

The Monocacy MONOCLE

Keeping An Eye On Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

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A clown on a cat, by a local muralist. See Center Stage on Page 3.



The "face" of retirement. Read all about it on Page 17.



Read all about Darlene McEleney on page 17.



Rock Hall, in Dickerson. Doctor Belt and his sons spent their last hours here. See Local History on Page x for details.

Residents Of Poolesville Turn Out to Be Heard!

By Rande Davis

Residents of Poolesville took the opportunity to get their opinions and concerns heard at a special town meeting on January 11. This was a night for the people to speak their minds and for the commissioners to listen. Tightly packed in the small room, the citizens had various concerns, complaints, and suggestions, but they all seemed to share at least one thing in common: They welcomed the opportunity to voice their opinions.

Chris Owens of Elizabeth's Delight led off with his concern about excessive noise nuisances by drivers in the area, especially those going



Sixth grader Austin Bupp came to the open forum Town Meeting to state his case for a skateboard park.

into the Getty Station in the evening. He felt that the Montgomery County police has not been able to effectively handle such annoyances, and he was suggesting the town initiate a crime watch program. Commissioner Tom Yeatts suggested that the town's website might have a section that could accept logged-in complaints,

as an accumulated record of such complaints might be taken more seriously. Local county police officer, Michael Bupp suggested that a better solution would be for complaints to be e-mailed to him which he would in turn convey to the officers handling the Poolesville beat.

Kevin Schramm of Soper Street in Poolesville first voiced his appreciation for the new sidewalks that are in the town's streetscape plans but inquired what might be done about the difficulty in crossing Fisher Avenue since traffic seems to be getting busier. He was informed that the state had already turned down the request for four-way stop signs at the corner of Wootton and Fisher, but that his suggestions for more substantial pedestrian crossing signage might help the situation.

Rudy Gole spoke of his concern

-Continued on Page 9.

White's Ferry Comes to a Halt for Love

By Rande Davis

We have become accustomed to the closing of White's Ferry due to inclement weather or rising, icy waters. On Saturday, December 30, the ferry was temporarily closed for a much more heartwarming reason and one that is quite surprising.

While cars on both sides of the ferry began to line up to cross the river, the ferry moved to the center of the Potomac River with only a handful of pedestrians on board. It was there that Jacob Holmes and Nicki Gonzalez, in the presence of her twelve-year-old son, Nino, and in the witness of two friends, Rick and Robin Dixon, exchanged their wedding vows and made their lifelong commitment to one another. The warm, breezy weather and scenic river provided a perfect background for the bride and groom who have long enjoyed hiking

and touring in the area. "We came upon the idea from our weekend hiking excursions, and because my son has a strong interest in the Civil War, we wanted a place that he could relate to as well," said the bride.

James Burch, bishop in the Catholic Diocese of the One Spirit of Chantilly, Virginia, officiated the ten-minute ceremony, which included an important role for Nino in proclaiming his personal approval of joining into the new family. Bishop Burch may have set a record in his brief but moving homily which exalted the couple to know that "no minister or state authority can truly sanctify your vows. The true sanctification comes from both of you and what is in your hearts."

The romance of the river long heralded in literature is something that is not unusual, of course, but this is an extremely rare event for White's Ferry with only one other ferry wedding occurring within memory. There was also the time that a man proposed



Bishop James Burch, Jacob Holmes, Nicki Gonzalez, Rick and Robin Dixon, and Nino Gonzales.

to his wife on the ferryboat—a ferry proposal.

As the wedding commenced, commuters left their cars to watch from the shore. The momentary delay may have upset a few of them; however, love can make the world stop. The reward for their patience was a brief moment to reflect on love, witnessing the joy of two committing to each other, and a free trip across the river to boot. All in all, not a bad deal.

Family Album

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Town of Poolesville Commissioner Tom Yeatts, Leo and Betty Bassett.



Dan Frasier (back right) leads Barnesville School students through a workshop on non-violent conflict resolution. Mr. Frasier was trained by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a group that trained Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders.



Soldiers from Walter Reed Army Medical Center had a special day of hunting sponsored by the Riverbend Outdoor Club. Their breakfast and dinner were hosted by Joan and Darrel Ferdock. Pictured are Joan Ferdock, Sgt. Patrick Rose, Jordan Cissel, Darrell Ferdock, Sp. Matt Litherand, Sgt. Cole Hansen, and Bob Cissel.



The Monocacy Lions Club held their quarterly blood drive at St. Peter's. Poolesville's Karen Fales is assisted by representatives of the Washington Hospital Center.

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Center Stage Painting for The Love of It

By Dominique Agnew

Last August, the *Monocle* published a piece about Melissa Foster of Boyds, muralist extraordinaire. For almost a year and a half, she has devoted many hours of time and her love of children to painting murals for the HSC Pediatric Center, formerly known as the Hospital for Sick Children, in Washington, D.C. Melissa's murals depict delightful scenes of animals and fantastical creatures frolicking and cavorting. They have helped countless children forget about their illnesses, for at least a moment, and revel in a world of fantasy and imagination.

Painting murals is just one in a long



Melissa Foster.

line of forms of expressing herself through art which Melissa has pursued. She says she began painting and writing when she was eighteen, but throughout her childhood, she was surrounded by art. Her father is one of twenty legal scrimshanders (artists who do scrimshaw — etching on ivory) in the United States. Melissa's three brothers are also extremely creative. One is a sculptor. Another is a portrait artist and glass blower, and a third made jewelry. Melissa admits her mother is not creative in the artistic sense of the word, but she says, "My mother is the most supportive person I have ever met in my life."

As a child, Melissa saw everyone being an artist and creative. She saw her brother take art lessons. She saw her father creating and selling scrimshaw kits. There was so much creativity in her household growing up, "I wanted to be part of it." When Melissa began having children, her oldest has just begun his university studies, she began painting murals on their bedroom walls and painting shirts and sweatshirts for them. She credits her children for being one of her

biggest influences.

Melissa continues to expand her horizons. She continues to paint murals and still has at least eight more to do for HSC (she'll paint for them for as long as they want her to), and she is now dabbling in art cards, little trading cards that measure two and a half by three inches. The cards Melissa has painted have included fairies, mermaids, clowns, and cats. They're all original, and they're all one-of-a-kind. "I do whimsical drawings that are what I want to draw," she adds. She paints them with watercolors, acrylics, and sometimes she fine lines them with art pens. She has also been invited to put together a collection of twelve fantasy paintings for the Balticon science fiction convention in Baltimore this spring.

After more than twenty years of painting, Melissa says, "I'm still in a learning period." Every time she changes venues, she experiments with different techniques and genres. Although Melissa



Underworld Mural by Melissa Foster.

has never taken an art class in her life, she hopes to one day take classes to "learn how to paint better." In the end, her painting is, above all, a labor of love. She doesn't want to build a painting business; "When I was paid for [painting murals], it was stifling," but painting and donating the murals for HSC is invigorating. "I like to know that people who are looking at my art are getting enjoyment out of it."

Now that Melissa's youngest children are in school full time (she has six children, including two stepchildren), she has also added writing back into the mix, something which she had been doing, but not finishing. "This is my year to get started on things like my writing," she says. She just completed her first novel and is actively seeking an agent or publisher. There doesn't seem to be any stopping or containing Melissa. "Art is what courses through my veins. It's what I want to be doing."

Remembrance Sarah Cohen: Beloved Educator Passes Away

Poolesville High School students, faculty, and staff were greatly saddened by the death of Ms. Sarah Cohen, a media specialist. Ms. Cohen, who had been at PHS for the past four years, took leave this past September and died of organ failure on December 24. She is survived by her husband, Edward Cohen of Frederick, Maryland.

The sentiments of Sammeei Cameron, volunteer for the media center and close friend, spoke on behalf of everyone when she expressed her sadness at Mrs. Cohen's passing. "She was not just an instructor or a librarian, she was a mentor for the kids. She was very down-to-Earth, and she was very patient and dedicated to the kids, and she supported the kids to help them reach their goals."

As a tribute to her, a memorial on the bulletin board is outside the media center recognizing her as a person who guided the students to do the

most with their lives with her challenge: "Every life makes a difference. What will you do with your years?" Visitors and students are encouraged to see the memorial.

One of her main achievements was playing a key role in bringing the TV production program to the school and working with students on their daily broadcast program, Falcon Media, which brings news information at the start of every day to each classroom. She also helped the media students participate in the Environmental Film Festival.

Outside of media education responsibilities, she had been previously the faculty sponsor of the Emerging Leaders Club and the Equestrian club. Principal Levine cited Mrs. Cohen as someone who was loved and respected by students, staff, and fellow teachers.

A scholarship in her name is being established to benefit students pursuing their education in TV/film production.



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Commentary

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Inconvenient Truths

By John Clayton

I recently watched the documentary "An Inconvenient Truth." I received it as a Christmas gift, and it was eye-opening. I also love the phrase "inconvenient truth." It says so much and is so useful. We are surrounded by inconvenient truths. We also have unavoidable truths, inescapable truths, unacceptable truths, and unfortunate truths, but there is something elegant and assertive about an inconvenient truth. It suggests that we are going to ignore a truth that will not go away, which I believe many people are doing.

If you have seen the movie, then you realize how overwhelming the data on carbon dioxide pollution in the atmosphere are, and how overwhelming the data are on the rise in the Earth's temperature. If you haven't seen the movie, then I suspect you have already made up your mind about global warming, or you really don't like Al Gore, or both.

Global warming, like many other environmental issues, is political in nature. In our simplistic little world, this means Democrats, who like to tell people what's good for them and how to live their lives, think global warming is a great opportunity to tell people what's good for them and how to live their lives. Staying simple, this means Republicans don't want to hear about global warming because the solutions are bad for business, and all that really matters is making money now, in our lifetime, and the future be damned. I don't think that either of these overgeneralizations takes us anywhere useful, but they are part of why each side is so annoyed with the other.

If you really want to be depressed about global warming and its cures, I highly recommend recent columns by economist Robert J. Samuelson, printed in Newsweek and The Washington Post. They are easily located on the internet. He doesn't attempt to dispute the science, but he is devastating on how little of an impact we can have with what he suggests are politically-motivated feel-good measures. He demonstrates why we will need massive and significant technological innovations, "The trouble with the global warming debate is that it has become a moral crusade when

it's really an engineering problem. The inconvenient truth is that if we don't solve the engineering problem, we're helpless." He does not present this as justification for ignoring the problem.

It does seem that doing nothing will at the very least have dire consequences for our economic well being. If the changes to the planet continue at the same rate, let alone accelerate, then the polar bears aren't going to be the only ones having a hard time. It may be wrong to oversimplify how difficult it is to reverse the process, but it is just as wrong to ignore the problem because you don't like the messenger or just don't want to accept the message. As I have talked to various people about this, I often get the following reactions:

I have never liked Al Gore.

I don't think Al Gore should have claimed to have invented the internet.

It doesn't matter what we do, it won't have any effect unless everyone else does something.

All of these may be true, but in light of the evidence, it's not an excuse for doing nothing. If you simply don't believe the problem is real, or that the problem could possibly have been caused by people, then you should definitely see the movie. Send the kids to the park and pull the shades. No one has to know.

An inconvenient truth is bad enough; let's not enter into a state of denial

Letter to the Editor

Reader Objects to the Possible Closing of Elgin Road

The following are excerpts of my comments made at the recent public hearing on the possible abandonment of the Elgin Road spur near Jerusalem Road in Poolesville.

The request to abandon a portion of Elgin Road (the spur that runs off of Route 109 to Jerusalem Road) is a bad idea. It may be a good idea for the developer of the adjacent property, but it's a bad idea for all of us who use that road on a regular basis.

Closing the road is a bad idea for the residents of the seventy-three homes in the subdivision up a little ways on Jerusalem Road, for the county employees with their heavy equipment that come out of the county depot on Jerusalem Road, for the school buses, for the horse trail-

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Published and Edited by
John Clayton and Rande Davis

John Clayton
Production
Financial
301-349-0071

jclayton@monocacymonocle.com

Rande Davis
Advertising
Circulation
301-349-0070

rdavis@monocacymonocle.com

Dominique Agnew
Copyediting
dagnew@intlnet.com

Departments
editors@monocacymonocle.com
advertising@monocacymonocle.com

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

Contributing Writers
Dominique Agnew
dagnew@intlnet.com
Debbie Lyon

debbilyon@comcast.net
Maureen O'Connell
maoconnell@comcast.com

Curtis Osborne
cjtor@comcast.com

Jack Toomey
jack212@comcast.com

Contributing Photographer

Hilary Schwab
hilary@hilschwabphotography.com
Graphics

WhipSmart Graphics

Kara@WhipSmartGraphics.com

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ers going in and out of the adjacent farm, and for volunteers with the non-profit Hands of Love who regularly deliver furniture/appliances and clothing for the needy to their holding barn on Jerusalem Road.

It is a bad idea for those who use the spur every weekend by truck, van, trailer, and car to go to the Upcounty beauty spot. All of this traffic will intensify with the construction of 177 more homes.

I believe there are serious safety consequences to abandoning Elgin Road. It is difficult to see the oncoming vehicles traveling at a high rate of speed south on Route 109 when leaving Jerusalem Road. A wooden fence along the perimeter of the horse farm obstructs the view. Using the current exit provides a much safer view of oncoming traffic.

When traveling north on Route 109, it is more difficult to make a right turn onto Jerusalem Road—particularly for trucks, buses, and horse trailers. When turning right onto Jerusalem Road from Route 109, it is dangerous due to the placement of a telephone pole along the

acute angle which may cause vehicles to drive into oncoming traffic. Closing the Elgin Road spur is an accident waiting to happen.

Lastly, let me say that a public hearing on a weekday morning away from Poolesville does not allow for much participation. I believe if you had staff standing at that road to solicit a response to this abandonment, I am sure it would be a resounding, "No, do not abandon Elgin Road."

Rudy Gole, Poolesville Maryland.

In the Garden

Winter – The Forgotten Season

By Maureen O'Connell

We are now almost four weeks into winter, but, by definition, it has not been much of a winter. Much to my friends' dismay, I look forward to cold weather and lots of snow. So, I am highly disappointed in our recent spring-like weather. We seem to have stalled in autumn or spring.

For the sake of the timeliness of my article, let's pretend it is winter. This is a good time to assess the structure of our gardens, which now have a bare bones look. Many landscape designers suggest taking a black and white photo of your garden now. With a black magic marker, you can draw in shrubs, trees, flower gardens, and walkways. Add a patio or a fence line. You can get a pretty good idea of how these new additions would look in your yard.

Winter is often viewed as a forgotten season in the garden; nothing much is happening. Spring delights us with new hopes, as we marvel at the resurgence of life in the emerging spring bulbs. Summer runs riot with flowers and shrubs in all shades of the rainbow. The red, gold, orange, and sepia tones of autumn soften the landscape, and gently remind us (usually) of the approach of colder weather. Winter brusquely removes the finery of the past three seasons, and leaves us with a barren and simple look, but if you are observant, you will notice that the low trajectory of the light of the winter sun magnifies the colors of warm browns, bright red, and snowy silver. Winter is about texture and substance. Without the layers of leaves, the bare outlines of trees and shrubs impact our eyes in a way as in no other season. Someone once said that a garden devoid of trees somehow lacks soul, particularly in winter. Now is a good time to choose, for spring planting, new trees and shrubs that will bring your garden to life in the winter months. The following selections will grow well in our Monocacy region.

Witch hazel (*Hamamelis-H.*) has been described as the best antidote to winter. This genus of five species can be upright, spreading shrubs or small trees. Their twigs of flowers, which look like spiders with ribbon-like legs, are the first to brave the midwinter. They break out in color in late Feb-

ruary or early March, and continue for six weeks or more. White Flower Farm offers a hybrid, *H. x intermedia* 'Pallida,' a winner of the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. It is even more dazzling than its better-known cousin 'Arnold Promise,' and its pale yellow flowers stand out well against winter's somber skies, and perfume the cold air with a scent redolent of freesias. Wayside Gardens enthusiastically recommends *H. x intermedia* 'Diane,' an extremely rare red-flowered witch hazel. Its flowers are of an intense coppery-red color, which are produced abundantly before the foliage appears. This tree makes a dramatic presentation, when it is planted against an evergreen background of rich-green leaf, such as holly or yew. I must warn you that this tree is not for all gardens. It grows fourteen to twenty feet tall and wide, and needs moist, well-drained soil in sun or light shade. If you have the space and the right growing conditions, you will not be disappointed with this beautiful and unusual tree.

Cherry trees (*Prunus*) are not just for the spring garden. The Japanese Apricot, *Prunus mume* 'Peggy Clarke,' is a fifteen- to twenty-foot tree that has fragrant, fully double, one inch rose-pink flowers that appear in midwinter. It matures quickly, growing three to four feet per year. *Prunus x subhirtella* 'Autumnalis' is another delightful cherry tree for the winter garden. If you are going to add just one flowering tree this spring for your winter Eden, this is it. This light, airy tree sports tiny, pink-tinged white flowers which shine and glimmer against even a dull winter sky. I found this tree at Ruppert's Nurseries in Laytonsville.

Abundant blooms are not the only characteristics of trees that can spread winter magic. Striking bark, seductive shapes and silhouettes, or colorful stems can capture your imagination. Of all the ornamental trees for winter interest, the birch tree wins first prize for beauty and diversity of its bark, branches, and twigs in all seasons. Without its leaves, the bark becomes more conspicuous and stunning in the bright light of winter. *Betulaceae utilis* var. *jacquemontii* is one of the finest of trees grown for its bark. It also has the whitest trunk of all birch trees. Sometimes it comes with a pink tint, and it has a tendency to peel attractively. Another interesting birch tree is *Betulaceae niger* 'Heritage,' a variety of River Birch. The bark peels

Local History

Dr. Edward Belt and The Wreck at Terra Cotta

By Jack Toomey

The little group left the big stone house just after 4:00 p.m. and rode down to the Dickerson train station. They had taken the morning train from Washington to Dickerson bearing Christmas gifts and had spent the day at Rock Hall, the family mansion that had been built in 1812, and had been owned by their family since 1830. The train to Washington, known as the Frederick local, pulled into the station on time, and Dr. Edward Oliver Belt, two of his young sons, Mrs. Nettie Lee Compber and her two daughters whose family lived in Dickerson, and Roy Elder of Poolesville, got onboard. Already seated on the train were many people who were returning to Washington after visiting family in Frederick.

The late evening of December 30, 1906 was foggy, and the little train, so much different than those that roar through Dickerson today, set off eastward towards Rockville and Washington. The train, consisting of three flimsy wooden coaches and a small steam engine, ran only on Sundays because people needed a convenient way of

visiting their friends and family in Frederick and the upper part of Montgomery County. As the train neared Rockville, Robert Hilton, the treasurer of Montgomery County, rushed to make his train. He noticed a young lady that he knew standing near the station and decided to accompany her back into town, a decision that probably saved his life. The train briefly stopped at Rockville, picked up more passengers, and headed towards Washington, and Hilton missed the train. It made other stops at Randolph, Garrett Park, and Kensington, and the train became so crowded that people were standing in the aisles. It was later estimated that there were two hundred people aboard.

Dr. Belt, a very well known eye doctor, then called an oculist, a frequent guest at the White House, professor at Howard University, author of medical textbooks, and benefactor to the poor, no doubt chatted with his little sons, Edward, age six, and Sinclair, age five, about the day's activities, and the gifts that the boys had received from family members. Their mother, Emily Norvelle Belt, was at home caring for their three-year-old son Norvelle, who was recuperating from a broken leg and had been unable to make the trip to Dickerson. Dr. Belt had offices at the Episcopal Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital and also

operated a clinic for the poor. He was such an advocate for the identification of childhood eye afflictions that he wrote a letter to the Washington Post in 1895 in which he commented, "Forty years ago, one seldom saw a child in spectacles and few adults wore them in public. Now, go where you will, on the streets, the schools, the trains and steamboats, you will find spectacled children all around you."

At 6:15, the train made a stop at Silver Spring and then headed on towards Washington on the same path that the railroad and the Metro system follow today. The train stopped at the Terra Cotta station which, even though it was inside the boundaries of the District of Columbia, was no more than a small village just north of Catholic University.

Several passengers left the train at this point. While the passenger train was making its stops at the stations along the line, another with heavier and empty passenger cars was following it. The operator of the Takoma station noticed that the second train had passed him even though a stop signal had been displayed. The operator, knowing that a full passenger train was ahead, was concerned enough to send a telegraph message to the operator of the next station in an attempt to flag down the trailing train. At 6:35 p.m., while the passenger train was still discharging passengers at Terra Cotta, the second train plowed into the rear cars of the Frederick local splintering them and hurling scores of passengers onto the cinders and crushing many more. Chaos reigned, and neighbors, who had heard the tremendous crash, rushed to the scene. They were met with scenes of horror as the dead lay pinned in the wreckage, the injured cried out for help, and personal belongings and Christmas gifts lay alongside the tracks.

Soon doctors and nurses, police officers and firemen, all arrived, some by train. They found a scene of unimaginable horror. Over fifty people were dead and at least a hundred injured. The

more severely injured were taken to city hospitals while some of the less seriously injured simply walked away to nearby drugstores or homes seeking treatment. D. W. Baker, the United States Attorney for Washington, who had boarded at Germantown, walked to a drugstore and was treated for a cut on his foot. Telegraph wires up and down the railroad hummed with news of the disaster, and friends and relatives from Montgomery County, knowing their loved ones had boarded the train, made it to Washington the best way they knew how. Their first stop was the morgue where some identified loved ones. Others found them at hospitals, and in one case, a woman found her daughter at a private home in the care of a family.

Dr. Belt, and his two sons, Edward and Sinclair, were killed as was Mrs. Compber, but her daughters survived. Mrs. Compber was buried at Monacacy Cemetery. Other Montgomery County residents who died were Thomas E. Metz of Germantown, Lucy Mullican, who lived in Derwood, Mary Alice Bohrer, of Garrett Park, and Thomas Kelly from Kensington. A funeral service for the Belt family members was held at their residence in Washington, which was the custom of the time, and then the caskets were sent to Point of Rocks by train for burial. On a windswept hill one hundred years ago, on the afternoon of January 1, 1907 with Sugarloaf Mountain in the distance, Dr. Belt, Edward, and Sinclair were laid to rest at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at Point of Rocks. Later, a memorial, in the form of a clinic for the poor, was opened in Dr. Belt's name. Norvelle, the child who was too sick to make the trip to Dickerson, went on to become a successful physician with offices in Washington and Frederick. Emily, the widow of Doctor E. Oliver Belt, never remarried and later moved to Dickerson to live with her surviving son. She died at Rock Hall in 1952. Frederick County named the road to Rock Hall, Doctor Belt Road.

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Local News

Poolesville Town Commissioners Weighing Water and Sewer Rate Increases

By Rande Davis

A shortfall in revenues from town water bills resulted in an \$80,000 deficit in the Water and Wastewater fund which heretofore has been covered from funds transferred from the general fund. With the cost of electricity possibly doubling in the coming year, there is concern that the general fund transfer will double to \$160,000. Seeking to make up for the shortfall and lower the amount provided from the general fund, the town commissioners are considering a rate change structure that will be presented at a public hearing on February 5, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in the Poolesville Town Hall.

The potential increase of revenue from the new proposal would be \$126,000, which is still nearly \$40,000 short from the anticipated increases for the 2007 fiscal year. Currently, the town has six rates changing at 10,000-gallon increments up to 50,000 gallons and more. The new program will have

only three: 0 to 30,000 gallons, 20,000 to 40,000 gallons; and 40,000 gallons and over. The reader can determine the impact of this proposal by reviewing his water bill to estimate the quarterly usage of water in gallons and determining where they fall in the following breakdown.

For the 325 residents or businesses that use less than 10,000 gallons per quarter, the proposed rate change would increase the quarter water bill approximately \$11.00. For those in the 10,001 to 20,000 gallons per quarter range (794 homes/business) the change would result in an increase of \$19.00 per quarter. In the 20,000- to 40,000-gallon range, the increase would be \$23.00. For those using 40,000 to 50,000 gallons, the rate increase would be \$26.00 per quarter, while those using more than 50,000 gallons would be paying \$31.00.

The shortfall in the past has come from property taxes, which go to the general fund. If the proposal is unaccepted and no change made, the shortfall estimated to be about \$160,000 would be paid by all property owners in the town through the property tax. The new rate structure is \$6.41 per thousand gallons up to the first 30,000 gallons used per quarter; \$7.18 per 1000 gallons; and \$8.41 per

1000 gallons over 40,000 gallons. As a comparison, the town of Middletown charges \$38.88 for the first 3,000 gallons and \$5.94 for each additional 1,000 gallons used.

A proposal to change the top rate of 40,000 gallons or more to \$15.00 would raise an additional \$40,000, which would avoid transferring any funds from the general fund.

The commissioners agreed to refer the proposal for public hearing since final decisions will not be made until after that event. Concerned readers who would like to learn more or voice their opinion should plan to attend the February 5 meeting.

A New Carwash for Poolesville?
At a November meeting of the town's planning commission, Frank Jamison of Charles H. Jamison Co. presented a change in usage for property on Norris Road in Poolesville. His request was for permission to apply for a special exception from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) permitting the change from a storage facility to a carwash. While granting this request, the commission later decided that the change of use might cause problems as regards the town's water allocation procedures (originally the property


-Continued on Page 14.

JERRY L. NEAL
301-972-8950

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Health & Fitness

The Way to Fitness – 2007!

By Karen Fales

Most of us at one time or another have contemplated the incorporation of fitness into our daily routine. It's a new year, and many of us have made this our New Year's resolution. We are constantly reminded of the importance of fitness and good health on television, in the newspaper, at work, and at the mall. Researchers have even defined this thought process as the Transtheoretical Model of Stages of Change. How far have you gotten in this process?

The first stage, precontemplation, is the hardest stage to get out of. In this stage, we do not even think we need to exercise. This is where education becomes important. The articles we read in newspapers, magazines, and newsletters, and advice from friends, family, doctors and co-workers encourage us to think about our fitness.

The next stage, contemplation, shows that the education is working, we now know the risks of not exercising and the benefits of exercising. We begin to think that a fitness program will be good for us. Some of us stay in this stage for years, but normally, again with help from our family, friends and peers, this stage lasts about six months.

The third stage, preparation, is when we begin to change some habits. We quit smoking, we go out and purchase tools to begin a fitness program, we join a gym. Now, we have the right clothes and a place to begin our fitness

program. We set our goals. We start exercising a little. We are still relying on our family, friends, and peers for encouragement and support.


Finally, we are ready, action. We are adopting healthier behaviors, and we begin a fitness program to meet the goals we have set. When we have maintained our fitness program for six consecutive months, we can move on to the maintenance stage of this model.

Do you find yourself still in that contemplation or preparation stage and do not know how to continue? These are the most difficult stages to conquer. That is where a personal trainer, joining a gym, or committing to exercising with a friend might be the boost you need. Personal Trainers can help you define your goals, develop a fitness program to meet those goals, and help you to maintain the program so you can reach the next stage: maintenance.

After we have incorporated the change to a healthier, fitter lifestyle for up to five years, we have achieved the adoption of the Transtheoretical Model of Stages of Change. So a New Year's resolution won't take just a few weeks or months to accomplish, and you shouldn't be discouraged too easily.

Why do we want to make this change? The reasons are numerous and can be summed up into one goal: To improve our quality of life!

Reference: JD Prochaska, JC Norcross and CC Diclemente, *Changing for Good* (New York, William Morrow, 1994)



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Tidbits

2006 Holiday Lighting Winners Announced

Poolesville commissioners have announced the winners of the 2006 Holiday Lighting Ceremony. There were three categories: north of Fisher Avenue, south of Fisher Avenue, and the business sector.

The winners north of Fisher were: contemporary – William and Sharon Conway (McKernon Way), traditional Louis and Melinda Consentino (McKernon Way), and townhouse – Richard and Chrystall Sheetz.

For south of Fisher Avenue, the

winners were: contemporary – Jeffrey and Gail Lego (Whites Road), traditional -Michael and Barbara Greene (Hartz Pond Court), and townhouse – Jose Cabrera.

Taking honors in the business category was Bassett's Restaurant.

Mystery History Partially Resolved

Our quest to unravel some of the mystery in our December 8 Mystery History photo of Mr. Frank Davis being wheeled through Poolesville in a wheelbarrow has only been partially resolved. The incident was a result of a bet on politics, but the specifics of it still remain undetermined. The loser of the bet is thought to be Mr. Wallace Poole, they are in the center of town,

"Community Speaks Out" Continued From Page 1.

that town codes are not being strictly enforced especially in regards to home sites that have more than two homes sharing a driveway. He also complained that the town's planning commission far too often disregards the master plan, has plans to build more than thirty homes per year which he believes does not coincide with past commission decisions on the number per year, and requested that past plans to extend Bodmer Avenue through to West Willard Avenue be considered. Ed Kuhlman posited that many of these infractions of the ordinance were decisions made by planning commissioners no longer in service and that the Master Plan is not something locked in stone but is meant to be a guide for town planners.

Mr. Gole also expressed his grievance over the possible abandonment of Elgin Road.

Marge Luther of Hughes Road expressed her frustration with a growing problem of residents not properly taking care of their front yards and wondered whether the town could do something about this kind of problem. She was concerned that such neglect affects the whole community in a highly negative way. Ed Kuhlman voiced a shared frustration with her concern but stated that the town has tried health and fire codes and even has had conversations with various people to see if such a problem could be resolved. To date, nothing has motivated the offending homeowners to do anything.

Conrad Potemra of Spurrier Avenue rattled off a number of items he would like the commissioners to at least consider. His first suggestion

to the commissioners was for them to reinstate a ten-minute open comment time at town meetings. Acknowledging that the lagoon at Stevens Park has to remain for now, he asked the commissioners make a goal of replacing it with ball fields at a time when it might be feasible. Mr. Conrad offered the notion of a subsistence water usage program that would assist older citizens on a fixed income. He suggested, as an example, that the first 3,000 gallons per quarter could be free. Additionally, he asked the commissioners to look at a plan to ban trans-fats, and to consider making English the official town language. He asked commissioners to pick two items in the budget that each one could select to see who could come up with the greatest cost savings to the town. He also recommended that town attendance at the Maryland Municipal League conventions are a waste of town money and should be discontinued. His last idea was for the commissioners to list future work projects on the website as that might bring about unsolicited work bids that might actually save the town funds. He endorsed the idea of the Bodmer Road extension.

Clearly everyone's favorite speaker of the evening was Austin Bupp, a sixth grader at JPMS. Austin made a heartfelt request for the commissioners to build a skateboard park in town. Town Manager Wade Yost assured young Austin that the parks commission does, indeed, have such a park in its plans and that the site location is now being reviewed.

facing the old Town Hall, and the year is sometime in the late 1940s. No one has come forward who can identify the others in the picture. The commercial circular sign in the background is said to be for gasoline. In the article, we said Mr. Davis was elected sheriff in the 1950s. However, Mr. Jack Davis corrected us on this matter. He should know since Frank Davis attended his wedding in the late 1940s, and he was the county sheriff at that time. If we ever resolve the specifics of the bet, you can be sure we will let you know.

Riverbend Outdoor Club Hosts Wounded Soldiers

In the first week of January, the Riverbend Outdoor Club hosted a hunting day on behalf of a few soldiers from Walter Reed Medical Center. Club member, Bob Cissel, along with Guy Hardesty, responded to a request from Paul Kelly, an employee at Walter Reed, to host a day of hunting, something each soldier had not been able to do for a very long time. The Club also hosted a day of hunting this past December where they were joined by club member, Fred Cissel

Two of the soldiers hailing from Minnesota, Sgt. Cole Hansen and Sp. Matt Litherand, were joined by Missouri native, Sgt. Patrick Rose. Ser-

geant Rose spoke for all of the soldiers in saying that this opportunity was "greatly appreciated and meant so much to us – to be out here for the day is a great thing."

Two of the hunters were successful in the quest, and Poolesville Taxidermy agreed to provide its services for free. Bassett's restaurant hosted a free dinner for the group the night before the day of hunting. Joan and Darrell Ferdock not only prepared a hearty morning breakfast but also had them back to their home in Poolesville for a steak dinner.

A Hole in One Was Not Enough

Mike Selby of Poolesville has achieved two things in sports very rarely experienced by most. A while back he bagged a hole-in-one, something that is every golfer's dream. This past fall, during league play in Frederick, he bowled a 300. "The tension and excitement at the end makes this so much more thrilling than the hole-in-one." We are sure what happens in bowling, but if Mike didn't by a round of drinks for everyone at the golf club, maybe he can make up for it some night at Bassett's.

-Continued on Page 10.

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Book Corner

The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid

By Bill Bryson
 Broadway Books. 268 pp. \$25
 Reviewed by Maureen O'Connell

Last August I wrote an article about the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) in Poolesville, and their West Woods Preservation project. I referred to IWLA member and project manager Butch Mezick. After touring the woods with him, I remarked that "a walk in the woods with Butch is not a walk in the woods with Bill Bryson." Fans of writer Bill Bryson knew what I meant. To the others who were clueless, let me introduce you to one of the funniest authors in the country and his new book.

Bryson has been described as "a lumbering, droll, neatnik intellectual who comes off as equal parts Garrison Keillor, Michael Kinsley, and ... Dave Barry." (New York Times Book Review) His latest book, *The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid*, is a funny and touching memoir of growing up in the middle of the American

century—the 1950s—in the middle of the United States—Des Moines, Iowa—in the middle of the largest generation in American history—the baby boomers. For anyone born in the middle 1940s to the early 1950s, this is a travel-back-in-time to a simpler era and a uniquely American way of life. For those of you who were born after those dates, you can get a glimpse into the baby boomers' nostalgia for "the good old days"—or were they?

How many readers recognize these splendid words of the '50s that are no longer heard: mimeograph, stenographer, ice box, dime store, Studebaker, bobby socks, candy cigarettes, Sputnik, canasta, United States Saving Stamps, Swanson T.V. dinners, and *Colliers Magazine*? Remember when your brother and all his friends rode their fat tire bicycles on their paper routes, and every Sunday night they made their collections? How many little old ladies never had the exact change, so they had to return five times to get their \$1.50? You knew you were finally "grown up," when you no longer had thick scabs on both your knees.

Bryson fondly remembers his days at local P.S. 39. "It was, I believe,

-Continued on Page 11.



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"Tidbits" Continued From Page 9.

PHS Field Hockey Alumni Receive Post Season Awards

Congratulations go out to former PHS field hockey players in their success at the college level. We all can be proud of the following for their achievements this past season:


Congratulations to senior, defensive back, Abby Johnson (St. Mary's College) who was recognized by the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) Division III - 2nd team All-American. She was also chosen NFHCA 1st team All-South Region and 1st team Capital Athletic Conference (CAC).

Junior, forward, Michele Repass (Catholic University) was also named to the NFHCA Division III - 1st team All-South Region and 1st team CAC.

Senior, midfielder, Holley Marchwicki (Virginia Wesleyan) was named honorable mention in the OLD Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC).

Other PHS alumni who continue to play at the collegiate level: junior, Kiri Jimerson (Mary Washington), sophomores, KC Marchwicki (Virginia Wesleyan), Karyn Snyder (Elizabeth-

town College) and freshman, Emily Stovicek (American University). Club players include: Amy Harmon (Towson), Courtney Horan (Maryland University), Ashley Loh (Clemson), and Robin Miller (George Washington University).



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**"Book Corner" Continued from
Page 10.**

the handsomest elementary school I have ever seen. Nearly everything in it—the cool ceramic water fountains, the polished corridors, the cloakrooms with their neatly spaced ancient coat hooks, the giant clanking radiators... had an agreeable creak of solid, classy, utilitarian venerability." In Iowa, "winters...were much longer, snowier, and more frigid than now...and weeks of arctic weather so bitter you could pee icicles." There was also the serious side of school days—the monthly civil defense drill: "Sirens would sound to alert us about an eminent nuclear attack by agents of Communism... I remember being profoundly amazed that anyone would suppose that a little wooden desk would provide a safe haven in the event of an atomic bomb being dropped on Des Moines."

Bryson's unique talent lies in combining a very, very funny memoir with very touching moments. He can make you smile broadly and fall off your chair laughing, but he can swiftly bring you back to reality with doses of social history. The 50s and early 60s were, for some, carefree and optimistic days. They were the gap

years between the post-war glow and the nation's growing angst. But, there was a dark side to those days, as there always is. Racism was growing uglier; the faces of Communism, Joe McCarthy and his cronies were rearing their ugly heads into the lives of American citizens from all walks of life; and the United States and the rest of the world were entering the advent of the nuclear age.

This is probably Bill Bryson's best book, since his sixth, *A Walk in the Woods*. He can humor us with his astute observations of everyday life, and at the same time, remind us, ever so pointedly, of man's foibles and their resultant consequences. This highly enjoyable and readable book is well worth your time.

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All Advertisers will be in the Advertising List and highlighted in bold type in the Business Listing.

PACC members can also have their ad posted on the PACC website .

ATTENTION TO ALL AREA RESIDENTS:

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Things to Do

January 22
Poolesville Town Commission Meeting
Poolesville Town Hall
7:30 p.m.

January 24
Last day for Christmas Tree Pick Up
Town of Poolesville – Town residents must leave the tree out front.

Kids' Book Club
Quince Orchard Library
For kids in grades 4 to 6
The Seven Professors of the Far North by John Fardell
Registration required
7:00 p.m.

January 25
Poolesville School Cluster Concert
Featuring PHS, JPMS, PES, and MES
\$7.00 – advanced tickets now available
7:00 p.m.

Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce Banquet
Izaak Walton League – Willard Road
6:00 p.m. – Guests Welcome
Call Jake Perkins at 301-922-0115 for information

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

Librarian's Choice Book Discussion
Quince Orchard Library
The March by E.L. Doctorow
7:30 p.m.

January 27
Kick-off Dinner for Relay for Life
Poolesville Baptist Church
6:00 pm. to 7:30 p.m.
Call Chontelle Hockenbery at 301-972-7867

January 29
Library Book Discussion Group
Poolesville Public Library
David McCullough's 1776
7:30 p.m.

January 30
Family Storytime
Poolesville Public Library
Stories, fingerplays, and music
7:00 p.m.



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Focus on Business

M&T's Dennis Conni Knows We Can Bank On Our Kids

At the end of the class, the third-grader raised her hand, asking if she could make a comment. The teacher, just finishing only his second elementary school teaching experience, gave her permission, and she simply wanted to say, "You're a real good teacher."

For Dennis Conni, manager of the Poolesville branch of M&T Bank, the concern about teaching the Junior Achievement (JA) class at Poolesville Elementary school and his worry over the extra time spent in preparation and its interruption in his very busy business schedule melted away. For him it was something like that familiar commercial: "Preparing for class – one hour; teaching the class – one hour; making a child's day – priceless."

Junior Achievement is an international program started in 1916 that uses hands-on experiences to help young people understand the economics of life. In partnership with businesses and educators, Junior Achievement brings the real world to students, opening their minds to their potential.

Through a network of local busi-



Dennis Conni.

ness people and educators worldwide, JA reaches out to seven million students each year, opening their minds and knowledge to the world of economics and business and its role in society. Their motto is to "Invest, Involve, Inspire" students in kindergarten through twelfth grades.

When JA representatives came to a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce, they came with a problem. Montgomery County Public Schools requires that its elementary school students have a Junior Achievement class, and JA had not been able to locate a volunteer to run the one-hour-a-week, five-week class for PES. Dennis Conni,

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who is also the treasurer of the PACC, had hoped someone else would fill the bill, but when that did not happen, he admits to reluctantly agreeing to the challenge. Like so many others in a similar situation, his initial concern ultimately turned to pleasure as the "reward" of working with the children became reality.

The JA lesson plan used the process of "building a town" as its model to demonstrate the shared interdependency within a community of its citizens, government, educators, and businesspeople. Within that concept, the students gained practical lessons in the things that are involved. In the first class, they learned that a town is just like a puzzle, made up of various "pieces" with include areas for residents, businesses, commerce, agriculture, transportation, and recreation. Using a color-coded map, the students could visualize how a town has various areas set aside for each of the different segments in society.

In the class the Monocle visited, they had reached the point where buildings needed to be built, and they were at the planning point. They had already identified a long list of participants in the process which included architects, engineers, masons, carpenters, excavators, etc. Now, with their list of necessary workers and businesspeople in place, the students were given blueprints of a theoretical building. They were taught how to read it, take measurements, and how to convert inches to centimeters.

With each example of metric conversion completed, the kids eagerly raised their hands to give their answers. Dennis told them not to be shy when they knew the answer and just as citizens in real life, they needed to speak out loudly to make sure they were heard. With that exhortation, the class let out a group roar with all hands raised.

With the map and its "zoning" in

place, with workers "hired" and ready to go, each student was given a pop-up cardboard building that they now had to "build." Just like the government with its permitting requirements, Dennis warned them not to start building until he gave them permission. With the "go signal" given, students began to assemble the building they were given. When each had finished the building, Dennis went around the room asking each student where their building was to go on the town map. The little girl with the post office came forward and touched the map in the town center area. The boy with the grain elevator building correctly touched the green area set aside for farming. Another with a residential home pointed to the residential zone on the map.

As the Monocle watched the students in Mrs. Schramm's third grade class, the enthusiasm and full-involvement of every student was apparent. Their moment of considering real-life needs was obviously getting through to them as exhibited by their complete involvement in working out the metric problems, figuring out who they needed to build a building, asking questions, and enthusiastically answering questions. Dennis ended the class with a teaser about his next lesson in running a restaurant as well as being a customer in a restaurant. He also let them know that in the final class, M&T bank had a surprise for them which one student immediately meant to mean they were to get money. He smilingly explained that the bank's money is not theirs to give, and he kept the actual gift a mystery.

As he began to pack up his lesson plans and tools, the kids rushed forward to help him fold the town map and thank him for teaching the class. With a voice raspy from an hour of speaking more loudly than is his custom, he expressed just how happy he was in his decision to overcome his reluctance to teach, "Working with kids is so much fun."

POOLESVILLE PARKS NOTICE

Reservation forms are now available at Town Hall for the reservations of the athletic fields in Poolesville Parks for the 2007 spring season. All applications must be received by January 31, 2007.

Facilities available at Stevens Park are the baseball field and soccer field as well as a concession stand. Halmos Park has three baseball fields, soccer field as well as a concession stand. West Willard Road has a practice soccer field.

Individual coaches are asked to schedule their playing time and field reservations through their organizations. It is the organization that will reserve the fields.

Fields are scheduled to be opened for playing beginning March 15, 2007 conditions permitting. Please contact Town Hall at 301-428-8927 for further information.

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"Local News" Continued From Page 7.

was ranked fourth within one of the categories in the allocation list). Even though water usage was not part of the listing procedure, many other questions focusing primarily on the change of use and unintended impact on the listing process caused the planning commission to take another look at the carwash request.

The planning commission decided to let the request to zoning board go forward and to consider the other questions if the BZA approves the special exception request.

Meadow Valley Home Owners Pack Town Meeting

To demonstrate their desire for the town to assist them in upgrading their parking lots, the residents and members of the Meadow Valley Townhouse Association (town homes at the corner of Fisher and Wootton Avenues in Poolesville) filled the meeting room as the town commissioners discussed potential ways the town could help. Previously, the commissioners refused to consider using town funds to pay the estimated \$450,000 cost for the repairs. The commissioners seemed unanimous

in presenting a potential proposal that would deed the property to the town, allow the town to assess the homeowners for the cost, and to further consider granting some town funds to offset some of the amount needed to be raised through property assessment. This proposal was crafted in line with previous agreements with the Wesmond Townhouse Association in the 1990s.

Mr. Waxman, president of the association, asked for a specific proposal that he could take back to the members for their consideration. The suggested proposal would mean the individual homeowners would be assessed around \$280 per year for ten years or \$550 a year for five years in what would amount to an interest-free loan which would also include some as yet undetermined amount that would come from the town toward the project. This proposal was presented simply to move negotiation on assistance forward and is not binding on the commissioners.

The Check Is Good But Too Large for an Envelope

Charles Elgin, Jr., representing the Elgin Family Farm, presented the town of Poolesville with a symbolic \$50,000 over-sized check representing their first payment on a committed \$100,000 offered the town in the 2001 water and sewer application. The payment was committed from the sale of property to Kettler Forlines Homes, Inc. for their 177-home development of Brighton Crossing. The development is at the corner of Elgin and Jerusalem Roads in Poolesville.

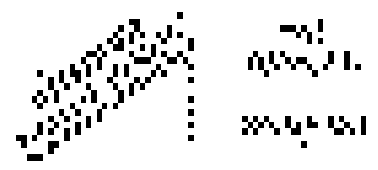
T-Mobile to Consider Commissioners' Criteria

Seeking use of the town's water tower for transmission purposes, T-Mobile Communications had offered the town \$2000 a month with a three percent increase every year after five years but required certain provisions allowing the company to transfer the lease to others without the need for approval from the commission.

The commissioners refused this proposal because they would not transfer "right-of-refusal" to future tenants and because the projected rent increases were below existing contracts, and it did not meet the \$2,500 rent expectation.

After discussion with T-Mobile's representative, Greg Souline, an agreement for rent to increase four percent and clarification regarding tenant transfer appeared to settle the issue. However, Mr. Souline doubted he could obtain agreement to a rent of \$2,500. He did raise the possibility of a \$5,000 signing bonus as a way around his company's policy of not paying rent over \$2,000. Mr. Souline will report back to the commissioners on whether his company will agree to the terms.

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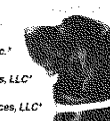


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"Winter the Forgotten Season" Continued From Page 5.

in large patches in colors from tan to deerskin to cream. Birches make attractive single specimens set in a lawn. For a larger effect, you can plant a small grove of three to five in a group.

The Japanese Maple *Acer* offers many suitable small trees that do well in our Monocacy area. They are very tolerant of heat and humidity, and are strong growers. Their beauty makes them a lifetime investment in your landscape. Most are known for their dramatic appearance in summer and fall, but there are others that put on a wonderful winter display. The Coral Bark Maple, *Acer palmatum* 'Sango Kaku,' has delicate, light green foliage in summer, which turns to bright yellow in autumn. Winter brings new growth of highly-colored twigs. It grows to a height and width of ten feet. The most tactile bark of all trees belongs to the aptly named Paper Bark Maple, *Acer griseum*. This is a good choice for a small garden, as this slow-growing tree from China reaches thirty feet, at most, at maturity. In chameleonic fashion, it quickly sheds its bark on both its trunk and branches, revealing the brighter, cinnamon-colored wood beneath.

The versatile dogwoods (*Cornus*) are perfect all-season trees. There is more variety to this genus than our familiar pink and white dogwoods, that grow everywhere in the spring. *Cornus sericea* 'Arctic Fire' is considered one of the best of the Red Osier Dogwoods. This three- to four-foot high, compact shrub will brighten your winter landscape with its intensely red stems.

In the winter palette, red is the color that keeps the flame of hope burning in the winter garden. As a gardener and bird lover, I am always torn between feeding the birds or creating a brilliant, red winter berry spectacle. Should I plant berry-producing trees and shrubs that I know the birds will find unpalatable and thus avoid, or do I indulge them and tempt them with plants bearing luscious, hard-to-resist berries, fruits, and hips? I usually do the latter, and all winter I watch the marauding berry-stealers—the blue jays, the starlings, the blackbirds, the juncos, and all the other wonderful birds of winter—gobble every red berry in sight. I have several cotoneaster and pyracantha shrubs along my driveway and along the back of the house. Their plump, juicy berries offer my bird friends many tasty meals throughout the win-

ter months, and their dense, evergreen foliage is a favorite place of refuge for my many cardinal guests.

The best berry-producing shrubs, the hollies, belong to the genus *Ilex*, and include some three hundred and fifty species. They come in all sizes and shapes, and are ideal for small gardens, as they grow slowly. A beautiful, dark-green holly with its brilliant, red berries against the backdrop of pure, white snow is a living Christmas and holiday card. Gardeners should keep in mind that hollies are dioecious, which means "two houses" in Latin, and refers to the fact that the male and the female flowers are, in most cases, on separate plants. In order to produce berries, pollen has to pass between the pair, so you need at least two hollies to produce fruit. People have told me that they have only one holly, and they still get berries. Most probably, they get berries, because there are other hollies close by, either in a neighboring garden or woodlands. I think that the most beautiful holly is our native Winterberry Holly (*Ilex verticillata*). These plants are ideal for foundation plantings and mass landscaping. They flourish in our area, as they are hardy to minus thirty-five degrees—no need to worry about that this year—and are tolerant of a variety of soil types and moisture levels. Their upright, full, rounded form and six- to eight-foot height make them an attractive specimen plant in the corner of a yard. 'Winter Red' is my favorite. It is densely branched, and it bears abundant bright, red fruits that last well into winter. Male hollies like harems, so I recommend that you buy one male pollinator for three to six females. The birds will thank you.

There is no excuse for avoiding your garden in the winter. With a little planning now, and planting in spring, your garden can be just as magical in February as it is in June.

School News

John Poole Middle School The Phantom Tollbooth

What is a bored boy named Milo to do with too much time on his hands? When a mysterious package arrives containing an enchanted tollbooth, almost anything can happen. Meet all the wondrous characters of "The Phantom Tollbooth" as presented by the JPMS Players. Performances will be held Friday, February 2 and Saturday, February 3 at 7:00 p.m. Admission is \$5.00, and tickets may be purchased at the door or during lunch periods during the week of the show. There will also be fun, themed goodies available for purchase before and during the show.

Poolesville High School
PHS Winter Cluster Concert

Jim Laster, the enthusiastic maestro at Poolesville High School, has announced that, for the first time in over twenty-four years, there will be a Cluster Concert on January 25 at the auditorium featuring the music departments of the high school, John Poole Middle School, Poolesville Elementary School, and Monocacy Elementary School. This event will help raise funds for the music departments, and you can be sure it will sell out early. Tickets of \$7.00 are on sale now and disappearing quickly.



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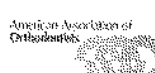
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At Your Service

Joseph Hallman At Your Service

By Jack Toomey

The Monocacy Elementary School community recently said goodbye to one of its most dedicated and valuable employees—well, sort of.

Joseph Hallman was raised in the Big Woods Community near Dickerson and attended the Poolesville area schools. Shortly after turning eighteen, he went to work for the federal government at the new Department of Energy building in Germantown and later transferred to the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda. He retired from federal government service in 2000. While working for the government during the day, Mr. Hallman also worked for the Montgomery County Public School System at night. He began working for the schools in 1968 in the building service field, working at several locations before arriving at Monocacy Elementary in 1989. After thirty-eight years of county service, Hallman decided to retire in November. In addition to holding two jobs for all of those years, Hallman also operates a car repair garage. "I guess I am a workaholic," he said. He and his wife have three grown children. Hallman is not shy about talking about his longevity in public service, and a spokesperson for the Montgomery County Public Schools confirmed that Joe Hallman, at seventy



Principal Cynthia Duranko, Brittany, Meghan, and Megan with Hallman.

years old, is one of the oldest employees ever to work for the school system.

A Monocle reporter visited the school in late December and found Hallman sitting in the building service office, in uniform, having already worked several hours. Hallman explained that, even though he was retired, he was volunteering his time until a new employee could be hired. School was about to be dismissed and Hallman entered the cafeteria. Suddenly, several children jumped out of their seats and raced over and started hugging him and giving him Christmas cards. Hallman said, "It will be hard leaving, a kid will make you cry. We have a nice group here." On Hallman's

last official day at work, the day before Thanksgiving, he went to the main office just before dismissal, took the microphone, and sang "Now It Is Time to Say Goodbye," reducing staff, children, and visitors to tears. Monocacy principal Cynthia Duranko said, "It has been my sincere pleasure to work with Joe Hallman. In addition to an outstanding work ethic, Mr. Hallman demonstrated a fine sense of humor and compassion which made him a strong male role model for our students and staff. His contribution is far beyond what can be measured or communicated."

Joe sat back in his chair and reminisced about his many years at Monocacy. He recalled that he had been called up to do much more than maintain the building. Hallman has repaired many skinned knees, dried countless tears, counseled hundreds of children in distress, acted as a disciplinarian, and has seen thousands of kids go on to adulthood. Because his workday at Monocacy was split between the school day and evening, he would often meet adults who used the school for after school activities. Mr. Hallman said, "You try to carry yourself responsibly because visitors see you and form an impression." Recently Hallman was honored at a ceremony at the Board of Education. Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Schools, presented him with an "assistant principal" cap.

As a joke, Hallman wore it the next day, and when school was dismissed, he asked the children who had given them permission to leave! Always the jokester, Hallman had a policy that no children would be allowed in the building after hours unless accompanied by an adult. Frequently, children would appear at the school at night, banging on the door asking to retrieve homework, glasses, or clothing. Joe would greet them at the door and would try to charge them twenty-five cents admission!

While the Monocle reporter was visiting the school, Hallman was constantly interrupted by children, by staff members wanting to schedule their cars for repairs, and by Joe himself who wanted to show off his shining floors, repair scuff marks, and proudly point out bulletin boards that were filled with photos of him with Dr. Weast, children, and staff members. Gay Riggs, the building service supervisor, said, "Joe was always willing to go that extra mile. He never took a day off, and he came in early and stayed late." She added, "He taught me the ropes and made me a better supervisor."

Hallman has no plans to slow down. In addition to keeping busy with his car repair business, he is also asking to be placed on the substitute worker list which would allow him to continue to work at Monocacy or other schools in case of a shortage of workers. Joseph Hallman may have retired from Monocacy Elementary, but that doesn't mean he'll stop working there!

Tributes

PES: One Happy Family

By Dominique Agnew

When the question came up about the number of years Mrs. Darlene McEleney has been the principal of Poolesville Elementary School, she seemed surprised when she realized she's been there fourteen years—surprised and pleased. In her fourteen years in Poolesville as part of her thirty years in the Montgomery County Public School system, she has seen many changes. She has seen some of the changes the town has gone through in its growth: Selby's used to be where Healthworks is now located, and there was no Tama II. She has also witnessed changes in the population, not necessarily the size: parents are more aware of how MCPS works, and they are very involved in what the kids are doing

in school every day. "The parents in our community are just the best in the world," she says. "They are incredible."

Mrs. McEleney grew up in Massachusetts and earned her bachelor's in elementary education and her master's in higher education from the University of Massachusetts. Her husband's job took them to Texas for a little while, then here to the Washington, D.C. area. Her mother was a middle school music teacher, and Mrs. McEleney claims she fell into teaching. It was something she had known all her life. Before coming to PES as a principal, Mrs. McEleney taught kindergarten through third grades, then she was a guidance counselor and an assistant principal. Her principal internship was at Galway Elementary School.

Mrs. McEleney has seen many more changes than just the physical ones around town. She thinks kids have changed, in part due to the environment. "We live in a totally different

age," she says, from technology to terrorism. She has also seen wonderful changes in education and the ways teachers teach. "Teaching has become a complex craft," she says. We know so much more about how kids think and how they can be better motivated to learn. Many years ago, students were given information they were then expected to "spit back out." Even ten years ago, teaching methods were very different. "It just blows my mind what these teachers get out of these kids," she says. "It's a pleasure to watch them do what they do." The children are encouraged to discover and own their learning.

In many other school systems or even in clusters within MCPS, teachers don't often see the success of their students after they leave the elementary school, but that's not the case in the Poolesville cluster. Students in middle or high school will come back to visit. Some of the parents are former students, and some of the parents' teachers

are still teaching at PES. "This cluster is pretty lucky," says Mrs. McEleney, "you don't have that kind of school in this neck of the woods very often."

The students are also lucky to be at PES, one for the school itself—"I would take an older building any day"—second, for the core value system in place and encouraged through all aspects of the child's education, and, third, a stable group of teachers means they are respected and happy. While many may think it's great to have a new and shiny school for students, Mrs. McEleney would disagree. At PES, where the last renovation was in the 1970s, the classrooms are larger than at most schools, and there is a full gym. Many new elementary schools do not have full gyms.

As part of the Baldrige process which is being followed throughout all MCPS schools, PES began look-

-Continued on Page 19.

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Police Blotter Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

Recent

Beginning January 1, 2007, the Frederick County Sheriff's Office will begin utilizing a new program to provide accident reports online. Citizens, along with their insurance companies, can now obtain a copy of their motor vehicle accident reports at <http://frederickco.policereports.us> or through the Sheriff's Office Website at www.co.frederick.md.us/Sheriff. The report can be searched by report number, report date, driver's name, or location. After submitting a credit card number for payment, the report can be printed immediately. The fee for a report still remains \$5.00, and reports should be available between five and seven business days after the date of the accident. Accidents involving fatalities will not be available online. This service is for traffic accidents occurring only in Frederick County.

December 19, Residential burglary. 18400 block of Ashmeade Road, Boyds. Residence entered by unlocked window, property taken.

December 20, Residential burglary 20900 block of Clarksburg Road. Garage entered, and ATVs and other property stolen.

December 20, Residential burglary. 15100 block of Barnesville Road, Boyds. Forced entry to a shed, tools and an off-road vehicle taken.

Past

January 19, 1933. William Clements, fifteen years old, was overcome by coal gas fumes emitting from a furnace at his home in Gaithersburg. Dr. Stanley Barber came to the house before the fire department arrived and managed to revive the boy. Doctor Barber, who lived a short distance away, managed to save the boy by using manual resuscitation methods.

January 20, 1941. Thirteen-year-old William Linhardt was lost in the woods near his Poolesville home. Montgomery County Police and Rockville firemen searched all night, and the boy was found about 8:00 a.m. by a trapper, but authorities were not notified immediately and kept searching into the afternoon.

January 23, 1898. James Liddard, age thirty-two, was brought to Rockville by train to answer charges that

he made an assault against his brother-in-law by cutting him with an ax near their Damascus home. Liddard was arrested by Sheriff Thompson in Frederick.

January 24, 1930. Policeman Paul Watkins went to the Gaithersburg home of William Dorsey to arrest him on a charge of failing to support his twenty-five children. While there, Officer Watkins saw a twenty-five gallon still and charged Dorsey with that crime also.

January 27, 1955. A fifty-one-year-old Sellman man fired six bullets through the door of a rambling frame house where his estranged wife was hiding. Police said that the man went to his house, returned with a rifle, and shot through the door, hitting and seriously injuring a friend of his wife. The man, who had been drinking, then killed himself.

January 28, 1895. Boarding pupils at the Fairview Seminary at Gaithersburg barely escaped with their lives as fire swept through the building. Dr. Charles Waters, headmaster of the school, discovered that the building had caught fire from a third floor chimney.

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**"Darlene McEleny" Continued
From Page 17.**

ing at the continuous improvement of the school and ways to structure that package. The first fruits of this are the development and implementation of the core values: honesty, caring, responsibility, effort, and respect. Every quarter there is a Town Meeting in the gym for the whole school to celebrate the core values and those who have demonstrated them—even the staff is nominated and recognized. There are also weekly awards given to kids for displaying the values. "We're trying to develop a sense of belonging for all students," Mrs. McEleny says. "We expend a lot of effort to make sure that all kids feel like they belong here." The staff at PES is pleased to see that it's working. "The kids have bought into it in a big way."

At the Town Meeting, a special award is given to a student who goes above and beyond what would normal-

ly be expected. Last year, on the last day of school, a student-patrol pulled another student back just in time to avoid being struck by a truck that was illegally going around a school bus. Because of reasons of student privacy in MCPS, the students' names could not be released.

Many of the teachers at PES live in Poolesville and have children in the Poolesville cluster. It is truly a community school. As such, there is a very low mobility rate for teachers—and students. "Staff tends to come here and stay here," adds Mrs. McEleny, "just like families." It is rare to have an opening, and when there is one, people are eager to come to PES.

"We have a student body of kids that know they're supported, and they know what they need to do, and they do it," says Mrs. McEleny. "I want them to learn feeling confident about their abilities and excited about the future."

While expectations were high, they were still modest, considering the size of the school, but the coaches have been surprised. "I think things are going better than I expected," says Coach Dorsey. "I didn't expect to get the kids to turn around the way they did." Some of the kids are new to wrestling, but "they have stepped up to the plate."

The record as of this writing is 3-4, but the exceptional match was not a win. On Saturday, January 2, the Falcons wrestled in tri-meet against Gaithersburg and Quince Orchard High Schools. They lost 48-31 to Quince Orchard, but it felt like a win. "To go up against somebody that's been a powerhouse like QO," and only lose by 11 points was amazing. Coach Dorsey says, "It makes you feel good about the kids" when they fight and fight and never give up. The team came away from that match with an "I-can-win-attitude."

At this point, the halfway mark of the season, there is one wrestler who stands out, senior Jason Boulter. In the 145-pound class, he has only one loss, and he was the only wrestler to have a win against Magruder High School. He is the captain of the varsity team, and Mallory Green (the only female wrestler on the team) is the captain of the junior varsity team. Both teams have alternating assistant captains.

Coach Agnew says, "The future looks really, really good," and Coach Dorsey looks even higher, saying, "The sky's the limit."

Youth Sports

The Sky's the Limit: Wrestling at PHS

By Dominique Agnew

The wrestling program at Poolesville High School has taken on a metamorphosis that is turning the program around and giving wings to the wrestlers to reach further than they imagined.

The PHS wrestling program has a new head coach, Kevin Dorsey, and a new assistant coach, Mark Agnew. Not only have both coaches coached together, side by side, for a number of years in the Poolesville Athletic Association (PAA) wrestling program, they have also coached many of the Falcon wrestlers through PAA.

The new coaching staff has brought an excitement to the program that was lacking, and it has increased the expectations and the numbers of the program. Says Coach Agnew, "The team has more than doubled in size." This season, there are enough wrestlers to be able to have a varsity and a junior varsity team, so many of the freshmen are wrestling junior varsity instead of being thrown into the varsity coliseum right off the bat. They gain more experience, and many are also wrestling in the Capital Area Wrestling League where some wrestled last year through the PAA wrestling program.

Big Board

John Huston Centennial Double Feature

The Man Who Would Be King (1975) and Sierra Madre (1948) are the features on this special double-header of John Huston classics. Beginning at 7:00 p.m. on January 19, don't miss these classics in the grand tradition of film at the Weinberg Center for the Arts. Tickets are \$9.00 for adults and \$7.00 for children. For more details, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-228-2828.

The Hot Club of San Francisco

Prepare to be astounded by the one-night show of the Hot Club of San Francisco entitled "Silent Surrealism." At the Weinberg Center for the Arts, January 20 at 8:00 p.m., the Hot Club is an ensemble of accomplished musicians performing gypsy jazz to silent surreal films. A huge success in Europe and across the U.S., come experience for yourself a touch of 1920s jazz and surrealism with a twist. Prices range from \$18.00 to \$22.00. For more details, visit www.weinbergcenter.org or call 301-228-2828.

Night of Fun Prepares for Relay for Life

Relay for Life of Poolesville, a team event to help raise funds to fight cancer, was an astounding success in 2006. Hundreds of area residents pitched in to make this a rewarding experience for all involved and financially rewarding for the American Cancer Society.

The group is holding its kick-off celebration dinner on January 27 at the Poolesville Baptist Church at 6:00 p.m., the snow date is February 3. The theme of the evening is a Winter Wonderland. The dinner is free, and there will be information on how to participate, as well as door prizes. Why not

join your neighbors and friends by getting involved this year?

The relay event is scheduled for June 9 and 10 at the Poolesville High School football field, so even if you can't make the dinner, get your walking shoes ready.

Have You Been Thinking about Joining the Local Chamber?

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce will have its annual banquet at the Izaak Walton League lodge off of Willard Road in Poolesville on January 27. The chamber is a critical community organization which not only sponsors and supports many of the non-profit groups and events in the area, but is a strong association of business people. By joining this group, you not only help in community needs but have a terrific opportunity to make new friends and important business contacts. The event starts with a reception at 6:00 p.m. and includes dinner, entertainment, and awards. Call Jake Perkins at 301-922-0115. Plan to become a member and join in this social event.

Batter Up!

Area sport coaches, please take note that applications for the use of local park fields are due on January 31, 2007. If you plan to use the facilities, reservations must be made prior to that date. The fields will be open for play on March 15, and reservations will have to be made through the organizations. The town parks are: Stevens Park, West Willard Road, and Halmos Park. If you have any questions, call Town Hall at 301-428-8927.

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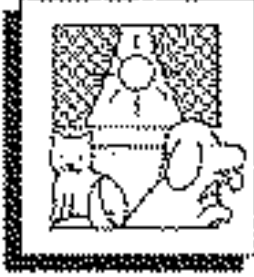
**ATTENTION
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Orders Are Now Being Accepted for the
2007 Community Phone Directory
DO NOT MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY

The Poolesville Area of Chamber of Commerce's 2007 Community Director *will be published in May 2007 and ads must be received by February 5, 2007.* All ads *must be camera-ready* (not cut from a previous edition) otherwise an additional \$20.00 fee will be charged. *Payment must be received at the time of your ad submission.* Those wanting the same placement as the 2006 edition must submit their ad (postmarked) by February 5.

All Advertisers will be in the Advertising List and highlighted in bold type in the Business Listing.
PACC members can also have their ad posted on the PACC website.

ATTENTION TO ALL AREA RESIDENTS:
You should review your phone listing in the gold 2006 directory and contact us if there are any changes to be made.
CONTACT PACC, P.O. BOX 256, POOLESVILLE, MD 20837 OR GO TO WWW.POOLESVILLECHAMBER.COM



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