

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

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At this auction, if bidders come in low, this auctioneer whips 'em into shape. Look for the whip in Family Album on page 2.



Mackenzie Magaha received a special award from two very special guys. See page 7.



Catherine Beliveau and Gail Lee received accolades at the annual PACC meeting. See more pictures on page 9.



Sophomore Rachel Daniels (left) is emerging as a leading state competitor. Read more on page 18.

New Proposed Poolesville Ice Rink and Retail Facility

By Rande Davis

A couple of weeks ago, Poolesville's Paul Loftus visited relatives near Harrisonburg, Virginia, something he has done for decades, but this time, his trip home filled him with a unique sense of excitement and wonder. While there, his niece convinced him to visit a special park in nearby Bridgewater called Generations Park. Bridgewater might rightfully be called Virginia's Poolesville. It's a historic town with a population similar to Poolesville's, having a quaint, quiet ambience but that suffers economically from a street plan established before the Civil War and not conducive to even the simple needs of an automobile-centered economy.

As he traveled home, Paul could not shake a sense that Bridgewater held a key to the success and future of Poolesville. That key took the form of a public ice rink, a facility that has come to anchor the town's economic future by offering not only a



Could this ice rink plan become a new image and entrance focus for the Town of Poolesville?

family-friendly public recreation facility but by serving as a magnet to bring essential revenue to the town through adjoining restaurants.

Paul continued to explore the notion of an ice rink for Poolesville with others, triggered by a public discussion bordering on a near uproar about a possible twenty-four-hour gas

station on the property adjacent to CVS. He began to piece together his thoughts and vision into a formal proposal for residents and elected officials to consider.

On March 4, Paul took his concept to Poolesville's Park and Streets

Continued on page 16.

Poolesville Swimmers to Hang More Championship Banners

By Jeff Stuart

On Saturday, February 22 at the University of Maryland's Epley Recreation Center, the Poolesville High School boys' and girls' swimming teams again claimed state titles in the 3A/2A/1A Division. The boys claimed their ninth consecutive title, remaining the only team to win the state title in this category since MCPS began to participate in 2012. They outscored second place Damascus, 374 to 259. The girls outscored Damascus 338.5 to 280 for their sixth consecutive state title and seventh overall. These athletes are proud to be part of what has become a tradition of excellence, but the championship banners to be unfurled in the gym this year are a



Oops! They did it again: State titles in the 3A/2A/1A Division.

Continued on page 17.

Family Album

Monocacy Lions Club Annual Auction Dinner

Right: Heidi Rosvold-Brenholtz and William Price handled the auction smoothly and with humor.



The annual Monocacy Lions Auction and Dinner event remains popular for both the auction items and the food.



Pat Sutherland and Vikki Clayton at the Lions Dinner and Auction fundraiser.



Looking for good deals at the Lions auction are Tom and Mary Conlon, Pilar and Mike Garrett, and Tom and Gail Lee with Frank Jamison.



Auctioneer William Price perused the items looking for those he thinks will bring top dollar.



Sometimes a service dog is needed to sniff out the best auction items.

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Town Government

Large Crowd Hears Extensive Debate About County Pesticide Ordinance

By Link Hoewing

A very large crowd of people attended the regular Town of Poolesville commissioners' meeting on March 2, many to hear a debate concerning a recently-passed county ordinance that would in essence prohibit the use of "synthetic" pesticides by homeowners and in most commercial operations. The ordinance generally restricts the use of certain pesticides on private lawns, playgrounds, mulched recreation areas, and childcare facilities. Most synthetic pesticides are not allowed to treat pests in lawns. The law was passed several years ago but was only recently upheld in a court challenge.

Appearing first to testify was Mary Travaglini, a Program Manager for the county's Department of Environmental Protection. She outlined the purpose of the legislation and what it restricts. She noted that it is focused on prohibiting the application of pesticides in cases where children are likely to come in contact with the chemicals, but it does not ban their possession or sale, meaning homeowners will still be able to buy banned pesticides at their local garden center or hardware store.

She was appearing, she said, to urge the town to "opt in" to the county's regulations. Eleven other local jurisdictions have already done so, and others, such as Rockville and Gaithersburg, are considering it. If the town were to opt in, the county would assume full responsibility for enforcement.

Two other witnesses, Ling Tan representing the Sierra Club and a coalition called Safe Grow for Montgomery and Joyce Breiner of Poolesville Green, testified in favor of having Poolesville opt in to the law. Both said that they were concerned about the effects of synthetic pesticides on the environment and on the health of residents. Tan pointed out that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service says that homeowners put up to ten times more chemicals on their lawns per acre than farmers and, according to physicians, children are especially susceptible to being harmed by lawn chemicals.

Numerous witnesses appeared to oppose not only the notion of Poolesville opting in to the law but the need for the law itself. Local landscapers Julie and Joseph Kuhlman remarked that the state of Maryland and the U. S. Environmental Protection both regulate various aspects of the use of pesticides and fertilizers. Julie Kuhlman said that the state conducts inspections, requires extensive training of company personnel, and sets standards for the application of chemicals. Both added that the chemicals used have become safer over time and all chemicals used meet standards for safety set by the EPA. They also said they doubt the county has the expertise and experience they and their counterparts in the industry have in applying lawn chemicals.

Bernie Mihm, the owner of Fine Earth Landscape Company, made many of the same points. He also brought a batch of chemicals found in most homes and used for such things as cleaning and explained how many of them are far more dangerous than some pesticides. Recommendations the county has made regarding substitute pesticides, such as concentrated vinegar, are actually rated as more dangerous than some synthetic pesticides. He said that while the law is limited in its application in some respects, he worries that it is simply a question of time before broader rules are adopted that might cover agriculture as well. Bob Cissel, representing the local farming group Montgomery Agriculture Producers, made the same point and said that his group opposed the legislation. Applying such restrictions to farming could "take the agriculture out of the Ag Reserve."

The commissioners deferred any decision regarding opting in until a future meeting.

Next, three map amendment changes—or changes to zoning rules—were considered. All three had been considered by the Planning Commission and recommended to the commissioners. Two of the three, the Fyffe property and the Asuncion property, both located on West Willard Road across from the high school, were proposals to change the zoning from residential to commercial. The house on the Asuncion property was once used by Dr. Hector Asunción to provide medical services, but the temporary zoning change applied to it had lapsed. Both proposals were approved unanimously by the commissioners.

The third proposal involves the application of the state's Forest Conservation rules to property owned by Jennifer Beaulieu on the corner of Tom Fox Avenue

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Rande(m) Thoughts

There Are No Second Chances

By Rande Davis

Every once in a while, someone comes up with a new idea that seems to hit a positive chord immediately. The most natural reaction to new concepts is reluctance, and let's face it, a dose of skepticism is never a bad thing. Try ending this sentence any way you want, and the result is almost always a cautionary negative: "John didn't want to rush into—(buying the car, starting or ending a relationship, agreeing to get the dog, etc.)." See what I mean?

For me, our frontpage article about a proposal for a year-round ice/roller skating/dance park with adjoining dining and picnicking area that supports retail space is one of those very rare new ideas that I liked immediately.

Don't get me wrong, though. I said I liked the idea—not that it would be easy. With a new master plan on the horizon, this is precisely the time to seriously focus on what that property means to this town. Whatever is developed there becomes the face of Poolesville. I always liked the Old Barn that was located on the opposite property, and I thought it was a perfect image for this ag town. Over the years, a number of possible uses of the barn were considered, but in the end, zoning restrictions and opposing forces finally forced the owner to abandon any notion of using it.

Understanding that we should not rush into things anyway, it is, nevertheless, important to give this proposal a full review and consideration. In fact, any notion of trying to manage what that corner looks like in the future will be quite complicated, but just consider how the ice rink plan checks off so many of the community goals we have for Poolesville, and it becomes very hard to dismiss the idea out of hand. Here is just a short checklist of things it might do:

1. We must find ways to boost revenue for area businesses without increasing our population beyond current limits. We need something that can bring consumers from outside the area on a regular basis. Our small population goals, while admirable, do not promise a healthy economic future for our commercial sector. Does this proposal help solve that dilemma? It does somewhat, not by itself, and would require year-round event planning and advance

marketing throughout the region to work, but can it become a significant piece of economic development puzzle? **CHECK**

2. We want to encourage youth to be active and outside and away from their digital world of cellphones, iPads, and computers as much as possible. Will this help in that goal? **CHECK**

3. We seem to always seek healthy and positive things for our children to do. Our current skate park is a good example; however, this proposal is even better since it is not just for youth but encourages a much wider demographic in group activity, not just individual experience. This rink will be great for families, daters, exercise clubs, etc. Hey, I am a senior citizen, now they actually have "ice-walkers" so even us old folks can take a twirl around the rink. Does this proposal offer something for almost everyone in town? **CHECK**

4. Part of our small-town ambience goes beyond population size to include the appearance of the town, keeping our town quaint and beautiful. Today, when visitors come to Poolesville from the east, they get a dose of overgrown and weedy shrubbery. Most proposals would have the entranceway become just another commercial scene straight out of Rockville. Does the ice rink provide a much more beautiful and inviting entrance to Poolesville? Just look at the front page. **CHECK**

5. Whatever changes that may come to Poolesville, there is another very important consideration. Will the change add to the value of our homes? Will this venue provide added value to living in Poolesville, add to the appearance of the town for decades to come, and thereby help our real estate values? **CHECK**

I admit I come to this issue with a very heavy bias for personal reasons. I grew up in upstate New York, and my wife spent her early youth in Holland. I so warmly remember the weekend nights and days of ice skating for hours and hours. I was lucky to have a neighbor with a pond long before lawyers got in the way. He installed floodlights and speakers to play music. There was a bonfire pit to get warm once in a while. We often brought thermoses filled with hot chocolate. By the end of the evening, kids were exhausted, cold, and often struggled to untie snow-covered skate

Continued on page 11.

Local News

Storm Damage to Boyds's Warrior Canine Connection

By Rande Davis

The tornado that hit our area on February 7 not only did extensive

damage to Calleva as previously reported but also touched down in Boyds, causing significant damage to the facilities of Warrior Canine Connection's Healing Quarters. Fortunately, no animals or persons were injured by the storm burst.

Warrior Canine Connection utilizes a Mission Based Trauma Recovery Model to help our military personnel with visible as well as invisible wounds reconnect with life, their



Warrior Canine Connection got hit hard and needs your help.

Continued on page 11.

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In Your Own Backyard

Native American Fish Traps

By Jon Wolz

When we have heavy rains, I often head out and visit the Potomac and Monocacy Rivers and their tributaries to observe the high, rushing, and often muddy waters. I am always amazed to see the floodwaters of the Monocacy River rushing through the arches at the Monocacy Aqueduct, watching the rising waters at White's Ferry and Edwards Ferry, or the Potomac River as it angrily rushes along at Great Falls. Most of the time, the waters of these two large rivers hide what lies beneath their surfaces.

On a walk last fall along the C&O Canal from Point of Rocks to the Monocacy Aqueduct, I noticed that the Potomac River was very low. As I walked by Noland's Ferry along the towpath of the canal, I heard rapids and I glanced over to my right. I walked over to the riverbank to get a closer look. What I saw were stones in the river partially protruding from the water in the shape of a very large V, stretching from the shore where I was standing across the water to Noland's Island. This stone structure is a Native American fish trap. On another walk, going from the Dickerson Conservation Park entrance to the C&O Canal down the towpath with my son Charles in December, I noticed some trash between the towpath and the riverbank. As I walked over to pick up the trash, I could hear rapids and, looking up, I saw another fish trap stretching from the riverbank over to Upper Mason Island. This spot is about Mile 38.5 along the towpath and is very near White's Ford. One day, as I was driving on Park Mills Road going to Frederick with my son Thomas, I slowed down as we were crossing the bridge over the Monocacy River. That day, the river was low and, looking downriver, there was another V-shaped Native American fish trap stretching across the river from one side to the other. All three of these fish traps pointed down river. These fish traps were also known as fish dams, fish weirs, or fish pots. There are fifty-four fish traps between Leesburg and Harper's Ferry. At the end of the V, there was an opening with a semicircle of stones. Native Americans captured fish as they swam towards the narrow opening at the V into the apex by either spearing them or scooping them up with a net made of brush or thin



A Native American fish trap in the Potomac River next to Mason Island.

tree branches. Fish caught included eels, suckers, catfish, crappie, sunfish, and fallfish.

When Native Americans lived in our area, the fish in our rivers were very plentiful. Constructing the C&O Canal damaged some of the Native American campsites. In our area, the campsites were at Point of Rocks at Conoy (Heaters) Island, Noland's Ferry, Tuscarora Creek, Monocacy Aqueduct, Mason's Island, White's Ferry, Sycamore Landing, and Seneca.

Native Americans came to this area between 20,000 and 9,000 years ago and were hunter gatherers. About 3,500 years ago, they evolved to an agricultural culture, creating large villages. Over a 450-year period, from 1,200 to 750 years ago, there was a Medieval Warming Period that caused crop failures among the Native Americans. Native Americans had to adapt or face starvation and began building large fish traps. With the arrival of European settlers in the mid-1600s, Native Americans began to leave our area and, by the early 1800s, they were completely gone.

When I was a Boy Scout in Troop 246, we canoed fifty miles on the Shenandoah River from Front Royal to Charles Town. Our scout leaders often yelled at us to paddle to the V where we would safely pass through the opening at the point of the V. We paddled through many Native American fish traps.

We learned to canoe at Swain's Lock, and Fred Swain let us use his canoes for free on the canal as well as for our high adventure on the Shenandoah River.

In the mid-1700s to 1828, there was great interest in making the Potomac, Shenandoah, and the Monocacy Rivers navigable by clearing obstructions

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Tidbits

Attention Parents of New Kindergarten Students

Poolesville Elementary and Monocacy Elementary Schools will have kindergarten orientation this coming April. Parents of children who will be five years of age on or before September 1 are required to sign up for their respective orientation programs. For parents of prospective students at PES, its orientation class will be on April 23 and 24. To schedule an appointment, contact Mrs. Harney at Christina_N_Harney@mcpsmd.org or at 240-740-5870.

Monocacy Elementary students from Barnesville, Beallsville, Poolesville, and Boyds will have their orientation on April 16 at Monocacy Elementary School in Barnesville. Program times are hourly from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Contact MES at 240-740-5790 to register, to select times, and to request the registration packet.

Is There a First Responder in You?

The Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department sure hopes so. Jeff Eck, of UMCVFD, tells us they are recruiting firefighters and EMTs, and if you have "the call" within you to serve, he would love to talk to you. For those wanting to help but not necessarily on the front line, they have need of support staff for their auxiliary and for fundraising. To reach him, go to UMCVFD.org/join-us.

Falcon Wrestling Championships

Senior Colin Savage led four other Falcon wrestlers to a fourth-place finish at the 58th annual MCPS Wrestling Championships at Gaithersburg High School. Other Falcons who placed for PHS were Xavier Kresslein and Kevin Fultz (second place), Jackson Barney (third place), and Mason Hillegas (fourth place).

Wizards NBA Analyst Knows Talent When He Sees it

Former Wizard and current NBA sports analyst, Phillip Chenier, joined Coach Fred Swick in presenting Mackenzie Magaha with a plaque honoring her as a Montgomery County High School player of the week. Basketball players are selected for their outstanding playing performance and valuable contribution to their teams. Go Mackenzie and go Falcons!

Jeff Stempler Gets Award, Shakes the World



Jeff Stempler of First Home Mortgage had a trip to remember for more than one reason.

Okay, so maybe not quite shakes the world. Jeff Stempler of First Home Mortgage, while attending his firm's business meeting at Montego Bay this past January really did receive recognition for his outstanding performance in 2019 in receiving its Leadership Club award. While he was there, the island experienced an earthquake, although we hear he was in a boat at the time and missed the main action. We admit we cannot really prove any connection, but we are glad he made it back safely.



Falcon wrestlers at the 58th annual MCPS Wrestling Championship.

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Things To Do

Poolesville Area Senior Center

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Pickleball: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 8:30 a.m.

Zumba Gold: Wednesday at 1:00 p.m.

Mahjong: Thursdays, Room 129, 10:00 a.m.

Chair/Slow Flow Yoga: Mondays, 11:00 am in the café

The Blue Hearth is open every weekend.

St. Peter's Rummage Sale

St. Peter's Spring Rummage Sale is scheduled for March 26 to 28. The church is accepting item donations now which may be left at the church. Furniture is no longer accepted, and the only books accepted are children's books, craft books, and cookbooks.

March 6

UMCVFD Auxiliary Bingo

Featuring cash and gift cards with door prizes. Enjoy an evening of fun while helping to support your local fire department. Admission is \$20.00 which includes a game card and three chances to win in each game. UMCVFD Fire Hall, 198001 Beallsville Road, Beallsville. Doors Open: 5:30 p.m., Games Start: 7:00 p.m.

Traditional Meditation

Join the Sugarloaf Mountain Mindfulness Community for an evening of meditation in the tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh at the Barnesville Town Hall from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Please bring a mat/cushion and light blanket. There will be some chairs for those who prefer to sit in chairs. For further information, please contact meditationsms@gmail.com.

March 7

11th Annual Knights of Columbus 3-on-3 Half-Court Basketball Tournament

Open to female and male players ages 6 to adulthood as the tournament will have youth and adult divisions. Entry fee is a non-perishable food item per player, donated to WUMCO Help, a food bank that serves our community. For more information, contact Donald Patti, Knights Council #6901, at 866-478-8080 or nash Rambler@yahoo.com. Poolesville Baptist Church, 17550 West Willard Road. 12:30 p.m.

March 8

Historic Medley District Spring Lecture Series

The Piedmont Region of the Potomac, presented by Mike High. Poolesville Old Town Hall Bank Museum.

March 11

WUMCO Wednesdays

Watershed Café for breakfast and lunch.

March 16

Poolesville Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:30 p.m.

March 18

6th Quarterly PASC Social

Featuring presentation about the Civilian Conservation Corps by George Richter, Jr., who was an enrollee in the CCC in 1935. Get a first-person account of the hijinks, hard work, dangers, and adventure as the boys in Roosevelt's Tree Army built Maryland's state parks. All are welcome. Seniors with birthdays in January, February, and March will be honored. Light refreshments served. For more information, call 301-875-7701. 17750 West Willard Road, Poolesville. 1:30 p.m.

WUMCO Wednesdays

Mexican Grill for lunch and dinner.

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Focus on Business

PACC Celebrates Another Successful Year

By Rande Davis

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce held its annual meeting at Rocklands Farm Winery on February 25. The highlights of this year's annual event were the awarding of the PACC Community Service award and the expression of appreciation of Gail Lee as she steps down as president after four years of leadership. Gail is a forty-year resident of Poolesville and proprietor of Gail Lee Homes.

Through the leadership of Lee, the chamber had a number of major accomplishments. Membership chair, Jeff Stempler of First Home Mortgage, nearly doubled the number of businesses joining it to bring its current membership to around two hundred. Eleanor Bateman from Interior Designs and Colony Supply led the effort to fully revise the highly-valued PACC business and resident directory. Gail, along with Jeff Stempler, initiated its successful Businesses Helping Businesses Network monthly breakfast program. Each of these meetings features a specific PACC member while all attendees have an opportunity to talk about their businesses. More evening network events like a bar crawl and a visit to Calleva's Haunted Forest were organized by Monica Molina (Magica Realty) and Woody Hilton (Hilton Funeral Home). Joyce Breiner of Poolesville Green supervised the revamping of the organization's bylaws, something that hadn't been done since 2005.

The PACC continued its participation and sponsorship in Springfest, First Friday, and the Fall Halloween Festival. In conjunction with the Monocacy Lions Club, the PACC sponsored its annual Poolesville Day 5K run/walk now going on its twenty-fifth year which provides public service money primarily to local deserving organizations.

Gail was named President Emeritus in recognition of her leadership. Vice president Monica Molina described Gail to attendees "as generous and kind, with a keen ability to resolve problems."

Gail's volunteer leadership of PACC follows decades of community service including pre-school teacher and auction chair at St. Peter's, PTA, Girl Scout leader, member of Historic Medley District, Inc., and much more.



New 2020 PACC Board of Directors: Steve Keeper, Rhi Combs, Monica Molina, Woody Hilton, and Jeff Eck.

PACC annually selects one of its members for recognition for outstanding achievement in community volunteerism, and for 2019, they chose Catherine Believeau who recently stepped down as Executive Director of WUMCO. Catherine has been involved in helping area residents for over twenty years through her involvement in the Girl Scouts and in youth leadership at Poolesville Presbyterian Church. She is also a vice president of Helping Hands, the group that sponsors Rebuilding Together each year. She began the annual Oktoberfest Fall Festival as a fundraiser for WUMCO in 2010 which has evolved into the fun Halloween scarecrow contest.

The 2020 board of directors was announced at the event with Rhi Combs of M&T Bank becoming the new president. Monica Molina returns as vice president, Jeff Eck of UMCVFD as treasurer, Stephen Keeper (Liberty Mutual) as the new secretary, and events chair, Woody Hilton. Cathy Bupp is the executive secretary of PACC.



Michael, Mary, Kevin, Catherine, and Bob Believeau, Joseph Benedick.



Tom Kettler of Kettler Forlines Homes, Woody and Lisa Hilton of Hilton Funeral Home, and Laura Davis.



Steve and Anne-Marie Thomas from AnyArt Solutions, attorney Roger Hayden, bartender at Rocklands Farm Winery.



Mark Corbett of Edward Jones, Robert Nivens of BioActive, and Jeff Eck of UMCVFD.



Ed Rothenberg of Barnesville School, Liz Bowen of Maggie Nightingale Library, and Jeff Stempler of First Home Mortgage.



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Continued from page 4.

There Are No Second Chances

strings with near-frozen fingers, but we loved it. It was an experience enjoyed not just as an individual but in groups, with friends, and that memory is carried in my psyche today.

My wife has similar memories of skating the canals of the Hague with dual-bladed wooden skates, used to make it easier to slide over snow-frozen, bumpy waterways. I can almost see the Dutch bonnet and apron right now.

Our children can have that same kind of lifelong memory, too. Whether the proposal is fully viable remains to be seen, but let's not dismiss the idea out of hand. As we say all the time, we only have one chance to get this right.

Continued from page 4.

Storm Damage to Boyds's Warrior Canine Connection

families, their communities, and for each other. By interacting with dogs as they move from being a puppy to training to become adult service dogs, Warrior trainers benefit from very special physiological and psychological animal-human connections. As a result of their efforts, participating veterans with disabilities receive the finest in trained service dogs.

As the community rallied on behalf of Calleva, area residents, especially dog lovers, can make a direct contribution to Warrior Canine Connection to help them recover from the damage by visiting <http://bit.ly/32v3Uab>.

Fun Fact...

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School News

PHS It's Academic Team Advances to Region Semifinals

By Andrew Sojka

On January 11, three students from Poolesville High School competed in the region playoffs of the televised quiz show *It's Academic*, placing first in the playoff qualifiers and second in the playoff match.

It's Academic tests competitors on their general knowledge in multiple subject areas, including math, history, geography, music, art, and literature. Students race to buzz in with the correct response and have a short time period in which to deliver the correct answer.

The competition is intensely fierce, with schools from all over the D.C.-metropolitan area vying for a spot in the finals. Students from PHS competed against schools such as Quince Orchard and Wakefield as they made their way to the semifinals. The semifinals team, consisting of senior captains, Jacob Kiviat and Jeffery Guan, and sophomore captain Orion

Foo, competed against Sandy Spring Friends and Georgetown Day School, coming in second place overall.

"It's good to be well rounded, but in these types of competitions, the more compartmentalized your team is, the more questions you can answer," said Guan. "If you just have a couple of well-rounded people, you can't answer the questions fast enough."

Marcia Snavelly, AP history and global ecology teacher, serves as the club's sponsor. She credits the team's success to hard work and leadership.

"They're dedicated," said Snavelly, when describing why the team performs so well. "Some people just join clubs or teams and aren't dedicated, but these guys are."

The team also competes in the Montgomery Academic Beltway League (MABL), another quiz-style academic competition held monthly between MCPS high schools. In MABL, teams compete in four rounds, consisting of coaches reading questions for each team to answer. The Poolesville team won three out of four of its games and is advancing to the county finals.

"It's fun to compete, especially in MABL," said Kiviat. "MABL is a competition, but you also interact with the other team a little bit more."

With much effort from Snavelly and



From left to right: Jeffrey Guan, Jacob Kiviat, Marcia Snavelly, John Butler, and Orion Foo.

former PHS principal Deena Levine, last year was the first time the team succeeded in having a televised appearance on the *It's Academic* show. "We've been trying for years to get on the *It's Academic* show," said Snavelly. "Now that we're in, we're in."

By placing in the semifinals, the team has been invited to compete in the National Academic Championship

in Washington, D.C. in May. There, they will face off against teams from all over the country for a chance to win the high school varsity national championship.

The semifinals episode will air on April 25, at 10:30 a.m. on NBC4.

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Garden

Companion Planting

By Maureen O'Connell

The earliest gardens were grown for different purposes, depending upon your station in life. Those of the royal and noble households would have pleasure gardens of spacious lawns and herbaceous borders with acres of orchards; medieval monastery gardens provided areas of privacy, study, and contemplation, but they also provided food and the study of plants for medicinal purposes. More humble properties would have kitchen or utilitarian gardens which contained food and medicinal plants, as well as those for dyeing cloth, floor coverings, quelling insects, and other household chores. The John Poole House Arboretum in Poolesville is an example of a garden for a general store owner, John Poole and his family, in the late eighteenth century that was built for such utilitarian purposes.

Over time, gardens changed. Vegetables, flowers, and herbs were grown together in borders. This was the evolution of the cottage garden style. Gardeners, whether by accident or careful research, saw the benefits of companion planting, which is the simple concept that certain plants together will help each other grow—a perfect symbiotic relationship. Plants, like people, can influence one another for better or worse; some get along better than others. Companion planting is reflective of how plants naturally grow in the wild. In nature, two plants that require vastly different growing conditions will not be found growing together. Native plants are hardier than non-native ones as they are indigenous to a given area in geological time; they have developed naturally.

The science of companion planting is often anecdotal; what works for



Foxglove growing with chives

my garden in Barnesville might not work as well for you in Poolesville. Localized growing environments, even within a short distance, influence success or failure of plant growth. A garden is a kaleidoscope of colors, aromas, heights, shapes, sizes, and textures. These factors influence a plant's tendency to attract pollinators, deter deer and small rodents, confuse and repel pests, and attract beneficial insects.

My garden is not just a collection of pretty plants; it is my small laboratory. I have twelve separate garden plots. I like to experiment each season with old and new plants in new or old locations with differing soil conditions, sun/shade/wind exposure, deer and rabbit traffic, insect and pest populations, and water needs. Several years ago, I noticed that similar plants did better or worse in different plot locations. Could the growing conditions vary that much in a relatively small

Continued on page 22.

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School News

One Dandy Vehicle

By Kerri Cook

For one Poolesville local, adventure is just around the corner. In fact, for children's book author, Alaina Ann Sacramo, adventure and nature exploration have brought her from hometown Poolesville to various corners of the United States. Alaina and her purple camper van, named Dandy, first began exploring Maryland and sought natural escape in state and national parks in Virginia and West Virginia. About six months out of the year, Alaina lives comfortably in her purple van, which features a full bed, kitchenette, and ample drawers and compartments for all the comforts of home. Their travels have brought them further west to experience the beautiful landscapes of New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona.

Alaina, who also makes her living as a travel photographer and graphic designer, eventually set up her base camp in Portland, Oregon, though she returns east to visit her family. She is always especially proud to share her stories of the open road with her nieces and nephews. From those stories, an idea to transform her travels with the purple van into a series of children's books was born.

This past December, along with the illustrators, her brother, David Sacramo, and sister-in-law, Diane Bidi, the first *Dandy the Van* book was released. The shenanigans of the purple van and her three sidekicks, Lainy Cakes, Divi Sweets, and Davey Marshmallow, based on the three book creators, can be followed online at dandythevan.com. There, schools can book the author for a visit and book reading. This past month, Alaina came home to read to the students at Poolesville Elementary (her alma mater) and Monocacy Elementary.

"Kids want adventure," says Alaina. She adds that when children see this book about silly characters travelling to real-life places, they envision themselves doing the same. Poolesville students were also particularly struck by the fact that the author once sat where they sit now, in kindergarten and first grade classes. "They see me and think, 'Oh, she's like me! She grew up here and wrote a book with her own family. I could do that, too!'"

Surely, Alaina Ann has created an inspirational lifestyle, traveling the country, writing about her experiences, and noting the changes in her environment. It's also important to Alaina that five percent of the proceeds of *Dandy the Van* go to the National Forest Foundation for a tree-planting campaign to offset Dandy the Van's carbon footprint. Dandy, a Dodge Promaster, is complete with 280 watts of roof solar panels, three lithium batteries in the back of the camper, and LED lighting throughout—but the part of Dandy about which Alaina is most pleased is simply that "Dandy, the purple van, spreads joy."



Alaina Ann Sacramo and her trusty sidekick, Dandy.

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Continued from page 1.

New Proposed Poolesville Ice Rink and Retail Facility

Committee. His call for public support prior to the meeting resulted in a significant number of residents attending the meeting to demonstrate that public approval for his plan will rally behind the concept.

His plan presents a community activity center offering ice skating during fall and winter seasons (ice skating can work in temperatures in the mid-sixties.) and a venue for possible roller skating, dances, and other public events in the spring and summer months—a facility not just for area residents but a venue that can serve as an economic magnet to draw consumers from outside of the town to the town's current restaurants and retailers.

He pointed out that the closest such rink is seventeen miles away and is not covered. Paul's vision includes a covered facility that would make activities available all year, in a wide range of weather conditions, to the 280,000 people surrounding Poolesville.

The Virginia model showed that its rink drew over 13,000 visitors the first year with seventy-eight percent from outside of the township. Bridgewater has experienced a steady increase in revenue from the facility. The approximately 10,000 non-resident visitors also used other town services such as restaurants, gas stations, and other retailers. In 2016, revenue from rink fees (local residents are exempted from these fees), retailer rent, and a special restaurant tax generated over \$121,000. Rink fees have continuously increased every year from \$55,000 in 2017 to projected rink fees of over \$100,000 this year.

As envisioned by Loftus, the rink, with an outdoor covered dining area and an additional seated picnic area, with retail/restaurant locations and skate rental shop, would provide a dramatic and attractive welcome to those entering Poolesville from the east.

It is intended that revenue streams to support the facility would include:

- Restaurant tax and lease payments
- Public ice-skating session fees and skate rentals
- Rink rental for private parties, birthday parties, etc.
- Brick pavers along the walkways for donations and sponsorships
- Private sector donations which would be recognized on the facility
- Farmers' market, movie, and bandshell rentals in warm months
- Summer roller skating rentals (rink, skate sessions, and skate rentals, rink rental for parties)

The proposed location for this park facility is the vacant lot next to CVS. Loftus suggested that the town and the landowner (who is interested in a plan that appeals to the town residents) form a partnership to develop this lot. The proposed idea suggested that the town build and manage the ice rink while the developer would build his retail restaurant space adjoining the ice rink.

It was apparent to all attending that the concept meets with strong initial interest and first-blush approval. With the concept in its very earliest manifestations, exploration into its full potential by the Parks and Streets Committee as well as with the general public is just beginning.

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Continued from page 7.

Poolesville Swimmers to Hang More Championship Banners

tribute to this year's team alone. Their accomplishments stand on their own. "We swam great," said Coach Jonathan Leong. "We swam like it was our meet to win, not to lose. We swam with confidence, and the evidence was in our results. I was extremely proud of how they carried themselves as they raced, on the podium, and how they are carrying on the State Champion Legacy. The lowest placing boy was fifth. We had two boys in the top five in every event. Every single athlete scored points. We had a general comfort level and a positive attitude. We remained focused the entire meet. We are graduating 102 individual points on the girls' side, 35 on the boys'. Who's going to step up?"

The Falcons jumped out in front early, taking first place in the opening two events, the men's and women's 200-yard medley relays. They had ten first-place finishes in twenty-two events, sweeping all six relays and placing first in four of the first seven events competed. Everything seemed to flow from those first two relay races. Two freshmen girls were double medal winners. Five sophomores overall won gold, as did three juniors.

In the men's 200-yard medley relay, junior Joshua Hou, sophomores Ben Nachod and Maxwell Chen, and senior Kenny Song won the gold. Song also won gold in the men's 50-yard freestyle; junior Jonathan Ye finished third. Maxwell Chen finished second, and Hou finished third in the 100-yard butterfly. Nachod finished fifth in the 100-yard freestyle while sophomore teammate Konnor Chen finished second. Nachod also finished first as part of the 200-yard freestyle relay along with junior Minsu Kim, Konner Chen, and Ye. In the 200-yard individual medley (IM), Maxwell Chen was second, and sophomore Jonathan Yi placed third.

"I am going to be sad leaving this team," said Minsu, "but at the same time, I know that our legacy will continue to burn with each new generation of swimmers."

In the 200-yard freestyle, sophomore Gordon Leeroy finished fourth, and Konnor Chen was fifth. In the 500-yard freestyle, sophomore Gordon Leeroy was third and sophomore Oruluke Borjigin fourth.

In the 100-yard backstroke, Hou placed second and Song fourth, and in the 100-yard breaststroke, Nachod was fourth and junior Aidan Goettsch fifth.

In the women's 200 relay, sophomore Sophie Elliott, senior Helena Narisu, and freshmen Anna Li and Lina Abzakh finished first. Narisu, who won three golds,

finished first in the 200-yard IM. Li and Abzakh finished fourth and seventh, respectively, in the 50-yard freestyle.

"I think the team came together really well early on in the season," said Elliott, a team captain, "and that team spirit carried us through to win states."

"Being a part of this team is really unique," said Narisu, "because we are all so close and supportive even across different grades. We know we are part of a bigger picture than just our own races. I think that is why our team has always been so successful and why there is such a drive to win. There is pressure to uphold traditions that go back further than we have been at this school. Every year that the streak goes on, it gets a little more intense. I am really thankful that, in my last year, we were able to pass it along."

"I finished off my swim career with this year's states on a high note. It was an unforgettable memory and a really emotional day. I think swimming and winning my last race for Poolesville was the best way to end an eleven-year career." Narisu's final race was part of the first-place 400-yard freestyle relay, the final race of the day.

Senior Moshelle Borjigin, who led all competitors with four golds, repeated as gold medalist in the 200-yard freestyle, senior Sofie Allison was seventh. Borjigin also repeated as champion in the 500-yard freestyle. Elliott was second. Borjigin also anchored the 200-yard freestyle relay in a first-place finish along with Allison, Abzakh, and junior Helen Matia. She also was on the winning relay team in the final event of the day, the 400-yard freestyle relay along with Elliott, Narisu, and Li. Moshelle won three golds as a junior.

"Being on Poolesville's swim and dive team over the past four years has been an honor," said Moshelle. "I have been a part of something bigger than just myself. The team is almost a family. Swimmers constantly step up to the challenge and support one another. We have a shared love for the team and the sport."

In the 100-yard butterfly, Li was second, and Allison finished sixth. In the 100-yard backstroke, Elliott was second.

Double silver medalists were Max Chen (200 IM and 100 fly) and Sophie Elliott (500 free and 100 back). In all, the Falcons claimed seven silver medals and four bronze. The Falcons set four team records in the boys' and girls' 200 medley relays and in the boys' and girls' 400 free relays. Moshelle Borjigin, Kenny Song,

Continued on page 19.

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Youth Sports

Daniels and Bodmer Represent PHS At the 2A Indoor Track Meet

By Jeff Stuart

A sprinter and a distance runner were the two PHS qualifiers for the Maryland 2A State Indoor Track meet at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex on Monday, February 17. Rachel Daniels, a sophomore, finished fifth in the 500m and Sam Bodmer finished eighth in the 3200m. Daniels has emerged as one of the top sprinters in the state. She was the only sophomore in the top five. Daniels finished third in the West Region. Rachel narrowly missed qualifying for the states in the 300m, finishing sixth just .7 seconds behind fifth-place finisher Caroline Mastria of Century at Hagerstown Community College.

"I am always excited to run," said Daniels, "but there is also a lot of nervous anticipation before my races. My best times in both the 300m (43.10) and the 500m (1:19.20) were at the MCPS Championships on January 22. My

teammate Verlyn Kayo has really helped push me during practice, and she brings a lot of joy to the workouts."

Kayo, also a sophomore, set a season record in the 300m at the MCPS third meet on January 8 and a PR in the 55m dash at the Montgomery Invitational on January 11.

"My season went pretty well," said Bodmer. "I got my speed up in the mile. I set a PR at the MCPS Championship, and at the end I qualified for the states in the two mile with a PR of 10:21.79 at the West Region on February 1. (That time would have placed him fifth in the state competition). Five of the seven top runners I ran against at the states came out of the West Region. Junior Christopher Stallard also runs the two mile. He missed qualifying for the states in the 3200 by .14 of a second at the regional. He was super close." Chris set a PR in the mile at the Last Track to Philly at Georgetown Prep on January 24. Sam set a personal best in the Indoor 800 on December 6 and in the 1600 at the MCPS County Championship.

The girls' team this season had a number of outstanding performances by juniors Lillian Hsu and Julia Lyons, sophomore Caroline Simmons, and freshman Anna Bodmer. In addition to Bodmer and Stallard on the boys'

team, junior Mac Gallagher, sophomore Daniel Ponciano, and freshman Kevin Hsu have found some success.

The team had nine meets during the 2019-2020 seasons. Out of those meets, six of them were held at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex in Landover, two were held at Hagerstown Community College, and one was at Georgetown Prep. Those locations are more than an hour away, and there are no home meets. Except for immediate family, there are few cheering fans. It is a bit lonely, and the conditions are not always the best. "Georgetown Prep is pretty good," said junior sprinter Connor Ransom told Colin Miller, staff writer for the MileSplit webpage, "but Hagerstown doesn't let you wear track cleats. It is really small. Running inside is nicer temperature wise, but the PG complex has toxic air."

"It is harder to breathe inside," said Anna Bodmer. Both prefer running outdoors on the track during practice to running inside the school. Anna set a PR in the 800m in the first meet of the season and a PR in the 1600m at the MCPS Championships.

Indoors is, in most ways, though competitive, just a preparation for the outdoor season. The team is coached by science teacher Prasad Gerard.



State indoor track qualifiers, Sam Bodmer (3200m) and Rachel Daniels (500m).

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Continued from page 3.

Large Crowd Hears Extensive Debate about County Pesticide Ordinance

and Hughes Road. As reported in the last edition of the *Monocle*, in 2014, the town changed the zoning of four fifteen-acre parcels of property from rural to PTR 2+ (two-plus acres) residential lots. Beaulieu was the only person trying to build on her fifteen-acre lot at the time and the zoning could only accommodate her one house. Forest conservation requirements applied, and Beaulieu filed an easement agreement preserving 8.4 acres of forest with the town so she could build her house. The Planning Commission finalized rules rezoning her property and others at the same time, and Beaulieu realized she could build more houses. She wanted to take advantage of the new rules and assumed the Forest Conservation requirements would automatically be reduced to cover her newly-zoned property, the norm in most jurisdictions.

For reasons that are not clear, the Planning Commission failed to explicitly change the Forest Conservation rules to apply to Beaulieu's property. She went before the Planning

Commission with a plan for her newly-zoned property and requested that the Forest Conservation requirements be reduced. She also worked with nearby residents to increase the amount of forest that would be saved and included wider buffers between her property and other residents nearby. The Planning Commission, after months of consideration and four public meetings, approved the new plan, but the decision to accept the new Forest Conservation rules is a policy decision that the town's commissioners must make.

In a very contentious exchange, Beaulieu and her attorney Roger Hayden were cut off from speaking on behalf of a new proposal they had developed that they hoped would satisfy the commissioners. Beaulieu could not offer more forest conservation area without losing a lot in her original proposal. Last Wednesday, she made a proposal to buy back the acreage from the town which would satisfy the original forest conservation easement. The town could use the funds raised to buy land elsewhere or plant indigenous trees of much better quality and type than the scrub forest presently on the Beaulieu property.

Commissioners Kerri Cook and Jerry Klobukowski were clearly opposed to making any modification to the original Forest Conservation easement agreement. Commissioner Martin Radigan suggested that the commission should delay any decision because Commissioner Valaree Dickerson, who has been very concerned about the proposal, was not able to attend the March 2 meeting. He suggested a delay until the next commission meeting on March 16. By a vote of three for to one abstaining (Commissioner Cook) the commissioners agreed to his motion.

Continued from page 17.

Poolesville Swimmers to Hang More Championship Banners

and Gordon Leeroy set individual marks. Ethan Groboski placed eighth in the diving competition at the West Region competition.

"This season, the team really came together in a special way," said senior captain Isaac Wang. "Everyone got to meet new people and supported and encouraged their teammates."

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Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

Present Crime

Burglary: 19800 Bodmer Avenue.

Theft: 17700 block of Moore Road, 17600 block of Kohlhooss Road.

Vandalism: 21500 block of White's Ferry Road.

Past Crime: 1974

All of the police resources in Rockville were sent to Richard Montgomery High School in an attempt to break up fighting that had broken out in the school yard. About two hundred black and white students were involved in the brawl. Each group blamed each other for the fighting, citing racial insults and unequal disciplinary punishments. About twelve students were arrested, and the rest of the student body was sent home for the day. Richard Montgomery had a history of racial fighting. Two years earlier, police were called repeatedly to the school to stop fighting.

In a bizarre incident, a Rockville man, who had posed as a police officer, was stabbed to death near the intersection of Parklawn Drive and Randolph Road. A car containing two couples was driving in that area when another car blocked their way, and two brothers got out, claiming that the car was being driven improperly and that they were police officers. When the driver of the first car doubted their claims, one of the brothers went to a phone booth claiming that he was calling police headquarters. Instead, a fight broke out. The man who had been accused of improper driving was stabbed in the stomach. Despite his critical wound, he pulled the knife out of his body and stabbed his assailant who later died at Suburban Hospital.

No charges were placed against the innocent man, and police declared that it was a justifiable homicide.

A Boyds man received a telephone call from a man who said that he had planted a bomb in his house and that he should leave \$20,000 at a location near a research center near Gaithersburg. The man also stated that he could detonate the bomb from a distance of a half a mile away. As instructed, the man carried a few hundred dollars and planted it at the site described by the extortionist. The area was covered by twenty police officers. When the man moved in to retrieve the money, he saw the police and ran. After a lengthy search, police admitted that he had escaped.

Two men, both 23, drowned in a farm pond near Laytonsville. Five people had gone to the pond, located in a rural area about two hundred yards from the Howard County line on the grounds of the abandoned Banneker Boy Scout Camp to picnic. When they went into the water to swim, it was soon noticed that the two men were missing. The fire department was called and, a few hours later, their bodies were found in the deepest part of the pond which was about twelve feet of water.

Police used tear gas to break up a large party that had gotten out of hand. Police had received numerous calls that partygoers were blocking the street on Amherst Avenue in Wheaton. When police arrived, they were met with a hail of rocks and bottles, and the decision was made to use tear gas. One man was arrested when he drove to the Wheaton Station to complain about police conduct. He had barged in and had become disorderly in the lobby.

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

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Remembrance

John Clayton, Sr.

Loving husband, father, and grandfather, passed away on April 25, 2019 at the age of 94 in Rockville. He was born April 17, 1925 in Fayetteville, Arkansas to the late Claud Franklin Clayton and LaReine Alberta (Warden) Clayton. A Washingtonian since childhood, he served as a combat infantryman in the 14th Armored Division ("The Liberators") during World War II. After the war, he secured a position with Armed Forces Radio in France, which began a lifelong interest in media and communications. He studied drama and theatre at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, writing and directing award-winning radio and television shows, including the American Adventure series with John Ehle. He proceeded to earn a Doctor of Fine Arts at Yale University, with a dissertation on the "Themes of Tennessee Williams." Returning to Chapel Hill, he taught and directed radio, television, and motion pictures, and drama.



John Clayton, Sr.

Dr. Clayton was an innovator in the application of media to achieve educational goals in the developing world, which led to assignments with USAID and the Organization of American States (OAS), envisioning and directing the introduction of distance-learning and other educational technologies. Dr. Clayton lived and worked in many countries throughout the Americas, including Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Dr. Clayton was a member of the Cosmos Club, the International Club of Washington, and the Sigma Chi Fraternity.

In his 94 years, Dr. Clayton was bigger than life, leaving his imprint on all those around him. He was predeceased by his first wife Mary Elizabeth Doolittle Clayton and his sister Betty Virginia Clayton Osborn. He is survived by his wife Jutta; his three children Ann Heffner (Grayson), John S. Clayton, Jr. (Victoria), and Susan Hickman (Douglas); his three step-sons Max (Lisa), Salomon (Heather), and Andres (Cheryl) Salinas; thirteen grandchildren; and one great-grandson.

Dr. Clayton was interred with military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on February 27, 2020.

Continued from page 6.

Native American Fish Traps

that included fish traps. Also, the Potomac Canal Company was formed in 1785 with George Washington as its president. The Potomac Canal built five skirting canal channels in the Potomac River around rapids from above Harper's Ferry down to Great Falls as well as side canals at Great Falls and Little Falls.

As Native Americans abandoned their campsites and fishing grounds, settlers began to fish from the Native American fish traps. Most of the Native American fish traps remained undisturbed. The Potomac Canal Company went out of business, and in 1828, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal took over the task of developing a waterway west running parallel to the Potomac River.

There is a fish trap that reaches from Upper Mason Island to the

Virginia shore at White's Ford that played a significant role in the Civil War. This fish trap has debris trapped between its stones, causing sand and silt to accumulate on its upriver side for several hundred yards creating a shallow river bottom. Farmers of Loudoun County and Montgomery County knew about this crossing and word was passed on to the Confederates during the Civil War. This is where the Confederates crossed on September 4 and 5, 1862, on their way to Frederick and eventually the Antietam Battlefield. That was the first of several White's Ford crossings during the Civil War by both the Union and Confederate Armies.

Today, there is virtually nothing to show of what was once a very vibrant Native American community along the Potomac River. The Native American fish traps have withstood floods, remaining as monuments to the first peoples of North America.

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Continued from page 13.

Companion Planting

amount of land? I had to experiment, and any experiment is affected by certain factors: there are fixed effects and random effects. To a degree, sun, shade, and wind exposure were fixed (over time, this could change); soil gets worn out with the depletion of nutrients, but it can be amended by adding compost or other organic material. Some of my plots were newer with virgin soil. Others had been, for many years, vegetable gardens. Gardens harbor weed seeds that are hard to get rid of, even if you were to dig up all the dirt (which I had no desire to do). Johnson grass and bindweed were particularly invasive in several garden plots. Invasive weeds spread by systems of rhizomes, horizontal underground roots, can stay viable for up to twenty years.

What made the difference between

the different plots? The above factors did have an influence, but I believe that the introduction of herbs amongst the flowers made the biggest difference—companion planting.

My best garden is located in front of ten towering forty-year-old white pine trees. It receives morning sun and afternoon shade and is protected from harsh winter winds. Its soil is about the same as in the other plots. Foxglove, 'Casa Blanca' lily, 'Inca Ice' *Alstroemeria*, dianthus, *Echinacea* 'Pow Wow Berry,' and David Austin 'Olivia Rose Austin' happily live there with three types of sage, lavender, English thyme, rosemary, and tarragon. They suffer no diseases or pest invasions, or harmful chemical sprays, and they are home to many birds, butterflies, bees, and beneficial insects. Many of these plants live in other plots, but they do not do as well. I have started to introduce more herbs in my other flower gardens.

Companion planting may help your garden. Besides the above-mentioned herbs in my garden plots, I also grow cilantro, basil, dill, chives, oregano, mint, dill, catmint, basil, chamomile, parsley, marigolds, geraniums, and fennel. They all have particular uses, from repelling insect pest and deer to encouraging pollination. It also helps you get the most from whatever growing space you have available.

The garden season will soon be here. Do some experimenting with different flowering, plants, vegetables, and herbs. All gardens can be a learning experience; it can be a study in science, home economics, agriculture, and mathematics. Children can learn how to select garden sites in relationship to light, soil, and wind conditions; to prepare soil for planting; to select suitable plant varieties for different conditions; and to attract pollinators to the garden. Create your own little laboratory this summer.

Continued from page 8.

Things to Do

March 21

12th Annual St. Mary's Annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner Celebration

Irish food and beer, live Irish band, and Ceili dancers. \$20 per person in advance, call 301-972-8660; \$25 at the door. Children 12 and under free. *St. Mary's Pavilion*. 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

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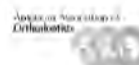
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The Truth about the COVID-19 Human Coronavirus, You, and Your Pets

By Peter H. Eeg, BSc, DVM, CVLF

There has been a huge amount of information presented by experts and non-experts regarding the outbreak of the COVID-19 Human Coronavirus. Some information is peer reviewed and very credible; other information is suspect at best and dangerously inflammatory at worst. In this review, I hope to answer many of your questions about this virus and its potential effects on you and your pets.

Coronaviruses are very common and can affect many different species. Each species has its own specific coronavirus that infects only them. The Human Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus that has likely mutated as it passed through several different species, ultimately residing in bats that were **eaten by humans**. The COVID-19 virus is readily infectious for human-to-human transmission. It can be transferred through the air directly or indirectly on surfaces. It can survive for up to 4 days on a variety of surfaces. The disease causes a range of clinical signs in people, with the primary sign being respiratory congestion, cough, difficulty breathing, and fever. Many people have very mild responses. In younger and older individuals and those who are immune compromised, more significant respiratory disease can occur. Infection can show signs in as little as 2 days or take as long as 24 days (not 14 as previously reported). In rare cases where a very high fever is present (above 106 degrees F.), brain swelling can occur. The fatality rate of this virus has been reported as high as 2% of infected people. The true fatality rate is likely lower, but still significantly higher than the flu viruses.

It is unknown if summertime temperatures will stop the virus as some government officials have reported. Many viruses have a reduced infectious rate in the summer, most likely due to people begin outside more, farther away from each other, and more individually active. Summertime temperatures will likely reduce the time the virus can be active on surfaces from four days down to two days, but complete removal of the virus is unlikely due to temperature change alone. It is highly unlikely the virus will disappear. Remember also that, while it is summertime here, it is wintertime in the southern hemisphere, so high infection rates will just shift geographically as temperatures change. General global spread of the COVID-19 virus producing a pandemic is still a great potential threat.

There is currently no evidence that animals or animal products imported from China or other infected regions of the world carry the COVID-19 virus nor are any ethnic foods produced in the United States. Information is constantly expanding, and the CDC website (CDC.gov) has consistently updated information. Currently, there are no restrictions for importing dogs or cats to the United States. Current importation requirements are still in effect with no additions for the COVID-19 virus.

While the virus has emerged from an animal source, there is no evidence that any animals or pets in the United States might be a source of infection to people. **YOUR PETS ARE SAFE.**

If you are sick with COVID-19 virus or any other virus that is airborne, it is recommended that you not handle your animals while sick. There is no evidence that the animals can become infected, but they can carry the virus on their hair and nails from being coughed on by infected humans. **DO NOT SPRAY YOUR PETS WITH DISINFECTANT COMPOUNDS. Hand sanitizers are for your hands not your pets.**

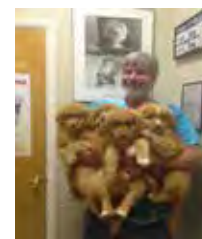
The best way to prevent or reduce your potential exposure is to wash your hands frequently when interacting with other people. The use of non-sealing masks primarily keeps you from touching your face, thus reducing potential contact exposure. Remember, any common surface can hold the virus if infected people are present and have coughed or touched the area, so gloves can be a helpful deterrent.

Lastly: **Don't panic.**



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