

# The Monocacy

# MONOCLE

*Keeping an Eye on Local News*

A Biweekly Newspaper

February 18, 2022 • Volume XVII, Number 24

## 'Back to the Future' as Yost Returns as Town Manager

By Link Hoewing



As Ali awaits your clothes at Professional Cleaners, he stays on top of local news. See who else is reading in Family Album on page 2.



Where they used to process milk, they now make beer! Do you know where? See page 3.



Rebuilding Together Montgomery is seeking recipient candidates. Turn to Tidbits on page 8 for details.



You may be surprised to find why our Beauty Spot is so historic. Find out in Foundations on page 9.

Some might say it is *Back to the Future* and, after a nearly one-hour interview with once-retired Town Manager Wade Yost and Commission President Jim Brown, the title may well be apropos. Yost, who served as Poolesville's Town Manager for seventeen years and retired a few years ago, is now back in the saddle, on staff once again as the top administrator for the Town of Poolesville. He and Brown discussed why Yost is returning and what goals and projects they see as paramount in the months ahead.

One of the obvious issues regarding Yost's return is why he was brought back as a full-time staffer and not as a consultant as was the case previously. Yost said that it is not possible for a "consultant to run the town" because they have no direct authority over staff. As an employee, Yost said, he reports directly to the commissioners and not only has authority over staff but also over town consultants. He also noted that the scope of the issues

and projects that need to be addressed is substantial. He is particularly focused on staff morale which he admitted is low due in part to the constant change and confusion in town management.

Yost also pointed to his seventeen-year stint as town manager and the relationships he had built up with staff and town consultants, including the engineering and legal advisors. He said this has helped smooth some of the anxieties as the town once again finds itself without a town manager in the space of just over two years. When the commissioners were discussing the plan to bring him back as full-time town manager, he received texts from staff expressing relief and support.

Brown also pointed to the morale of town staff as a big reason to bring back Yost as a full-time manager. When asked why it was not possible simply to rely on the current town manager,

Continued on page 17.



Town Manager Wade Yost and Commission President Jim Brown have reconnected for the future.

## Commissioners Focus on Sewer Plant Operations at Meeting

By Link Hoewing

The Town of Poolesville commissioners focused their agenda on the operations and upgrading of the sewer plant at their meeting on February 7. It was also the first meeting for Wade Yost in his returning role as town manager.

The commissioners first discussed a proposed contract award for the upgrading of the sewer plant to reduce the amount of nitrates released into the treated water flowing from the plant into Dry Seneca Creek. Nitrates are compounds in fertilizer that can be washed into water that flows to the sewer plant. They also occur naturally in soil as a result of the decaying of plant and animal matter. High levels of

the chemicals can affect water quality through the growth of algae which can rob water of oxygen necessary for animal and plant life. The chemicals can also be transformed into nitrites in humans which can affect the blood's ability to transport oxygen.

Town Engineer John Strong explained that the State of Maryland has a program to reduce the release of nitrates into waterways in the state. The program includes grant funds to jurisdictions to reduce nitrates in their sewer operations, and Poolesville had applied for such a grant. Bids had been solicited to upgrade the sewer plant, and three bids had been reviewed and deemed acceptable. He recommended

that the grant for just over \$7 million be awarded to Meridian Construction since they had done work on the sewer plant previously and knew the town's plant and its operations. The company was also the low bidder. The commissioners voted 5-0 to approve the award.

In a second item of business, the commissioners heard a report from Wade Yost about the capacity of the sewer plant. The issue of sewer capacity comes up periodically in the town, particularly in the context of remaining development projects. Yost explained that, once a year, the Planning Commission is tasked with coming up with a report examining

Continued on page 17.

# Family Album



Even in the middle of opening day, Gabe Scott (right) and crew couldn't wait to read the Monocle.



Lunch at Dunkin' Donuts or go back to school? Nah, they'd rather read the Monocle!



Sonny and crew look to the "fresh" stories from the Monocle.

# Everyone Reads the Monocle!



Don't tell me you don't recognize Raj from Poolesville Beer and Wine. Yep, they're big Monocle fans there, too.



Even the ballet dancers at the newly-opened Essence Dance Studios took a break to check out the latest Monocle.



Everyone at the Mexican Grill stopped work, so enthralled they were with the Monocle!



The best way to wait for your pizza at Cugini's? Read the Monocle like these folks.

## Business Briefs

### The Drinks Are on Me!

Okay, not really, just wanted your attention to tell you that Landmade Brewery is now open, and I can absolutely endorse the Italian Pilsner. They have five other blends for tasting. I needed to drive home, so tasting of the other beers produced at our new local brewery on Jerusalem Road will have to be up to you. The owner Gabe Scott and manager Hanna Dowdy are anxious to greet you. Everything is outdoors, but they have fires and heaters, and the crowd is spaced in a very safe fashion. The vendor's truck offers food. The half-smoked sausage and brats are superb, and the large beer pretzel looked terrific. Why not gather a few friends and sit by the fire to enjoy a Landmade brewski?



*The outdoor venue in the heart of the Ag Reserve will be a real draw for customers from all corners!*

### UMCVFD Provides CPR Training, Three Days Later Anytime Fitness Staff Saves a Life

Cynthia Stephens, of the Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department, trained the staff at Poolesville and Kennington Anytime Fitness gyms, and within just three days, a life at the Kensington location was saved. Anytime Fitness is rightfully proud of its star CPR students and equally proud of site manager Lee, who provided shock treatment with its defibrillator.

Goes to show how important it is to keep CPR certifications current.

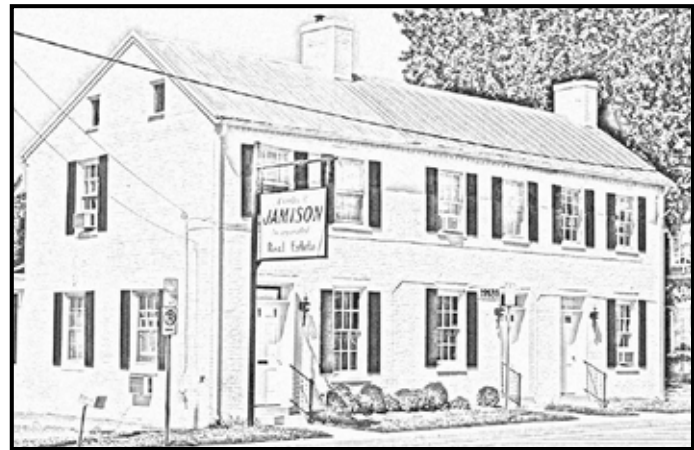
### Tony's BBQ Now Delivers!

Everyone has been raving about Tony Ghamelian's BBQ sandwiches. His vendor truck is in the parking lot of where Professional Cleaners is located. While it might be too cold for outdoor eating on some days this time of year, he has built a nice picnic table seating area so you can grab some BBQ to go, or you can sit awhile, too. While we wait for the warmer weather, Tony has introduced delivery service, so just give him a call for one of the best BBQs around: 240-449-6795.

By the way, Tony comes from a large family where dinner get-togethers were huge. He learned the love of cooking at this mother's elbow, watching her prepare all her amazing family recipes. His dad, a master BBQer, taught him the right way to butcher beef and to marinate it. When he grew old enough to move out, he tried being an x-ray technician for a while, even did some plumbing work as well. In the end, the call of middle eastern barbeque and his pure love of cooking brought him back to his roots. Family is huge for Tony, and he joined his brother -in-law in the barbeque business. "That's why I love being here in Poolesville. The small-town family values is hard to find, and it is so wonderful here. Everyone has been so welcoming!" Originally from California, his fondest wish is to have his wife Mary and seven-year-old son move with him to Poolesville someday.



*Tony's BBQ is now offering delivery service.*



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## Rande(m) Thoughts On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

By Rande Davis

Now that we are on the downward slope of winter, we can look forward to thawing out a bit in the warmer days right around the corner—well, only about a month away anyway. This spring looks to be the best in years for both America and Poolesville with all the signs of the pandemic more promising and hopeful.

In town, we have much to look forward to now. A lot of new, exciting things for our small town, proving change, can be a good thing. Consider what we have this spring which we did not have this time last year.

We have patiently been anticipating the grand opening of Locals Farm Market restaurant with its charming and historic indoor venue. David Therriault has always done everything with high quality from his fresh produce and baked goods to venue design, so it shouldn't be expected to see the same with the new restaurant menu: It will be amazing.

Everyone is relieved to know that Bassett's has a new owner, Erika Myers. Seeing the brown paper that covers the windows only piques our curiosity as to what the new Bassett's will be like. Again, experience counts, and while the menu will be different from the restaurant Myers has in Germantown, we can only expect great things here based on her success there.

Our business community is bursting with new businesses, all sure to revitalize our economy. The charming and unique K2 Café on West Willard has been introducing us to its beautiful baked goods and Indian fare. Katie Horan's Sweet Lemon has proven to be very popular and has been delivering her unique gift selections. Don't forget to check the store out if you need a gift for a party or anniversary or just to have something in hand when going to a friend for dinner.

The amazing barbeque at Tony's vendor truck in town, with its outdoor seating, has introduced delivery service. Forget the cold weather, his menu is only a call away. New on his menu: fried chicken, smashed burger (two fresh beef burgers smashed on the grill with cheese in between), and Philly cheesesteak sandwiches.

We absolutely enjoyed our afternoon at the recently-opened Landmade Brewery. We are excited for things to come as the warmer weather arrives. This

fun venue will be a perfect meeting place for friends to gather for great local brew, snacks, and the pure, simple joy of being together once again.

Windridge Winery not only has proven to have superior wine, but folks, their hillside view of Maryland sunsets will rival anything California has. Really! Better be careful though. It may be way too romantic for some.

Frustration about White's Ferry closure is going to be with us for a while still, but the White's Ferry Grill keeps making sandwiches worthy of the extra trip out to the river.

With games like Trivia reemerging at Cugini's, we just learned that full seating is now back. Dan will continue to bring us the best IP brew in the county.

Our good friends at Calleva have kept up their innovative ways by introducing a new store, Potomac River Supply, with a grand opening on February 26. They are located within their administration building across from Jamison Real Estate. Offering kayaks and related equipment, they will be open from Wednesday to Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Stop by to check it out and be sure to buy some of their incredible breads, cookies, and more in the most unique bakery ever. Where else can you shop, check yourself out, and leave with never a store clerk in sight?

We were sad to lose Oriental Gourmet, but House of Poolesville continues to satisfy our urging for Asian food, and no one can beat the welcoming service of Linda and Chan. If the spring doesn't warm you, their smiles will. Maybe the bands will be back soon!

Mexican Grill has proven to be one of the best Hispanic restaurants in the region and continues to keep surprising us with new items. Just around the corner, Subway is promoting its new, improved freshness!

We hear Heather Soskins is opening a photography studio, so we can't wait to fill you in on more about that in the future.

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce has been a major resource for our businesses and stands ready to welcome even more new entrepreneurs to PACC. If you have a business in town and are not already a member, be sure to come to their annual meeting on February 26 and join the group.

Like runners at the starting block, spring is near and so too is the new, thriving Poolesville economy. With starter pistol in hand raised to the sky, the Monocle is proud to shout out to all local consumers: On your mark, get set, Go!

## Garden

### Peat Moss: Good or Bad?

By Maureen O'Connell

When I was in London this past November, there were several articles in newspapers by environmental leaders and horticulturists about peat moss. They urged gardeners to stop using it in their gardens because of the consequences of harvesting it from peatland habitats on the environment, climate change, and plants and wildlife that inhabit these areas. Monty Don, one of the U.K.'s leading garden writers and broadcasters, strongly urged gardeners to "stop using peat." This issue has been debated in the U.K. for many years. In 2011, the government set up a voluntary target for compost retailers to end the sale of peat moss by 2020. Its use fell by a small amount from 2011 to 2019. It then increased by nine percent in 2020 as COVID lockdowns drove up interest in gardening as a hobby. Recently, the government announced that the sale of peat to gardeners in England and Wales will be banned by 2024 and to professionals by 2030.

What is peat moss? I would guess that the average gardener has no clear idea what peat moss is and where it comes from. Peat moss is dead fibrous material that forms when mosses and other living materials decompose over thousands of years in peat bogs or wetlands. It has been used in northern Europe for centuries as fuel. Like any fossil fuel, it is rich in carbon. It was during the 1940s that peat moss began to be used for horticultural purposes. Does this use justify the loss of peat bogs, caused by its extraction? Monty Don said: "We are using peat at around two hundred times the speed that it can take to be restored. Over ninety-five percent of British peat bogs, which are essential for a whole range of birds and plants, have been lost in this century."

A very worrisome concern regarding this loss is that peatlands store a third of the world's soil carbon, and its harvesting and use releases carbon dioxide, the major greenhouse gas driving climate change. Environmental horticulturists have told us for many years that the extraction of peat requires the removal of a bog's living surface to reach the partially decomposed layers that take centuries to

Continued on page 5.

**The Monocacy**  
**MONOCLE**  
*Keeping an Eye on Local News*

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Continued from page 4.

**Peat Moss: Good or Bad?**

develop. They agree that "peat is the best vegetative carbon sink we have on the planet." Why dig it up?

Why use peat moss in your gardens? Many use it for starting plants indoors. They use it as a soil amendment and for backfilling holes for trees and shrub transplants. Yes, it is a clean, sterile medium; it is moisture retentive, easily available, and good for acid-loving plants, like strawberries and blueberries, but let's take a closer look. Simply stated, it is environmentally bankrupt. Many gardeners use peat moss as a mulch to put on top of the soil. As a soil amendment, which is what the baled form is mostly sold for, peat moss is a poor choice. First, it does not add any nutrients to the soil. It breaks down too fast, compressing and squeezing air out of the soil, creating an unhealthy condition for plant roots. Good soil does not need the addition of peat moss to strengthen a plant's root system. Let the roots find native soil, and they will be stronger. If your soil is slightly compacted and not sufficiently friable, add a small amount of peat to lighten it up.

Debate in the U.S. about the use of peat moss is more muted than in Europe. There are no mandates here or in Canada, the source of the vast majority of peat for North American horticulture. In Canada, peat is not used as a fuel, and its sheer acreage in less populated areas seems to favor its mining. It is the second-largest country on Earth (Russia is first) and has twenty-five percent of the globe's peatlands. Peat producers make a persuasive argument for harvesting sustainably, and Canadian environmental groups have taken no position on peat moss.

**Peat Alternatives**

Gardeners will soon begin to make plans for their spring gardens. Do some homework first. More research is being done on good peat substitutes. While at the garden center, read the labels of the specific products you want. Look for "Peat Free."

Compost is made from rotted plants, green waste, and animal manures. It is renewable and making your own is cheap, but it does take time. Coconut fiber, called coir, is a waste product from coconut processing. It is mainly produced in India, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. Unfortunately, its distant origins add to the question of carbon footprint of its shipment to the U.S., but the reality is that every product has an environmental footprint whether from its production or transport to market, so weigh this into your product selections. Pine bark, finely shredded and composted, is another good and inexpensive substitute. In my book, the best (and least expensive) soil amendment is fallen autumn leaves which you mow over to shred into leaf mold. Every fall, I spread these leaves over all my gardens to age over the winter months and to enrich the soil. You can also buy Leafgro at garden centers.

There are many hot-button issues involved in climate change and an eco-friendly environment. Peat moss concerns might pale next to these. Roundup, the controversial herbicide, is a very pressing problem facing home gardeners, farmers, and the horticultural industry. In the meantime, try to be educated about your garden products selection. Your backyard is one small part of the planet Earth, but it is yours.

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## Senior News

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

For the months of February and March, Poolesville Seniors is offering a variety of virtual programs that will meet community needs for exercise, information, and socialization. Visit their website, [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org), or call 301-875-7701 for more information and to register for the Zoom link for each program. All virtual events are open to the entire community. Please check our website calendar for up-to-date information.

#### Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays Indoor Pickle Ball

Fully vaccinated players are welcome, and masks are required in accordance with Montgomery County regulations. Family Life Center, Poolesville Baptist Church. 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

#### Mondays

**Tai-Chi** with Maureen Ivusic. 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. Virtual.

#### Wednesdays

**Chair Yoga** with Twyla Insalaco. 11:00 a.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. For more information, email [info@poolesvilleseniors.org](mailto:info@poolesvilleseniors.org). 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### Thursdays

**Mahjong with Joyce Kral.** Fully-vaccinated beginner and seasoned players are welcome in person. Masks are recommended. 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.

#### February 21

##### PS Book Club!

This month, readers will be discussing *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah. This novel, set in Texas during the dustbowl, examines one of the darkest periods of the Great Depression. It is a portrait of America and the American Dream as seen through the eyes of one indomitable woman whose courage and sacrifice would come to define a generation. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### February 17

##### Historic Properties with Kenny Sholes

Join Kenny and the Poolesville seniors as we continue our exploration of the historic homes and properties in the Agricultural Reserve. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### February 24

##### Meet the Monocacy Lions

Join Ton Conlon, Heidi Rosvold-Brenholtz, and Roger Brenholtz to hear about this wonderful local volunteer organization and the much-needed assistance the members provide to our local area. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### March 3

##### Small Engine Repair

Want to know how small gas-powered engines really work or how to maintain and repair one? Join Kevin Thomas as he walks us through the workings of a small internal combustion engine, describing some of the common problems and the fixes. 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

Continued on page 7.

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Continued from page 6.

### Senior News

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.

## Fun Fact...

### Snow Rise

Dreaming time has reversed,  
I watch drowned snow

Appear to lift up from the lake;

Reshaping magnified,  
each risen flake

Looms in the air, deliberate  
and slow,

Allowing me to let your picture  
form and wake

Astonished that you have  
returned to go

To watch me watch drowned  
snow lift from the lake.

Dreaming time has reversed—  
and you,

Your red cheeks radiant against  
the wind,

Are gliding toward me on the  
ice into

A frame of glided twilight—I

Again awaken from your being  
gone to find

Your gloved hands covering your  
lips' good-bye

So you can watch me watch  
uplifted snow

As if your absence now  
concluded long ago.

—Robert Pack

### Afternoon in February

The day is ending,

The night is descending;

The marsh is frozen,

The river dead.

Through clouds like ashes

The red sun flashes

On village windows

That glimmer red.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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## Tidbits

### Correction: Boyds Negro School Will Be Open February 20

Please note that visiting dates in the last issue of the *Monocle* for the Boyds Negro School during Black History Month were incorrect. The school will not be open on February 21 as previously stated. The school will be open February 20 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

For generations, a vibrant African American community thrived in Boyds. A collection of photographs of some of the members of this community was recently discovered. Help is needed to identify many of the people in these images. If you'd like to help, please join the Boyds Historical Society during its February Open House event on February 20. Everyone is invited to share memories of Boyds, in-person or virtually. 19510 White Ground Road, Boyds, MD 20841. [www.boydshistory.org](http://www.boydshistory.org)

### Dedication of Rev. Townshend Dade, Jr.'s Plaque for Signing the Fairfax Resolves, 1774



*Celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Fairfax Resolves in 1774.*

On February 6, 2022, on the two hundredth anniversary of the death of Rev. Townsend Dade, Jr. (1742-1822), the Fairfax Resolves Chapter, Virginia Sons of the American Revolution, along with the Gen. William Smallwood Chapter, Maryland Sons of the American Revolution, dedicated a plaque in honor of Rev. Dade at the Monocacy Cemetery. Rev. Dade, a resident of Boyds, was one of twenty-five signers of the Fairfax Resolves in 1774 which claimed equal rights for colonists under the British constitution, rejected the British Parliament's regulation and taxation without colonial representation, and called for the colonies to govern themselves with their own assemblies with the blessing of the British Crown. Just as important, the Resolves called for the end to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The ideals of the Resolves regarding self-government helped pave the way for American independence once relations between the British government and its colonial subjects irreparably collapsed.

When the Fairfax Resolves were adopted on July 18, 1774, they were considered "the most detailed, the most influential, and the most radical" of their time.

The February 6 event was special for a couple of reasons. First, that day marked the two hundredth anniversary of the death of Rev. Townshend Dade, Jr. It also marked the first plaque dedication for a Fairfax Resolves signer.

### Rebuilding Together Montgomery Seeking Recipients

Rebuilding Together Montgomery is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing free critical home repairs and accessibility modifications to help low-income homeowners in Montgomery County remain safely and independently in their homes. RTMC was founded in 1990 and has served more than 2,600 Montgomery County homeowners over the past thirty-two years and engaged more than fifty thousand volunteers to help our neighbors in need. They work

Continued on page 18.

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## Foundations

### Black History in Local Architecture

By Kenny Sholes

I sometimes find myself thinking about how the pictures and physical structures still with us influence the way we tell the stories of those who lived here before us. The structures that have withstood the test of time on this land, largely built for a certain class of our predecessors in this part of Maryland, makes it much easier to tell their stories. The big estates on the hills provide a physical frame of reference to better understand a part of our history.

What about those who were connected to structures that are gone or forgotten? Those who, in many cases, lacked the financial means to build homes, barns, churches, and cemeteries out of the materials capable to last centuries? Their stories are equally as important but much harder to tell.



*In 1917, the Rosenwald Fund donated more than \$70 million for educational and cultural facilities nationwide. This one still standing at our local Beauty Spot was part of that program.*

With February being Black History Month, I'd encourage all to spend some time learning more about the vibrant and historic Black communities surrounding Poolesville (the Sugarland Ethnohistory Project and the Warren Historic Site would be two good starting points). These communities were started in the decade after the Civil War when formerly enslaved peoples found themselves with newfound freedoms. Today, much of the structures associated with these communities have been lost to the ravages of time, Mother Nature, and development, but we are incredibly lucky that many of these communities' most important structures, primarily churches and schools, are still with us. More importantly, many long-standing members of these communities still live amongst us with stories to tell.

One structure in this part of the Ag Reserve that is still with us but seems to have been largely forgotten is the Rosenwald School, located at the Beauty Spot on Jerusalem Road. I'd like to see it receive far more attention by residents given its historic cultural significance. There is currently no signage or marker signifying the building or explaining its history, but perhaps we can change that.

In 1913, Julius Rosenwald, a successful Jewish entrepreneur and philanthropist, partnered with Booker T. Washington to fund the building of six small schools for African American children in Alabama. Rosenwald had been a strong advocate for improving race relations in America, writing in 1911 that "the horrors that are due to race prejudice come home to the Jew more forcefully than to others of the white race, on account of the centuries of persecution which they have suffered and still suffer."

Seeing the impact of his efforts, Julius created the Rosenwald Fund in 1917, donating more than \$70 million dollars to educational and cultural facilities centered on Jewish and African American communities across the country. As part of this effort, thousands of additional schools were built across the country in the 1920s to improve educational opportunities for Black children.

These schools, collectively referred to as Rosenwald Schools, were largely transitioned to other uses in the 1950s and 1960s as desegregation of public schools took place.

Continued on page 13.



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## Youth Sports

### PHS Boys' Basketball: Deeper, Happier, and Winning

By Jeff Stuart

Like all sports teams, the Poolesville High School boys' basketball team has endured interruptions due to the weather and to COVID, but the boys are back on the court, and seeing some success. As the paper goes to print, the team is 9-8.

"It's been a good season so far," said boys' basketball coach BJ DeBuchananne, in his first season, post-COVID lockdown. "The guys have been excited about getting back on the court, especially the seniors who lost their junior year. The energy has been good, and we have been able to get a couple of wins which has helped keep that positive energy going. I think our best game was probably against Sherwood. It was our most complete game offensively and defensively. The only thing we didn't do particularly well was shoot free throws, but in the other phases of the game, we played very well." The boys beat Sherwood at home, 57-54, on January 25.

"We had a few guys, Dylan LeMarr earlier in the season, and Matt Griffith... against Sherwood, get blocks off the backboard. That always gets the guys pretty excited. You know someone is on a fast break and they are going full court, and we come up from behind and get that chase-down block, sort of like Lebron."

"It's been good to finally get some wins," said senior point guard Jeremiah Oyer, at practice after the Sherwood game. "Our first two seasons, we didn't win a single game. We have been playing well as a team. I think our best game was an away game at Springbrook (53-39 win on January 12). We really protected the ball well and played good defense. For me personally the best game was my game against Damascus (65-57 loss at Damascus on January 15). They are a very good team. I scored sixteen points, I think I handled the ball well and didn't turn it over which is really key for us in winning games. Our game tomorrow against Northwest is a big game for us. They are very talented and athletic. It will be a good test for us."

Poolesville beat Northwest, 56-46, on January 27 for their third win in a row.

"It's been a lot more fun than the last couple of years," said senior guard Matt Griffith. "We are more well-rounded. We are really deep, and we are playing good basketball, finally. Dylan is awesome. He plays great defense and gets a lot of rebounds. He is the spark and a big part of our defensive intensity. I think the Springbrook game was the first game this season that we came out and controlled the game from the beginning and never really let them back in the game."

"We have been winning more games than we have been [losing]," said senior forward Lemar. "We have been coming together and getting better and better each game. It's been fun. The whole team is playing well. I love Coach's passion for the game. It really keeps us going. I think the game against Sherwood was our best game because we were able to get the lead early and were able to keep it throughout the game. I don't point to any one game, just the next game ahead of us in the schedule. That is all you can really focus on."

"It's different," said senior guard Ty Grossnickle. "We don't have fans this year. It's quiet for the most part. We have to wear masks. Hopefully, later in the season that will change. We played an outstanding game against Sherwood. We played good for all four quarters and pulled out a victory. The whole team is doing good this year. We are all strong. We are deep. That's a good thing. Hopefully, we will win more games and go far in the playoffs. I am looking forward to



Jaylen Riggs, Ty Grossnickle, Matt Griffith, Dylan LeMarr, and Jeremiah Oyer.

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Continued on page 12.

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## Things to Do

All concerned residents of Poolesville should plan to respond to a survey for preparation of the town's upcoming Master Plan Program. The plan covers land use, housing, environmental issues, agricultural preservation, historic resources, community character, community services, utilities, and economic development. The survey can be found at [www.poolesvillemd.gov](http://www.poolesvillemd.gov).

### Varsity Home Games

MCPS has approved for schools to have spectators back at 25% capacity. The school will only be selling tickets through GoFan. No tickets will be sold at the door. For home games, priority will be given to parents/guardians of players.

A link through GoFan will be set up with a specific timeframe when these tickets can be purchased. The link will be sent to parents by coaches. Then, at noon on the day of the event, general admission tickets will be available until the tickets are sold out. There is a limit of two tickets per transaction.

### February 22

#### Poolesville Green's Monthly Carbon Challenge Meeting

Held via zoom at 7:00 p.m. Free event and all are welcome!

#### Poolesville Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:00 p.m. Zoom link on town website.

### February 24

#### 2022 Annual PACC Meeting

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce will be presenting its annual community service award to

Dr. Duggirala and his staff at Poolesville Family Practice for their outstanding service to the community during the pandemic. PACC will also be presenting donations from funds raised at its annual 5K race on Poolesville Day. The meeting may be attended live or streamed on the chamber's facebook page. *Poolesville Town Hall. 7:00 p.m.*

### February 26

#### Grand Opening of Potomac River Supply

Enter the raffle to win a brand new Waka Billy Goat, take advantage of the one-day celebratory gear sales, and meet other paddlers from the area. Whitewater kayakers, standup paddle boarders, sea kayakers, and recreational paddlesport enthusiasts will find that we have all of the gear needed to get you properly outfitted for all your paddling adventures. *19936 Fisher Avenue in Poolesville. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

### Save the Dates

### March 12

#### Annual Knights of Columbus 3-on-3 Half-Court Basketball Tournament

Entrants are requested to donate one non-perishable food item for WUMCO. Contact Donald Patti at 866-476-8080 or [nash Rambler@yahoo.com](mailto:nash Rambler@yahoo.com) for details. *Poolesville Baptist Church.*

### March 18

#### Annual St. Mary's St. Patrick's Day Party

Dinner, Ceili dance, and Irish entertainment (live Irish band). \$20.00 per person, \$60.00 for family. No ticket sales at door, reservations only at [stmarysb@yahoo.com](mailto:stmarysb@yahoo.com) or 301-972-8660. *St. Mary's Pavilion, Barnesville. 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.*

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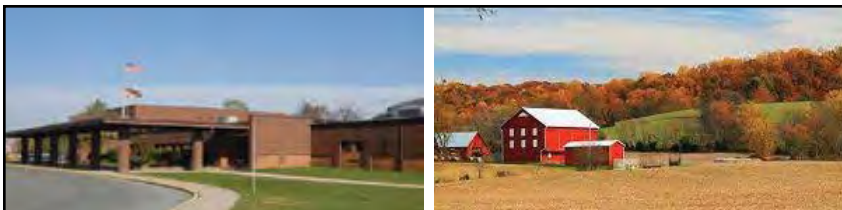
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The Comprehensive Plan will consider:

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- Recreation
- Historic Resources

### QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

Please feel free to reach out to the project team:

**Lauren Good**  
 Project Manager  
 Wallace Montgomery  
[lgood@wallacemontgomery.com](mailto:lgood@wallacemontgomery.com)



Continued from page 10.

### PHS Boys' Basketball: Deeper, Happier, and Winning

Senior Night against Northwood. They are pretty decent, but we should be able to beat them."

"My personal highlight was probably two games ago, against Whitman, when I scored more than two points in a game," deadpanned senior center Jaylen Riggs. "As a team, I think the Damascus game was pretty good for us. We kept it close for three and a half quarters. We ended up losing, but it was a good game, and they are supposed to be a very good team. Losing last season to COVID had a big effect on everyone, but we are back, and this year is a lot better than the past years I have been playing here. We have a better team. Everyone has stepped it up equally. I am looking forward to the playoffs and seeing what we can do."

Juniors Van Rosenbaum, Evan Raines, Abhi Cheerla, Joe Royal, Joss Kim, Andrew Jauch, and Jack Feys round out the 2022 varsity team.

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## Remembrance

### Rita Muir Buell

Rita Muir Buell, 95, of Boonsboro, Maryland, passed away peacefully on February 8, 2022.

Born on April 24, 1926 in Callao, Virginia, she was the daughter of the late Archie Tyler and Mary Douglas Muir.

She was the loving wife of the late Joseph Whitman Buell, III.

Rita is survived by her son, Joseph Whitman Buell, IV, husband of Macie Hopkins Buell of Poolesville; her daughter, JoAnne Rita Buell of Boonsboro; one granddaughter, Samantha Hopkins of Prescott, Arizona; and six nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by one brother, Douglas Muir, and two sisters, Iris Chambers and Mae Taylor.

Rita worked for Project Hope as a young mother and then began a career in commercial property management in Bethesda until she retired. Rita was an avid gardener and took great pride in the eye candy that was her lawn, people driving in the neighborhood would stop and express their admiration. No matter what Rita's initial destination was, she could not pass up a yard sale, a hobby she shared with her late husband. Rita was known by family members, friends, and neighbors as a wonderful cook and baker. In her later years, Rita traveled to many interesting destinations on the East Coast and Europe with her sister Iris. While enjoying all her other activities, Rita loved reading, and you could always find her tucked away with a book in her hand, sometimes awake but sometimes napping.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to a charity of your choice.



Rita Muir Buell

Continued from page 9.

### Black History in Local Architecture

The next time you drive by the Beauty Spot on Jerusalem Road, take note of the long, single-story building just inside the entrance. This structure is one of the few remaining Rosenwald school buildings in the county, and the only one retaining the large windows that were a defining architectural characteristic of Rosenwald schools when originally built. This school, built in 1925 for children from the Jerusalem and Jonesville Communities, was closed in 1949. The materials and architectural design of the building are certainly interesting, but only inasmuch as they help us to better understand the stories of the people who were here on this land before us. Let's all try to seek out the stories from these communities this month.

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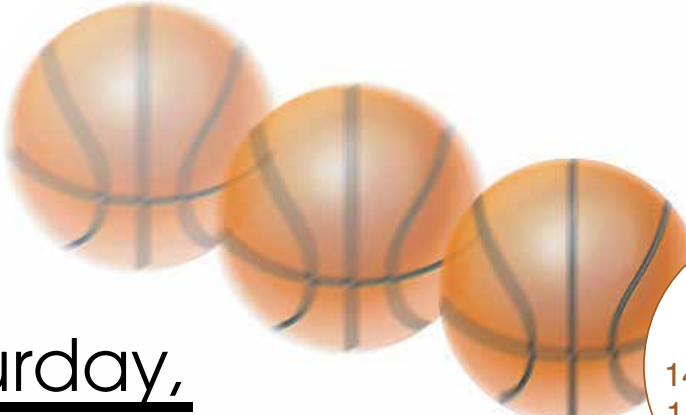




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## In Your Own Backyard

### Forgotten History of the Medley District: Part 1 of 3

By Jon Wolz

Poolesville historian Kenny Sholes does an outstanding job of telling us about the historic homes that are still standing or were once located in what was once known as the Medley District and is now the Agricultural Reserve. I sometimes think about where we live and what life was like long before we arrived. I have done some research and have learned a lot about the people who lived in our area in the early nineteenth century. Since it is Black History Month, my story focuses primarily on some of the forgotten black history in our area. I discovered a remarkable man by the name of William Still who was an African American abolitionist who helped about eight hundred runaway enslaved people escape to freedom.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, settlers came to western Montgomery County (Medley District) from southern Maryland looking for land to farm. They brought with them the knowledge of what grew well where they came from, that included tobacco and corn. They also brought with them the practice of using enslaved people to clear forests and to maintain the farms and their houses. In our area, there were tobacco houses where tobacco was cured before being sent down the Potomac River and, beginning in 1832 (from Seneca) and 1834 (from Harper's Ferry), via the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal to Georgetown. In the Archives in College Park, Maryland, in the Geddes and Roberts Report to the board of the C&O Canal Company in 1828, there is a sketch of Benjamin Latrobe's marble quarry and next to this quarry is a sketch of a tobacco house. Ships could purchase the tobacco directly from the wharves in Georgetown.

In our area at that time, the first homes were one- or two-room cabins with a loft. Often, a separate building housed the kitchen and slaves. Later, homes of brick and stone appeared. The more prosperous farms often included barns, a springhouse, smokehouse, and slave quarters. There were a few elaborate homes with carved fireplace mantels, high ceilings, and plaster walls and ceilings. Some of these homes survived through the years although many have had additions made to them. The slave quarters that were made from timbers are all gone; however, a few slave quarters constructed of stone remain that were near the main house. Some of these masonry slave quarters have been restored for modern uses today. The masonry slave quarters were used by enslaved people who worked in the main house of the farm. In the developed eastern Montgomery County, almost all of the historic homes and farmland are being replaced by housing and commercial developments. Fortunately for western Montgomery County, the Agriculture Reserve was established in 1980 that greatly limited development. Family ties among slaves in the Medley District were rare because few farmers had many slaves. On larger farms, slaves had a log house with a dirt floor, and often a small vegetable garden plot. On small farms, slaves lived with the farmer's family, lodging in the loft over the kitchen. A woman would work as a cook, seamstress, and maid for the farmer's wife. It was common for enslaved husbands and wives to be separated and to belong to different farmers, and children stayed with their mother.

In 1831, a slave named Nat Turner led a rebellion in Southampton County, Virginia. He was a Baptist minister. Turner and a group of followers killed about forty-five to sixty-five white men, women, and children on the night of August 21. Turner and sixteen of his conspirators were captured and executed. The news of this event spread throughout the South and greatly concerned whites who lived below the Mason-Dixon Line.

In the Medley District, there were at least fourteen enslaved men between the



*Sugarland's Rev. Phillip Johnson, 1847 to 1938, was born into slavery.*



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Continued on page 17.

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## Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

### Present Crime

**Assaults:** 19100 block of Dowden Circle, 19600 block of Wootton Avenue.

**Burglary:** 18000 block of Elmer School Road.

**Theft:** 19600 block of Fisher Avenue.

**Vandalism:** Poolesville High School, W. Willard Road.

### Past Crime: 1950 to 1954

Police were investigating the murder of U.S. Navy sailor John Little of Pennsylvania whose body was found in the parking lot of a beer tavern about a mile north of Rockville. Little had been hitchhiking to his home in Loreto, Pennsylvania. He had been stabbed to death. In the meantime a blood-filled car was found half over the seawall at Haines Point, and police presumed that Little had been slain that car. The car had been stolen from a residence in Rockville. The case remains unsolved to this day.

Two alert officers closed two cases at once. Officers Hurd and Johnson came upon two men who were sitting in a parked car. The officers noticed that the rear license plate was hanging down, so they questioned the men. While they were talking, the officers noted that the men were drunk, and upon some prodding, the men told the officers that they had purchased moonshine from a bootlegger. They then searched the trunk and found the

proceeds of several burglaries that had happened in the county over the past few days. Things were not over. The officers summoned two plainclothes detectives who went to the house where the moonshiner lived and purchased liquor. A husband-and-wife team were arrested as well as the burglars.

County police spread out and, during morning raids, arrested twenty-five youths for stealing car parts, radio equipment, and items from construction sites. Captain Joseph Nolte noted that most of the suspects "come from our finest families."

An eighteen-year-old Tobytown man was arrested for two rapes. One was of a neighbor who reported to the police that he had broken into her house and raped her in her bed. The second case was in Washington where he was accused of approaching a twenty-four-year-old woman walking near Francis Junior High and pulling her into some bushes where she was raped.

Godfrey's Drive-In Market in Wheaton had been burglarized thirty times in two months, and the owner asked for police assistance. Two detectives hid in the store after closing time, and on the second night, three boys dropped through the skylight and landed nearly at the feet of the officers. All three were residents of Wheaton, but one was an escapee from the National Training School.

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



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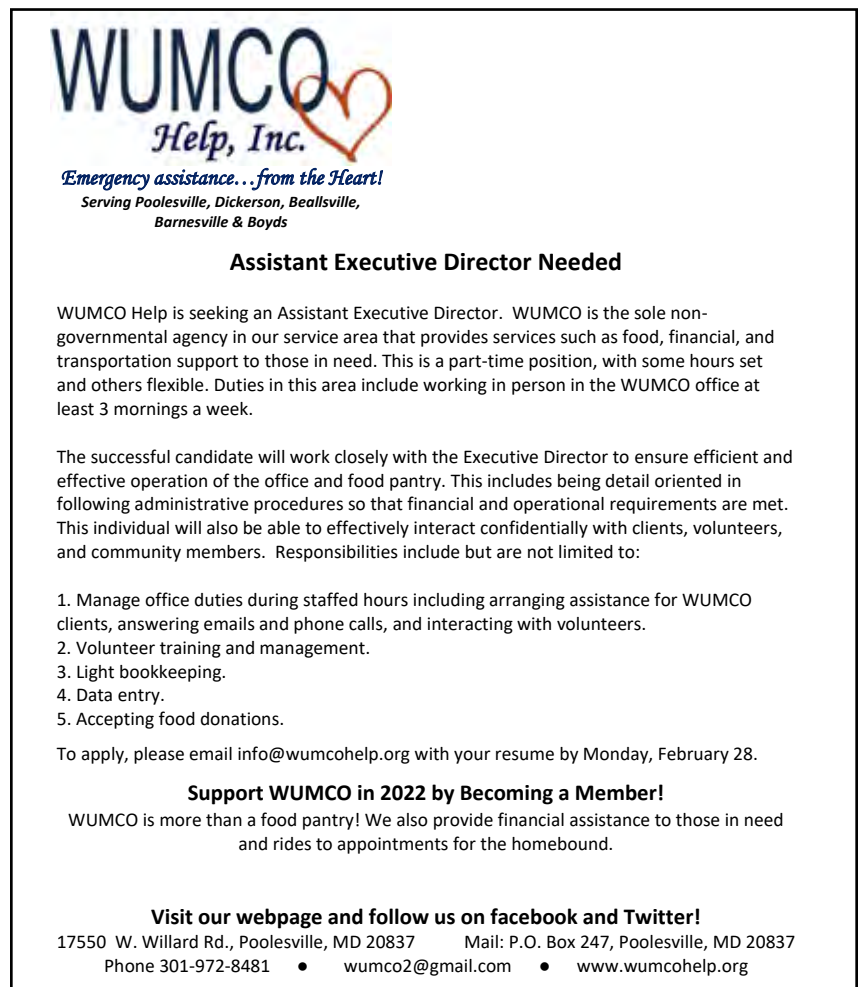
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The successful candidate will work closely with the Executive Director to ensure efficient and effective operation of the office and food pantry. This includes being detail oriented in following administrative procedures so that financial and operational requirements are met. This individual will also be able to effectively interact confidentially with clients, volunteers, and community members. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

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Continued from page 1.

### “Back to the Future” as Yost Returns as Town Manager

Tony Tomasello, on a consulting basis to manage the transition, Brown said that “once you announce you are leaving, you lose authority” in the eyes of staff. The staff has been tremendous during the very difficult changes that have occurred in town leadership over the past several years and feels that some stability now is important. This is particularly true, Brown added, because there are so many loose ends and unfinished projects in town.

When asked about a time frame for Yost’s stint as town manager, Brown said, “I don’t think we want a time frame for how long he remains on the job.” Brown said that the “pivot” he has proposed with Yost’s rehiring is to focus on getting the town and staff back on firm footing. He sees the strategy as a chance to “double down” and get an assistant town manager in place who will learn the ropes and be ready, once a new town manager is selected, to take responsibilities off the shoulders of the manager when needed and step in when the time comes for replacing the top administrator.

In terms of the types of projects that need to be tackled, Yost listed a number of matters, including engineering work on the sewer plant, failure to enforce requirements for public improvements in the Westerly Grove development, and a range of administrative items including completion of a new employee manual and an upgraded budget and finance system.

With regard to Westerly Grove, Yost reminded that all developers sign a Public Improvements Agreement or PIA that specifies when various public improvements such as new wells, road resurfacing, and sewer connections will be completed. The developer had missed deadlines for some PIA commitments, such as the construction of a well site and a park, and that these issues had been left unattended for quite some time.

He mentioned that the town already had an “employee manual” but acknowledged it needed to be improved and updated. The work on that project has moved along based on the work of an HR consultant the town hired, but a lot of work needs to be done to get the manual to its final stages and ensure staff is trained as well on important personnel procedures.

One of the key matters for the town in the near term is coming up with the budget for the next fiscal year. Brown said that he had proposed a set of objectives and projects to guide the commission in its decision-making in the months ahead. The budget is the way policy gets translated into action, so he sees the next budget as very important. For example, the town is receiving a lot of money from the federal government in various forms due to such laws as the American Rescue Act. Brown wondered whether it might not be possible to jumpstart projects such as the Streetscape Plan to improve the town’s main road via the new budget. The Streetscape Plan was created many years ago, and parts of it have gone into effect; however, much of the plan remains unfinished.

Brown was asked why the town has lost two town managers in just a few short years. He said that it was a “confluence of events,” including the pandemic and the fact that the commission had a number of new members who needed time to learn about the town government and its processes. He does think that the failure to communicate well with not only citizens but staff led to some of the turmoil. Town managers don’t usually stay on for more than five years. Yost’s long tenure provided stability, strong communication lines among staff, and increased levels of trust.

Brown also admitted that he has been part of the decision making over the last several years, so there is plenty of blame to go around. Yost said that part of the problem is simply that “no one stepped up and took the reins,” so too many projects and decisions were left unaddressed. He agreed that communications at all levels in town need to be improved and is focused on meeting that challenge.

## Fun Fact...

almanac.com

January and February were the last two months to be added to the Roman calendar (c. 713 BC). Originally, winter was considered a monthless period. Once considered the last month of the year, February eventually (c. 450 BC) moved to its current place as the second month.

February comes from the Latin word *februa*, which means “to cleanse.” It was named after the Roman *Februalia*, a month-long festival of purification and atonement that took place this time of year.

Continued from page 1.

### Commissioners Focus on Sewer Plant Operations at Meeting

sewer flows and capacity. The commission uses a three-year running average of sewer capacity levels in gallons per day (GPD) in order to determine the amount of capacity that remains unused and would be available for allocation. The assessment also considers the total amount of rainfall in each year because this affects the amount of water that flows to the plant and thus its overall treatment capacity.

Yost said that the three-year average GPD, from 2019 to 2021, was 585,000 GPD. Subtracting the amount of water measured in GPD that must be allocated for existing and permitted use, or for uses that are already under consideration, leaves a total of 138,642 GPD that can be allocated. This takes into account all commercial and residential projects. In sum, 138,642 GPD remains for potential allocation.

There were few questions about the report, and it was approved by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

In his town manager’s report, Yost said that Poolesville Town Hall will reopen to the public on February 10. He added that one of the projects he is focusing on is improving communications with the public and the functionality and ease of use of the town’s website. Among other things, he is considering using the town’s blog to respond to questions raised in the public sessions at town meetings. This has been an ongoing issue in town meetings. One idea that was mentioned for incorporation into the town’s website is the use of FAQs, a standard feature of many websites that can help residents get answers to questions that often come up, such as how to report a failure to pick up trash, how to apply for a town advisory body position, or how various aspects of town government work.

Continued from page 14.

### Forgotten History of the Medley District: Part 1 of 3

ages of eighteen and twenty-seven who escaped captivity from five farmers in 1831 and 1832. Their captors put ads in the *Daily National Intelligencer* newspaper offering rewards for their return. The ads also gave descriptions of the runaways, including their age, height, skin tone, clothing worn, any scars, build, and their personality. The ads offered rewards ranging from \$50 if captured in Maryland and between \$100 and \$300 if captured out of state. These men would not be the last to run from enslavement prior to emancipation in Maryland on November 1, 1864. Running away often occurred on a Saturday night after work had finished for the day. There was no work on Sunday, so it was not until Monday after the runaways had more than a full day’s head start would the discovery be made that they were missing. People who ran away were described as “fugitives” because they brought in the law by running away from a lawful enslavement. To read more about this event and others, go to the online Maryland State Archives Legacy of Slavery In Maryland, Case Studies, Stories of Flight, Montgomery.

The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, part of the Compromise of 1850, was a law enacted by Congress that declared that all fugitive slaves should be returned to their masters. Because the South agreed to have California enter as a free state, the North allowed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 to be created. The act was passed on September 18, 1850, and it was repealed on June 28, 1864. The act strengthened the authority of the federal government in the capturing of fugitive slaves. The act authorized federal marshals to require Northern citizen bystanders to aid in the capturing of runaways. Many Northerners perceived the legislation as a way in which the federal government overstepped its authority, due to the fact that the legislation could be used to force Northerners to act against their abolitionist beliefs. Many Northern states eventually passed “personal liberty laws” which prevented the kidnapping of alleged runaway slaves.

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

The Monocle welcomes your contribution.

Send to [editor@monocacymonocle.com](mailto:editor@monocacymonocle.com)

Continued from page 8.

**Tidbits**

primarily with seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, single parents, and members of marginalized communities, assisting with repair and accessibility issues ranging from fixing leaking roofs to installing wheelchair ramps to replacing broken heating systems.

RTMC is seeking candidates as recipients of their service in Poolesville and the Upcounty. RTMC accepts applications for critical home repair help year-round. Their application for home repair services and more information about applying can be found on their website [www.rebuildingtogethermc.org](http://www.rebuildingtogethermc.org) or by calling 301-947-9400 ext. 107.

**Friendly Thrift Shop Preparing for Spring Rush**

Our local Friendly Thrift Shop has been operating from its new location across from Gini's barbershop in Poolesville, and the venue is modern and much like a standard retail store. As winter begins to wane, there is an expectation of an increase of need, so persons wanting to make donations of clothing can make them at the donation entrance to the left of the building.

They specialize in clothes and small items, they do not accept furniture, electronics, stuffed toys, exercise or medical equipment, books, or bikes.



*Giving Local, Getting Local. Who needs local clothes bins, when we have our own Friendly Thrift Shop.*

**C&O Canal National Historical Park Aqueducts Update**

On February 8, 2022, Deputy Superintendent of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, John Noel, sent Jon Wolz of the Seneca Aqueduct Restoration Committee some good news via email, writing, "As requested, I am following up with an email for you to share the news with the rest of the team that was going to fundraise for an Historic Structures Report and Engineering study for the Seneca Aqueduct. The NPS just received news that a funding request for performing an assessment and historic structure report for ten aqueducts, including the Seneca Aqueduct, has been approved. The funding was approved for fiscal year 2023 which means in calendar year 2024 we will start the assessments. This means that we no longer need the external financial support to complete the historic structures report and engineering assessment on the Seneca Aqueduct." In a subsequent email, John Noel wrote, in part, "The funding is targeted for FY2023... It is typical to receive our 2023 funding by April of 2023. Federal Highways (funding source) will conduct the assessments this coming year. Once we have those assessments, then we will develop a project that will fund a historic architect and engineer to review and develop a treatment strategy and cost estimates. Our best guess is that the project will take a couple of years to complete. One company would be contracted to develop the treatment strategy and cost estimates for repairs. The Evitt's Creek Aqueduct has a standalone project that is already funded." On January 20, 2022, John Noel called Jon Wolz to talk first about the mule curb replacement project at the Monocacy Aqueduct and about the Seneca Aqueduct restoration. He said the park decided to perform the mule curb project themselves at the Monocacy Aqueduct and would ask the COCA with help to fund materials purchased. They expect to be finished by June 1.



*Graffiti on the Seneca Aqueduct.*


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### Keeping Pets Winter Safe

*Don't let a warmup in February fool you. Winter has a ways to go.*

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

Temps will be in the 50s, maybe the 60s, around Presidents' Day. Seems like we are headed for an early spring. Well, Punxsutawney Phil thinks no, and so do I. We seem to have a brief warmup every winter in late January or February. Then Ol' Man Winter comes roaring back for a finale. Don't let yourself or your pets be caught off guard.

The important things to not forget after a warmup:

1. Be sure to check the outdoor water supply for all you animals. If they are heated, do not unplug them just because there is a brief warmup. Be sure any ice is removed. Thick ice can take up to 48 hours to melt. Take a moment to clean any water bowls or troughs. Leaves and dirt can build up from the blowing winds. Top off all watering locations.
2. Be careful around standing water, ponds, lakes, and streams. During a brief warmup the ice that has formed can start to weaken and crack. Your pets may think they are still safe to run out on the ice and chase the smells or their wild animal friends. Falling through the ice on a warm day is just as dangerous as a cold day. The water under the ice will still cause hypothermia in as little as 5 minutes' time.
3. Keep your furry pals on their leashes on walks. Frozen odors will be free to entice your team to search for the source. This can at the least get them lost and at the worst get them in physical trouble with the owner of the smell.
4. Watch your pets' feet during warmups. Frozen areas that have been salted and sanded will melt. The salts and sand will mix with the melting ice and can provide irritating and inflammatory agents to your dogs' feet. Be sure to continue to check your pals' feet after every outside event. Washing their feet in cool (not cold or hot) water can help to avoid itchy, raw, bleeding skin between toes.
5. Be sure to check the temperature daily and monitor the long-range forecast. Pets with thin or short coats and pets not used to being outside for any extended time can be at risk when the temperature drops like a rock through the melting ice. We often let our furry friends spend more time outside during a short warmup, then fail to shorten outside time after the temperature plunges.

Lastly, remember, friends don't let friends live outside during the winter months. Enjoy winter's wonders together with your pets. Then everyone should come in to warm up by the fire.



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