

# The Monocacy

# MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

October 22, 2021 • Volume XVII, Number 16



Col. Gregory D. Gadson, U.S. Army retired, twenty-six-year veteran, living a life of the possible. See Family Album on page 2.



Families that run 5Ks together, stay together. See results of Poolesville Day 5K in Tidbits on page 8.



Girls' soccer team captains: Nicole Guzman, Avery Penn, Sierra Schenck, and Lizzie Kovacs. See season details on page 14.



C&O Canal tales of ghosts and tommyknockers. What's a tommyknocker? Find out on page 16.

## Townhouse Fire Displaces Family

By Rande Davis

An emergency call at 3:50 p.m. on Tuesday, October 12 reported a house fire in a townhouse in the Meadow Spring community in Poolesville. The home is located in the 19600 block of Fisher Avenue facing Tractor Supply. This is the townhouse development at Fisher Avenue and the east side of Wootton Avenue. The fire was under control and extinguished by 4:32 p.m.

Typically the protocol for a two-alarm fire in a townhouse structure requires five engines, two ladder trucks, one heavy rescue squad, and a few EMS units along with two command officers. Most often, other command officers (chiefs) will respond along with a Safety Officer and EMS Duty Supervisor. A second alarm would essentially double that complement of equipment. In this case, units came from Beallsville, Germantown, Rockville, Quince Orchard, Travilah, Hyattstown, Gaithersburg, Clarksburg, and multiple other stations from Rockville and Germantown.

Included in this call were four hook-and-ladder trucks, and fortunately, only one was needed to fight this fire.



Fire engulfed a Poolesville townhome until firefighters quickly brought it under control.



The heavy redundancy of equipment and the fire personnel on hand were positioned in case the fire spread to adjoining homes. The fire was basically confined to the townhouse of origin, with total destruction of the home. No

other families were reported as being displaced, although there was likely some water and smoke damage to the neighbors' dwellings.

Continued on page 15.

## Intruder Slain by Homeowner, No Charges to be Placed

By Jack Toomey

On October 11 at around 9:00 a.m., the Montgomery County 911 center received a phone call from an individual who said that another man was trying to break into his house in the 18800 block of River Road which is a very remote area near the McKee-Beshers Wildlife Conservation Area. While the dispatcher was on the line with the occupant of the house, she heard shouting and then gunshots. Officers who were responding were alerted to the gunfire and arrived shortly afterwards. They found an adult male lying on the floor of the house. He was pronounced deceased.

The occupant of the house, a male in his twenties, told the police that he did not know the deceased man. He was taken to police headquarters for a more

extensive interview. In the meantime, reporters and television personalities gathered in front of the house on River Road. It was noticed that at least three non-police vehicles were in the driveway.

Investigators searched the house and found a pillow and blankets in the basement which indicated that the deceased man had somehow entered the house during the homeowner's absence and taken up residence for at least a few days. The deceased man, identified as Harry T. Powell, age 34, is from southeast Washington, and it remains uncertain what business he would have had in such a remote area of Montgomery County.

The Monocle learned from acquaintances of the homeowner that the family had purchased the house two years



MCP investigated a shooting on River Road in Poolesville.

before and had arranged for their son to live in the house while he made needed repairs. The friends also said that he had been out of town attending the wedding of a friend and had returned Sunday evening. The Monocle

Continued on page 7.

# Family Album



Lunch for 350+ Cyclists Riding in the Annual Face of America Event



## Town Government

### Chances for a Community Center In Town Are Growing

By Link Hoewing

At the October 18 Town of Poolesville commissioners' meeting, Commission President Kerri Cook mentioned a meeting she and Fair Access Committee (FAC) member Lynn Schaeber had with County Executive Marc Elrich during which the idea of a community center in Poolesville was discussed. Cook expressed the strong support the county executive gave to the idea. He wanted to know more details about such a center, such as location and size, but he is clearly on board.

This is another indicator that the more-than-three-year effort started by the FAC in 2018 to promote a number of initiatives to ensure equal access to county services for Upcounty residents is bearing fruit. The FAC launched its efforts by releasing a white paper that discussed the idea of co-locating a community center with a new high school.

Since that time, the FAC has been meeting with a group of county departments to discuss how to move forward with the community center. In the FY22 facilities and planning budget for the county, the Poolesville Community Center is listed as an "eligible" project, meaning it is in the queue to have a study done, called a Program of Requirements report or POR, that provides details about the size, scope, and need for the project. Once a POR gets approved, it is often the basis for being included in the budget for funding. It is a vital step in gaining recognition for a project by county leaders.

County Executive Elrich first talked about both the need for a new high school and a community center when he came to Poolesville in 2016 for one of his listening sessions after his election. Having a county executive agree to come to such a forum in the Upcounty was virtually unprecedented. He heard repeatedly from leaders such as Catherine Beliveau, who then headed WUMCO, how the long distances involved in getting people in the Upcounty to needed services, like doctors, is especially challenging. He heard about the nearly thirty years that local leaders from the PTSA to the Chamber of Commerce had worked to try and get a new high school built, all to not avail.

The combined efforts of Upcounty residents, the FAC, local PTSAs and other groups appear to have led to growing recognition that our area has unfairly been denied access to services and facilities that are conveniently available to most county residents. While nothing is set in stone at this juncture, the progress that has been made to convince county leaders that change is needed in their thinking appears palpable.

It should be noted that the idea for a community center was first articulated by the Poolesville Planning Commission many years ago. While the idea was never fleshed out in any detail, the recognition that a community center is a need for our residents is a part of the role of the Planning Commission to set out future objectives and goals for the town. That is why the master plan review that is now under way is so important.

In other activities at the meeting, town manager Tony Tomasello outlined a number of developments that either needed commissioner attention or are important for citizens to note. He first mentioned that the so-called "water report" that was commissioned some months back had been completed by Kathy Mihm, a local geologist who has done lots of work in the past on the town's water system. The report examines, among other things, capacity issues. Mihm is expected to be invited to an upcoming commissioner meeting to discuss the report.

Tomasello said the town is preparing to release a citizen survey about trash and recycling and urged citizen participation. The results of the survey should help inform the upcoming discussion about a new trash collection contract that must be negotiated in about eight months.

One of the issues Tomasello knew would be on his agenda is staffing issues and employment policies. He said that the town's HR consultant, MMC, had helped design a survey of town staff. He expects to brief all nineteen employees in the coming week about the survey and will use the survey to inform decisions about employee policies going forward.

In this regard, Tomasello said that he now believes there is a need for an assistant town manager, given the heavy workload now facing him. He added that there is funding in the FY22 budget for such a position, and he plans to move ahead with that initiative soon.

Continued on page 7.



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## Rande(m) Thoughts Is It a Vision or A Pipe Dream?

By Rande Davis

Sometimes there is a very fine line between being a visionary or a day-dreamer. The same might be said of a genius or a fool. My thoughts this issue might reasonably be argued either way; nevertheless, I wish to engage our readers in my vision for Poolesville to see if others think as I do, or while perhaps smiling admiringly, they still regard me as leaning much more on the foolish side. You be the judge.

These thoughts center on a dilemma for the town commissioners. They are in a quandary as to what to do with the building that until recently hosted the Friendly Thrift Shop. This structure, which has stood in the center of our town since 1826, was recently declared unfit for public use. Without going into detail, it is estimated to cost roughly \$200,000 and possibly much more to rehabilitate the structure so it could once again serve the town as it has for 195 years.

The commissioners do not think the public would want them to spend that much of their taxes to do so and would be greatly relieved if some entrepreneurial commercial entity would come along to cover the cost. They might even consider selling it to them at next to nothing just to have the renovation and maintenance costs off their books.

Listed on the National Register of Historical Places, this plain but charming building has an amazing history of use in its nearly two centuries as a valued venue in town. Known historically as the Methodist church building, it preceded the other churches in town by a generation. In 1833, the pastor was buried beneath the pulpit and his grave marker is embedded in the back to this day. In 1892, the congregation relocated. It has been a dance hall, playhouse, and social center. It has been the site of elections, Masonic meetings, and Sunday school. At times, it was a public school, drug store, veterinarian office, and most importantly, a Poolesville town hall. This is the Old, Old Town Hall.

Outside are mostly empty graves of Union and Confederate soldiers buried there temporarily until they could be shipped back to their home. It served the nation during the Civil War as the site of a Union signal corps, hospital, and telegraph station whose primary role was to filter the news of

the war in the South to the White House and the rest of the world via telegraph. As a telegraph station, its role made Poolesville famous worldwide as newspapers reported American war news often with the byline such as, for example: Poolesville, Maryland, June 12, 1862. You can be sure the rulers and kings at the time who followed the news of the Civil War in newspapers knew of Poolesville—not because it happened here, but because it was from here that the telegraphed dispatch of war reports were sent around the world.

The building is sacred ground and has a hallowed and revered history. Is it best that it serves again simply as another commercial or retail site with an uncertain future, or is there another purpose, one that might help raise Poolesville up as a heritage site worthy of being a destination daytrip town for the region?

I have had the honor and enjoyment of playing the role of John Poole, Jr. as a living history docent for tourists and tourist groups to the John Poole House and as a docent telling Poolesville's role in the Civil War at the Old Town Hall Bank Museum, and even in telling travelers the story of the Seneca Schoolhouse.

I have witnessed firsthand the pleasure and enjoyment of tourists visiting the sites and hearing, seeing, and touching much of our history. From the reactions, comments, and even written thank you notes post-visit, people who have come here as individuals, in buses, or car caravans, know more of the fun and pleasure of learning about our history than most of our residents.

I tell you all of this to introduce my vision for the use of the building. I have spoken to the leadership of the Poolesville Seniors, American Legion, Odd Fellows, and Poolesville Chamber of Commerce. Most are very enthusiastic about using this space for their official meetings and small social events. Upstairs could be the venue for business or board meetings, downstairs could be laid out with the historical ambience of an early American inn, and a pavilion outside could serve to host larger events for them. Other groups or even individuals might consider renting the facilities for their special family or business events.

The remarkable advantage of having our extremely important and valued civic groups using the facility is that then the site would still be available on weekends for living history, costumed docents to add a third component to our historical draw. Doing so will add value economically to Poolesville as a quaint, charming, historical town.

Would this bolster all our restaurants and retailers? Might this add to our property values?

Locals Restaurant has already demonstrated, even in its earliest stages of development, the potential of Poolesville as an Ag Reserve place of respite for dining and visits.

Is this vision worthy of financial support by the town? I am convinced there is grant money available. I know firsthand that Sarah Rogers, the executive director of Heritage Montgomery, supports this vision. I know the county restored the Darby Store in Beallsville at a cost approaching \$900,000. Might they consider helping us? Can we do this? Can we get our tourist facilities opened on weekends on a regular basis so advertising and marketing can serve to bring the people?

Of all the important people who we need to help us make this vision a reality, none is more important than you. If you want it so, they will too. Now is the time for the conversation about the future of the Old, Old Town Hall to begin. Will it serve best as another commercial establishment or should it be an anchor for our civic groups with a new and robust future? You need to decide, and you need to share your thoughts with those in power. For me, I say with full conviction, "If you build it, they will come."

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### The Monocacy MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

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## Focus on Business

### ProTec: Not Just a Job, a Career

By Rande Davis

Rob and Michelle Hopkin of ProTec Inspection Services Home Inspections in Poolesville are more than partners in business, they are a married couple who built their family-centered service from a small home inspection firm to a whole new level of operation through a shared positive entrepreneurial spirit.

Rob, founder and president, was a general contractor and builder before branching off into home inspection. Michelle, the CEO and co-owner, was a math teacher who ended up supplementing Rob's expertise in construction with an entrepreneurial vision and marketing skills that have enabled the firm to not just grow in profits and sales locally but to expand regionally, including a branch in Philadelphia. More importantly, it has broadened its focus from basic home inspection to include mold, pool, radon, and termite inspections. They even are experts in thermography, the use of thermal infrared cameras to check and scan things that are unseen by the naked eye. It allows them to look at upper-level ceilings for leakage, evaluate unknown sources of leaks from plumbing and walls, including testing fixtures and appliances for leaks in the bathroom or kitchen.



Members of the ProTec Inspection Services team.

When purchasing a new or existing home, buyers want to be completely knowledgeable of its strengths and weaknesses. Unwanted surprises are one of every buyer's most feared concerns. Home inspections from ProTec provide a complete overview of the property's condition, identifying any problem areas that may need to be addressed and guidance on what needs immediate attention. Their certified property inspectors thoroughly assess structures, appliances, and major systems, and deliver a full, twenty-five-to-forty-page report on the same day.

Their residential inspections include everything from Pre-Listing Inspections for home sellers to Pre-Drywall and Post-Completion Inspections for new constructions. They have the technology to take samples of mold on the spot and work with local laboratories to get quick mold testing results. Issues within sewer infrastructure and plumbing lines can result in costly repairs. Their sewer camera inspection before you purchase the home will help ensure that the main sewer line is free of problems that can cause immense headaches after one moves into the home.

In establishing the firm, the Hopkins concentrated on building a thorough support team of managers and inspectors, valued for their leadership and management skills so much so that, today, the Hopkins are less involved in the day-to-day operation. They concentrate more on helping other inspection companies (including some that come from their own staff) become better home inspectors, taking a leadership role in the home inspection industry nationally, and finding and developing new entrepreneurial opportunities for growth in untapped areas.

One such development is what they like to call the walk-and-talk inspection. Walk and talks are a timesaving, low-cost option when a full home inspection isn't needed. This overview of the home can offer a quick understanding of a home for buyers or homeowners preparing to list their home. When a home-buyer does not have time for an extensive home inspection, the alternative is to schedule this one-hour consultation with one of ProTec's licensed inspectors to point out any major problems. This is especially useful when a buyer is facing a

Continued on page 12.

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## Senior News

### Poolesville Seniors Present Virtual and In-Person Programs

Would you like to join activities that refresh your interest in exercising, socializing, and learning new information? Visit the Poolesville Seniors website, [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org), to see their schedule of virtual programs, via Zoom, which are open to the entire community.

No events on Thanksgiving, 11/25.

Watch for the return of our socially distanced, outdoor Pop-up Walks on the C & O Canal.

#### Mondays

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

#### Wednesdays

**Chair Yoga** with Twyla Insalaco. 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Virtual.

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

#### Trivia Game Night

If you love Trivia, come join a team with Poolesville Seniors. Email [info@poolesvilleseniors.org](mailto:info@poolesvilleseniors.org) for more information. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### Thursdays in November

##### Mahjong with Joyce Kral

Fully-vaccinated beginner and seasoned players are welcome in person. Masks are required. Poolesville Presbyterian Church's Speer Hall. 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

#### Fridays

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

#### October 25

##### PS Book Club

Read Daniel James Brown's non-fiction

novel, *The Boys in the Boat*, recounting the story of the nine working-class boys of the University of Washington's eight-oar rowing team that stunned the world at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### October 28

##### Book Discussion

Join author Matthew Papuchis when he discusses his book, *A Little Birdie Told Me... A Journey to Find Hope, Happiness, and the Wings to Fly*. He will share excerpts and insights gleaned from his journey through the pandemic. Book available from author. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### November 4

##### Planets and More Planets

Join physics and astronomy professor, NASA Solar Ambassador, and director of the Montgomery College Astronomical Observatory, Carrie Fitzgerald, when she brings us her exciting presentation "Planets, and More Planets!" on the search for alien worlds in our galaxy. 7:00 p.m. Virtual

#### November 11

##### Veterans Day Event

Join this Veterans Day virtual event by our local Poolesville American Legion Post. The Daniel-Jeffers Post 247, formed in 2012 to support veterans and veteran causes in the area, will help us honor veterans on this special day. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### November 18

##### Historic Ag Reserve Properties with Kenny Sholes

In his monthly series, Kenny will continue his exploration of the historic homes of the Agricultural Reserve, giving us a better understanding of the people who came before us and the land they cherished. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### November 22

##### PS Book Club

Read *The Wife between Us* by Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen. This psychological thriller twists and turns

Continued on page 7.

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Continued from page 1.

### Intruder Slain by Homeowner, No Charges to be Placed

is not identifying the person who fired the fatal shots because the police and states attorneys office both have not officially named him. He has not been charged with a crime and is not likely to be.

Lauren Demarco, a spokesperson for the states attorneys office, said that her office had consulted with the police department, and it had been decided that the homeowner had broken no laws; thus, he would not be charged. She added that the case would most likely not be presented to a grand jury.

Continued from page 3.

### Chances for a Community Center In Town Are Growing

Finally, Tomasello said that a major sewer backup had led to the flooding of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in town. The church is connected to the sewer system that also serves the nearby Stoney Springs development. It is not clear what led to the backup, but Tomasello said the minister in the church had come to talk with him about the mishap. He is not clear what the town's financial responsibilities are in such cases and said that it is important for the town to look at this matter to ensure it has well-thought-out policies to deal with such matters.

Continued from page 6.

### Senior News

as it follows the attempts of recent divorcée Vanessa Thompson to prevent her ex-husband's remarriage. You may assume this is a story about a love triangle and a jealous ex-wife. Assume nothing. 7:00 p.m. Virtual

For more information or to register for any of the programs listed here and receive the Zoom link for each, visit the Poolesville Seniors website: [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org). Many of these presentations are also streamed live on their Facebook page and recorded for later viewing 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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## Tidbits

### Town of Poolesville Receives Prestigious Sustainable Maryland Certified Award at Maryland Municipal League Conference

The Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland announced that the Town of Poolesville was one of twelve Maryland municipalities honored at its Sustainable Maryland Awards Ceremony at the Maryland Municipal League's annual Fall Conference on October 13. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Sustainable Maryland program.

Highlights of Poolesville's accomplishments include: In April 2019, Poolesville became the 120th National Wildlife Federation Certified "Community Wildlife Habitat" in the U.S., and the eighth in Maryland. As of 2020, there were a total of eighty-six backyard habitats, including seventy-one residences, four schools, five businesses, two places of worship, one museum, two local government facilities, and one community garden; and installed public electric vehicle charging stations to promote electric vehicles in the community.

"The Town of Poolesville is thrilled to be receiving the Sustainable Maryland

award yet again this year," said Commission President Kerri Cook. "We strive to be good stewards of the environment and incorporate sustainability in all aspects of our municipal operations. Even in small-town America, we are constantly feeling the effects of our changing global climate and know that the time for action is now."

According to Mike Hunninghake, Program Manager for Sustainable Maryland, "During the first ten years of the Sustainable Maryland program, if we have learned anything, it's that reducing our footprint on where we live, be it a town, a county, a state, or the planet, is vital to our continuation as a species. The work being done at the local level forms a foundation, by example and by action, for upward pressure on governments at all levels to take action to make our communities greener, cleaner, and more resilient."

### Special Memorial Tribute to Linda Grubbs

A memorial service for Linda Grubbs on Sunday, October 10 at Whalen Commons had more than fifty persons in attendance. The service included a walk past the shopping center where she used to keep the premises clean, readings of prayers written by Linda, recollections by neighbors who helped



Linda live independently in Poolesville for as long as possible, and the dedication of a tree in her memory on the commons. Children from her family decorated the tree with origami birds.

Linda's sister Patty made a collage in remembrance of Linda and as a thank you to all the good people who helped her, especially near the closing days of her life. The family was profoundly grateful for all of the friends, neighbors, local business employees, and WUMCO volunteers who kept an eye on Linda that allowed her to live independently in town for as long as she could. We include the collage here,

knowing that Patty will have a smile from heaven.

### May Retires from Fire Department



After thirty-four years of service, firefighter Jim May retired.

Jim May, B-Shift UMCVFD, recently retired after thirty-four years of service, with twenty-two of those years at Station 14 in Beallsville. In giving Jim a retirement gift of a shock-absorber rocking chair with UMCVFD embroidered patch, it was noted he was a great guy, and his knowledge and helpfulness will be missed on B-Shift.

Continued on page 13.



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## Garden

### A Gift of a Tree

By Maureen O'Connell

In June of this year, I wrote in my Garden column about two white oak trees that died in May at Historic Medley District's Seneca Schoolhouse (SSH) on River Road in Poolesville. Arborists believe that they were over 250 years old, and they were growing there before the schoolhouse was built in 1866. HMD has leased the land on which the school stands since 1976 from the State of Maryland. Since then, it has been renovated and it hosts every year several thousand boys and girls from public, private, and home-schooled schools on field trips. They travel back in time to experience a school day in 1867 taught by Julie Shapiro, known to the children as "Miss Darby" (daughter of the school's founder Mr. Darby).



Students from Christ Episcopal School in Rockville raised funds to help replace two white oak trees for the Seneca Schoolhouse property.

Trees die all the time, but these two white oaks were special. They were located directly beside the school. In 1976, the book *Country School Boy* was written by Bess Paterson Shipe and illustrated by Carol Stuart Watson. It described education in Montgomery County, and particularly at the Seneca School in the last half of the nineteenth century. One of the students who, at the age of six, entered Seneca School, was Mr. Lewis Allnutt. He was born at Rockland, Seneca, Maryland on January 2, 1875. He described the school and recalled his school days in an interview with Virginia G. Hersperger on January 25, 1974. He vividly remembered many fond memories of playing under these majestic and grand trees. Almost 150 years later, children were still being "watched over" by these historic trees as they happily played beneath them. It was a sad day in May when they had to be cut down.

Students from Christ Episcopal School in Rockville have participated in field trips at the SSH for many years. This past May, fourth grade students attended a class with their teacher Cindy Medema (a Poolesville resident). Julie Shapiro mentioned to Cindy that the two old white oak trees near the school were dead and had to be cut down. Ms. Medema suggested to the children the idea of donating funds to purchase another white oak from funds they raised from their Chores Project. These are chores done throughout the year by the students to raise money for charity. The students and the school administrators heartily agreed.

On Monday, October 17, 2021, Christ Episcopal fifth grade students (last year's fourth graders) visited SSH with their teacher Sarah Pfanz to take part in planting a new nine-foot white oak tree in memory of their "old oak friend." Garth Seely of Gardens by Garth located a very good quality white oak tree and helped the children with the planting. He and his wife Amy are the founders of the nonprofit organization Landscape and Nature Discoveries (LAND). He shared with the boys and girls several interesting and fun facts of the oak tree and the ecosystem in which it will live.

Historic Medley District thanks the children of Christ Episcopal for their donation of this tree. May it live on the grounds of the Seneca Schoolhouse for many, many years and continue to look after the schoolchildren of Miss Darby.



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## Youth Sports

### PHS Field Hockey Wins a Thriller against Watkins Mill under the Friday Night Lights

By Jeff Stuart

After two consecutive Falcon football wins on Friday nights under the lights, the Poolesville field hockey team took center stage on September 22, hosting Watkins Mill. In a thriller, PHS prevailed, 3-2, in overtime. Poolesville fell behind, 2-0, early, and it looked like the Wolverines would take that advantage into halftime, but just before the buzzer ended the first half, junior Phoebe Snelson scored to cut the deficit to one. Phoebe scored again in the second half to tie the game. Senior Alaina Sorell scored the game winner less than a minute into overtime. It was Poolesville's first win of the season. Poolesville owns Friday nights it seems.

"I think we've really been ramping up our work at practice," said senior Helen Kreitzer, "and working a lot on where we are supposed to go, especially in the circle. We've worked hard in games and started to play really well. It's gotten a lot better. We are having fun. Practice is so much fun. It's hard, but we are all friends. I think our best game so far was against Northwest. We really kicked it in that game. It was a really close and interesting game. I think our skill sets were pretty even. It came down to one shootout. It was really a tense game for all of us."

"Our team has really improved overall," said senior Marta Brannman, "especially our team chemistry. The season started off a little bumpy and rough. We played Walter Johnson and Richard Montgomery, two of the hardest teams we will ever play, but then we played Watkins Mill and that was a really good game and we did end up coming out on top in overtime. That lifted us up, and that helped us for the next game. The crowd wasn't as big as those at football games that Friday night, but we still had quite a few people there which was really nice, and we could definitely hear them on the field, and it really pumped us up. It was exciting to pull out that win in front of them."



Kelsey Hobbs, Alaina Sorrell, Emily Bupp, Marta Brannman, Brooke Rendzio, Helen Kreitzer, Vyoma Mehta, and Rosemary Dean.

"Scoring the winning goal against Watkins Mill was really exciting," said Sorell. "That was the first game that we won. Before that, we got pretty crushed by some pretty strong teams, so to finally win a game felt great. It helped us out. It put us in a better mood. Now we can look to win some more games. The game winner was in first overtime. In the first forty-five seconds we got a corner. Brooke Renzio, a senior, passed it to me, and I drove it in and scored. It was really exciting. We could definitely hear the crowd. I think one player who has really stepped up this year is Lauren Hopkins, a junior. This is her first year ever playing field hockey, and she stepped up to play goalie and she is impressing everybody."

Kelsey Hobbs, a senior, said, "Even though the Northwest game did not end up the way we wanted it to, my favorite moment was playing two against six on

Continued on page 12

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## Local News

### Four Little Girls

By Jack Toomey

Lester and Caroline Shields married about 1921. They took up residence on a farm near Boyds and started a family; however, tragedy struck this young couple early in their marriage. They lost two children to natural causes shortly after their births. Then, within a span of eight years, they were blessed with four healthy girls, Mary, Myrtle, Elise, and Helen.

On the morning of March 27, 1930, Lester and Caroline quarreled. Mrs. Shields later said that her husband had struck her with a club and had thrown rocks at her. Caroline decided to leave the farm for the time being, so she gathered her four girls and drove to Frederick, hoping to take up residence with her sister until things calmed down. They arrived at the home of her sister on Trail Avenue, near Hood College, at about 10:00 a.m. Caroline found that the door was locked, and no one was home. She obtained a key from a neighbor who told her that her sister was at a church meeting. Caroline and her daughters went inside the house to await the return of Elsie Bussard, her sister. Mrs. Bussard eventually came home, and they ate lunch together, discussing Caroline's marital problems. Elsie Bussard then returned to her church. At about 1:30 p.m., Caroline decided to visit a neighbor on Trail Avenue. She locked the door and instructed the girls to stay in the kitchen because she feared that her husband might come to Frederick and take the girls back to the farm. She was gone about twenty minutes, and when she returned, she realized that something was terribly wrong. The entire house was filled with gas fumes, and she found her daughters unconscious on the kitchen floor. It was later determined that the girls, having been raised in a farmhouse with a wood cooking stove, were unfamiliar with the gas stove and had turned on the knobs, releasing fumes into the air.

Mrs. Shields then screamed and started dragging her daughters onto the rear porch. A neighbor, hearing the screaming, ran across the street to Frederick Hospital and alerted the staff. Doctors Conley, Slusher, Baer, and a handful of nurses immediately ran to the house and attempted to give first aid. A crew from the Potomac Edison power company was nearby—in those days, the company had a resuscitation crew on standby in case of electrocutions—and they quickly came to the house. The resuscitation crew used the oxygen that they carried until it ran out. They called Hagerstown and Williamsport for more oxygen, and it was sent to Frederick with a police escort. In the meantime, a huge crowd had gathered around the house to watch the lifesaving effort being carried out on the back lawn. There seemed to be little hope for the three younger girls, but the doctors and power company workers continued their attempts to revive Mary, age seven, until 6:10 p.m. when she was pronounced dead. As was the custom of the time, the sheriff and the coroner held a brief inquest and ruled that the deaths of the four girls were accidental and that no criminal charges would be placed. Mr. Shields, who was at his farm in Boyds and had no telephone, was told of the tragedy by neighbors who had read about it in the Frederick newspaper.

The next day, a wake was held at the home of the Bussards on Trail Avenue. Thousands of people, from both Montgomery County and Frederick County, attempted to enter the house to pay their respects, and it was necessary for the city police to prevent traffic from entering the block.

On March 29, 1930, the funerals of Mary, Myrtle, Elise, and Helen were held at the First Baptist Church. The Rev. William Royal presided over the ceremony that was attended by several thousand people. Then one casket containing the bodies of the four girls was carried to Mt. Olivet Cemetery. The four little girls were buried together, in an unmarked grave, next to their grandparents and the two infant siblings who had preceded them in death. Four little girls who lived together and died together, lay together for the rest of eternity.

## Fun Facts...

Established in 1854, Mount Olivet Cemetery is considered one of the most beautiful and distinguished burial grounds in the country. The cemetery is located in historic Downtown Frederick, Maryland, and has provided final resting places for generations of residents over the last century and a half. Within the gates and hallowed grounds, the cemetery is the keeper of thousands of stories and, likewise, "storied" lives.

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Continued from page 5.

### ProTec: Not Just a Job, a Career

competitive bidding process, this quick check for any potential showstoppers can be a financial lifesaver.

The Hopkins stress that their fundamental success has been their philosophy of not hiring employees seeking a job but rather those who are looking for a career, one that helps them grow, even to the point of one day branching out for themselves in home inspection. Today, ProTec is a major employer for Poolesville, with more than half of its forty-five employees living in the immediate area.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Rob has found that "a lot of people want more than a job, they want a career. We are not looking for a job-seeker so much as for people who want an opportunity. We are looking for partners, not employees. Here, once you have mastered your job, you can take it anywhere. Yeah, you are going to start off as an employee, but it is my hope that new hires will be a partner with me in some venture someday. We want to hire people who come here thinking farther down the road than just immediate work."

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Continued from page 10.

### PHS Field Hockey Wins a Thriller against Watkins Mill under the Friday Night Lights

defense in double overtime. We were shorthanded because of penalties. One of our players got carded around the same time, but we held them and forced a shootout. I think that game helped us learn what we needed to learn. Our next game we came out stronger, against Damascus, and although that game also didn't end the way we were hoping it would, it was a very well-fought game. Everyone on the team is friends, so that definitely helps keep our chemistry alive. We know how to pick each other up when we're down. We know what to do and what not to do in various situations. I think there has been a significant improvement in our team, connecting and passing, so I am looking forward to the rest of the games because I think we have a real shot at improving our record."

The field hockey team has played a very tough schedule and has lost some tough games, notably a 3-2 loss at Northwest on September 27 and a 2-1 loss at Damascus the next day. The overall level of play throughout the county has improved in recent years. The effort is there and was visible in a resounding 5-0 victory over Kennedy on October 13.

The schedule is mostly more favorable heading into the second half of the season although there are some very tough opponents left to play. The regular season closes with a game at undefeated Quince Orchard.

Other seniors are Rosemary Dean, Emily Bupp, and Vyoma Mehta. Other juniors are Lauren Anderson, Sydney Rorke, Gabby Tuwiner, Erica Escobar, Annabelle Yontef, Cienna Stowers, and Erin Dower. Rachel Carreras is a sophomore.

Do you have an interesting story to share?

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# Things to Do

The Monocacy Lions will not be hosting their annual Halloween Party in Barnesville this year. They are excited about having the event in 2022.

**Annual WUMCO Scarecrow Contest**  
Now underway. Be sure to stop by Whalen Commons, review the entries, and vote for your favorite residential and business submissions. Voting can be done at wumco.org

**Markoff's Haunted Forest**  
One of America's top-ranked Halloween venues, Markoff's Haunted Forest offers much to do while waiting to enter. Open all weekends in October.

**October 22**  
**PHS Varsity Home Game**  
Football vs. Kennedy. 6:30 p.m.

**October 24**  
**Community Trunk or Treat**  
All are welcome to Trick or Treat or decorate one's car/truck and share goodies with the goblins, princesses, and heroes, etc. *Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church*. Set up for vehicle decorating is 4:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. Trick or Treat: 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

**October 26**  
**Poolesville Green Monthly Carbon Footprint Challenge**  
Zoom meeting. Scan the zoom barcode in their ad this issue. 7:00 p.m.

**October 28**  
**PACC Fall Networking Gathering**  
The PACC will be hosting a gathering at *Cugini's Restaurant*, 19616 Fisher Avenue, on the outdoor patio for current and past PACC members. The chamber will be providing pizza, and there will be a cash bar. 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**November 4**  
**American Legion Poolesville Post 247**  
Member meeting. Held at Calleva offices in Poolesville at the corner of Fisher Avenue and Elgin Road.

**November 11**  
**Veterans Day Tribute**  
Hosted by American Legion Poolesville Post 247. This brief ceremony is held to honor all veterans. The armistice for WWI was officially signed on November 11 at 11:11 a.m. Originally called Armistice Day, it was change in 1954 to Veterans Day to honor all who served in the military. *Whalen Commons*. 11:11 a.m.

Continued from page 8.

### Tidbits

**PACC/Lions 5K 2021**  
The annual Poolesville Day 5K had 277 participants, including fifty runners from the Poolesville High School cross country team. Hasan Hobbs of Poolesville won first place for men and Danielle Firlie of Mt. Airy took first place for women.

The oldest participant, Milton Andrew of Poolesville, won the 80-plus category while Karina Flynn of Poolesville won in the Women's 70-79 division.

All results can be viewed at [mcrc.org/race-results/2021/poolesville21/](http://mcrc.org/race-results/2021/poolesville21/).



Start of the 2021 Poolesville Day 5K.

**Golfers Capture Class 2A/1A District**  
Congratulations to our coed golf team of Olivia Cong (72), Robert Xu (82), Charlie Helfert (84), Noah Naing (84), and Ethan Huang (88) who captured the MPSSAA Class 2A/1A division title at the Poolesville Golf Course on October 4, 2021.

**Phew! That Had Us worried**  
The owner of the building that hosts the House of Poolesville restaurant and bar has decided to sell the building. Fear not! Linda and Chen have a long-term lease. Our good friends will be here serving us their great food, drinks, and entertainment even with a new owner of the building.

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## Youth Sports

### PHS Girls' Soccer Rolls to Division Title

By Jeff Stuart

On Tuesday, October 12, at Springbrook, the Poolesville High School girls' soccer team, which has garnered a significant fan following, rolled to a 10-0 win, securing the Division Championship. At practice the day before, Coach Rod Nubgaard had said that securing the title was "doable" — and it was.

"I think we were all really focused on getting that division title and just getting it done," said senior Erin Cherian.

"All season, the girls fought to build a hard-fighting team and to achieve as much as they could," said Nubgaard. "We have four incredibly hard-working captains, junior Avery Penn, junior Lizzie Kovacs, senior Nicole Guzman, and senior Sierra Schenck. Cherian not only scored a season record twenty-two goals, she unselfishly fed other players the ball... The rest of the team has also stepped up. Regardless of the score, they will fight for the full eighty minutes and, if needed, in overtime. The game at Rockville was a high mark. They turned that game around and fought hard for a 5-4 overtime win. That took grit."

"At the first practice, I looked at how we were connecting," said Guzman, "and I thought, 'We have a good team.' I knew that we would face problems, but I knew we would eventually figure them out, but the chemistry of the team has kept building. We have the same captains, including me, as we had last spring. We had others from last spring as well. We had a good dynamic last year, and we brought that into this season and added to it. Rockville was a big game for us. Almost all of the players on our team have scored a goal. Erin has scored twenty-two goals for us so far. I admire her hard work and dedication."

The girls (10-2) posted seven straight wins after a September 11 loss at Churchill, and five straight shutouts. While scoring in double digits three times. Their most exciting victory came on October 18 when the Falcons defeated unbeaten Wootton, 2-1, at Wootton. Cherian had two goals, and the defense held WHS for the last twenty-five minutes. "It was a game to remember," said Nubgaard. "Upset of the year."

After a successful abbreviated spring season, the girls opened the fall season at home with a 4-1 win over Wheaton in front of an appreciative crowd. Cherian had a hat trick and Nicole Guzman scored the final goal. The game was suspended about ten minutes early due to lightning from an approaching storm.

"We clinched the division title," said Penn, "and I am really proud of us. I am really pleased with how the team has been playing. We have all really learned to communicate with each other and learn from each other. I think that is the biggest thing. I think our best game was against Rockville. We came back from a 3-0 deficit at halftime to win, 5-4, in overtime. We played over ninety minutes in that game. Erin has really stood out at striker. She is having a fantastic season and has really helped our team pull through to get those wins. Freshman Alex Sosna scored overtime goal against Rockville. I was really proud of her for that."

"We have all put in a lot of effort from week one," said senior Abby Antonishek, "and I am glad to see that reflected in our record. It has been a lot of fun. We have had a majority of our games at home, and it has been nice to see our student section come out to support us. It's nice to see and hear lots of fans. I love the energy. It makes it so much more fun to play. We can definitely feel it on the field. Because I am a senior, I have played all four years, and I don't remember there being that many fans my freshman year, and of course, last spring there were no fans, so this year it is just nice to look up and see everybody cheering for us."

"It was amazing for us to come back like we did against Rockville. That was definitely a highlight. The only game I was really looking forward to was our game against Damascus because we are such big rivals. That one was a lot of fun. We beat them, 6-0. We just made sure to not come out flat that game. We came out of the gate strong and worked hard together. We immediately put pressure on them. I was happy to be a part of that. I really enjoy playing with my sister Zoe on the team. She is Class of '23. It has been a lot of fun for us to be on defense together."

"It's really been great," said Cherian. "We have never really had big crowds before, so for people to come out, especially during my senior year, it's been really nice. Hearing them in the stands helps us push on. Scoring two goals in two minutes against Rockville was definitely a highlight for us. Alex Sosna has been really big for us. She scored the winning goal against Rockville and had a bunch



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Continued on page 17

Continued from page 1.

**Townhouse Fire Displaces Family**

The cause of this fire turned out to be the primary cause of residential fires in Montgomery County. The family was home cooking on the stove but left to pick up another family member. Unfortunately, they neglected to turn off the food/oil cooking on the stovetop. Upon their return, they encountered heavy fire throughout the townhouse—essentially, a total loss estimated to be in excess of \$250,000. The family pet cat was missing but is believed to have escaped; however, some goldfish and a snake did not survive.

Typically, the Red Cross will assist with immediate needs, shelter, food, etc. Gift cards, clothing, and household goods will greatly assist the family, and donations can be given to WUMCO or Poolesville area churches. The family that was displaced includes the parents and children, ages 15, 12, and 7. Tips for safe practices while cooking can be found at [montgomerycountymd.gov/mcfrs-info](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/mcfrs-info).



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## In Your Own Backyard

### Stories of Canal Ghosts and a Tommyknocker

By Jon Wolz

In 1850, a farmer, Clarence Colmore Offutt who went by the name of Colmore, owned a farm near Barnesville. Living with him were three daughters. He had been married twice, was born in 1797, served in the War of 1812, and died in 1855. He is buried in the old Methodist Episcopal Church Cemetery in Barnesville with family members. In 1850, according to the slave census, he owned nineteen enslaved people. This census listed the sex and age of individuals, but it did not provide names. On a Sunday in February 1850, the Baltimore Sun reported, "...a negro man belonging to Mr. Coleman (Colmore) Offutt, residing near Barnesville, whilst riding across the Monocacy on the aqueduct of the Canal, on the upper wall, was thrown over together with the horse and drowned immediately." The horse was able to swim out of the river to safety; sadly, the man's body was not recovered. The article mentioned that "...it is to be hoped that this fatal result will be sufficient to deter others from it. It is to be greatly regretted that others, in their fits of intemperance, have set the horrid example by performing this desperate feat." The berm side wall is five feet wide and about 475 feet long. The river is about twenty-five feet below the top of the wall. Unlike the towpath side of the aqueduct, there are no barriers on the river side or on the canal basin side berm side wall.



*The Maryland Mine workers in 1906 near Great Falls before a tragic explosion occurred at the mine, killing one of the men seen in this photo.*

Why was this man riding on the berm side wall going away from Barnesville? Was he attempting to ride to freedom? His name and reason for his adventure that ended tragically that February Sunday in 1850 have been lost to history. Word traveled in the local area about this accident and, subsequently, people preferred to ford the river by riding their horse. For those who did cross the aqueduct on the berm side, walking their horses across the aqueduct, sometimes their horses would rear up in fear. When this happened, it was thought by locals the ghost of the man appeared to the horse trying to stop it from the crossing.

On the night of October 31, 1911, Fannie Whalen, 52, who was the wife of lockkeeper John Whalen at Lock 27 along the C&O Canal, left her bed, ran deliriously out of the lockhouse, walked into the canal lock, and disappeared into the dark canal waters. Mr. Whalen searched frantically for several hours but could not locate his wife until early the next morning when he found her dead in the waters of the lock. It was reported that Mrs. Whalen had been worried about one of her children who had been sick for several months. She had five children. Tragically, three children did not survive past one year of age. Reviewing the 1910 census, living at the lockhouse in 1910, were daughter Blanche, 14, grandchildren Iona Cross, 8, Frances Cross, 6, Beatrice Cross 3, and Fannie's brother Henry Collier. The Cross children were children of Fannie's daughter Emma Whalen Cross who lived with her husband Reginal Whalen Cross in Darnestown. Emma had recently lost an infant child. It is unknown as to which child Fannie was worried about. Unfortunately, Fannie may have suffered from mental illness,

and in different censuses where she was listed, by her name appeared the word "sick." Early census takers used this term to identify someone who suffered from mental illness. Word spread up and down the canal, and canallers avoided this lock at night, if at all possible, for fear of encountering Fannie's ghost. From time to time, those who did travel late at night through the lock, on a moonless night, reported that cries could be heard. Fannie is buried in the Monocacy Cemetery along with her husband John Whalen, their children, grandchildren, a son-in-law, and five of her six siblings. If you visit Lock 27 by yourself on Halloween night, you may not be alone.

In 1906, twenty-eight-year-old Charles Eglin was working at the Maryland Mine near Great Falls as an engineer and lived with his widowed mother Harriett and his half-brother Joseph in Cabin John. The mine was actually a gold mine and opened after the Civil War. In 1900, Charles had been working as a clerk in a country store; however, he found he would earn more money working at the mine. He was unmarried and very popular. Early, in 1906, Charles posed with

Continued on page 17

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## Remembrance

### Bilyie Louise Luhn

Bilyie Louise Luhn, 89, of Beallsville, passed away at home on October 6, 2021.

Born on August 9, 1932 in Poolesville, Bilyie was the daughter of the late Maynard Clark Luhn, Sr. and Eula Lee Wynne. She was preceded in death by her brother, Maynard Clark Luhn, Jr.

Bilyie was an avid New York Yankees fan and a long-time season ticket holder for the Washington Football Team.

She is survived by her sister-in-law Arlene Norris Luhn of Poolesville; a nephew Kevin Luhn of Hagerstown; two nieces, Ellen Luhn Williams (Ed) of Beallsville and Laura Luhn Hiatt, (Rodger) of Elk, Washington; four great-nieces, Laura Luhn Hiatt (Rodger) of Elk, Washington, Lara Saylor (Ryan), Megan Malik, and April Kroboth (Brent); one great-great-nephew, Zain Malik; and two great-great-nieces Kaycee Saylor and Aleena Malik.

A memorial service will be held 11:00 a.m. on November 6, 2021 at Barnesville Baptist Church, 17917 Barnesville Road, Barnesville, MD 20838.



Bilyie Louise Luhn

Continued from page 16.

### Stories of Canal Ghosts and a Tommyknocker

several mine workers in a photo at the mine. Unfortunately, the identification of the miners pictured has been lost, but it is believed that Charles is one of the young miners seen in the front row.

On the night of June 15, 1906, at 10:30 p.m., forty pounds of dynamite exploded at the mine, killing young Charles Eglin instantly. After setting the explosives for the blast in the mine, a group of miners retreated to a shed just outside the entrance to the mine. Before detonating the explosives, they decided to take a break. One of the men set a bundle of dynamite on a bench. Another man put his head lantern with a lit candle on the bench by the explosives. Seeing a fuse lit, several men ran from the building. When Elliott saw the lit fuse, he called to Eglin to look out. George Elliott leaped from the building just as the explosion occurred. Eglin did not follow Elliott but jumped behind an engine he operated. The explosion destroyed the building and could be heard up to ten miles away. His body was badly mangled, and he was buried at the Concord Methodist Episcopal Church Cemetery in Bethesda. After the death of Charles, the mine attempted to return to normal, but paranormal activity began occurring at the mine. The miners began hearing footsteps behind them, and when they turned to look to see who was following them, there was no one there. There were knocks on doors and when opened, there was no one waiting to enter. There was a work-horse which refused to enter the property and went wild whenever someone would try to urge it onto the mine property. One night, the watchman claimed he saw a "ghostly looking man with eyes of fire and a tail ten feet long" emerging from the mine. The watchman immediately quit his job, and the foreman could not find anyone to take his place. The ghostly figure the watchman saw became known as the tommyknocker of the Maryland Mine. A tommyknocker is a ghost that inhabits mines where a miner has died. The miners believed the ghost of Charles was tapping and knocking on doors and on the walls of the mine as a warning of danger, telling them to get out. The miners knew better than to ignore a tommyknocker—if they wanted to live.

By 1908 the mine closed; however, it would reopen from time to time, and it permanently closed in 1951. The mine is now a part of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, and the Gold Mine Trail takes visitors past the ruins of the buildings and the mine. If you hike the trail by yourself, you may not be the only one there.

Continued from page 14.

### PHS Girls' Soccer Rolls to Division Title

of other goals that put us in the lead. By winning the division title, we get a chance to hang a banner in the gym. It is so nice to leave the school with a legacy."

Other seniors are Alaena Bowman, Chloe Maher, and Mackenzie Saum. Other juniors are Stephanie Windall, Lexi Hinds, and Marissa Edwards. Bre Salovich, Madi Manning, Gabby Montemurro, Gabby Orns, Sophia Deng, Courtney Hurbanek, Morgen Smith, and Allie Webster are sophomores. Rylen Smith is a freshman. Promoted from junior varsity are junior Ella Franklin and freshman Amelia Goettsch.

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## Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

### Present Crime

**Auto Theft:** 20800 block of Slidell Road.

**Vandalism:** 19500 block of White Ground Road.

**Trespassing:** 15100 block of Barnesville Road.

**Homicide:** 18800 block of River Road (see article on page 1).

### Past Crime: 1935 to 1939

The search for reclusive farmer Elwood Matthews continued near Four Corners. Eventually his body would be found in a creek. After a long investigation, a group of home-grown gangsters from the Four Corners area would be charged in his murder. The defendants were never tried in Montgomery County because they were arrested in West Virginia where they had slain a salesman. Two were hanged at the West Virginia Penitentiary, and the other served a life sentence.

Well-known farmer Otis Watkins of Rockville was acquitted of selling diluted milk to the Montrose School. Watkins had been accused of watering down his milk and then selling it at full price. Judge Smith delivered the not guilty verdict saying that the state had not produced evidence that Watkins was selling anything but grade A milk.

Numbers gangs from Washington were blamed for the second murder in recent days. The body of a forty-year-old Washington man was found on the Laytonsville Road at Smith's Corner. It was believed that the man had been murdered in the District and then dumped in Montgomery County.

States Attorney Pugh announced that all slot machines in the county were illegal. Two years earlier, Pugh had banned machines that distributed

coupons that were to be redeemed for food and drink. A news style machine had made its appearance in the county, and it was the type that paid off in coins for a winning score. Police officers were ordered to visit all commercial establishments to check for the illegal machines.

A domestic dispute in the front yard of a house in a rural section outside Lincoln Park in Rockville led to the death of a nineteen-month-old. Police said that the mother and father were arguing about custody of the baby when the mother took off in an auto with the baby. When the police located the car, the baby was dead. Millie Frazier, 22, was charged with murder.

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

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**Spirits of the Dead**

Be silent in that solitude,  
Which is not loneliness—for then  
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In life before thee are again  
In death around thee—and their will  
Shall overshadow thee: be still.



-Edgar Allan Poe

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## Celebrating 32 Years of Service

### Understanding Your Cats and Their Use of Litter Boxes

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

Cats are amazing creatures. They often keep an exceptionally-low profile in their homes, around their human servants, and the other lesser animals (their opinions). Cats can be very routine oriented: Eat the same time every day, go to the bathroom the same time every day, torture the humans same time every day, and sleep most of the time every day.

One of the most problematic changes in their routine-oriented life is when there is a change to their urinary tract. Cats with urinary tract disease often start to pee outside of the box, pee in public locations (bathroom, bathtub, sink, bed, chair, etc.), stand positioned to pee in their box for extended periods, or go in and out of the box multiple times in one hour.

There are a number of reasons that cats develop urinary disease. The recommendations below are designed to minimize this health issue and maximize your cats' status as animal in charge.

#### 1. Stress is a major factor in the presentation of a urinary tract disease. These all produce stressor events for cats.

- a. New cat, dog, or human in the house.
- b. Major change in the house servants.
- c. Major change in routine in the house.
- d. Less than one litter box per cat.
- e. Change of water source in the house.
- f. New neighbor or neighborhood cats coming into the yard.

#### 2. Change of the primary food type or location can be a key factor.

- a. Not all cat foods are created equal. Cats like consistency.
- b. Variations in diet can change the makeup of the urine and increase the chances of urinary crystals (Oxalate or Struvite). These can cause irritation to the bladder and urethra and cause abnormal urination patterns.
- c. If you have changed your cats' diet and they start to urinate outside the box, discuss it with your veterinarian.

#### 3. Urine evaluation.

- a. There are at home additives that can be added to your cat's litter box to look for blood in their urine.
- b. You can also take your cat to your favorite veterinarian for a sterile urine sample collection and evaluation. This usually finds the issue and helps with treatment plans.

Your feline friends do not urinate outside the box because they are mad at you but because they are trying to get your attention that something is not right in their body. Listen to your cats.



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