

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

July 23, 2021 • Volume XVII, Number 10



Movie Night on the commons! BYOC (bring your own chair) included purple balloon seats. See Family Album on page 2.



Maggie Rose Rook broke a twenty-three-year-old record. Tidbits has the scoop on page 3.



The great Potomac River flood of 1889 not only devastated the C&O Canal, but it also flooded parts of Washington, D.C., including Pennsylvania Avenue. More details are on page 10.



The sunflowers are blooming! Read about the fields on page 16.

Gwendora Reese: Iconic Historian and Founder of Sugarland Ethno-History Project Passes Away

By Rande Davis

Gwendora “Gwen” Reese, a direct descendant of the Poolesville area’s Sugarland, one of the African American communities that surrounds Poolesville, which was originated and owned by freed slaves, died surrounded by family on July 12, 2021.

She was chosen as the 2019 Grand Marshal for Poolesville Day. In nominating her, Skip Etheridge stated: “Ms. Reese is a true unsung hero, not only in the African American community, but as an American patriot who has opened the doors to our rich history in Poolesville.”

At the time of her selection, Ms. Reese told the *Monocle* that she was shocked and humbled to learn of the selection. “I wasn’t even sure at first I should accept, but as I thought about it, I decided to accept on behalf of my ancestors, Sugarland, and all the African American churches and communities

in the area. I appreciate very much this special honor.”

In 1995, Gwen was joined by family and friends in establishing the Sugarland Ethno-History Project, whose mission is to preserve and document the community that surrounded St. Paul’s Church in Sugarland Forest.

Ms. Reese’s great-grandfather, Phillip Johnson, was one of the original members of the Sugarland community which is located off of Sugarland Road. He was a former slave who shared many firsthand accounts of slave life with Gwen while she was still a child. Although very few Sugarland descendants still reside in the Poolesville community today, Ms. Reese felt a need to honor the memory of him, the community, and their many impressive achievements. Consequently, in 1995, Ms. Reese founded the Sugarland Ethno-History Project and began the painstaking process of documenting



Gwendora Reese, 2019 Poolesville Day Grand Marshal and iconic historian.

the history of the freed slaves in the community and their historical impact on the Town of Poolesville.

Continued on page 13.

Recipient of Homes for Our Troops Customized Home Welcomed in Robust Celebration

By Rande Davis

Homes for Our Troops (HFOT), a national nonprofit whose mission is to build customized homes for veterans with disabilities resulting from their service in combat, hosted a Community Kickoff Celebration on July 17 to welcome Sgt. Emmanuel “Manny” Melendez-Diaz and his wife, Natibel, to Poolesville. The kickoff celebration, held at the Poolesville Baptist Church, was attended by over two hundred local residents, all showing support for the Melendez-Diaz family and HFOT. He was escorted to the venue by a police motorcade which was joined by the Maryland Chapter of the Patriots Guard, a group sponsored by the Sykesville American Legion.

On December 4, 2004, in Miqdadiyah, Iraq, Sgt. Melendez-Diaz was serving

Continued on page 12.



Homes for Our Troops new home now under construction in Poolesville. See the photo collage of the Kickoff Celebration on page 11.

Family Album



Joe and Judy McIntyre.



The Nalvarte family.



The Evans family brought some popcorn.

movie night



Jennifer Cayzedo, Chrissie Harney, Paul Harney, George Phelps, Lynda D'Amelio (in front of Paul), and Beth Watt (seated).



Katie Hanna, Elizabeth Hitchens, Scott and Diane McGrew, and, of course, little Joe-Joe.



The Malechka family.

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Tidbits

Maggie Nightingale Library in Poolesville to Close for Six Months

Poolesville's Maggie Nightingale Library will close at 6:00 p.m. on August 2 to undergo interior improvements under the county's award-winning Library Refurbishment Initiative. Montgomery County Public Libraries expects the facility to reopen in the spring.

The project will include replacement of carpeting/flooring, some new shelving, a new service desk, painting, replacement of doors, and installation of the Open Plus automated system. Work also will be performed to bring the building into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The library will be closed for six to eight months.

"Physical construction for the refresh project at Maggie Nightingale will begin in September," said MCPL Director Anita Vassallo. "We are closing ahead of the construction start date to complete the internal reorganization of collections and shelving. We look forward to resuming operations at the branch in spring of 2022 and hope customers will access services at nearby branches and our 24/7 website while the facility is undergoing the refresh process."

For additional information, contact Angelisa Hawes at 240-777-0022 or email at angelisa.hawes@montgomerycountymd.gov.

It's Not Too Early to Sign up for the Poolesville Day 2021 Parade

This twenty-eighth annual celebration is scheduled for September 18 with the parade starting at 10:00 a.m. The parade application is available on the Poolesville Day website.

Twenty-Three-Year-Old Breaststroke Record Falls

On July 10, 2021, Maggie Rose Rook (age 16) broke Sarah Auer's 100m breaststroke record for the Poolesville Piranhas Swim Team. Sarah's record was set in 1998 and stood for twenty-three years. Maggie Rose asked that Sarah's name be left on the record board next to her own, as a tribute to Sarah (100m breaststroke: Maggie Rose Rook – 1:19.44, Sarah Auer – 1:20.34).

College-Bound Falcons



Steve Orsini, Colleen Hueting, Ainslee Barger, and Mackenzie Magaha.

Four PHS senior athletes have announced their intentions to play at the collegiate level. Steve Orsini will play baseball at Frederick Community College; Colleen Hueting will play softball at Susquehanna University; Ainslee Barger will play volleyball at Hood College; and Mackenzie Magaha is set to play basketball at Montgomery College.

Monocacy Bridge on Route 28 to Close on Weekends Again

Elizabeth Harris, Community Relations Manager for the Maryland Department of Transportation District 7, reports that the Route 28 bridge over the Monocacy River in Frederick County will undergo additional repairs.

MDOT SHA will make steel repairs and apply a protective seal to the deck of the MD 28 bridge starting Monday, July 19. The protective seal is a chemical treatment that acts as a protective barrier against deterioration and extends the service life of the bridge.

The work requires a total closure of the bridge on three weekends. The bridge will close on Fridays at 10:00 p.m. and will reopen Mondays at 5:00 a.m. on the

Continued on page 7.






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Rande(m) Thoughts Great People: Past and Present

By Rande Davis

One of the highlights of publishing a community newspaper is having the chance to meet so many very special people who have served their community and the country so greatly. I am thinking about two such people today whose stories can be read on the front page of this issue.

The first person on my mind is Gwendora "Gwen" Reese, who resided in Gaithersburg but whose family founded Sugarland Forest, a post-Civil War community made up of mostly freed slaves in 1871. Gwen grew up in Sugarland and eventually founded the Sugarland Ethno-History Project, whose mission is the documentation and preservation of the history of the community that surrounded St. Paul's Church on Sugarland Road. She died with her loving family by her side.

She was a thoroughly delightful person whose loving nature surrounded her like a halo and whose personal drive to preserve the history of Sugarland Forest became a defining purpose of her life.

The second is a soon-to-be-newcomer to Poolesville, Emmanuel "Manny" Melendez-Diaz. He is the recipient of the home being built for him under the auspices of the Home for Our Troops organization that provides customized homes for military vets who have sustained severe wounds from their service to America. Manny lost a leg to an IED as he followed the lead of numerous relatives before him in choosing to join the army.

With these two people on my mind, right on the heels of our recent Fourth of July celebration, I got to thinking about the tens of thousands of faceless people who also served this country and sacrificed everything. I have specifically in mind a Union soldier who passed through Poolesville during the Civil War who may have sacrificed everything to unbind four million people from slavery and to preserve this nation. There is little to remind us of these soldiers and their time here except for a few artifacts left behind. I own one such item, a bullet found in the ground here.

As I hold this Civil War bullet, I wonder about the person who left it behind. We don't know his name, but we do know quite a bit. He would have been young, most likely in his late teens, single with his whole life ahead of him yet volunteering to

defend the sanctity of the Union and to free millions of people all the while doing so under the glorious Stars and Stripes.

Perhaps in his youth and innocence, he may have appreciated that he would surely impress the ladies in his new uniform. That youthful innocence eventually found him farther from his home than he otherwise would have ever thought possible. While in Poolesville, he shared the duty of defending the American capital from attack from the Confederacy, with, on one occasion, as many as fifteen thousand or more other boys just like him.

While on this garrison duty, he spent his official days mostly in drill and ceremony, and target practice. His personal time would be consumed with writing home, playing cards, talking to others about home, and often praying—fervently. His time here would have been short, not much more than a few months, maybe a bit more. His nights were cramped, sharing a small tent with one other soldier who would have been carrying the matching half to the pup tent. His quarters were cramped, often stifling hot, stinky, and very humid. He may have slept with a hand-crafted tube of pot-pourri around his neck to lessen the stink or perhaps to remind him of the special someone he left at home.

One of his only true pleasures would have been to purchase a small fresh-baked cake from Uncle Watty Owens, whose wife, Aunt Polly, was the baker. Uncle Watty was a popular local slave who loved singing in church, most likely in the balcony at St. Peter's. The sweet smell of Polly's cake would have been another reminder of home. Much of what would have been on his mind, would have been the fearful days to come.

The owner of the bullet might have been working the telegraph line to Washington, D.C. Sadly, he might have been one of the nearly one thousand who died hopelessly in the Battle at Balls Bluff near White's Ferry or the thousands at Gettysburg.

If so, he would have been one of the 625,000 or more Americans who died in the war from battle or disease. That is more American military deaths than the total of all others killed in all our wars. In today's terms, the total killed is equivalent to over six million soldiers dying.

As I grasp that bullet in my hand, I hold a connection to the strength and root of American greatness. Despite the worthy credit, there really is no single greatest generation. With full respect to World War II vets, it took the full length of our history to forge this country. From the snows of Valley

Forge, the devastation at Antietam, and the ravages of Normandy to the liberation of Mosul, they are all links in the same chain.

As I hold that bullet in the palm of my hand, thinking of that young soldier, I know that I truly grasp the true meaning of the phrase, "The land of the free and the home of the brave."

Fun Fact...

The Minié ball, or Minie ball, is a type of bullet used extensively in the American Civil War. Although the Minié ball was conical in shape, it was commonly referred to as a "ball," due to the round shape of the ammunition that had been used for centuries. The muzzle-loading rifle bullet was named after its co-developer, Claude-Étienne Minié. Made of soft lead, it was slightly smaller than the intended gun bore, making it easy to load in combat.



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www.historynet.com



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Keeping an Eye on Local News

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Youth Sports

Steven Lostoski: The New PHS Girls' Volleyball Coach

By Jeff Stuart

On June 23, the Poolesville High School Athletic Department announced the hiring of Steven Lostoski as the new coach of the girls' volleyball team. He becomes the fourth new coach of the program since 2017.

Prior to becoming coach at Poolesville, what was your coaching experience?

I have been an assistant club volleyball coach with MVSA (Montgomery Village Sports Association) for the past three years. I spent two years working with the girls' 17 and under team and last season with the girls' 15 and under team. Prior to coaching volleyball, I spent a number of years coaching my younger son's flag football teams and a couple years coaching my older son's MSI soccer team.

Where did you play volleyball?

I did not start playing volleyball until I was in college. I went to Penn State University, and my roommate was the president of the volleyball club at that time. He encouraged me to come out to the club's open gym nights, and I started playing. Once I graduated, I joined a social group that played volleyball and is also where I met my wife. I continued to play in various coed and men's rec leagues around the D.C. area for thirty years. In my twenties and thirties, I spent many weekends playing in grass doubles tournaments.

When did you know you had been named to the head coaching position at PHS?

I submitted my application for the Poolesville position back in early June. A few days later, Ms. Grubb, the athletic director, called me to set up an interview. About a week after the interview, Ms. Grubb called to let me know I had been selected.

What are your expectations for this season?

Every season is different. There are different players and different obstacles to overcome. Some teams progress faster than others, so I try not to enter the season with predetermined expectations. I want to get to know the girls, their strengths and weaknesses, and then hopefully work with them to be the best team they can collectively be and to improve from where we started.

What do you try to teach your players besides volleyball?

My coaching philosophy can be summarized as "GROW": Gain knowledge; Respect one another; be Open minded; and develop a Work ethic. I hope by following this and instilling it in my teams that the individuals will grow as a player, a person, and a teammate.

What is something that stands out that your previous experience in coaching has taught you?

Winning a game or having a winning season is not the ultimate goal. Don't get me wrong, winning is more fun than losing. What's important is the process and what everyone on the team learns about themselves and each other. Those lessons you can carry with you through life. If winning is your only goal, what do you do when the season is over?

How do you promote a positive energy with your team?

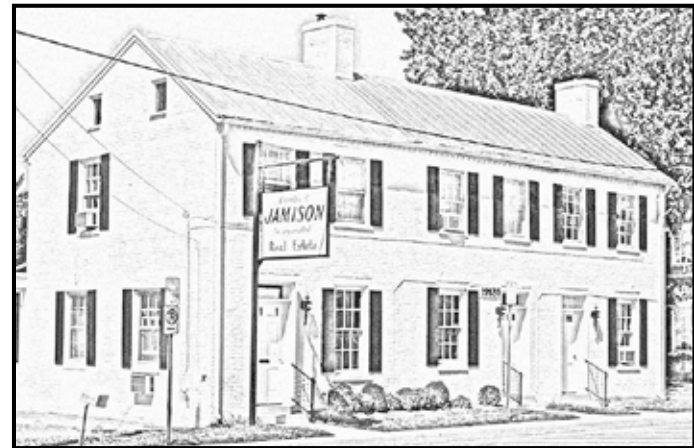
My goal is to establish a team atmosphere in which players feel comfortable communicating with one another and me, an atmosphere in which they feel comfortable trying new things and taking risks. If players feel comfortable, and the team supports one another, I think the positive energy will come.

How do you motivate players?

I believe motivation is more intrinsic than extrinsic. My hope is to create an atmosphere in which players feel safe and supported, and therefore feel comfortable pushing themselves to improve.



Steven Lostoski, the new girls' volleyball coach.



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Continued on page 7.

Senior News

Poolesville Seniors Present Virtual and In-Person Programs

Poolesville Seniors is offering a wide variety of free, virtual, and in-person programs this summer that meet community needs for exercise, information, and socialization. Visit their website, poolesvilleseniors.org, or call 301-875-7701 to register for the events listed below. All events are open to the entire community.

Mondays

Tai-Chi with Maureen Ivusic. 10:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Wednesdays

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

Trivia Game Night

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

Fridays

Breath-Mind-Body with Kathy Jankowski. 12:00 p.m. to 12:45 p.m. Please register for each Friday class.

July 26

PS Book Club

Join Poolesville Seniors as we discuss Britt Bennett's thought-provoking novel, *The Vanishing Half*, which explores the consequences of both the past and race as the Vignes twins live in different worlds, one black and one white. 7:00 p.m.

July 29

Summer Garden Maintenance

Join Bernie Mihm in person for gardening maintenance demonstrations and tips to keep lawns, trees, shrubs, and flower and vegetable gardens looking their best through the summer. This event will be held on Budd Road in Poolesville. Exact address will be provided after registration. Please register early to reserve a spot. 7:00 p.m.

August 3

Are you curious about Pickleball?

This fastest-growing sport in the U.S. combines elements of tennis, ping pong, and badminton. Our in-person

Beginners' Pickleball Clinic with Poolesville's pickleball ambassador, Patty Walker, is just for you. Limited space. 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

August 5

Jump on the Butterfly Bandwagon

Lauren Hubbard, certified Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional and Master Gardener, will explore the subject of biodiversity and how we can help to bring back butterflies and other pollinators by using native plants in our yards and gardens. 7:00 p.m.

August 12

Sip & Sample— Wine and Cheese Pairings

Join award-winning professor and cheese enthusiast, Christine Rai, as she demystifies the pairing of wine and cheese. We will be guided through basic pairings, learn about the main styles of cheese, explore the steps to analyze and discern taste and flavor, and learn how these affect our enjoyment of food and drink. Tips and serving suggestions will also be shared. 7:00 p.m.

August 19

Historic Properties with Kenny Sholes

Kenny Sholes continues to explore the land and homes and history of the Agricultural Reserve in this popular series.

August 23

PS Book Club

Join Poolesville Seniors as we discuss *The Dry* by Jane Harper. This chilling novel follows Australian Federal Agent Aaron Falk when he reluctantly returns home after twenty years for the funeral of the entire family of his best childhood friend. Present tragedy and the past secrets of this rural town will engulf him and keep you reading. 7:00 p.m.

For more information or to register for any of the programs listed here and to receive the Zoom link for each, visit the Poolesville Seniors website: poolesvilleseniors.org. Many of these presentations are also streamed live on their facebook page and recorded for later view-ing on YouTube. Did you know that you don't need a computer to participate? You can join the Zoom presentation using your smartphone or just listen in using the local telephone number from Zoom and the Poolesville Seniors meeting ID and Password. Call or text them at 301-875-7701 to learn how.

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Continued from page 3.

Tidbits

following three weekends: July 23 to July 26, July 30 to August 2, and August 6 to August 9.

During the weekend closure, MDOT SHA will detour vehicles using MD 109 (Old Hundred Road), MD 355 (Urbana Pike), MD 80 (Fingerboard Road), and MD 85 (Buckeystown Pike). Motorists are encouraged to allow extra time if traveling during the closures.

There will also be single lane closures with a flagging operation from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday so crews can safely work on the bridge. All work is expected to be completed in August.

Fight Hunger with the New Giant Food Floral Bouquet Program to Benefit WUMCO Help

Fight hunger this August in the Upcounty with a simple purchase of a floral bouquet. WUMCO Help has been selected by local Giant Food store leadership as the benefiting hunger organization in the brand-new Giant Food Bloomin-4 Good Program for the month of August.

The Giant Food Bloomin-4 Good Program is designed to fight hunger in local communities with every floral bouquet purchased. Every \$10.99 Bloomin-4 Good Bouquet with the purple circle sticker sold supports a hunger organization local to the Giant Food in which it was purchased.

Continued from page 5.

Steven Lostoski: The New PHS Girls' Volleyball Coach

Since I am new to the program, I cannot speak to what has gone on in the past. My goal going forward is to instill my philosophies in the players, and in doing so, help to develop players and a program that will allow them to reach their potential. For now, my hope is that as many girls as possible will try out for the team in August and that the community will come to the games and support them.

Mr. Lostoski graduated from Churchill High School. He has played volleyball for over thirty years and is certified through USA Volleyball. Two of Steve's children and three nieces/nephews graduated from PHS, so he is familiar with the school.

"I have always been impressed with the positive attitude Poolesville students bring to everything they do and the support they receive from the community. I look forward to being a part of the Falcon community and doing my best to make the volleyball program as successful as possible."

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Local News

WUMCO and Poolesville MUMC Discuss New Location

By Rande Davis

For over five decades, WUMCO Help has been providing food, emergency, and financial assistance to many residents of the Upcounty. Their work has benefitted tremendously from the generous donations of churches, businesses, and individuals to support our neighbors. Demand for WUMCO's services was on the rise before the pandemic began and has only increased since. As a result, WUMCO has outgrown its current space and has been conducting an exhaustive, year-long search for a suitable and affordable permanent location to enable them to meet current needs and position themselves to continue serving the Upcounty for decades to come.

WUMCO and Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church (PMUMC) are currently discussing a viable and mutually beneficial collaboration between the two organizations. There is a natural nexus between the mission statements of WUMCO ("to provide quick and friendly assistance to needy persons in Western Upper Montgomery County in times of crisis") and PMUMC ("Welcoming All. Serving Neighbors Together") which makes for an obvious community partnership. Together, WUMCO and PMUMC intend to upgrade and repurpose the existing red brick building after the attached, deteriorating wood-frame structure has been razed. We are optimistic that a new home will be available for WUMCO before the end of the year.



This former youth center at Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church is being considered as a new site for WUMCO.

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Swiss Chard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Squash-Patty Pan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eggplant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zucchini
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sugar Snap Peas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Squash-Yellow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cucumbers: Slicing and Pickling	

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Things to Do

July 24

Locals Restaurant Special Event: Quiet Mind, Rich Life

Start your mindfulness meditation habit with Sam Cooper of Frederick Meditation Center. 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

July 27

Poolesville Green's Carbon Footprint Challenge Monthly Meeting

Join friends and neighbors to explore ways to take small and big bites out of your household carbon footprint. Details at our facebook page. Free. Zoom. 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

July 28

Planning Commission Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:30 p.m.

July 30

Friday on the Commons: "Gone Country"

Petting zoo, pony rides, face painting, yard games, DJ, 3rd Alarm BBQ. Whalen Commons. Wild West Show: 7:30 p.m. 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Poolesville Presbyterian Church Summer Special Event: "Ours Is the Earth and Everything in It"

Silent auction.

Sunflower painting: Sunflower fields visitors welcome—6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Sunnyside Faith Singers—7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

July 31

Calleva Dirty Dinner

One-of-a-kind farm-to-table dining experience. Reservations required and available at Calleva.org

146th Annual St. Mary's Chicken Dinner

Barbeque chicken with all the fixins! Carry-outs only: \$16 (no indoor dining, tent with outdoor seating available); plus country store, white elephant, crafts, baked goods, snack bar, and live music by Sookee Jump. Featuring Maryland's Official sport: Jousting from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. St. Mary's Pavilion, Barnesville. 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

August 7

Summer Rummage Sale

To benefit Operation Restoration—a little bit of everything. Poolesville Presbyterian Church. 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

August 18

Special Town Public Forum on the Future of White's Ferry

Hosted by the Fair Access Committee.

Continued on page 18.




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Focus On: Poolesville, Dickerson, and Northwestern Montgomery County Housing Market April 2021

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In Your Own Backyard

Lock 25—Edwards Ferry: Part Four

By Jon Wolz

In the 1880 census for the 3rd Election District of Montgomery County, Charles Wood was still employed as a lockkeeper at Lock 25. By 1880, Charles and Columbia had seven of their eight children living with them. Their oldest child, Charles William Wood, now twenty years old, was a clerk in a store at Edwards Ferry living with W. Jerome Offutt, his wife Anna, and their three-year-old daughter, Ava. Mr. Offutt owned the store. In 1885, Charles William Wood married the woman he had courted across the river in Leesburg, Sarah Miskell, in Washington, D.C.

Children living with Charles and Columbia in 1880 included John, 15, Fannie, 14, Lottie, 10, Earnest, 8, Albertus, 6, Hattie, 4, and Bettie, nine months. The oldest four children were in school and possibly attended the Edwards Ferry School that was located on Edwards Ferry Road, up from the lockhouse. The school building still exists; however, it is now a privately-owned residence. The census taker erroneously wrote down "Albertus" who was actually Alfred Worth Wood. Albertus may have been a nickname for young Alfred. Alfred would eventually work on the canal and became a lockkeeper at Lock 26. Alfred was the last lockkeeper for Lock 26.



Photo provided by Jim Poole.

Lock 25/Edwards Ferry during canal operating days. The photo shows the canal basin, the lockhouse, a loaded canal boat heading upstream, the lockkeeper's shanty, a small store at the lock, and what became known as Jarboe's store.

In 1880, Charlesworth Wood, the father of Charles Worth Wood, died and was buried on the family farm along Partnership Road. During the 1880s, the canal competed with the railroad for coal shipments, and at times, the salaries of canal workers were cut and then restored. There are no payroll records available for the 1880s. Coal was the primary commodity shipped down the canal from Cumberland; however, local area farmers loaded their crops onto canal boats at Lock 25 for transport down to Georgetown.

In 1885, Miss Ella Davis, 14, of Washington, D.C., was visiting friends in August at Edwards Ferry with her sister. Both sisters spent a lot of time boating on the canal. One day, while Ella was on the canal boating with two other boys, all of its occupants were thrown into the water. The two boys clung onto the boat, but Ella failed to reach the boat. She rose to the surface three times and then sank to the bottom of the canal. As soon as the boys were in the water, they screamed for assistance. Mr. Nathan White was lying at home sick in bed nearby. He would have been at work on his farm. Hearing the cries of the boys, he ran to the canal, not even stopping to dress, dove into the canal, where he found the girl lying lifeless on the bottom, and brought her up to the surface. With the aid of "restoratives," she was revived and continued with her vacation.

In the 1880s, Edwards Ferry was the place to go for bass fishing. Newspapers reported on groups that traveled up the canal in packet boats from Georgetown where people fished and camped at Edwards Ferry. The *Washington Herald* reported on a party composed for Federal government officials from the War and Treasury Departments heading to Edwards Ferry where they were to spend a week making "a corner" in bass. Another group by the name of "The Happy Ten

Continued on page 15.



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Welcome, Melendez-Diaz Family!



Previous HFOT home recipient, Sgt. Luis Rosa-Valentin



Sgt. Emmanuel Melendez-Diaz, recipient of the Homes for Our Troops new home in Poolesville.



Dr. Craig College of Calibre Systems, a national sponsor of HFOT.



With a capacity of two hundred attendees, the Poolesville Baptist Church was full.



Commissioner Jim Brown welcomed the Melendez-Diaz family to Poolesville.



Sgt. Luis Rosa-Valentin and family.



Poolesville Post 247 Commander Julien Singh welcomed Sgt. Emmanuel Melendez-Diaz to its group.



Tom Landwermyer (U.S. Army Brigadier General, retired) the president and CEO of Homes for Our Troops, thanked the people of Poolesville for their outpouring of support.



Homes for Our Troops President Tom Landwermyer welcomed Emmanuel Melendez-Diaz to its Community Kickoff Event in Poolesville.

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Continued from page 1.

Recipient of Homes for Our Troops Customized Home Welcomed in Robust Celebration

with the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division on a road clearance patrol when his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device (IED). This resulted in damage to his right leg, severe nerve damage in the left foot, severe pulmonary disease, and severe intestinal damage. In March 2006, doctors amputated Manny's right leg above the knee. He was medically discharged from the army in May 2007.

HOFT reports that Manny, who is now medically retired, enjoys handcycling, kayaking, and spending time with his wife, Natibel. The two have hopes and aspirations for their future, but they were forced to put many of them on hold because of the daily restrictions Manny experiences in their current home. They feel relieved Manny will finally have wheelchair access and a yard when he receives his specially-adapted custom Homes for Our Troops home. He especially is looking forward to making meals together with Natibel in the home's fully-accessible kitchen. The financial freedom a donated home will provide is the perfect foundation for Manny to fulfill his dream of opening his own catering business. Natibel also looks forward to the peace of mind that the HFOT home will bring and cannot wait to see her husband comfortable and happy, rather than struggling in his everyday life. The home will also provide Natibel with the freedom to pursue her goal of opening her own makeup company. In the future, they would also like to start a family.

HFOT is four-star rated by Charity Navigator with ninety-seven percent of all funds received used solely for the building of the homes. Unlike similar groups, they spend very little in advertising

Since 2004, HFOT has built over 319 specially-adapted homes in forty-two states, including seventy-two active projects in the country. Their goal is to build a home for every veteran who qualifies for one of their specially-adapted homes.

The organization is unique in that it allows the recipients to choose the location of their homes, and the Melendez-Diaz family wanted to move to Poolesville. Homes for Our Troops has a "Rebuilding Lives" mentality; therefore, they stay with their veterans after home delivery. Homes for Our Troops provides a pro bono financial planner for three years to assist in financial planning and household budgeting. They also provide homeownership education and warranty coverage to ensure that the veteran is set up for long-term success as a homeowner.

Poolesville's American Legion Post 247 commander Julien Singh welcomed Manny into its ranks by having Post 247 sponsor his membership.


Commissioner Jim Brown officially welcomed the Melendez-Diaz family to Poolesville: "We are looking for a long-term relationship with Manny and Natibel. Poolesville knows how to wrap its arms around people with no end in sight."

Brown unleashed a robust fundraising drive by throwing down the gauntlet in giving up to \$1,000 in matching funds for local donations within the next three days. Subsequent to his offer, Dr. Craig College, chief executive officer of Calibre Systems, matched Brown's challenge. Then Dave Strickland of Strickland Fire Protection added another \$1,000 to the challenge. Julien Singh of Crossroads Talent Solutions and local commander of the Poolesville Post 247 also donated \$1,000 followed by Bernie Mihm of Fine Earth Landscaping who bumped his offer to \$1,500. Capital Fence offered home fencing for free, and Lee Bristol of Global Solace, Inc. has offered free solar panels for the home.

Brown has since added that when the funds exceed \$10,000, he will increase his amount another \$500.

Melendez-Diaz humbly acknowledged the profound support from the Poolesville community and thanked everyone for their coming to the event and showing such support. The home, now under construction, will be located at the corner of West Willard Road and Westerly Avenue and will have more than forty adaptations within the single level home to allow full access by the veteran. It is scheduled to be completed by late fall.

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Continued from page 1.

Gwendora Reese: Iconic Historian and Founder of Sugarland Ethno-History Project Passes Away

Even though most of the original residents were unable to read or write, Ms. Reese has been able to scribe their oral history from descendants as well as from documents maintained by St. Paul's Community Church. In 1996, the church became officially a National Historic site.

To date, Ms. Reese and supporters of the project have collected more than one thousand artifacts and documents. When the National Museum of African American History and Culture opened in 2015, pictures from the Sugarland community were selected to represent slave and post-slavery life.

The museum highlights Sugarland, which was founded in 1871, as one of the first African American communities established by freed slaves after the Civil War. Ms. Reese spearheaded efforts to have these exhibits included and was invited to the opening ceremony. She has worked closely with the Montgomery County Historic Preservation and has been the recipient of several awards for her tireless work in keeping alive the stories which would not have been told of the contribution of these early Americans.

Gwen was also highlighted in an article in the *Monocacy Monocle* in June 2016 as one of the first recipients of the Historic Medley District's Whisper Award. This award identifies and honors persons who have demonstrated personal dedication to safeguarding the knowledge and appreciation for the heritage of Poolesville and the Upcounty area. The name of the award comes from an observation that recorded history can be either like a whispered message lost in the night or like a whisper in the ear from generation to generation. Honorees are chosen for their personal dedication and contribution to ensuring that local history is preserved for the many generations to follow.

The tiny St. Paul's Church which now serves as a museum for the Sugarland Ethno-History Project is a living history of the lives of freed slaves. These farmers, carpenters, and blacksmiths, along with other African American communities, Jerusalem, Martinsburg, Big Woods, Jones Lane, and Mt. Ephraim, breathed life into the economy and commerce of the Town of Poolesville.

Sugarland Ethno-History Project recently published the history of Sugarland in a book entitled *I Have Started for Canaan*. The \$25.00 book may be purchased directly from SEHP or through Montgomery Countryside Alliance's website.

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Saturday, July 31

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Continued from page 10.

Lock 25—Edwards Ferry: Part Four

Fishing Club” returned home to D.C. from Edwards Ferry on the steam packet H. G. Wagner “after a pleasant and successful stay” at Edwards Ferry.

In 1887, Elijah White had the ferry phased out because “Old Harper,” the ferryman, could no longer work the ferry. The ferry remained closed until 1913. On Thursday, September 22, 1887, it was reported in the news that on the previous Monday morning, the body of Douglas Wood, a stonemason and native of Montgomery County, was found in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal near Woods Lock. The drowning was reported as an accident. Lock 25 probably took on the name of Woods Lock because Charles Worth Wood had been the lockkeeper there for many years. He had a twin brother Edward who was a stonemason whose date of death was September 18, 1887. Edward is buried in the Wood family cemetery. It is possible the newspaper used Douglas instead of Edward in its reporting. There is no Ancestry.com record of a Douglas Wood. Edward and Charles had bought the family farm of 40½ acres from their father in the 1870s; however, Edward had mortgaged his half interest in the farm for \$51.14 in 1881 to Elias Price and

Benjamin F. Sparrough. At the time of death, Edward still owed the debt of \$51.14. After his death, Charles Worth Wood paid off the debt and obtained clear title to the entire farm.

On February 12, 1889, Clayton Fields, a storekeeper at Woods Lock on the C&O Canal was beaten and robbed. Three men entered his store late that night and asked him if they could stay all night. While talking to him, one of the men hit Fields on the head with a club and knocked him unconscious. The men took between thirty and forty dollars and a gold watch. The men left the scene of the crime and were not caught. Fields recovered consciousness soon after the robbery, but his head was very sore. In 1887, Clayton married Frances Wood who was a daughter of Charles and Columbia Wood. Together, Clayton and Frances had about ten children. The Ancestry.com records are conflicting regarding the number of children they had together, and some records show they may have had more than ten children.

On May 31, 1889, heavy rains caused massive flooding in Johnstown, Pennsylvania and overwhelmed the South Fork Dam. From May 30 to June 1, 1889, the same weather system caused disaster to the C&O Canal. A titanic flood swept down the Potomac River, and the crest was higher than any that

had ever been recorded in the history of the Potomac. The Potomac River flooded parts of Washington, D.C., and areas around Pennsylvania Avenue were under one to four feet of water.

After the river receded to its normal level, the full extent of the damage to the canal became apparent. The flood and subsequent destruction of the canal put several hundred of people out of work. There were about 250 employees and families, two to three hundred boatmen and their families and mules, and others in occupations associated with the canal. Charles and Columbia Wood and their family moved off of the canal. The entire road

system on the Maryland side was keyed to the canal. Only a few connections existed with the railroad and the main highways. Mills, warehouses, and feed stores were damaged or entirely swept away all along the Potomac River. One woman living near Edwards Ferry lost forty-six head of cattle which were grazing near the river. A huge carp was found upon the banks of Broad Run near Edwards Ferry after the waters receded. When it was found, it was dead and was stranded when the water receded. It measured over three feet in length and weighed between thirty and forty pounds.

To be continued with the year 1890.

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Monocacy Nature and Wildlife

The Sunflowers Are Blooming

By Susan Petro

Every year, Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plants multiple fields of sunflowers in McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area located off of River Road. The flowers are just beginning to come into bloom and should be close to or at peak by the arrival of this current edition of the *Monocle*.

The fields are located off of Hunting Quarter and Sycamore Landing Roads this year. The large field that is normally planted on River Road was planted with another crop this year. Each field, except for the one at the end of Sycamore Landing Road, requires a short hike.

Although the flowers are planted to attract a variety of wildlife, throngs of human visitors seek them out as well. People from far and wide make the drive to Poolesville to see and take photographs of the flowers.

The flowers only bloom for a week or two. Some fields may be in peak bloom ahead or behind the other fields. Traffic and parking can be nightmarish on weekends. The best time to visit is early in the morning or later in the evening.

Visitors are expected to leave the fields in the same condition as when they arrived. Parking is allowed in designated areas only, and the roads are gravel and often filled with potholes. Rain can make for muddy roads and fields. No one is allowed to trample the fields or pick the flowers. Bug spray is essential. Leashed pets are allowed, but keep in mind that the fields can be very hot for both humans and pets; water is likely needed for both. There are no bathrooms or any other facilities at the fields.



Welcome the new crop of sunflowers.

The fields have also become a popular destination for professional photographers, who specialize in family or senior portraits, scenery, or the large variety of birds feasting on the seeds. Birding enthusiasts love the fields, as well.

The sunflowers are known to attract beautiful iridescent indigo buntings, bright yellow American goldfinches, pretty red summer tanagers, and more birds which love to feast on the sunflower seeds. Even when the flowers have wilted and faded, the fields remain a wonderful birding spot for weeks to come.

Visitors should keep in mind that McKee-Beshers WMA is a large swath of land that supports all kinds of insects and wildlife, including the occasional bear. Wildlife typically tries to avoid humans, but it's important to be mindful of the surroundings.

A map of the location of each field can be found on the Maryland DNR's sunflower web page: dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/publiclands/central/sunflowers. Photos of the current conditions and other useful tips are also provided on the page.

If you happen to miss the sunflower blooms at McKee-Beshers WMA, there are additional fields located in other parts of the state that bloom later in the season. Rocky Point Creamery, located in Point of Rocks, has a pick-your-own field that usually blooms in August or September. Poolesville's Gypsy Flower Farm has a field of pick-your-own sunflowers growing this year and expects to have sunflowers from about mid-September until mid-October.

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Remembrances

Sadie M. Turner Bell

Sadie M. Turner Bell departed this life peacefully on July 13, 2021, in Boyds. Sadie was born on December 25, 1934 to the late Preston D. and Mary B. Turner. She was preceded in death by her husband, the Rev. William Rudolph Bell, her brothers Harry A., Preston D., Lawrence F., Donald E., and sisters, Betty L. and Minnie J.



Sadie M. Turner Bell

Sadie received her religious training at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Boyds. At an early age, Sadie accepted Christ as her savior under the pastoral care of the late Rev. Charles Smallwood. During that time, she was also a member of St. Mark's choir. No matter where Sadie lived, she was always a supporter of St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

Sadie was educated in Montgomery County Public Schools. She attended Clarksburg Elementary School and graduated from Carver High School and later attended business school.

In her early years, Sadie decided to relocate and move to Washington, D.C. where she found employment at the United States Postal Service in the Claims and Inquiry Department for twenty-five years and purchased her first home. Sadie was very particular about her work and she loved her job. She loved to share stories about the day-to-day events at the office and funny conversations between her and her colleagues. Sadie was recognized multiple times as a valued employee. During her tenure at the U.S. Postal Service, Sadie met and married her late husband of twenty years, the Rev. William Rudolph Bell.

During her time with her husband in Washington, D.C., Sadie became very instrumental in helping her husband open his own church and served as the First Lady. Later, she became very involved in working on the Bell Family Reunion Committee and continued to do so after they moved to North Carolina. During her marriage, Sadie and her late husband loved to travel to St. Louis to visit his brother and attend Oral Roberts Ministries in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Also, during her early years, she was fortunate enough to visit Japan in 1970.

Although she never had children, she helped her family in some form or fashion. After the passing of her stepdaughter, she helped to raise two step granddaughters, Sara Bell and Olivia Wray.

After retirement, they relocated to Smithfield, North Carolina where they built their home. During her time after her husband's passing, Sadie continued to live there and helped to raise their niece Tierra Sanders until she moved to Maryland.

Sadie was a lover of antique porcelain figurines, and she was very conscientious on all her purchases. It had to be exactly what she was looking for and, of course, the price had to be what she was willing to pay, otherwise it stayed in the store. She enjoyed decorating both of her homes and was good at it. If you didn't know, Sadie's favorite color was pink. If you ever had a chance to visit, you would know what her passion was. Not only did she love to decorate, but she loved the finer things in life: clothing, jewelry, and cars, as well as working word puzzles, reading the Word, and singing.

After moving back to Maryland, Sadie attend church whenever she was able to. You could walk past her bedroom and could hear her singing "To God Be the Glory," and she had a beautiful voice.

Sadie M. Turner Bell leaves to cherish her memory: three stepdaughters, Peggy Bry-ant, Loretta and Jennifer Bell; one stepson, Jerrod Bell; two sisters, Florence Phillips and Mary Campbell; one brother, Douglas Turner; one sister-in-law, Beverly Turner; one godson, Eugene M. Phillips; one goddaughter, Dana L. Turner; and a host of step grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and other family members and friends, as well as her long-time closest friends, Barbara Holloway and Areila Means. Sadie had a special re-relationship with her devoted niece and nephew, Marc and Brenda Cosby, whom she lived with for the past seven years.

April Lynn Parker

April Lynn Parker, 47, of Frederick, passed away on July 6, 2021.

She was the loving wife and best friend to Tony Parker.

Born on December 9, 1973 in Maryland, she was the daughter of the late Robert Eugene and Patricia Lane Yokley.

Along with her husband and mother, April is survived by her brother, Robert Yokley; her sister, Laura Etchison; one stepdaughter, Stephanie Burch; and one grandchild, Alyssia Burch.



April Lynn Parker

She was preceded in death by one sister-in-law, Shelly Yokley, and one brother-in-law, Sean Etchison.

April loved to travel to the beach, watch Lifetime movies and reality TV, and always held a special place in her heart for animals, especially her cats. April was full of life and a true angel.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or the Frederick County Humane Society.

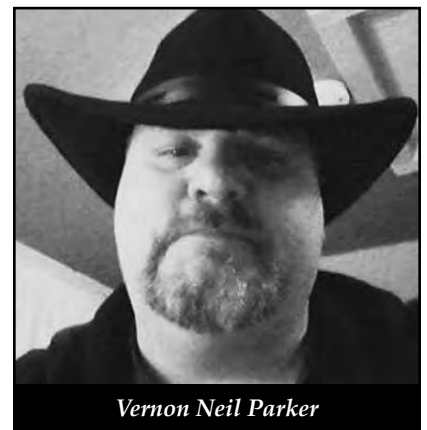
Vernon Neil Parker

Vernon Neil Parker, 46, of Dickerson, passed away on July 5, 2021 at home.

He was the loving husband to Dawn Parker.

Born on September 15, 1974 in Alaska, he was the son to Pamela Rowe and stepfather Terry Walker.

Along with his wife, mother, and stepfather, Vern is survived by his children, Thomas, Vernon, Jr., Taylor, Dale, Rachel, Jayla, Brittney, and Allie; three sisters, Teriann Walker, Spring Parker, and Jessica Parker; eight grandchildren, Riley, John, Kyle, Kylie, Christian, Bryson, Braylee, and Caydence; and one niece, Aria.



Vernon Neil Parker

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the gofundme memorial page that has been created to help the family with funeral costs.

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Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

Present Crime

Assault: 19200 block of Hempstone Avenue.

Past Crime: 1935 to 1939

County police were looking for man that they had labeled the Whistling Bandit. Police said that, in the first case, a woman was walking in the Chevy Chase area when she heard someone whistling and, when she turned around, a young man ran up and took her handbag. While officers were interviewing her, they were directed to come to police headquarters to view a suspect. While on the way to Rockville, the woman told the officer that she had also been raped. In the second case, a group of women playing bridge were accosted by the same whistling man who robbed everyone at the bridge table.

County police were under pressure to solve the murder of well-respected farmer Elwood Matthews who lived at Four Corners. Matthews lived a frugal life even though he was believed to have thousands of dollars secreted around his farm. Police were actively searching for Lawrence Gingell, a known outlaw. His mother said that she was listening to a music program on the radio when the announcer broke in and announced that Gingell was a suspect and considered dangerous. Mrs. Gingell went to wake her son and told him what she had heard. She said that Lawrence hurriedly dressed and left the house without explanation. After years of investigation, a group of dangerous bandits from Montgomery County were arrested for Matthews' murder and the murder of a West Virginia salesman. They were hanged in West Virginia for their crimes.

Police officer James Shoemaker was at the Sunset Inn on the Conduit Road. He was acting in the capacity of a guard but was in uniform. A woman became

disorderly and kicked Shoemaker in the chest. He fell to the ground and appeared to be in distress. His son rushed him to Georgetown Hospital, but he died soon after arrival. The coroner ruled that Shoemaker had died of a heart attack. The woman was arrested and charged with manslaughter. Shoemaker was the third county police officer to die in the line of duty.

Richard Stockton was on his way back to Rockville after he was arrested in Cambridge, Massachusetts on several warrants from Montgomery County. Stockton was part of the Four Corners Gang that had terrorized a section of Montgomery County. He had taken part in the robbery of a grocery store, the beating and robbery of a pedestrian, and firing shots during the robbery of the Indian Springs Club. Most importantly, he was wanted for the murder of farmer Elwood Matthews whose body was found at the Burnt Mills dam by a group of boy scouts.

The officers of the county police force rejoiced when the county commissioners

rescinded their order that prohibited them from drinking alcohol even when off duty. The order had lasted just a few months, and the entire force, except for one man, had refused to sign the order. A group of sergeants made an impassioned plea that the police were being treated unfairly and had the same rights as their fellow county residents.

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

Continued from page 9.

Things to Do

Chuck Kuhn, president of JK Moving and new owner of White's Ferry will discuss his reasons for purchasing the ferry, its future, and plans going forward. State and local officials assisting will be in attendance. *Poolesville Town Hall. 6:30 p.m.*

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Important Alternatives to Consider Instead of Relinquishing Your Shelter Pet Once You Return to Work

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

At the start of the pandemic, local animal shelters saw a rapid uptick in homebodies adopting cats and dogs. With more time at home, people felt it was the ideal time to add a new member to the household.

There were many reasons, but primarily, pets provide something for a family or an individual to care for and can be a source of fun and pleasurable activity. They're also a source of constancy and comfort during frightening times.

As people start spending more time away from home again, go on vacations, and, in many cases, are sent back to work at offices, pets are needing to adjust to less time with their owners at home. Many of these pets have not known any life other than one with full-time human interaction.

In some cases, the humans and animals are actually parting ways, as some families decide they're in over their heads and end up returning animals to shelters.

It's not a simple decision at all, but it is really not easy on the pet. It's not easy for the adopter to make that decision either, but there are so many other resources to explore before resorting to surrendering your pet to a shelter.

Here are some considerations to help you maintain your new best friend in your home:

1. Start with finding a quiet place, either one you create within a given area or by designating a separate room. Begin to allow your pet to know this is his/her safe place. It is usually best to pick a room without large windows, so it acts like a den for your furry friend.
2. Put dogs in their crate if you use one or designated room and step outside for five minutes. Then check back in with them so they realize that you will come back and that you aren't leaving them forever. Remember, dogs and cats (well, dogs

mostly) have no concept of time; five minutes, five hours, five days are all similar to them.

3. Work up to longer intervals over time.
4. Work on visual cues: Pick up keys or put on shoes so that they know you're leaving. Start to do the same, then don't leave. Pick up your keys, put on your shoes, and then just cook dinner, watch television, read a book, or talk on the phone and not actually leave. This helps to remove the drama of the ceremonial key-show leaving event for whenever it does become time to leave.
5. When you are at home, make sure to provide pets with mental and visual stimulation.
6. Consider getting together with other members of your street, condo, or apartment area and start pack walks in which everyone meets at a specified area away from the front door for a group walk. It's a way for animals to socialize with other animals as well as other people and diffuse the fear that they are all alone in the world without you. You may consider asking a local trainer to join you for the first couple events to help you learn a safe way to introduce pets (and people) to new people and new animals. You can practice that on your own in different environments, as long as you feel comfortable with the routine.
7. Hire a pet walker/visitor to come to your home daily to give your pet some company while you are away. It does not have to be long; twenty-minute visits can reset their internal schedule.

Your veterinarian can be a great source of information related to trainers, considerations, and implementing successful remedies instead of returning your furry friend to a shelter.



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