

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

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Lori Kohne had some help in shoveling her driveway. See more of Winter's Last Gasp on page 2.



Even the youngest of us wanted to help the Ukrainians. See how on page 4.



Amazing! PHS Ended up with a border wall. Find out why in Tidbits on page 5.



PHS students can now join crew. Find out how on page 8.

A New Solution to Reopening White's Ferry? By Rande Davis

In a recent post on Facebook, the *Monocle* reported that negotiations concerning the re-opening of White's Ferry have moved into a more hopeful direction. In that post, the *Monocacy Monocle* reported from conversations with Chuck Kuhn, the new owner of White's Ferry, that he has been in discussions with Leo Rogers, the county attorney for Loudoun County, about a new arrangement that has been proposed to the owners of Rockland Farm in Virginia.

The dispute over the designation of a public landing in Virginia has been ongoing for over fourteen months. Loudoun County has been developing plans to widen Route 15 going north to ease the heavy traffic congestion. According to Mr. Rogers, negotiations that would include the county gaining the public landing as part of a package is being proposed. While full details are not set at this juncture, the coupling of these objectives might prove helpful in achieving a solution to the White's Ferry dilemma.

Interestingly, one proposal on the widening of Route 15 would include a roundabout at the intersection of Route 15 and White's Ferry Road.

Loudoun County has made it known that it would be seeking financial assistance from Montgomery County in coming up with a final proposal to Rockland. Should the proposed negotiations fail, the most likely alternative to reopening the ferry for Loudoun County would be eminent domain, a lengthy legal process through the court system, that would almost certainly result in a less attractive financial arrangement for Rockland Farm and would include additional and expensive attorney fees for them.

According to Herb Brown, former owner of White's Ferry, Rockland Farm was seeking a \$2,000,000 settlement for a permanent, perpetual agreement on use of the public landing from the Brown family. At another time it was suggested by the Virginia stakeholders to be paid fifty cents per car. This suggestion was rejected by the original

owners as well as the new owners. Such an arrangement would require making Rockland Farm a de facto partner in the business, something neither owner would agree to, and concern that such a proposal would easily change time and time again disallowed this proposition.

Before the Brown family sold the ferry to Chuck Kuhn, they had offered \$400,000 to Rockland Farm for the landing, which is small (under seven thousand square feet) and is unusable due to being in a flood zone. There is no viable way to build or farm the land. It is reported that a higher amount was subsequently offered by the new owner but turned down.

That Loudoun County intended to declare the site a public landing in the 1870s is of no doubt. Due to an inadequate survey at the time, the issue is legally obscured. That the county has always viewed it as a public landing is also not in doubt. They recognized

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Introducing the Real 'Just Do It' Woman

By Rande Davis

The recent news of Bassett's Restaurant closing hit the Poolesville community especially hard since no one else in town offers a full American-style menu. Bassett's Restaurant had been a cornerstone of local commerce and a touchstone of community fellowship since 1993. Over these three decades, the restaurant had become beloved for its country friendliness, comforting American fare, and a venue of warm ambience. Only Selby's Market, in its heyday, could be considered a greater meeting space for residents to occasionally run into each other, informally updating each other on their lives, and then moving on while smiling to themselves, appreciating this rural community where glad tidings are more than a holiday theme. People were pleased when the restaurant, that was once called Titus's Tasty Cupboard

in the fifties and Larry's in the sixties, retained its iconic name under the most recent ownership.

The new owner, Erika Myers, has been a part of Poolesville for fifteen years. Her children, Bianca, 16, and Chris, 11, both attend Poolesville schools. Her husband, Nick, works for the health department as a case worker. Her parents and siblings came to America in 2004 when she was just seventeen years old from El Salvador, knowing they had to work hard, make money, save, and one day, maybe, own their own business. For Erika and her siblings, Cecilia and Gabriel, that meant a restaurant. The path to her place as the new owner was a journey of fourteen-to-fifteen-hour work days, double shifts, and a willingness to learn. Erika recalled gaining confidence

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The new owner of Bassett's, Erika Myers, keeping the business close to her home.

Family Album

Winter's Last Gasp



Town Government

Commissioners Adopt Energy Efficiency Policies and Hear Budget Requests

By Link Hoewing

The Town of Poolesville commissioners adopted policies on the use and promotion of electric vehicles and solar panels at their March 7 meeting. In a sign that the town is transitioning towards more “normal” times ahead after two years of COVID-19 restrictions, they also heard budget requests related to two of the town’s marquee events, the annual Poolesville Day celebration and the Fourth of July fireworks display.

With regard to energy use and efficiency, Joyce Breiner, with Poolesville Green and a member of the town’s Sustainability Committee, presented background on two initiatives to promote the use of electric vehicles and the adoption of solar panel systems in an effort to reduce carbon emissions. In the case of electric vehicles, Breiner said Montgomery County had launched an electric vehicle purchasing cooperative to support residents and local businesses as they considered moving towards owning electric vehicles (EVs). The Electrification Coalition, a nonprofit organization that works to facilitate widespread adoption of EVs across the country, is the program’s lead implementation partner, under a contract with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) and the direction of Montgomery County. A number of local governments are part of the coalition, and they work to educate the public about EVs and even negotiate programs that will reduce the costs of purchasing them.

In the case of solar panels, Breiner said that a large number of local governments —Gaithersburg, Rockville, Takoma Park, Bowie, Arlington, Washington, D.C., and Montgomery County—have joined forces to promote residential solar installations. This cooperative, collaborative co-op will do everything from providing educational materials to working with solar panel installation companies on financing and incentive options for citizens. A key focus will be educational sessions that each jurisdiction will be holding for its citizens in the coming months.

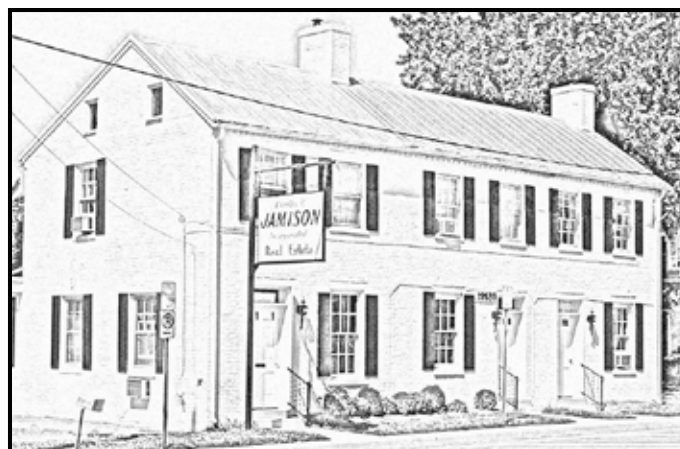
The Poolesville Sustainability Committee, Breiner said, had worked with both of these co-op initiatives and believes that Poolesville should sign on to both as a partner. In a unanimous 5-0 vote, the commissioners voted to participate in both projects.

After these discussions, the commissioners also adopted a new set of renewable energy use and efficiency policies. Town Manager Wade Yost explained that, with regard to the energy efficiency policy, the town would estimate total energy usage and the amount of building space in square feet managed by the town. Energy is expended by the town, both to provide services such as sewer and water, and to heat, light, and cool town buildings. By establishing baselines in these areas, the town can then establish energy efficiency targets in an effort to reduce energy use and reduce the town’s carbon footprint.

In addition to this policy, Yost also recommended that the town adopt a renewable energy policy. Under this policy, the town would declare its intent to take a leadership role in renewable energy generation within the Town of Poolesville, partnering with the Maryland Energy Administration and enrolling as a Smart Energy Community. Under the policy, the town would commit to be a socially-responsible leader by increasing the use of its own renewable energy production. Yost noted that, by doing so, the town not only is a better environmental steward, it also reduces costs to its citizens. Among other things, the town would “commit to reducing conventional centralized electricity generation serving its buildings by twenty percent by this year and substitute renewable energy generation systems.” The town already has a solar array and is moving to adopt other initiatives, such as the installation of LED lights for its streetlighting system, to reduce energy use. In part, the new policy is focused on how best to sustain the progress the town has already made in using renewable energy. As part of its commitment, the town will report electricity consumption and renewable generation capacity annually to the Maryland Energy Administration in order to assure that it accomplishes its goals and exceeds the twenty percent mark over time. The commissioners unanimously approved the two policies.

Kevin Schramm, the Chair of the Poolesville Day Committee, appeared next to explain the grant request to the town made by the committee to help fund its activities. Schramm said that the committee had begun to adopt a number of efficiencies, such as eliminating paying for an old landline phone used in the past

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Rande(m) Thoughts Let's Hear It for the Great American Entrepreneurial Spirit

By Rande Davis

The two major stories in this issue highlight something oddly in common. Both are tied to the powerful concept of entrepreneurialism. The new owners of the ferry and Bassett's exemplify that spirit perfectly.

After months of quiet from all the parties involved in the White's Ferry landing dispute, it was a real relief that Loudoun County has put some new ideas on the table. Combining the widening of Route 15 in Virginia with the need for Loudoun to take control of the public landing is a brilliant approach.

Part of the problem stems from a perception that the operation of the ferry is much more profitable than it has been and, discounting the obvious, that it will not be as profitable going forward. The cost of gas has risen, and the pandemic has permanently altered past commuting patterns. Ed Brown always referred to the operation as being "for the pleasure and convenience of the public." He had a love affair with the ferry and was able to put up with much more than most, including severe, periodic flooding.

Many do not know that the ferry service itself was part of the White's Ferry Foundation. That foundation exists and is still owned by the Browns, and even as recently as within the past six weeks, many worthy causes in and around Poolesville have benefited from donations from the organization. The truth, though, is that only about twenty percent of the foundation's revenue came from the ferry, but eighty percent of the problems did. Investments drive the foundation, not ticket sales.

While the service has been profitable for sure, the question going forward remains: How profitable? Asking \$2,000,000 for the perpetual rights for the use of the landing was dead upon arrival and not even a serious consideration. For some, paying fifty cents a car seemed a minor increase, but there was nothing offered that made that a perpetual, final amount. To accept fifty cents per car today only really meant for now. In any number of years, there was nothing to prevent reopening the discussion and demanding more for the cars, again and again. In order to resolve the dispute, the issue of the landing rights must be clean cut, and

something that ends the discussion now and forever.

One thing is certain: Loudoun County will be widening Route 15, and in the final analysis, the county will have its way. The road is going to be widened because residents' usage demands it. Not even Rockland Farm can stop that. We have noted time and time again that the county declared a public landing at the end of the nineteenth century, and all that is being asked now is to restate that objective and intention with clarity. It is not the same as declaring a fresh, brand new eminent domain. Doing so again is nothing new here.

Without the ferry operating as a vehicle crossing, there is a bright future for the facility that could still help the Montgomery County economy, create jobs, and meet Mr. Kuhn's interest in preserving history, and while not as desirable as the river crossing, this new use would have strong economic merit. What is that other option? The ferry industry throughout Maryland at one time was a major, powerful engine for economic growth and prosperity in the state. Some have said there were up to 130 ferries throughout Maryland. The history of this industry in Maryland, coupled with the proud history of the C&O Canal, makes the landing at White's Ferry a perfect location for a vibrant tourist magnet for families eager for an afternoon daytrip to a museum, to learn history, maybe to enjoy a lunch on the ferry boat, or even take the kids for a ride on one. Families could still "ride" the ferry across and back just for fun without landing on the other side. Remember, Maryland owns the land under the Potomac River all the way across. The ferry can always go to the river's edge and come back. No permission from anyone in Virginia is necessary. Some question the location for a museum due to its flood zone, but a structure built on pilings solves that problem. Some propose this historical usage to be developed, even if the ferry reopens. Wild eyed and crazy? Maybe it's just entrepreneurial.

Our other story is a true inspirational example of the American dream. Erika Myers and her family immigrated as others have for generations. She started work in the restaurant business at the bottom, making salads and desserts and waiting tables. She worked hard, very, very hard, and learned cooking from others, some with the degrees and others with just a lot of experience. She, along with her sister and family, rose to the point

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Local News

Valaree Dickerson: Hometown Humanitarian

By Maria Briançon

What do you do when you can't stop watching the painful stories of millions of Ukrainians fleeing their homes, cities, and country? If you're the force of nature with a can-do attitude named Valaree Dickerson, you get on Facebook and mobilize your local—and global—contacts into a community, all-hands-on-deck humanitarian relief effort—and you connect all the dots of a complicated puzzle in just one week's time.

From start to finish, Valaree says she had no concerns that Poolesville would sit this crisis out. Ours is a community whose generosity has been tested in the past. Many answered the rallying cry when Valaree, Cathy Bupp, and others organized relief for flood victims in White Sulphur Spring, West Virginia in 2016, or the time before that when they drove truckloads of donations to aid victims of Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

While those weather events were destructive and disrupted many lives,

helping this time posed global challenges involving crossing an ocean to another continent and overcoming hurdles the former Poolesville commissioner had never encountered. Could this one be a metaphorical bridge too far?

Early on, pieces fell into place. At the outset, Joy Hallfors of Anytime Fitness and Deb Lingle graciously answered the request to provide retail space as a drop-off site.

The next challenge was how to decide which supplies to collect and who was equipped to receive them. The most pressing concern was to provide the greatest impact for the most people. Valaree took to social media in search of contacts in Poland. By the uncanniest twist of fate, a longtime family friend from her days in Annapolis, Mary McGinn Vickers, provided the answer she needed.

Mary led Valaree to Tomasz, a pastor in Poland who was housing refugees from Ukraine. After connecting with him via WhatsApp, Valaree was convinced he was the right person for the job and only too ready to receive and distribute Poolesville's collected bounty.

After reviewing the vast needs, Valaree and Tomasz settled on a concise list of necessary non-medical

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Tidbits

Truth and Hope Outreach Group

The Truth and Hope Outreach Group, which meets twice a month at St. Peter's, is an interdenominational group of women who create clothing and comforters/quilts as well as school and hygiene kits for children in need throughout the world.

Tina Grove is the coordinator, and through her and other group members' connections with various missionaries plus through their own missionary trips, they can identify worthy recipients. Additionally, through these sources, specific needs can be identified.

It is not unusual for the participating missionaries or church groups to be able to deliver the created items often filled with baby items or kit bags. Often, when they go home on furlough so to speak, they will take an extra-large suitcase filled with baby items or other kit bags. This ensures that items are safely delivered where needed and saves postage.

While the group often receives notes of appreciation along with photos of the children and their families who are recipients of their gifts of love, for Tina, creating "baby bundles" is one of the highlights for volunteers in this group. "All of the gifts we create are highlights! I love doing this together!"

Amazing! PHS Has a Border Wall!

Relax, it's not what you think. The high, black-netted fence is for the first phase of new school construction. The construction fence was installed in preparation for the demolition of the front of the building.

The main entrance has been closed off, and the new main entrance to the school has been moved to the side of the building off of Wootton Road. Morning bus drop-off and afternoon bus pick-up has also been moved to this same location. Visitors will now enter the school through the new main office entrance.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will occur soon.

Historic St Paul's Church Gets New Roof

The original land deed for Historic Sugarland called for "a place of excellence for persons of African descent." Moved by a 150-year tradition of faith, family, and community, the nonprofit Sugarland Ethno-History Project maintains their historic 1893 church, the cemetery behind it, and a vast collection of artifacts, documents, and images, all part of a larger effort to honor those who have come before and share their story with the wider world.

Along with a new roof, there will be even more need for donations. Readers may do so by visiting sugarlandproject.org.



Sugarland's historic St. Paul's Church gets a new roof.

Monocacy Lions Welcomes 'Home for Our Troops' Recipient with Gift Certificates

On March 6, the Monocacy Lions Club presented Sgt. Emmanuel "Manny" Melendez-Diaz, a wounded army warrior, and his wife with \$1,200 in gift certificates from eleven Poolesville area businesses as a welcome to Poolesville.

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Senior News

Poolesville Seniors Presents Virtual and In-Person Programs

Visit the Poolesville Seniors website, poolesvilleseniors.org, to see their wide variety of virtual and in-person programs that are open to the entire community. Note: Our first in-person event on April 5.

Weekly Events

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. No class March 23.

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. 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.

March 21

PS Book Club

PS Book Club will be discussing *The Hour of the Witch* by award-winning American author, Chris Bojhalian. This historical fiction novel confronts Puritan society from the perspective of twenty-four-year-old Mary Deerfield. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

March 24

Off the Beaten Path: The Richness of Richmond

Travel expert Barbara Paulson will lead us on a virtual tour of Richmond, Virginia. We will discover the largest collection of Fabergé eggs this side of Moscow, visit one of the best public gardens in the U.S., hear some Civil War stories, and more! 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

March 31

Make Your Own Chocolates with Chocolate and Chi

Maureen Ivusic of Chocolate and Chi will tell us about the health and nutrition advantages of making your own chocolates, especially for certain health conditions. Learn just how easy chocolate making can be with the right combination of ingredients. DIY kits available for purchase. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

April 5

Calling All Baseball Lovers from 9 Months to 99 Years!

Stories from the 1956 Washington Senators Baseball Season

Join Bill "Bat Boy" Turner and Ed "Boy in the Scoreboard" Baruch for this in-person, family-friendly evening in which they share their up-close and personal experiences from the 1956 Washington Senators' Baseball Season. Learn secrets and insights into the Dugout, Bullpen, Clubhouse, and On-the-Field Experiences with film clips and demonstrations. *Speer Hall at Poolesville Presbyterian Church.* 7:00 p.m. In person.

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Let's Hear It for the Great American Entrepreneurial Spirit

where they were able to buy the restaurant. To her, Bassett's is not just another restaurant; it is her American dream. Her goal is to provide the kind of dining experience most of us want. We play a role in her dream and need to be supportive. For the Facebook, peanut-gallery food critics who deem it is their role to run down others trying to make a living, all we can say is: Get a life. Better, yet, get a job and be sure to ask your boss to critique your work on the internet. Not everyone will like what she creates. Nothing is right for everyone. For now, choose to respect that difference of choice. If you really think she needs to do something different, then gather the fortitude and maturity to tell it to her directly. We know she will be forever grateful if you do—so will the rest of us.

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Senior News

April 7

Meet the Poolesville Independent Order of Odd Fellows

Join Poolesville residents and IOOF Grand Lodge of Maryland Grand Secretary, Laura Teate, and Deputy Grand Master, Jeff Teate. They will recount the history of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows from its founding in Baltimore and its mission: the betterment of man. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

April 14

Remember Shady Grove Music Fair

Join Montgomery County historian Ralph Buglass as he recounts the heyday of Gaithersburg's Shady Grove Music Fair, the entertainment mecca for the D.C. area in the 1960s and 1970s. 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. 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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Youth Sports

Rowers Are Back at Riley's Lock

By Jeff Stuart

Wouldn't you like to get away? Where everybody knows your name—and they're always glad you came?

DC National Rowing Club, a co-ed, competitive rowing club open to high school rowers in Montgomery County, provides just that opportunity, but be prepared for a challenge because crew races and practices are physically demanding. "My favorite part of being a member of the team is the friendships I have made from it," said Poolesville High School senior Harriet Gaughan. "Transitioning from swimming, a primarily non-team sport, to rowing, with four to nine other people in a boat was a big difference, and I loved it. Being able to work as a team to move a boat fast is a great feeling." Gaughan has been on the team since the summer of 2020 varsity 4+ boat (four rowers and a coxswain). Harriet has committed to row at the University of Delaware. She finished in third place in the women's 200-yard medley relay at the state swimming championships on February 26, and sixth in the 100-yard backstroke.

"The team has trained five days per week this winter on rowing machines to prepare for the spring season," said coach Julian Canha. "In addition, the team made two trips to the Naval Academy to use their state-of-the-art, indoor rowing tanks. In January, the rowing club held an erg (rowing machine) tryout at Poolesville High School to raise awareness of the sport and club.

"Last fall was the club's most successful season to date, with both male and female rowers of all experience levels winning medals at some of the biggest races in the region. The fall season was also marked by the team's seniors making decisions about where they will row in college. Harriet and Tilly Gaughan, competing in the girls' varsity four, came in second out of twenty-three competitors at the Occoquan Chase event, second of thirty-five in Head of the Occoquan, and second of nineteen at Bill Braxton Regatta.

Cooper Paksima, racing in the boys' JV 4+ won the Head of the Occoquan and won at the Frostbite Regatta. Milla Brizhik, competing in the girls' JV 4+ came seventh out of thirty-six at the Head of the Schuylkill. Will Jauch, racing in the boys' novice 8+ won his races at the Occoquan Chase and Bill Braxton regatta, and Audrey Pioli, competing in the girls' novice 8+, won her race at the Bill Braxton Regatta.

The fall regatta season was extremely successful for the varsity boys' and girls' boats. At the Bill Braxton, the boys' 4+ (Reider McFeely, Fred Mulford, Oliver Abushacra, Alex Myler, and Callie Burd) took home gold, and the girls' 4+ (Tilly Gaughan, Christina Steinki, Harriet Gaughan, Stephanie Mo, and Amina Mai) took silver. The boys' team, which includes some kids from Darnestown and Gaithersburg, placed second at the Head of the Occoquan.

"The Head of the Occoquan is the biggest fall race in the D.C.-metro area, and the Bill Braxton race is the biggest race in the region and is always held towards the end of the fall season. The team is continuing to grow, with a roster of eighty. I expect that we will carry momentum from this fall and winter into our spring racing. The team aims to qualify more of its rowers for Youth Nationals than ever before and to achieve its highest ever ranking."



The D.C. Rowing Club gives our students a new opportunity in sports and fitness.

April 2 is Bring a Friend to Practice Day (open to all middle and high school students) from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Spring events also feature an annual fundraiser to raise funds for new boats and oars. Spring competition events include the James River Sprints, Richmond, Virginia on April 9; the Mercer Sprints, West Windsor, New Jersey on April 23 and 24; the US Rowing Mid-Atlantic Championship, West Windsor, New Jersey on May 14 and 15; the Row NJ Dual, Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey; and on June 5, they will compete in the Potomac River Sculling Championship, on home water. This is an intrasquad singles competition.

The club has recently opened registration for Learn to Row classes this summer. These classes, open to rising seventh to eleventh graders, provide an introduction to the sport and are a great option for anyone looking to give the sport a try. The website is dcnationalrowing.org. The coach can be contacted at julian.canha@gmail.com.



Rural Women's Republican Club (RWRC) to offer a \$3,500 scholarship for a vocational, trade school, or certification program, including a certification from a community college during the 2022-2023 academic year.

This scholarship is intended for students attending Poolesville High School, Damascus High School, Clarksburg High School, Quince Orchard High School, Seneca High School, and Northwest High School. Students from these schools who are about to complete their senior year of high school, students already enrolled in a trade school, and non-traditional students under the age of 21 are eligible to apply. The student will need to answer an essay question as part of the application process. All inquiries, as well as any questions regarding the application or essay, may be directed to the following e-mail: ruralwrc@gmail.com; or for more information, may call/text (301) 655-4711. Applications and essays must be received by **Friday, April 29, 2022.**



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Business Briefs

Yoga, Adult Ballet, and Tap: Plenty of Choices for Exercise and Fun

Essence Studios, Dance & Performing Arts in Poolesville is now offering four yoga classes a week, suitable for novice and seasoned yogi alike!

Claire Jones, owner and artistic director of Essence Studios, said, "Both our teachers are crowd favorites and great at providing alternatives that accommodate each individual's ability and experience level."

The talented Joyce-Melamed Berger instructs on Mondays at 6:00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., while the equally-talented Lynn Schaeber leads the classes on Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m.

In addition to their popular adult/teen yoga program, they have also continued the Adult Ballet class on Mondays at 7:00 p.m. which offers a different way to stay fit and increase flexibility. This class is also geared towards any level, taught by the Diane Robinson who caters the movement each week to those present.

The studio also hopes to add an Adult Tap class, possibly before the end of the spring semester, as an introductory mini session in preparation for the summer schedule! Claire hopes to see some new faces at the studio.

Bring on the Bands!

As a sign of restrictions loosening up, the House of Poolesville is starting to bring back live music entertainment. Long a venue for local musical talent, as springtime comes upon us, AHOP is busy lining up the bands!

Does Losing Weight Have You in a Pickle?

Have you been trying to cut back on the carbs a bit? Being on a Keto, low-carb diet can work, but it can also be very challenging. All of us know that no matter what diet you may be on, you must make an exception for pizza, at least occasionally, or life itself might not be worth it!

The greatest challenge is on Mondays when Cugini's offers its BOGO (buy one, get one) special. If you're like me, you find a way around that by telling yourself that you can always freeze leftovers. Funny how there never seems to be any, though.

After pizza, subs become my next greatest temptation. Not to worry, White's Ferry Grill has a rather unique solution of sorts to this dilemma. They remove the roll and use a giant pickle! It's clearly a two-fister, and rather slippery at times, but since it is still loaded with their locally-famous hefty portions of meat and cheese, it's delicious. Sound strange? Well, remember how often you have a pickle with your sandwich. This simply cuts a step, gets you right to the heart of the matter, and you now have a fully carb-less sub! Try it!

Continued on page 17.

Continued from page 5.

Tidbits

The club purchased all gift certificates, but Poolesville Tire and Auto, when learning whom the gift certificate was for, chose to provide it to the Lions at no cost.



To the sergeant's left is his wife, Natibel. Milton Andrews, club treasurer, sitting, and Tom Conlon, club president, behind.



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Market Minute

Focus On: Poolesville, Dickerson, and Northwestern Montgomery County Housing Market February 2022

Units Sold	Active Inventory	Median Sale Price	Days On Market
41	22	\$685,000	35



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Down -35%
Vs. Year Ago



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Vs. Year Ago



Up 19%
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In Your Own Backyard

Forgotten History of The Medley District: Part 3 of 3

By Jon Wolz

In September 1851, runaways from farms in the Medley District, Nelson Coe, Len, Henson Lee, and Lloyd McCubbins, were arrested in Fisherville, Pennsylvania on suspicion of participating in the events of Christiana, Pennsylvania where a slaveholder from Baltimore County was killed and another man badly injured earlier in the month when they attempted to retake three runaway slaves. After the murder, those suspected of being responsible threw the state and the country into a turmoil. Henson Lee was owned by Mary E. Shreve, Len was owned by John L. T. Jones, Lloyd was owned by Hezekiah Trundle, and Nelson was owned by Esther Trundle. The slaveowners' farms were located along what is today Martinsburg Road between Martinsburg and Dickerson. The four runaways appeared in a Pennsylvania court where the judge dismissed the charges because there was no evidence that these four men were involved in the events at Christiana. While the judge was writing out his verdict, three policemen, hired by federally-appointed Slave Commissioner Richard McAllister, arrested the four runaways in the courtroom. They were taken to the commissioner's office, where, after a speedy hearing, they were taken to Baltimore by McAllister and ten of McAllister's officers. Once in Baltimore, the four were handed over to their owners where they were sold by their owners for \$3,400. The owners gave McAllister the \$800 reward money. There had been a reward posted for \$800 for the capture of the four runaways that enabled policemen who worked for McAllister to recognize the men and to arrest them. Once arrested, McAllister telegraphed the slaveowners to come to Harrisburg where, after the four runaways were taken from the state court, the owners testified in McAllister's court room. The day after McAllister's verdict, the slaveowners from Maryland wrote a joint lengthy letter that was sent to the editor of the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper that was published and later published in papers around the country. The letter said in part that when the four runaways saw the owners, they said they had been enticed away by boatmen on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, that they had a very hard time since their escape sleeping among they mountains without food or shelter, and they were perfectly willing to return home. The letter concluded by saying "that no Southern man need to hesitate to go to Harrisburg in pursuit of his constitutional rights, and there is no apprehension to be entertained by mob violence there so long as the fugitive law is administered by the present U.S. Commissioner and his fearless efficient body of officers." Richard McAllister rose to prominence and infamy as a federally-appointed fugitive slave commissioner for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

In 1854, Adam Brooks escaped from farmer John L. Phillips who farmed the 118 acres owned by his father Philip Phillips who was a shoemaker. John lived with his mother and father along with eight siblings. The farm was on Edwards Ferry Road near present-day White's Ferry Road and was across from East Oaks. The slaves on the Phillipses' farm produced Indian corn, oats, Irish potatoes, and butter.

Adam reached the Vigilance Committee of Philadelphia on January 20, 1855, where he met William Still who was a famous African American abolitionist. Fortunately, Still documented his meetings with people who arrived at his door, and these people come to life in a book he wrote, *The Underground Railroad*. Adam escaped from what he referred to as "Hardtown, Montgomery County." In his notes, Still wrote that "Hardtown lost a rather promising article of merchandise in the person of Adam." He went on, "The so-called master, John Phillips, believed in selling, and he sold Adam's mother, brother, and sister only two years before his escape. Adam had a deadly hate for Phillips. Phillips kept threatening to sell Adam and forced Adam to believe that his master was not only a



William Still

Continued on page 11.



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Things to Do

March 18

Grand Opening

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a ribbon-cutting ceremony to welcome Heather Soskin Photography. 20005 Fisher Avenue. All are welcome. 4:00 p.m.

March 19

St. Mary's Annual St. Patrick's Party!

Includes dinner, Ceili dancers, and live Irish band entertainment. Great traditional Irish food and beer. No Sales at the door. Reservations required. Call 301-972-8660 or email stmarys@yahoo.com. St. Mary's Pavilion, Barnesville. 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

March 21

Poolesville Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall or Zoom. 7:30 p.m.

PHS Varsity Home Games

Baseball versus Quince Orchard. 3:30 p.m.

Boys' tennis versus Walter Johnson. 3:45 p.m.

March 22

Annual WUMCO Meeting

Learn of new creative plans to assist the area. Zoom meeting. Email info@wumcohelp.org for login information. 7:00 p.m.

March 23

PHS Varsity Home Games

Girls' tennis versus B-CC. 3:30 p.m.

Boys' lacrosse versus Paint Branch. 7:15 p.m.

March 25

PHS Varsity Home Games

Girls' tennis versus Gaithersburg. 3:30 p.m.

Softball versus Walter Johnson. 3:45 p.m.

Coed volleyball versus Kennedy. 5:30 p.m.

Boys' volleyball versus Kennedy. 7:00 p.m.

March 26

PHS Varsity Home Game

Baseball versus Walter Johnson. 2:00 p.m.

March 28

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' lacrosse versus Seneca Valley. 7:00 p.m.

March 29

PHS Varsity Home Games

Boys' tennis versus Northwest. 3:30 p.m.

Coed volleyball versus Winston Churchill. 5:30 p.m.

Boys' volleyball versus Winston Churchill. 7:00 p.m.

March 30

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' lacrosse versus Northwest. 7:15 p.m.

April 1

PHS Varsity Home Games

Softball versus Watkins Mill. 3:45 p.m.

Girls' lacrosse versus Clarksburg. 7:00 p.m.

April 2

PHS Varsity Home Game

Baseball versus Watkins Mill. 2:30 p.m.

Continued from page 10.

Forgotten History of The Medley District: Part 3 of 3

hard man as a driver on the farm, but at heart he was actually a bad man. It was Adam's duty to break his fetters and seek his freedom in Canada."

Before reaching the Committee, Brooks worked for a short time as a hand on a Pennsylvania farm; however, he soon learned from friends that Phillips had discovered his location, and "was pretty hot in pursuit." Brooks escaped with the help of his friends, safely reaching the Committee in January. He then set out for Canada. William Still described Brooks as short, strong, and pleasant, and believed that Brooks would have no difficulty "making a good citizen in Canada." He left the Vigilance Committee for Canada with a new identity, William Smith.

In 1859, a young man from New Hampshire who was out of work traveled south and eventually ended up in Cumberland, Maryland where he visited with friends. One of his friends knew a C&O Canal boat captain named Captain Coss who invited the man to take a boat ride down the canal to Georgetown, across the Alexandria Aqueduct to Alexandria, and back to Cumberland. Captain Coss's boat was named "Caroline of Williamsport" in honor of the town from which he hailed.

About thirty years later, this traveler wrote an anonymous manuscript that eventually made it to the Maryland Historical Society. On the trip back up the canal, as they reached Montgomery County, Captain Coss commented, "We must be on the lookout for Montgomery County merchants."

"What is a Montgomery County merchant?" the young man asked.

"If you hear a whistle or any peculiar sound, stop the boat and run it over to the berm side and you will see."

They both kept their ears open but heard not a sound; either the merchants were not abroad, or they did not like the looks of them as customers. The captain made an explanation, saying the black people occasionally felt the want of a little money to spend and were not long in finding some commodity for which the boatmen were willing to exchange it. The captain said that if one of these merchants was seen through the shadows of the trees loaded down with a bag of corn or oats, a few dozen eggs, a ham, or even a pig, he would not pass him but would stop and take pity on him. He would not ask him if he was free or a slave.

As they were boating one night up the canal, Captain Coss heard a whistle and stopped the boat. An ancient black man stepped out of the woods. After considerable parleying on both sides and when the merchant was satisfied everything was safe, he led out of the woods a 150-pound pig which he offered at a very reasonable price. The offer was accepted, and the money paid while the pig stood calmly, giving grunts of satisfaction, but when they came to put him on board, he made a decided objection and the merchant had to throw him on his back, the pig squealing as only a pig can squeal. The captain asked the man if he were not afraid they would hear him up at the house. "Oh no, massa, there is not a living person within two miles of here." The pig was dropped in the hold, the black man disappeared in the darkness, and when the sun rose, the boat with its living freight was twenty miles up the canal.

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Continued from page 4.

Valaree Dickerson: Hometown Humanitarian

supplies to be collected. The call went out for simple dry foods needing only hot water, children’s underwear, and kid-sized fleece blankets. Valaree, herself a grandmother of three, recalls the haunting images of children sleeping on floors, four sharing one blanket.

The far-reaching outpouring of support surprised even this intrepid organizer. Donations and volunteers alike flooded the collection site. Poolesville Commissioner Jim Brown asked Chuck Kuhn, owner of both JK Moving and White’s Ferry, for boxes to pack up the supplies. The answer was, “You can have one hundred or one thousand, whatever you need.” Good thing they generously offered the larger number. Support for the effort has been nonstop since the boxes were picked up by Poolesville Commissioner Jeffery Eck and the Upper Montgomery Volunteer Fire Department and dropped off at the extension warehouse next to Anytime Fitness.

Valaree noted the personal donations seniors in the area made to this effort. Many hand-carried their contributions to Valaree directly. One eighty-five-year-old woman who no longer drives walked across town to make her donation.

At the time of this writing, two thousand pounds of goods have been packed into those boxes, each holding up to thirty pounds. They were packed, taped, and shrink wrapped onto pallets which were donated by John Speelman and Poolesville Hardware. They are expected to be on their way this week.

Ah, but there was still the looming logistical question of how they were all supposed to get from here to there—and where exactly is there? Once again, a plea through Valaree’s wide circle of friends netted the answer. Rich and Michaela Huelbig’s contacts unlocked a key piece of the puzzle. In an incredibly generous move, William and Eugenia Chester of the Paul Chester Children’s Foundation offered to take care of the shipping “whether it was one thousand or ten thousand pounds” for all those prepared pallets through an international shipping port in New Jersey.

As if this story has not been remarkable enough, Pastor Tomasz’s friend Oleg, and his shipping company TRT International, assured Valaree that the expected

total six thousand pounds of boxes, with their ‘Straight Outta Poolesville’ message and stylized Ukrainian flag stickers of blue and yellow daisies, would be delivered to Ukrainian refugees in need.

To see so many who shared her feelings and wanted to take some action to counteract the devastation in Ukraine has meant so much to Valaree. In just one week’s time, to be able to galvanize such an impressive showing of far-reaching support by our little community is mind boggling.

When this effort is over, Valaree will continue this year’s promise to herself to check items off her list of fifty-nine things to do in her fifty-ninth year. Her plan is to create more happy memories that she can reflect on with joy, and yes, at times, pride, too.

We, at Poolesville Seniors, are so pleased that Valaree Dickerson gave us such an important reason to smile and feel pride during this challenging time while reminding us why we all love our community.

Reprinted with permission from the *Poolesville Seniors Postscript* newsletter.



Jeff Eck, representing the Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department, accepted a gift of packing boxes from representatives of JK Moving. JK Moving was recently named Independent Mover of the Year by the American Truckers Association.



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Tidbits of The Past

By Rande Davis

Welcome to Chiswell, Maryland

Although John Poole, Jr. gave his name to the town of Poolesville, he was not the first property holder in the village. That honor goes to the Chiswell family (the Chiswell homestead is directly across the Route 109 entrance to Jerusalem Road). So why Poole rather than Chiswell? Because the U.S. Post Office Department established Poolesville's first post office in the Poole Store in 1805.

What caused Poolesville to grow in the early nineteenth century?

Agricultural development and the C&O Canal increased the size of the town to 200 to 250 residents in 1861. In September of 1865, the last of the Union garrisons left town. The zenith of the town's population was during the Civil War with, at times, fifteen thousand Union soldiers. The town was unable to return to its accustomed pre-Civil War prosperity, though, primarily due to the B&O Railroad impacting the C&O Canal trade. Poolesville still only

had about 350 people as early as the 1960s. This misfortune was our fortune, as Poolesville has maintained its relatively small size, slow growth, and rural character ever since.

Isolation Resulted in Self-Reliance

During the 1920s, Poolesville was still a self-sufficient town with a hotel, boarding house, blacksmith, livery stable, millinery shop, drug store, two doctor's offices, and even a silent movie. The movies were in what we call the Old Thrift Shop (historically known as the Old Methodist Church). Back then its most common name? The Y.M.C.A! Yep, we were truly village people. Times were not necessarily dull though. There were dances every Saturday night; however, with the acquisition of automobiles starting in the 1920s, it became easier to go to bigger towns (Frederick and Rockville) for shopping and entertainment. It wasn't until the 2020s, when isolation hit its high mark during the pandemic lockdown, and with heavy reliance on cell phones and computers for entertainment, that we turned inward, especially the young.

Congratulations, all is not lost! After all, you are still reading print news!

Fire Hydrant Flushing

The Town of Poolesville Water Department will be flushing hydrants during the month of April to reduce and remove the accumulation of rust and iron in the water mains. The flushing may cause discolored water from the loose sediment, and we advise residents not to wash white clothes for twenty-four hours following the flushing.

- April 4** Elizabeth's Delight, Tama, Woods at Tama, Brightwell
- April 5** Westerly, Meadowlark Manor, Hunter's Run
- April 6** Fisher Avenue, Meadow Valley, Wootton Heights
- April 7** Wesmond
- April 8** Seneca Chase, Sumner Ridge, Stoney Springs

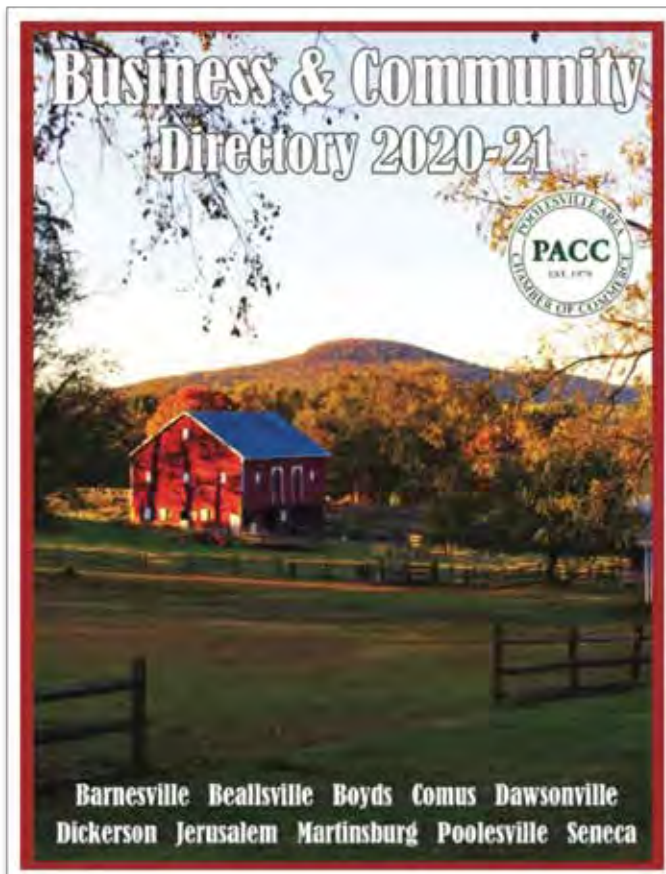
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Continued from page 1.

A New Solution to Reopening White's Ferry

their responsibility when they recently repaved the road from the landing to Route 15. The estimated \$200,000 project was either a re-pavement of a road to a public landing or it was to a private driveway, one or the other.

Reportedly Rockland Farm majority owner, Peter Brown, and minority owner, Elizabeth Devlin, have not set a date with Loudoun County at this time for negotiations. Mr. Brown is the CEO of Renaissance Technologies, one of the largest hedge funds in the nation, and according to Forbes Magazine in 2019, he has a personal income of \$100 million per year.

Poolesville's commission president Jim Brown said, "The Town of Poolesville is encouraged that a reopening of the ferry might be in the works. This can't happen soon enough. Upper and western Montgomery County businesses and residents, specifically those in Poolesville, have endured this disruption in service for almost a year and a half. The ferry is critical to the overall success of our region. Our 'main street' needs to reopen."

Montgomery County Councilman Andrew Friedson commented, "We've been working relentlessly at the county, state, and municipal level with area stakeholders since December 2020 to get White's Ferry back in the water to serve the residents and businesses who rely on it. This latest development is very encouraging and reflects significant collaboration among Montgomery County and Maryland officials with colleagues across the Potomac River. As we have throughout this extended process, we remain fully committed to a permanent solution, and stand ready to partner with Loudoun County to permanently restore the White's Ferry service we know is essential to our regional mobility and economy."

Representing the Fair Access Committee, Link Hoewing said, "Fair Access has worked to put a continuing spotlight on the importance of White's Ferry not only to the Western County but also to Loudoun County, its economy, and many of its residents. The fact that a possible resolution to the ferry dispute appears to be part of a comprehensive plan to improve Route 15 demonstrates that this is true. The possible improvement of the landing to smooth the curve there and improve traffic flow that appears to be part of the plan is further evidence of this reality. We are hopeful that this means reopening of the ferry is right around the corner."

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Do you know these Bible verses?

To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. (*Daniel 9:9*)

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (*John 3:16*)

And the prayer of faith will save the sick. (*James 5:15*)

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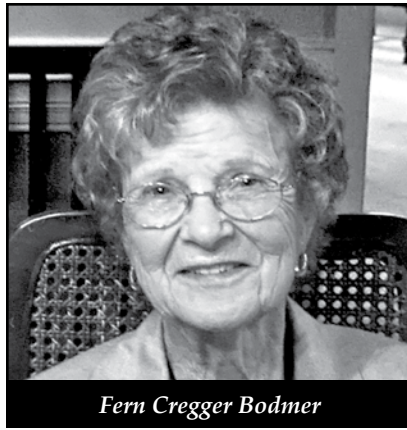
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Remembrances

Fern Cregger Bodmer

Fern Cregger Bodmer, 97, of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania peacefully passed away at her home on February 26, 2022. She was the longest living member of her ancestors, beginning with the arrival of the English Paxtons in 1682. Born on October 21, 1924 in Nebo, Virginia, she was the third of ten children of Luther and Ada Paxton Cregger. Fern lost the love of her life, Charles, on July 14, 2010. She is survived by her siblings, Arnold (Jenny), Gwenda Fuss (Lloyd), Leslie (Joan), and Marvin (Diane). The following siblings predeceased her: Ruby, Wayne, Irvan, Elmer, and Rhudy.



Fern Cregger Bodmer

The Cregger family moved from Virginia to Maryland when Fern was five years old. They farmed first in Dickerson and later in Emmitsburg. Fern attended school in Poolesville, graduating in 1943. She married Charles Roszier Bodmer on June 7, 1944 and raised their children in a home they built in Poolesville. Fern was active in the Poolesville Methodist Church where she was in the choir and taught Sunday school. She was the first woman school bus driver in Poolesville and transported children for nineteen years. She thoroughly enjoyed all the activities that came with being a mother of five children.

Fern is survived by her children, Ed (Nancy), Tom (Carol), Diane Boyer (Clark), Jim (Ann), and Gary (Patty); her cherished grandchildren, Carrie (Tim) Brandt, Jason (Jessica), James Boyer, Beth (Brian) Boyer, Serrin (Eric) Ransom, Lora MacDowell, Katie (Danny) Hall, Corey (Jamie) Breidenstein, and Ada Zada. Fern's great-grandchildren continue the family heritage: Nicholas and Joshua Brandt; Grace, Sam, Caleb, and Anna Bodmer; Owen Ransom; Wilson MacDowell; Riley Breidenstein; and Remi and Ella Hall. Fern's two great loves in her life were her relationship with the Lord and her family.

A memorial service will be held on March 19, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at Living Hope Presbyterian Church, 155 Early Avenue, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

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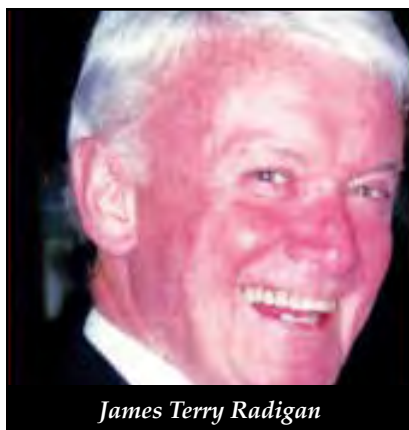
James Terry Radigan

James Terry Radigan of Chevy Chase, age 91, died peacefully at home surrounded by family on December 29, 2021. Terry is survived by his beloved wife, Mary, of 57 years. He was the devoted father of Martin (Abby) and Erin, and granddaddy to Parker (15) and Maisie (7).

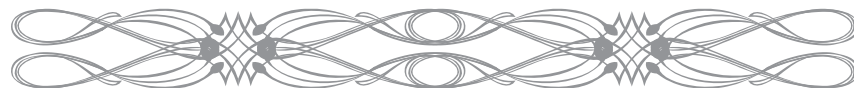
Mr. Radigan graduated from St. Anselm's in Washington, D.C. He received an Economics degree from Georgetown University and a Master's degree from St. Louis University. He was employed at the Federal Deposit Insurance Company (FDIC) for many years, retiring in 2002. He was a U.S. Army Veteran of the Korean War and past president of the Parish Council at Little Flower Church.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at the Church of the Little Flower, Bethesda.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Archdiocese of Washington or to JSSA Hospice.



James Terry Radigan



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

Continued from page 1.

Introducing the Real 'Just Do It' Woman

when she began working at Bassett's. "When I was first asked to start cooking more, George Virkus was so encouraging, and when I had doubts, he told me I could do it."

Although she is in the process of making various interior upgrades to the appearance of the restaurant, she has chosen to keep the foxhound- and equestrian-themed pictures so perfect for the Ag Reserves as a tribute to the establishment's past. Erika knows Poolesville, and she knows the role the restaurant has played in town all that time. That is why, along with the pictures, she has chosen to maintain its name. The name Bassett's will continue to reign as an icon in the life of the town.

"Bassett's has always held a special place in my heart and the hearts of my family. Upon hearing of the closing, we understood what the town and surrounding communities would be missing. For a very long time, it was a center staple in the Poolesville community. Not only did it provide good food and drinks for customers, but it also provided employment to many town folks. It helped bring in business to Poolesville."

Erika and her family, in an example of family entrepreneurship, bought Rio Grande Grill in Germantown and have now expanded with their ownership of Bassett's. When she came to Bassett's, she started as a server, then began working in the kitchen. First, simply making salads, then desserts, and as the years passed, she worked elbow to elbow with the various chefs and cooks. A couple were even graduates of the Culinary Institute of America. She paid attention, watched, and learned. Her hard work and dedication paid off as she rose to become the kitchen manager.

She wants to start with offering the same style of menu the customers have come to value. Selections ranging from the classics like their fried chicken to include some new things along the way, perhaps some of her signature menu items from the Rio Grande. She understands our agrarian and rural heritage so well that she knows that liver and onions must remain on the menu. There may not be a lot of liver fans, but for those who are, they are died-hard fans. For those who aren't liver fans, it is still comforting to know how well she understands the community she has come to serve and love.

It has only been a few weeks, and already you can see the transformation of the interior into a lively and inviting venue. White ceilings instead of black, new light-colored flooring instead of dark, which are ways to not only visually open the rooms up, but a better way to monitor cleanliness, so important to her.

"Our goal is to make Bassett's a success not only for our customers and their families, but also for the town and employees, but we will need your help and support in making Bassett's what you want it to be."

No restaurant ever pleases everyone, and Erika is very aware of issues raised by a few on Facebook about service and food preparation. Some of the more recent problems were not the result of staff not working hard enough, but rather of staff having to work too hard. Staff shortages can have its effect. Finding employees has become the number one problem for all restaurant owners. She believes that while it can be difficult at times, she will be able to staff properly.

She has two requests, though, of her future customers. "If you come and enjoy your experience, please tell your friends, tell family, tell everyone. If, by chance, you do not have that good experience, please tell me." Erika wants the chance to get it right.

With an opening targeted for the end of April, barring unforeseen problems, we look forward to the new Bassett's, not simply as a great new food venue for townsfolk and visitors, but as the perfect example of the fulfillment of the Great American Dream. Erika has not ever been one to sit on her laurels. If that were her nature, she would not have risen to ownership in such an inspiring way. She is a woman ready to meet the big challenges and she does so fearlessly. She is the "Just Do It" woman!

Continued from page 9.

Business Briefs

Attention Contractors: Request for Proposal

The Warren Historic Site Committee is seeking contractors for a rehabilitation project for their Warren M.E. Church and the Martinsburg Schoolhouse in Dickerson. Qualified contractors may contact the committee at 301-972-7293 or by email to tom@tjtarchitects.com for details and specifications. All proposals need to be received by April 14.

Continued from page 3.

Commissioners Adopt Energy Efficiency Policies and Hear Budget Requests

for communications to digitizing all committee documents and forms. He said that it is hard to have a very exact idea of how large this year's event will be or how costs may increase in part due to the effects of COVID on the economy. In addition, the committee did not hold its event in 2020, and last year's Poolesville Day was scaled down from recent events of the past. He said the committee is making strong efforts to attract vendors and sponsors to offset as much of the costs for the event as possible. He asked the commission to approve a request for \$25,000.

Commissioner Jeff Eck, in his role as a leader of the local volunteer fire fighters, next made a request of the commissioners for \$13,000 to help fund the Fourth of July fireworks display. He said that costs for the event will rise but expected that the company the firefighters rely on for its fireworks will still be able to provide the support they have in the past without too large an increase in cost. He added that, after cancelling the event due to COVID-19 in 2020, the 2021 event went off without a hitch and was well attended.

The commissioners did not vote on either proposal. They will be discussed during the budget review session the commissioners will hold on March 15.

The commissioners next discussed the town's annual summer camp program. The program runs for six weeks and hires a number of teens who act as counselors and a director and assistant director. Yost said the program served 165 kids in 2019, the last time it was held. A fee of \$70 per child is levied, but Yost said that \$275 per child would be needed to actually cover all costs.

Commissioner Martin Radigan said he thinks the town is "giving this away." He acknowledged some may have difficulty affording the program but proposed a "scholarship" program of some sort to help those who need it. He wants to "see if the program can pay for itself."

Commission President Jim Brown said, "The idea behind the program is to provide an amenity to our citizens, and it is really about community building." He sees it as a way to reach out to a wider community.

Commissioner Ed Reed said that if the fee were raised, he thought it would be relatively simple to help those who need it by simply putting a check box on the entry form. Those who check the box would have a reduced fee, and this approach would be based on the honor system.

The idea of allowing residents in surrounding areas to participate was also raised. Participating kids from those other areas would have to pay a higher fee than residents of Poolesville.

This program will also be discussed in the commissioners' budget session, so no final decision was made at the meeting.

The commissioners also discussed staffing issues and the organizational structure of the town's government. Yost mentioned that it has already been decided to hire an assistant town manager, and work is under way to get that done soon.

Commissioner Martin Radigan, as he has in the past, again said he thinks the town needs to hire more staff. He pointed to morale problems and what he said is the need to do a better job on HR issues and such things as conducting annual salary surveys. Yost said that he always did do such surveys as part of the budget process. Radigan said he thought town residents would get more or better services if the town had more staff and a better-managed workload.

Brown asked exactly what services town residents were not getting and where major improvements in services are needed.

Reed said that he thought that it is not as simple as comparing organization charts or staffing levels. It is important to look at everything from pay levels to resources that are available and how jobs are managed. He thought that a significant part of the issue is organizational and management oriented and those matters need attention.

Yost added that the new assistant town manager will be hired and needs to come on board and settle in. He or she will help focus on how to better assign tasks and workloads and rebalance any imbalances. Yost said these salary, staffing, and management issues will be a part of the upcoming budget review and discussion.

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Avoiding Animal Charity Scams that Pull at Your Heart Strings and Wallets

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

Sadly, scams related to charitable giving show up as soon as there's any sort of well-publicized crisis or emergency. The situation in Ukraine is no different, with people and animals at risk of being targeted to you for supposed help.

Look for agencies that have a proven track record for promoting good, effective charitable organizations, especially in times of severe crisis and emergencies.

Charity Navigator is an organization that provides guidance based on its knowledge of and connections to well-vetted, solid organizations.

In Ukraine, for example, the work of the International Fund for Animal Welfare and Humane Society International is impressive and well-documented.

Look for the following when you are trying to avoid scams and donate for a cause you believe in. According to Charity Navigator, you should consider the following:

1. Is the organization a registered public 501(c)(3) organization? Ask the charity what their EIN or employer identification number is. If they don't have one, don't donate. Once they give you their EIN, you can find them on the Charity Navigator site.
2. Do you know what the organization's mission, goals, and history of success is? If a charity struggles to answer these questions, consider giving elsewhere.
3. Is their website real or a front? It is not enough to simply have a website. After disasters in particular, scammers are likely to set up fake websites claiming to be a charity. These often have photos that are particularly compelling (after all, nothing gets to an animal lover's heart quicker than an innocent animal in danger). Make sure you can find the nonprofit's EIN somewhere on its website or donation page to know that the money is going to the right place.
4. Most nonprofits also have a .org website rather than a .com.
5. If it's an individual seeking a donation on behalf of an organization, never give them money directly. Instead, ask for the organization's information, do your research, and then donate through their official channels.

Follow these guidelines, and you'll have a much better chance of giving where it counts to you.



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