnel. She was thrilled to become a part-owner as a perfect fit for her career ambitions. "I truly believe in the mission of Anytime Fitness. They are all about boosting self-esteem, using exercise as preventative medicine, and investing in your health which is much more cost effective than paying medical bills."

One of the advantages of her association with Anytime Fitness is that, through various conferences and meetings, she has been exposed to many motivational speakers, seminars on the most current and up-to-date exercise information, details on best practices and technology, and travel opportunities. Her last conference was held in Colorado Springs.

She is excited about some new changes coming to her facility. The space is expanding by two thousand square feet by incorporating the empty space on the west side of the facility, and all the strength training equipment will be there. "The changes will help us be more of a coaching club, offering more small group coaching, large group training, which will help us offer a lower personal training costs, and bring in hi-tech functional movement and body measuring monitors with over sixty points of health data."



Anytime Fitness's Joy Hallfors.

Continued on page 7.

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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).

January 5

Classic Movie Night

Join us for the 1942 cult film classic, *Casablanca*. Set during World War II, this black and white tale of romance, courage, and the greater good stars Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. Snacks provided. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m.

January 10

Woodworking Demonstration

Join us for a demonstration of artisan woodworking on a lathe. William Price will demonstrate his skill of making bowls with local wood to a group of eight in his barn. Long lasting and finished with oil and wax, these bowls are completely food safe and can be used indefinitely with proper care. Registration is limited. Directions to location with registration. 10:30 a.m.

January 11

Richard Montgomery: "A Grateful Remembrance"

Robert Plumb of History Montgomery presents the life of Gen. Richard Montgomery and his connection with our county. Virtual. 7:00 p.m.

January 12

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.

January 15

PS Book Club: *Tom Lake*

Join us for the first 2024 meeting when we discuss *Tom Lake*, a novel by Ann Patchett. As with most of Patchett's work, this is a story of family and relationships. Virtual. 7:00 p.m.

January 18

Trail Hike:

Little Bennett Regional Park

Join Karen Dansby and Gwen Haney for a two-hour, 5.5-mile trail hike with an elevation gain of five hundred-plus feet in Little Bennett Regional Park. These natural trails may be leaf-covered, rocky/root covered paths with multiple hills. Hikers should be able to maintain a moderate pace. Good hiking shoes, water, and a snack are recommended. Directions to meeting place on registration page. 10:30 a.m.

January 19

Friday Movie Night

Kenneth Branagh directs and stars as the detective Hercule Poirot searching for the culprits at a deadly Halloween séance in *A Haunting in Venice*. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m.

January 20

Riley's Lock Pop-Up Walk

Join Jon Wolz on at Riley's Lock where he will guide a walk to the Seneca Stone Cutting Mill and then on to the Seneca Quarries. 10:00 a.m.

January 25

Jumpin' Joe Motown & Oldies Show

Join Jumpin' Joe Phillips for a musical blast from the past when he entertains

us with hits from the Motown era. *Speer Hall*. 2:00 p.m.

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@poolesville-seniors.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.

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Continued from page 4.

**The Sinking of White's Ferry:
The End of a Great Era**

with the ferry closed. She even placed a small trailer on the riverbank at the landing to do just that. I hope that, while she sits on the bank, watching the river peacefully flow by, she also sees the 1.25 million dollars float by as well. Too bad Peter Brown doesn't choose to get involved and provide her with the benefit of his excellent investment knowledge to make the money grow. Our advice to her: Take the money on the table now or forever regret your decision.

Continued from page 5.

**Anytime Fitness:
A Joyful Health Option**

Operating the health club during the height of the pandemic was especially challenging. Joy credits local high school students who use the club in large numbers after high school. "I think they actually saved us."

As a member of the Poolesville club, I have already been able to take advantage of their many locations outside of Poolesville. I was able to use the Frederick location in Whittier while my wife was at physical therapy in Frederick, and while visiting a relative in New Jersey, I was pleased to find one available just a few miles from her home.

The one in Frederick has an idyllic setting surrounded by a pond, but I told the personnel staff there that, while their location is particularly beautiful, the Poolesville club had one thing better that they didn't have. When asked what that was, I simply said, "They have Joy!"

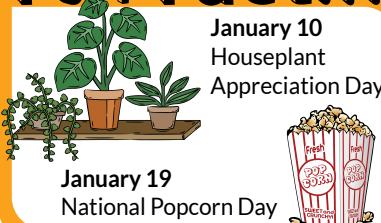
Joy and her husband reside in Mt. Airy with their three-year-old son, August (Auggie).

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Senior News

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

Fun Fact...



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Houseplant
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January 19
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School News

MES Helps WUMCO

Monocacy Elementary School students had a very successful toy drive to benefit the children served by WUMCO.

PES Students Help Raise Funds for New Playground Equipment

Students in grades K, 2, 3, and 4 from Poolesville Elementary School worked after school in planning sessions to create a fundraising hot chocolate sales stand. Their goal was to raise money for new playground/recess equipment for Poolesville Elementary. They made flyers, stuffed mailboxes, and placed flyers in neighborhoods. Local business, like Sweet Lemon, Healthy Hub, and Bassett's, supported them by hanging their flyers in their locations. The principal and assistant principal announced the hot chocolate sales on the morning announcements.

It worked! The town and kids showed up for them, resulting in raising \$322. The group gave the money to Principal Robins who will allow the students to help choose what equipment is purchased with the money they raised.

This project demonstrated community thoughtfulness and initiative from which all the kids will benefit.



Principal Doug Robbins (right) with student fundraisers, Asher Gang (kindergarten), Sydney Gang (third grade), Ava Strickland (second grade), and Alex Strickland (fourth grade).

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Continued from page 1.

Poolesville's Irv Smith Dreamed Big

"Coach Cecatto was a big influence on me and helped me grow as a young man and a student athlete. He was very fair. He and the other coaches truly cared about their players. As an individual, you could feel it, and if we were not doing the right thing, they would have no problem coming to our houses and talking to our parents. That was a benefit of playing at a small-town school like Poolesville. We only had twenty-plus players on varsity. I was fortunate to watch him being inducted into the Maryland State High School Coaches' Hall of Fame. That was a well-deserved honor. I got some great pictures.

"I still touch base with teammates, Mike Curtis, Keith Wilkins, Ronnie Magaha, and Richard Rosser, when I go home. We stay in touch. I stay connected with Robbie Holland via Facebook. He lives in Kentucky now. This past spring, I ran into Mike Bupp who is a retired Montgomery County Police officer. Bupp's thirty-one-yard TD pass to Curtis gave us the lead against Southern Garrett in the first quarter. It is great to see those guys. They all helped me succeed. They supported me in every which way. We were a team. In my high school years, we only lost three football games. My senior year, we went 9-1 and did not make it to the playoffs. Go figure. Now everyone makes the playoffs. Anyway, I look back on those days and cherish them.

"I had fifteen scholarship offers from Division I schools, including every school in the ACC except Clemson. Penn State was at the top of my list. Virginia Tech and UCLA were too. It just showed that it did not matter that I did not go to Seneca Valley or one of the other powerhouse schools in the county. My hard work and athletic achievement were rewarded. I got recognized. My final three schools were UNC-Chapel Hill, Virginia Tech, and Maryland. I ended up choosing Maryland. Back in 1984-1985, the Terps were ranked number one in the pre-season polls. When I was a senior, they had won two straight ACC Championships and were coming off another bowl win. The Turner Sports Network had Maryland on every Saturday. They were in my backyard. They are big, and they were recruiting me. Coach Bobby Ross came to my house. He had my mom in the palm of his hand from the moment he walked in our door. He talked about discipline, taking responsibility, and being mature. He said, 'He will be away from home, but I will be his mom and dad out there.' He told them if I were injured, they could helicopter me to Johns Hopkins or University Hospital in twelve minutes. He laid it on thick. Afterward, my mom looked at me square in the face and said, 'You are going to Maryland.'"

Immediately after high school in 1985, Smith played in Pennsylvania's BIG 33, an all-star high school football game featuring Pennsylvania's thirty-three (then later thirty-four) top high school players. He played for the Maryland team in the first time Maryland played in the BIG 33. "We lost the game, 15-13, but I was still co-MVP of the game as a running back. At eighteen years old, I dreamed big. I had aspirations of going to Maryland, leading the country in rushing, and winning the Heisman Trophy. They were the number one team in the nation. What better way to get exposure? At Poolesville, I had never played a snap on defense. I went to Maryland, and they moved me to defensive back, but it all worked out in the end.

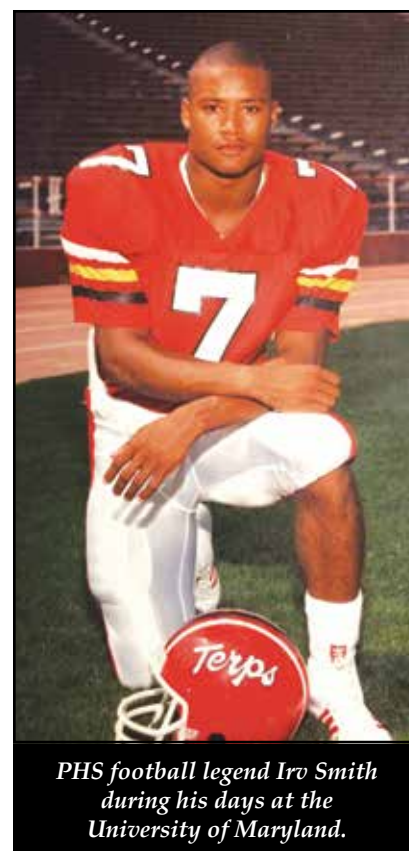
"In my junior and senior years there, it seemed like I had an awesome game on Homecoming weekend. I had two interceptions. One came on the final Duke drive to seal the game. We were playing Duke when Steve Spurrier was coaching there. Their quarterback was Anthony Dillweed. We won 23-22 in 1987. In 1986, Boston College was our homecoming opponent. I had a ninety-yard interception return for a touchdown late in the game to give us the lead. Unfortunately, they got the ball back, and quarterback Shawn Halloran led a game-winning drive. We lost 30-25. That game broke a two-game losing streak and started the Eagles on an eight-game winning streak to end the season. My best friend in college was J.B. Brown who went on to have a phenomenal career with the Miami Dolphins. Charlie Gassaway, who graduated from Gaithersburg High School, was a teammate. He and I battled each other for the county rushing title in 1985. Our dads worked together for twenty-five years. They introduced us. We became friends and decided to go to Maryland together. I was best man at his wedding. Mike Anderson and Lewis Askew were also influential teammates and friends. We are still close.

"When I graduated from Maryland, I signed as a free agent with the New York Jets. I got cut, so I went back to Maryland and picked up the nine credits I needed to graduate, and I graduated with a degree in Criminal Science. I was just a regular student and utilized the weight room to keep in shape. I went back to the Jets. The defensive back coach under new head coach Bruce Cosset was Pete Carroll

who is now the head coach of the Seattle Seahawks. The Jets allocated me to the World League. I ended up being the last pick in the second round of the London Monarchs. I played for them for two seasons and won the first ever World Bowl Championship in 1991. I was the starting left corner on that team. That was a phenomenal experience. Wembley Stadium was our home field. Our fans were just getting a taste of American football. They did not know when to cheer. We would punt the ball and get a standing ovation, but they loved it. To get to the World Bowl, we had to beat the New York Knights. We had beaten them two times. Because Wembley Stadium was booked for a soccer match, we had to go to New York to play them this time. Their coach, Miles Davis, had told the media there was no way we were going to beat them three times, but we did. We really wanted to make it to the championship. I had about twenty-five family members and friends come to watch the game. We really wanted to make it to the championship at Wembley. We had a blast flying back home. We beat Barcelona, 21-0 in that game.. The fanfare was great. It was quite an after party. I was voted onto the All-World Football Team."

Smith's football journey took him to the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the Canadian Football League (CFL). In 1993, he was on the roster of both the NFL Redskins and the Vikings. In 1994, he returned to the CFL with the Baltimore Stallions and won a Grey Cup Championship with them in 1995. The Stallions beat the Calgary Stampeders, 37-20, in Regina, Saskatchewan. He relocated to Canada with the team as it became the Montreal Alouettes and was named an all-star in 1996 and 2000. Smith became one of a few to ever win both a World Cup and Grey Cup Championship.

Today, Smith works for Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services.



PHS football legend Irv Smith during his days at the University of Maryland.

A Monocacy Moment



Poolesville Post Office's Ron Poole dressed for success in spirit and deed this Christmas season.

Tidbits

Santa Is So Happy with WUMCO

Together with their partner organizations, WUMCO served 181 families with 414 children. For the Christmas holiday, WUMCO acknowledges it is as all due to

Continued on page 22.



The Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department once again spearheaded a successful toy drive to benefit recipients of WUMCO Help.



Monocacy Lions and their helpers distributed holiday gifts to those in need through WUMCO. Pam and Bill Jamison, Josh Davis, and Josh and Chris Maisel.



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Youth Sports

Preview of Boys' Basketball And Swim and Dive Teams

By Jeff Stuart

Boys' Basketball

"The varsity boys' basketball team will look to build off of last year's success," said Coach BJ DeBuchananne, "with seven seniors, four juniors, and three sophomores. Jackson Hartke and Alexavier Saunders will lead the back court with a strong instinct to score. The duo will prove to be a tough matchup on a nightly basis for other teams. Carson Smith is a jack of all trades that can play all five positions, score inside and out, looks to set up others, and provides a strong defensive presence. Preston Krueger, Ryan Griffith, Jack Loftus, and Brady Cournoyer will bring senior leadership and defensive intensity. Sophomores, Jordan Smith, Armaan Jain, and Emmanuel Chukwurah, bring length and athleticism that will be a big help to the group.

"The first quarter of the season will prove to be a big challenge for the Falcons as they take on four teams that made it to the Elite 8 or further in last year's state tournament. Last year, the Falcons had ten games that were decided by six points or less, including five one-point games. The last two years, the Falcons won their first-round home playoff game only to fall to top-seeded Walkersville in the second round. This year, they will play in a new section with the hope of making a longer playoff run."

The Falcons picked up their first win of the season at home against Wheaton, 84-37, and beat Damascus at home on December 21, 48-36. They beat Watkins Mill away on December 19, 58-52.

Swim and Dive

"So here we are again," said swim team coach Jonathan Leong. "This year is a little different. The rebuild is for real this time. I am very excited to have such

a large showing of new members trying out for the team this year. At last count, there were over eighty students interested in the swim and dive team. We are excited for the opportunity to climb back up to the top of the podium at the end of our season as the outlook of competing against last year's winners, Rockville and Easton, looks very much wide open. Hopefully, with the large freshman class of swimmers and divers, we will be able to get the job done; however, we cannot look at the playoffs just yet. We still have a lot of practice and our own divisional meets to get through before the championship part of our season. In Division II this year, we face Blair, Richard Montgomery, Sherwood, Damascus, and Watkins Mill. All of these teams are going to be a challenge to swim. Richard Montgomery's girls were the winners of the division last year, Blair is moving down from Division I, and Watkins Mill's girls were the Division III winner last year, so we have our work cut out for us.

"I am looking forward to having our seniors lead and help me motivate the team, further team community, and create an enjoyable memorable year for our

Continued on page 12.

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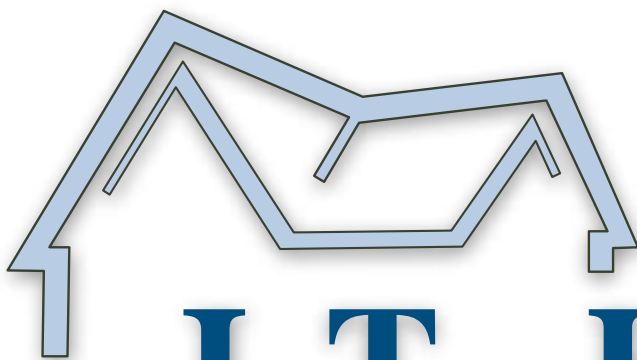


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Continued from page 11.

Preview of Boys' Basketball And Swim and Dive Teams

athletes. We will be adding more senior captains, but right now we are being led by Sammy Ye, Lydia Wong, and Liam Sheeran.

"We look forward to making a splash and moving forward with our season.

"Swimmers to watch on the girls' side are sophomore Sophie Huang and freshmen Christine Wang, Vivian She, and Kristina Kuzemenko. On the boys' side, we have senior Liam Sheeran and sophomores, Ethan Lee and Justin Jarszynski."

In December, the swimmers won at Damascus and lost at Blair. Upcoming meets are January 6 versus Magruder at the Gaithersburg Aquatic Center at 2:30 p.m., January 13 versus Richard Montgomery at the Martin Luther King Swim Center at 11:30 a.m., January 20 versus Sherwood at the Gaithersburg Aquatic Center at 9:30 a.m., and January 27 versus Damascus and Rockville at the Germantown Indoor Swim Center at 9:15 a.m.

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Poolesville Green

Action for the Earth by St. Peter's Church

By Doug Boucher, President Poolesville Green

As the threat of climate change has become more and more evident, religious congregations have been reflecting on what they can do about it—not just as individuals but as communities of faith. Churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples have found the inspiration to take action in their traditions of caring for creation, using the resources with which they have been blessed. In late January, we will see one such action in our own small town as St. Peter's Episcopal Church inaugurates the new solar panel array on its rooftop.

The ceremony will take place at the church on Sunday, January 28, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service. The solar panels, installed by Lumina Solar, will generate seventy-six kilowatts of clean energy and are projected to prevent the emission of 1,212 tons of carbon dioxide every year. They'll also help the church's budget, with an estimated savings of \$135,540 in electric bills over the first twenty years.

St. Peter's Church's move to generate clean energy was made possible by an innovative public-private partnership between Skyview Ventures and the Montgomery County Green Bank. The Green Bank's funding of a "Commercial Solar Power Purchase Agreement," to the tune of \$122,871, allowed St. Peter's to go solar with no upfront cost. The action isn't just good environmentally but financially, as well.

As I heard the story of St. Peter's going solar, I was reminded of another church and another celebration that I attended on Earth Day in 2022, in the eastern part of Montgomery County. This was for the community solar farm installed on the land of Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville. After much discussion and prayerful reflection, the congregation of Cedar Ridge decided to dedicate eight of its sixty-three acres to a solar project that would generate two thousand kilowatts of power. This provides renewable electricity to about 350 families, of which thirty percent are living on low or moderate incomes.

Continued on page 15.



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Things to Do

January 8

PHS Varsity Home Games

Boys' basketball vs. Magruder. 5:30 p.m.

Girls' basketball vs. Magruder. 7:15 p.m.

January 12

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Rockville. 5:30 p.m.

January 18

Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:00 p.m.

January 19

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Gaithersburg. 7:15 p.m.

January 20

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Sherwood. 11:45 a.m.

January 22

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Kennedy. 7:15 p.m.

January 24

PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling vs. Gaithersburg. 7:00 p.m.

January 26

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Northwood. 7:15 p.m.

January 28

St. Peter's Solar Array Celebration

Ceremony to celebrate the inauguration of the rooftop solar array. There'll be refreshments for young and old alike, the joy of doing good, and hopefully a very sunny day! *St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Poolesville.* 11:30 a.m.

January 30

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Clarksburg. 7:15 p.m.

January 31

PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling vs. B-CC. 6:15 p.m.

February 1

PACC Networking Event

Featuring Kuhlman Landscaping. *Locals.* 8:30 a.m.

PACC Annual Meeting and Dinner

Registration required on PACC website. *Crossvines.* 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

American Legion Post 247

Monthly Meeting

Calleva Offices, Poolesville. 7:00 p.m.



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Continued from page 13.

Action for the Earth by St. Peter's Church

Cedar Ridge's solar farm is screened by planted trees and shelters pollinator-friendly vegetation. It complements other faith-inspired uses of the church's land, including a food-producing farm, beehives, birdboxes, a nature trail through native woods (called a prayer walk), and four geocaches for outdoor enjoyment.

When I attended the Earth Day celebrations at Cedar Ridge, its pastors and congregation told me of the long period of discernment that led to the decision to adopt the community solar project. The congregants were proud of their long record of stewardship of their land and, in particular, of the beautiful meadow vegetation that blossomed with wildflowers each spring, but they came to feel that they could retain the natural beauty of the meadows while at the same time generating energy for their neighbors. They wrote how they had come to a positive decision, "We are committed to 'be the change we want to see in the world' as we seek to make the world a better place—not just for ourselves, but for everyone." Now they are proud to be able to see that they have the first community solar project hosted by a faith community in Maryland.

St. Peter's is part of the same movement to put faith in action in confronting the climate crisis through collective action. It'll be the first religious institution in Poolesville to go solar—and hopefully not the last.

Everyone is invited to the church's solar celebration on January 28, starting around 11:30 a.m. There'll be refreshments for young and old alike, the joy of doing good, and hopefully a very sunny day!

County to Consider Lodging on Ag Reserve Farms

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 of agriculture.



Concerns have arisen about the proposal, however. It's overly broad, poorly justified and could undermine basic tenets of and practices in the Ag Reserve.

Along with Montgomery Countryside Alliance and several regional farmers' groups, SCA opposes the measure (Zoning Text Amendment 23-09). We urge you to do the same and let your County Council member know.

The Council should scrap the proposal and instead support a public dialogue in 2024 on the future direction of agritourism in the Ag Reserve, to include the issue of overnight lodging on farms.

Visit SCA's website for updates on this proposal.

ONGOING SCA INITIATIVES

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

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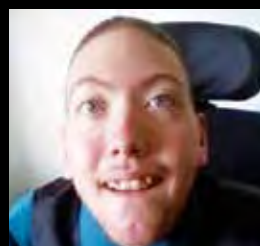
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Tina Louise Haga



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Ralph Montgomery Helms, Sr.



Gary Brent Honemond



Forest Lee Hough



Kate Szuberla Jauch



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Gregory Christopher Jordan



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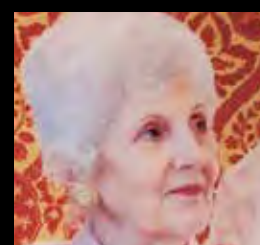
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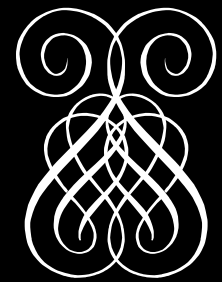
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Local Arts

Riverworks Events

Local arts events take place at three locations: 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:

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.

Events Calendar:

January 7

Classes and Workshops for Adults

'Circle your Intentions' Wellness Workshop

Promote your momentum and flow going into the new year with creativity and life coach Suzanne Wright and create a new year's wellness kit complete with energized intention circles,

a personal mantra, sensory reminders, and much more. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

January 14

Locals Gallery Opening Reception featuring Claire Howard

Meet Upcounty artist Claire Howard, the newest Artist-in-the-House Gallery Show artist at Riverworks. Enjoy complimentary soft drinks and snacks; beer and wine available for purchase. Free. *Locals Farm Market*. 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Fridays, January 19 to February 23

Color Theory in Painting Class

Join James Vissari for this six-week intensive to explore color theory and learn about contrast and values. This workshop will build confidence in your knowledge of color theory and mixing, so you create stronger and more aesthetically-pleasing paintings. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Composition in Painting Class

Join James Vissari for this six-week intensive learning to describe the arrangement of the visual elements in a painting or other artwork. Learn how the elements of art and design are organized or composed according to the principles of art and design using still life painting. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

January 20

Taste of Encaustic Workshop

Learn to paint and collage with wax and experimenting with techniques like carving and fusing. Optionally bring your own work and upcycle existing art. All materials provided. *Riverworks Studio at Alden Farms*. 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Now to February 18

Artist in the House Gallery Exhibit

Claire Howard: "Poetry in the Sky"

These large oil paintings celebrate winter landscapes and capture the expansive, luminous views of a season with its own unique tension of shadow and light. Free. *Upstairs gallery at Locals Farm Market* (accessible only by stairs).

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I'm January

I'm January bringing you
A year of days—all brand, brand new;
I step upon the frosty ground.
When chimes and sleighbells
ring around;

You welcome me and children sing,
And joy comes into everything.
I bring you love and lots of cheer,
And work and friends for all
the year.

— Annette Wynne



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Closes Sunday evening March 3rd. Watch the Postscript Newsletter for further information. Inquire at info@poolesvilleseniors.org

A Monocacy Moment



On the last evening of 2023, is the sun setting on White's Ferry prophetic of its fate?

Photo by Jon Wolz.



Bally Cliff, nestled in the rolling meadows of the Medley Historic District in Poolesville, Maryland, is a working farm on acres of picturesque farmland.



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WELCOMES



PACC Kicks off 2024 with an Open House to celebrate the opening of **The Market at Deere Valley**

Details

- The Market at Deere Valley
22919 Dickerson Rd
- Wednesday, January 10th from 5-7 pm
- Free wine and cheese
- Public is welcome - No registration required
- Website: <https://deerevalleyfarms.com>

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Continued from page 1.

Commissioners Finalize New Pesticide Rules

to the new rules and educate the public on what is safe to use and can be used legally.

Commissioner Martin Radigan basically agreed with Eck and Paksima. He said he "feels for the landscapers." He went on to say that the commissioners had heard from several experts who urged that the rules stay in place. He also said he weighed heavily the advice of Town Manager Wade Yost who said he worries about the quality of water and believes the rules are important for this reason.

Commission Ed Reed said, "We could have done a much better job of how we rolled this discussion out." While there remain some questions on the issue, "I am not willing to gamble with the health of Poolesville residents."

After the discussion ended, it was clear there was a consensus that the newly-adopted rules stay in place. There also seemed to be broad agreement that the new policy was poorly implemented. Staff was tasked with putting together an education and implementation plan that includes use of social media, education sessions for the public, possibly seminars or events for the business community, and ongoing testing of water quality regarding pesticides. Yost was asked to come up with cost estimates for a continuing testing regimen as well.

Of Poetry and Prose

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"A happy new year" it will be—
if it's new:
New visions of all that is noble
and true,
New powers for service, new
knowledge of God,
New zeal for the ways that the heroes
have trod,
New comforts, new courage,
new graces, new joys,

New peace where the evil assails
or annoys,
New friendship, new helpers,
new faith and new love,
New treasures on earth and new
treasures above,
New wisdom, new glory, new health,
and new cheer,
Nothing old, all things new, in the
happy new year!

— Anonymous

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Remembrances

Steven "Mike" Michael Hough

Steven "Mike" Michael Hough, 69, of Adamstown passed away on December 15, 2023. Mike was the loving husband of Eleanor Hough.

Born on June 30, 1954 in Maryland, he was the son of the late Jasper Franklin and Doris Marie (Warfield) Hough.

Mike was a 1972 graduate of Poolesville High School. He married his high school sweetheart, Eleanor Matthews Hough in 1974. Mike and Eleanor just celebrated forty-nine years of marriage. In 1982, he started his own business and retired in 2017. He enjoyed riding motorcycles and loved spending time with his family.

Mike is survived by his wife, Eleanor; his children, Walter (Tiffani) and Amy Cole (Anthony); one sister, Sue Helmick (Mike); two grandchildren, Jaden and Brooke Hough; one nephew, Zach Helmick (Alyson); and one great-niece, Abigail.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Mark Hough.



Steven "Mike" Michael Hough

Brenda Kay Souders

Brenda Kay Souders, 73, of Damascus passed away December 17, 2023, in Martinsburg, West Virginia where she lived with her loving husband James "Jim" Souders of twenty-six years.

Brenda was born to the late Orvil and Alice Magers on January 15, 1950, in Damascus. She grew up with her loving sister Marilyn in Damascus where Brenda was a beauty queen as a former Miss Damascus. Brenda attended Damascus High School where she completed the cosmetology program. After beginning her career as a hair stylist at the Jo Lyne Hair Salon in Damascus, Brenda went on to open her own salon, Bren-Lar Hair Care, in Poolesville. Brenda owned and operated her salon for more than thirty years where she made many lifelong special friends.

In addition to styling hair, Brenda was a true artist, decorating cakes and creating beautiful flower arrangements. Brenda helped to bring the visions of many brides to life with exquisite wedding cakes and flower bouquets. In addition to weddings, Brenda also created many fun—and sometimes a bit risqué—birthday cakes. No matter the occasion, Brenda provided the smiles.

Brenda is survived by her loving husband, James Eugene Souders; daughter, Sherry Minnick (Mark); son, Keith Hubble (Risa); grandchild, Ashley Minnick; and sister, Marilyn Shifflett.



Brenda Kay Souders

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Would you like to announce a meeting, club, or upcoming event in Things To Do? Then let us know!
Send it along to editor@monocacymonocle.com

Continued from page 10.

Tidbits

the many volunteers, the many people who made donations of toys or gift cards, and those who helped in the distribution of the holiday gifts: Monocacy Lions Club, Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department, St. Mary's Catholic Church, St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Our Lady of the Presentation Catholic Church, Hosanna Community Church, Poolesville's Memorial United Methodist Church, Poolesville Presbyterian Church, Boyds Presbyterian Church, Western Montgomery United Methodist Church, Covanta, MOMS Club of Poolesville, Dickerson UMC Church, Potomac Hunt, and WUMCO.

WUMCO counts on community support all year for our food and financial assistance, but it is always especially welcomed at the holiday.

Don't Let Your Holiday Spirit Fade

In thanking the community for its support of WUMCO, they remind us that it is because of community that they are able to assist those in need in the Upcounty all year round.

This past year saw an increase in need for assistance, especially for food and financial assistance. In the past year, as prices rose and benefits such as SNAP

were reduced, its service became even more essential. WUMCO's food pantry orders increased by fifty percent in the last year, and its financial assistance went up twenty-five percent.

In 2023, WUMCO was able to provide gasoline so that a father could get to the hospital to help care for his newborn twins, to provide dental care to a woman who couldn't have needed surgery until her tooth infection was treated, to help an elderly woman pay for her \$700 prescription that was not covered by Medicare, to hold multi-lingual health clinics that saw patients that had not been to a doctor in many years, and to keep the electricity on for a single mother of a toddler and a teenager.

Join the Healthy Hub Team in Losing Weight in 2024

Healthy Hub has a mission to help its customers collectively lose one thousand pounds in the coming year. They have created a Weight Loss and Transformation Challenge. Everyone is invited to join in with live weekly meetings @ healthyhub every Tuesday from January 9 to February 20 at 9:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.

The program offers one-on-one coaching, meal plans, recipes, nutrition support, and accountability, all incentivized by cash prizes. Visit laurajmclure@gmail.com for more information.

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Celebrating 35 Years of Service

New Year's Resolutions for You and Your Pets

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

First, Happy New Year to you and your furry pals. It was an interesting 2023. Poolesville Veterinary Clinic moved to its new location and facility so that we may continue to serve all our wonderful clients and their four-legged kids.

I was thinking that this is a good time to give you some simple resolutions to implement for you and your pets. Here we go:

1. **Spend at least 30 minutes focused on your furry pals each day.** Studies show that this creates a closer bond and makes your pet friends more well-adjusted. A 30-minute walk is all you need.
2. **Look to provide the best nutrition you can for your furry kids;** 90% of pets in the USA are at least 10% overweight. This is just our culture. We can help them shed some of the extra weight by reducing the extra "Cookies." Talk with your veterinarian.
3. **Microchip your pets.** Having a microchip significantly increases the chances of getting your furry friend back should he/she go missing.
4. **Think before you leap into adding new furry friends to your house.** You should always discuss any plan to add new four-legged kids with your family and veterinarian before you make the decision to add new pets.
5. **Have your furry guys and gals get an annual examination.** If it has been a couple years since your pets have been seen by your veterinarian, make an appointment. There are many new and innovative therapies for arthritis, diabetes, weight control, vaccinations, and new diagnostics. Take time to discuss with your veterinarian what is best for your pets. Finding problems early is the best medicine for a long and healthy life for your furry pals.

From all of us at Poolesville Veterinary Clinic 2.0, have a great 2024. We look forward to seeing you and your furry kids.



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