

# The Monocacy

# MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

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This cool scout helped with Wreaths across America at Monocacy Cemetery. More pics in Family Album on page 2.



Glenn Wallace received a surprise award! Details can be found in Tidbits on page 4.

## White's Ferry Rally Cry: Two Years, Too Long! What Do We Want? White's Ferry Opened!

By Rande Davis

A rally to regain momentum for opening White's Ferry was held at the Maryland landing in the afternoon on December 29. Due to failure on both sides of the Potomac River to agree to terms, the ferry was closed in December 2020 and has remained closed ever since. At the time, Elizabeth Devlin of Rockland Farm, LLC on the Virginia side of the Potomac sought an interim license agreement seeking an \$18,000-per-month fee through a contract that she could terminate within thirty days.

The Brown family was not interested in any short-term, on again-off again agreements, especially since they would have had to have fixed a snapped cable line first and did not want to do that under uncertain conditions. Consequently, they chose to close the ferry permanently as the costs and risks associated with the interim arrangement were untenable.



Commission president Jim Brown was joined by the Grinch at the rally to reopen White's Ferry.

At one point in the initial discussions, the Browns offered Rockland \$400,000 for the property, land no one can build on or farm as it is on the river's edge and floods regularly.

When Chuck Kuhn purchased the ferry service from the Browns in 2021, his stated goal was to purchase the

Continued on page 18.



PHS has a pep band! Story on page 8.



The White's Ferry rally made the evening television news. See more rally pictures on page 10.

## Crossvines Winery: Gateway to a Vibrant Ag Reserve

By Rande Davis

On December 15, Keith Miller, director of Montgomery County's Revenue Authority, provided a preview tour of Crossvines Winery and wine crush facility, located by the Poolesville Golf Course, which is being funded primarily by the county but includes state funds as well.

With much of the exterior completed enough to begin inside construction, Mr. Miller guided a small group of local leaders through the facility. If all goes as hoped, it could have an opening by the end of April or mid-May.

The journey to where we are now with this new winery and grape crush/fermentation facility started eight years ago. It was at the end of a revenue meeting to query from where new economic growth and revenue



Maureen O'Connell (president, HMD), Jim Brown (president, Town of Poolesville Commission), Keith Miller (director, MC Revenue Authority), Marilyn Balcombe (MC councilmember), Ed Reed (commissioner), Dawn Luedtke (MC councilmember), David Therriault (Locals Restaurant), Laurie-Ann Sayles (At-Large MC councilmember), Link Hoewing (Fair Access Committee), and Dale Tibbitts (assistant to MC executive).

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Family Album

666 WREATHS  
across AMERICA

MONOCACY CEMETERY





## Town Government

### Commissioners Hold Public Information Session Concerning PFAs in Water System

By Link Hoewing

The Town of Poolesville commissioners held a public session at their January 3 meeting to provide citizens with information about the existence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the town's water system. PFAS are a group of some four thousand synthetic chemicals that have been used in fire-fighting foam, chrome-plating, waterproofing textiles, some home cleaning products, and in Teflon coatings. These chemicals are attracting particular attention due to their persistence in the environment and the possible risk of adverse health impacts. The town first learned of the existence of these chemicals during tests conducted by the State of Maryland's Department of the Environment.

Kathy Mihm, a hydrologist and senior scientist from Papadopulos and Associates, which consults with the town on water quality issues, gave a presentation to a nearly-packed town hall. She prefaced her comments by saying that there is a lot that is not known about PFAS, including how they get into water systems, the long-term effects of the chemicals on the human body, nor exactly how widespread they are in the environment. It is known that PFAS do not degrade readily or rapidly which is why they are sometimes called "forever chemicals."

Even so, the town took Wells 2 and 3 offline out of an abundance of caution once levels of PFAS were found that were relatively high compared to other wells. The levels found, Mihm explained, were well below possible maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been studying, although no standards for such limits are at this stage being suggested. Mihm said that it is simply too early in the investigation of PFAS to make determinations about exposure limits. It was not even possible until recently to measure PFAS.

In 2010, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) first began to investigate PFAS, but wells in Poolesville were not part of the tests then conducted. In 2020, the MDE tested wells again, and this time, those in Poolesville were part of the examination. About three quarters of the wells in the state that were tested had PFAS present at various levels. Mihm said that PFAS appear more often in well water, but that the chemicals are present as well in rivers and streams.

It is not clear how PFAS have migrated into the well system. While the town's wells all draw from the same aquifer, each well draws from a much smaller area of the aquifer and conditions can be different at each well's location. Mihm pointed out that, in addition to the low levels of PFAS identified in the two wells, the water used by all citizens is a blend from the entire well system. In other words, no user gets water from only one well. This would help to dilute any concentrations of PFAS even if the levels were high in some wells.

There are technologies that can remove many if not most PFAS, including activated carbon filters and reverse osmosis. Again, it is not clear yet exactly what types of PFAS are in the water tested in Wells 2 and 3. Depending on which of the thousands of PFAS are found to be in the wells, technologies to remove them may vary. Audience members asked whether it might make sense to put filtering systems on all wells. Because the types of PFAS vary and the technologies involved would need to be targeted to each set of chemicals identified, Wade Yost, the town manager, said that is not feasible.

Some citizens asked what can be done to prevent PFAS from getting into the water system. Since so little is known at this stage about how PFAS proliferate, it is only possible to offer general recommendations. Mihm said that PFAS have been found in sewer water possibly because such chemicals exist in cleaning solutions and other products used in homes. Cutting back on such chemicals would help reduce PFAS. Also, biofertilizers such as those produced at Blue Plains from sewer products should not be put onto lawns because they can leach down into the water table. Mihm also said that bottled waters may also contain PFAS, so caution needs to be used in choosing this option.

The town is now putting into a place an active water testing and monitoring system to detect PFAS going forward. It will also be looking at technologies to mitigate PFAs that appear in wells.

After the discussion, the commissioners then held a public hearing on an ordinance that would allow for the raising of chickens on residential properties.

Continued on page 8.



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## Rande(m) Thoughts

### White's Ferry: Our Bridge to Nowhere?

By Rande Davis

Just as the years go by more swiftly as we age, the dichotomies of life, our ups and downs, hopes and fears, moments of pride and times of regret, seem to flash by as if in a swirl. Maybe the only benefit of the dreaded pandemic is that it can make each new year more hopeful if for no other reason than we are that much further away from its peak impact and isolation.

The *Monocle's* melancholic first issue of the new year has the annual heart-rendering Hail and Farewell to all who passed in 2022. It is our small effort to make sure we remember all those friends and neighbors who do not walk among us anymore. May their smile warm us one more time. May their sweet memory help sustain us into the future.

I have noted many times this year just how positively we can envision Poolesville's future: The new school, prospering businesses, robust and unique restaurants, and even a cultural awakening of art in our town. All this and even with a proposed new home development in the center of town, the prospect of always remaining a small town remains.

Congratulations to our town government and business leaders! You have us on a bright path forward. That path will continue to have twists and turns as does life itself, but our headline points to a glitch that threatens that future: The continued closure of White's Ferry.

It was joyous to see so many of us turn out for the rally to push for its reopening. Without the addition of the revenue from travelers coming and going from Rockville and Virginia to help sustain our economy, the bright future I speak of is less brilliant. A twenty percent loss of revenue can prove critical, even devastating without the ferry.

All of us share one vision in common: We want Poolesville to remain the small town that has become a hometown to us all almost from the first day we arrived, yet we cannot have a bright future without economic growth. Sustained stagnation always leads to degradation.

The quandary for us has always been how to ensure economic vibrancy without adding hundreds of more homes and thousands of people. The way is so clear: Find opportunities to

bring more people here as non-residents, as visitors. Simply put, here today, gone tomorrow. Our vibrant weekend schedule of events was a start. Riverworks Performing Arts Center and the robust and attractive restaurant scene have already had a major impact. When the Crossvines Winery opens this spring, Poolesville will make its mark on the county's cultural map. We are no longer just a quaint farming town; we are becoming the "in" place for the county. If you want to start a business in a town with a strong future, that is us. If you want a home of increasing value, that is us. If you want to live where education reigns high, google it and then behold the answer: Poolesville, Maryland.

Our front-page story also fills you in on all the prospects of the new winery at the golf course. County leaders had a similar dilemma to ours. How do you add significant revenue without simply building more homes, and how do you protect the Ag Reserve? The answer is making the Ag Reserve more useful to visitors without harming its open spaces. Agri-tourism can be, through proper management, a great tool in helping to preserve it. The tens of thousands of out-of-area visitors who come to the Ag Reserve for weekend pleasure can be a powerful ally. It might be through visiting a produce farm or art/craft shop or Sugarloaf Mountain, but the most important benefit to us is developing millions of out-of-region voters who want to keep the Ag Reserve the Ag Reserve. We have the land, but they have the votes. As more and more come to love the Ag Reserve, the greater the prospects of its continuance will grow.

As with the wine press, the county has done what the private sector would not. A winery with its wine press is too costly for small farmers to invest in with its high start-up expense and delayed reward along with the risk of the success or failure from growing grapes and the uncertainty as to which types of grapes to grow. For some who bemoan the government's initiative to do so, let me remind you of the level of government involvement that makes American farming viable.

The county is all in on creating a new billion-dollar industry for Maryland as the growth of wineries and breweries can do. Similarly, perhaps now—only through government involvement—can the ferry dispute be resolved. It just may be that the private sector cannot get past the impasse. The truth is simple: Virginia political leaders should solve the mess they made. Virginia clearly granted and paid the

Continued on page 7.

## Tidbits

### PHS Coaches and Student-Athletes Named *Washington Post* All-Met

Coach Prasad Gerard was named Cross Country Coach of the Year by the *Washington Post* after his boys' team won the MCPS county championship and repeated as Maryland Class 2A region and state champions, while the girls were state finalists. Distance runners Daisy Dastrup was a second-team pick while her brother Caleb earned an honorable mention nod.

The *Post* named Coach Michelle Hunsicker-Blair as the Golf Coach of the Year after the Falcons repeated as both District and Class 2A/1A state champs. When Michelle wasn't on the course coaching, she was organizing the Montgomery County Ladies' tournaments every Wednesday throughout the season. Her efforts to promote and advance girls' golf in Maryland helped produce a record number of forty girls competing in districts, half of whom qualified for the state tournament, including All-Met first-team selection junior Olivia Cong who captured a second straight individual 2A/1A state title.

Running back Evan Taylor earned an honorable mention after leading the

Falcon football team to a 7-3 record and a Class 2A West playoff berth. Taylor was also named Co-Player of the Year of the Coaches' All-County 3A/2A team.

### Winners of Legion Raffle

American Legion Post 247 held its annual Army-Navy Game party at Cugini's. A highlight, besides an incredibly bland game until the very last minutes, was their first ever raffle board fundraiser. Winners of the raffles, with winners identified at the end of each quarter, were Spencer Schmidt, Sara Young, Patrick Furgeson, and Mia Brennan.

### Martin Luther King's Birthday to be Celebrated

The Boyds Historical Society will celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday by having an open house at the Boyds Negro School on Monday, January 16 (the federal holiday rather than King's actual birthday on January 15) from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The historic school was the center of education for African American children in Boyds from 1895 to 1936. For forty years, African American teachers taught reading, writing, and arithmetic in this historic building. Visitors are welcome to tour the school on this date.

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## The Monocacy MONOCLE

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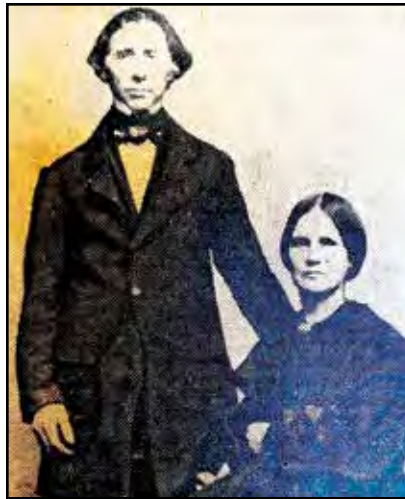
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## In Your Own Backyard Rock Hall: Part Two

Introduction by Jon Wolz, Written by Helen Wardlaw Jones Berry

In this issue, we print part two of two of the reminiscences of Helen Wardlaw Jones Berry about Rock Hall. Helen Berry was a descendant of the Belt family. The Belts lived at Rock Hall from 1839 to 1939. As a child, Helen Wardlaw (Jones) Berry (1911-1993) and her mother would travel east from the Midwest to visit Lottie's parents in Dickerson. Lottie's mother was Annie Oliver (Belt) Jones (1853-1940) who grew up at Rock Hall and was a daughter of John Lloyd Belt (1819-1889) and Sarah Eleanor McGill (1818-1903), the one-time patriarchs of the Belt family and longtime residents of Rock Hall. Here continues the story Helen wrote, a snapshot of what life was like at Rock Hall for one hundred years.



*John Lloyd Belt and Sarah Eleanor McGill Belt whose family lived at Rock Hall for nearly one hundred years in the 1800s and 1900s.*

Rock Hall was the home where my Grandmother Belt (Annie Oliver Belt White) grew up. There were ten children in all. The six young girls grew up to be charming young ladies. Sunday became a very special day. No courting during the week, but the parents of young girls held open house on Sunday afternoons. At this time, the young gentlemen were allowed to call and pay their respects to the young ladies. Such anxiety as to who would come! In time, it narrowed down to: "Will he come?"

Great Aunt Julia told me about it, "Some days there would be at least twenty—more at our house than anywhere." I detected a decided note of pride in her voice, and I accused her of it. Great Aunt Julia laughed, tossed her head, and admitted that of course they liked it.

"What did you do?" I asked. "Oh, we had a lovely time talking, and sometimes we flirted with the boys." Her eyes twinkled. "Supper was served at six, according to the custom of the countryside. There were either platters of fried chicken or a huge baked ham, hot biscuits, preserves, and pickles. In the summer, freezers of ice cream were packed away in the cool cellar, waiting to be served. My, what a job it was to make the ice cream. The heavy blocks of ice had to be carried to the kitchen. This ice had been cut from the pond in mid-winter and stored in layers of straw in a cave." She paused and smiled. "After supper, we gathered around the piano and sang hymns. The evening passed quickly, and the young men had to leave promptly at nine o'clock."

All but three of the children married and left home, but they returned often for may reunions. Christmas was the outstanding occasion for all the family to gather, forty to fifty of them at the same time. Children and grandchildren started arriving at ten o'clock, and all would be there by noon. There was happy, excited confusion with everyone crowded in the hall, on the steps, and in the library.

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## Senior News

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

Are you looking for activities that stretch your mind, renew your body, and lift your spirits? Then visit the website for Poolesville Seniors, [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org), or call 301-875-7701 to register for a wide variety of virtual and in person events. **Registration is required, but all events are open to the community.** Most in-person events are located at Speer Hall at Poolesville Presbyterian Church.

#### January 10

##### History of the C&O Canal

Join Doug Zveare, Information Officer for the C&O Canal, to learn about the history, barges, locks and lockhouses, and the people of the canal and canal towns. Registration required. *Poolesville Presbyterian Sanctuary*. 7:00 p.m.

#### January 12

##### I Pay What?

Join Larissa Johnson, MoCo's Residential Energy Program Manager when she helps you demystify your utility bill and show you ways to save energy and money in your home. You don't want to miss this workshop! Participants can receive at least one energy saving measure for their home like a refrigerator thermometer or shower timer. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### January 16

##### PS Book Club

Anthony Doerr's novel, *Cloud Cuckoo Land*, brings together an unforgettable cast of dreamers and outsiders from past, present, and future to offer a vision of survival against all odds. It illustrates the extraordinary human capacity to transmit stories from

generation to generation and the importance of stewardship—of books, of our shared planet, and of the human heart. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### January 17

##### Mary Wilson Bingo Celebration

Join IJ Hudson and Roger Brenholtz for a fun-filled bingo afternoon celebrating bingo enthusiast Mary Wilson. This afternoon of laughs, fun, competition, snacks, and special prizes is open to all ages. *Speer Hall*. Registration required. 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

#### January 19

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

Explore the next historic Ag Reserve Properties with local historian Kenny Sholes. Dotted landscape is an array of impressive historic homes, standing as a visual reminder of those who came before us and the important part they played in American history for centuries. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### January 20

##### Friday Movie Night: *Thirteen Lives*

Come out for the 2022 Ron Howard film, *Thirteen Lives*, about the real-life rescue mission in Thailand to save a group of young boys and their soccer coach who were trapped in a system of underground caves that flooded. Registration required. *Speer Hall*. Snacks and conversation start at 7:00 p.m.

#### January 26

##### Retirement Finances

Join finance expert Linda Sterns to learn about making the most of your finances in your retirement. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### February 9

##### Black History Month: Boyds Negro School

Join Claudia Golenda, vice president and one of the archivists for the Boyds

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Historical Society, for this special presentation covering the history and preservation of the Boyds Negro School, the only school for children of color in that area between 1896 and 1936. 7:00 p.m. Virtual.

#### Weekly Events

##### Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

**Indoor Open Play Pickleball.** *Poolesville Baptist Church Family Life Center*. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

##### Tuesdays

##### Bridge and Other Games

Snacks provided. Registration required. *Speer Hall*. 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

##### Wednesdays

**Tai-Chi** with Maureen Ivusic. 11:00 a.m. to 11:45 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

**Indoor Ladder Play Pickleball.** *Poolesville Baptist Church Family Life Center*. 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Mahjong with Joyce Kral.** Beginner and seasoned players are welcome. *Speer Hall*. 10:00 a.m. to Noon.

For more information or to register for any of the programs listed here and receive the Zoom link for each, visit the Poolesville Seniors website: [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org). Many of these presentations are also streamed live on their Facebook page and recorded for later viewing on their YouTube channel. 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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**White's Ferry:  
Our Bridge to Nowhere?**

owners of the land for a public landing in the 1870s. They saw the need, and they acted. What is needed now is for them to reassert their original intention by making the landing public. They want to expand Route 15 to ease traffic. They know they have to declare public domain to do so. Why not the landing? Does that not likewise improve traffic congestion? Better yet, Virginia should make a deal with Rockland to include the landing as part of their roadway expansion.

It's clear Loudoun County, for political reasons, won't do it. The added revenue to their county from Marylanders, although substantial, remains lower on the bar than their political interest to please one resident even to the detriment of thousands of Virginia voters and business owners who would benefit from the ferry reopening. The majority owner of the landing on the Virginia side heads one of the largest hedge funds in the country, and *Forbes* has reported he earns \$100 million a year. How can it be that a viable price for the sale of such a small piece (less than seven thousand square feet) is impossible? There is no question Rockland deserves payment for their land even though Virginia messed up on the original survey. Can Montgomery County join in on offering a price that works?

If the governments in Virginia or Maryland fail to solve the problem, I doubt the ferry will open. While there are many things of a historical or recreational value the current owner of White's Ferry might do to create a draw for tourists to his site, without the ferry fully operating, even that potential may prove too limiting for visitors coming only from the east.

There must be something, short of building a bridge, that Maryland can offer to gain Virginia's support—or perhaps the real reason White's Ferry may not open is just that simple: Virginia wants its bridge.

## Fun Fact...

The global ferry industry is similar in size to the commercial airline industry, transporting approximately 4.27 billion passengers per year, plus 373 million vehicles (including cars, buses, and trailers). Comprehensive safety regulations resulted in ferry transport being one of the safest modes of transport in most parts of the world.

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## School News

### Introducing the PHS Pep Band

By Maxwell Bingham

The 2022 football team for Poolesville High School won more games than the school has had in years, and with the student community excited for the playoffs, the first Poolesville Pep Band since 2017 was organized to play at home games. PHS's ability to pull off a pep band is on the rise. Music programs at PHS are all run by one music director, David Rogoza. This limits the music education in the school to a few classes, and confines both orchestra and band instruments to a "Full Orchestra" course, attended by violinists and trumpeters alike. Even with such a broad division of instruments, the course had at times scarcely twenty students on the roster. Enrollment in the high school is steadily increasing, however, and though the class is still combined with the string players, it has reached a size of over fifty people. That's about twenty-five band instrumentalists, basically all the possible members of our pep band.

Attempts to create a pep band have happened here and there but have been snuffed out by a lack of numbers among the students. Mr. Rogoza, the teacher to sponsor the band, said, "I don't like less than a dozen" bandmembers who are willing to come to games. Almost every year the idea is brought up, but Rogoza stated that "if there is only, say four people," that's not going to cut it. "It is up to the students," he explained, to spread the word about the pep band to their friends and get enough people together.

So how did it happen this year? Mr Rogoza introduced the possibility of a pep band in the beginning of the year, and following the first interest meeting, the group began to fall in place. Students came for all kinds of reasons. Riyana Saxena (sophomore), a saxophonist, recalled that she joined because she "likes the music," while others like trumpeter Connor Anderson (junior) joined out of duty. "They needed a trumpet, and I was the only one available," he said.

The group originally planned the first performance for the homecoming game, but the tally of members was insufficient the day of. After two weeks to rally more members, the band was finally ready to play for the October 28 game

against Manchester. The game was a close one, with Poolesville six points behind, fighting for a touchdown until the last second on the clock. The band played popular tunes like "Don't Stop Believing" and "The Final Countdown" to name a few, and they sounded fanfares at important points of gameplay, such as our team's first down. This required the band to be attentive to gameplay always, ready to burst into song after a touchdown or interception. A few bandmembers had never watched a football game before, but by the end of the game they were cheering on the Falcons along with the rest of the crowd. The noise was audible on the field, and football player Seamus Brennan (senior) commented that "seeing the band play and get the crowd all excited really helped the game atmosphere." Even with a band that barely entered the double digits, we managed to produce loud enough music to reach our team.

Although PHS lost to Manchester, there are still more opportunities to bolster school spirit. In addition to all the home games we get this season, Mr Rogoza named more sports the band could play for. "I'd like to do basketball, volleyball, anywhere appropriate where we could add to the atmosphere without taking attention away from the athletes." As for now, the pep band community is going strong, but the future of the band depends on the commitment of PHS students. (I personally play trombone in the pep band and would be willing to answer any questions about our plans at my email, quergatron@gmail.com.) With new generations of musicians every year from middle schools across the county, hopefully we can continue to inspire enthusiasm in our rural community.

Continued from page 3.

#### Commissioners Hold Public Information Session Concerning PFAs in Water System

The ordinance has been under consideration for six months by the Planning Commission and the public hearing before the commissioners is the final stage before its adoption.

Many citizens, both for and against the ordinance, testified. Most of the arguments have been heard numerous times over the last few months, including concerns regarding the odors supposedly caused by chickens, the possibility that predators like coyotes will be attracted by the birds, and the fact that the new rules would be enforced by complaints filed by citizens. The notion that neighbors would be "ratting" on their neighbors if the new ordinance is adopted seemed to be a major concern. It was brought up that there are already violations of the existing ban on chickens, making it even more questionable in the minds of some that the new rules will be adequately enforced.

In support of the new ordinance, several commenters sought to debunk many of these criticisms. It was also noted, including by a mother who brought her four children to appear before the commissioners, that raising chickens helps promote responsibility and shows children how food is produced and used safely. Given Poolesville's presence in the Ag Reserve and its focus on sustainability, the raising of chickens seems to the supporters to be an even greater fit in our town than it is in places like Rockville and Gaithersburg that have allowed the raising of chickens for many years.

The commissioners took note of the comments, and it was also mentioned that written public comments will be accepted by the town until January 6.

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Commissioners Sarah Paksima and Jeff Eck enthusiastically supported the rally.



A large crowd of well over four hundred attendees was on hand to implore county and state politicians in Maryland and Virginia to take action.

# WHITE'S FERRY RALLY



Television media, helicopters, and drones covered the important story from top to bottom.



Pastor Chuck Copeland fired up the crowd with an emotional and personal appeal for the need to reopen White's Ferry.



PACC President Tom Kettler and Erika Myers of Bassett's rallied to get the ferry reopened.



Commissioner President Jim Brown hosted the rally to seek new momentum to end the closing of White's Ferry.



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## Youth Sports

### PHS Athletes Set for Winter Competition

By Jeff Stuart

#### Boys' Basketball

"The boys are looking to build off last year's successful season," said basketball coach BJ DeBuchanne. "Last year was Poolesville's first winning season since 2015. We hosted and won a playoff game for the first time in eight-plus years as well.

"The team returns a solid group of seniors led by Van Rosenbaum and Jack Feys. Van is the lone returning starter and averaged eight points per game last year. This year, we expect him to bump up that scoring average and lead a strong group of guards. Feys and Andrew Jauch will anchor the middle for the team. At 6'-5" and 6'-3" [respectively] with the ability to play inside and out, the duo will prove to be a tough matchup for any team. Joe Royal, Evan Raines, and Abhi Cheerla will also be significant senior contributors. Raines is a steady ball handler who will run the show at the point guard position. Royal is a 6'-3" long athletic wing who can shoot the three and be an impact defensive player. Cheerla will provide an offensive spark with his ability to get to the rim and shoot from the perimeter. Junior guard Jackson Hartke is another offensive spark plug who can change the game with his ability to hit threes from all over the floor. Junior Carson Smith is a cerebral guard/wing who can play any position and uses his size, 6'-3", to make plays on both ends of the floor.

"Coach Steve Watson joins the Falcons for his first season after being a varsity head coach at Clarksburg for the last six years and Rockville four years prior to that. He will join JV head coach/varsity assistant Rob Smith and Rob Suggs in what is a seasoned staff."

#### Girls' Basketball

"Girls' basketball is excited for the winter season," said girls' basketball coach Katie Hackey. "We have eight returning players from last year, with four new players rounding out our team. We have five seniors, three juniors, and four sophomores. Our five seniors are forward Lauren Hopkins, forward Ella Franklin, small forward Avery Penn, small forward Phoebe Snelson, and guard Lizzie Kovacs. I am looking for strong leadership from our veteran players as well as some strong play from our younger girls. We have a good dynamic of both speed and strength."

#### Swimming and Diving

"Here we are again," said swimming and diving coach Jon Leong. "It's the night before our first scrimmage, and I'm scratching my head asking myself, 'Where did last year's team go?' We graduated so many seniors last year, and sadly a few of our rising swimmers have decided to not return or moved to other schools. Metaphorically speaking, this team is under construction, just like our high school. I am very confident the future is bright. We do have a good group of freshmen and sophomores that can turn into the core that we have had for so many seasons prior, but we are going to have to pick up the pace if we want to see the returns this year.

"This year in Division 2 for MCPS is going to be very competitive. There is a handful of swimmers that we will face that have already signed and committed to college swim programs. This is going to be a challenge, especially at the region and state level. This rebuilding process will definitely be a challenge tested during the championship part of our season.

"It's hard to build a program like we have, it's harder to maintain the results that we have been fortunate to have accomplished. We can't take it for granted that we will just 'keep winning'—things that get taken for granted usually get taken away. I think from some points of view it seems easy to do what we have done. It's expected of us—but it is not easy. This year, we are going to have to earn it. The Rockville boys' team looks highly competitive, and Damascus (reigning state champ on the girls' side—I haven't forgotten!) will be in the mix as will LaPlata High School, but I hope our new senior leadership, Maggie Rose Rook, Avery Ye, Anna Li, and Ava Lee, will rise to the challenge and lead our girls back to the top of the podium. Our boys' senior leaders, Andrei Hanu, Charlie Matia, and Nick Lowell, will all be trying to extend the ten-year championship run. It will be an exciting season with new faces doing new races. I am not taking anything for granted this season; I hope our athletes don't either. There is much this team can accomplish, but they will have to earn it."

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# Things to Do

## January 6

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Damascus. 7:15 p.m.

## January 9

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Rockville. 7:15 p.m.

## January 10

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling vs. Northwest. 6:15 p.m.

## January 11

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Bocce vs. Clarksburg. 3:30 p.m.

## January 11

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Springbrook. 7:15 p.m.

## January 13

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Kennedy. 7:15 p.m.

## January 16

### MLK Day at Boyds Negro School

Visit the Boyds Negro School for an open house to celebrate Martin Luther

King, Jr. Day. The historic school was the center of education for African American children in Boyds from 1895 to 1936. 19510 White Ground Road, Boyds. 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## January 17

### Poolesville Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:00 p.m.

## PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Einstein. 7:15 p.m.

## January 18

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling vs. Springbrook. 6:15 p.m.

## January 20

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Whitman. 7:15 p.m.

## January 24

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Sherwood. 7:15 p.m.

## January 25

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling vs. Churchill. 6:15 p.m.

## January 27

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Seneca Valley. 7:15 p.m.

## January 30

### PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball vs. Paint Branch. 7:15 p.m.

Continued on page 15.

Continued from page 4.

### Tidbits

#### Winners of Poolesville's Holiday Lighting Contest

Judges: Christina and Carter Micioni; Faith and Skip Etheridge

#### Townhouses

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Continued from page 1.

**Crossvines Winery: Gateway to a Vibrant Ag Reserve**

might come. Then-councilman Marc Elrich gave a one-word answer to the question: Wine.

Dale Tibbitts, an assistant to the county executive, explained that Marc’s motivation started from his desire to preserve the Ag Reserve, but also “believing that if we are to keep the Ag Reserve, it needs to be economically feasible. He had visited a crush facility in California and witnessed precisely what he had been looking for. Grapes are the fourth most profitable farming produce, and when you turn it into wine, it ranks first or second. Grapes love crappy soil, they think they are going to die; stress makes for delicious grapes and wine. Wineries also bring benign tourism that does not threaten the Ag Reserve.”

That one-word answer launched an extensive investigation into its feasibility study for Montgomery County. What was quickly realized is that there are around a hundred wineries in Maryland resulting in a one-hundred-million-dollar industry. In comparison, Virginia has nearly three hundred farms producing \$1.5 billion, and in Pennsylvania, two hundred farms create a \$2.9 billion farming industry.

What has prevented this kind of economic growth and revenue in Montgomery was the huge risk and heavy cost of investing in wine. A single crush can easily cost a million dollars, and eight years ago there remained uncertainty that county grapes could become good wines. They determined that investment and research dollars were needed to advance the industry within the state.

Fortuitously, the county already owned land at the Poolesville Golf Course, and by working with the University of Maryland agriculture research department, the feasibility of growing wine grapes could be ascertained as well as what varieties of wine would work best. Armed with this information, many farmers would hopefully choose to set aside small two-to-five acre lots to grow grapes. The single greatest hindrance was in the cost of simply crushing the grapes and the fermentation process.

The result, after eight years, is Crossvine Winery’s half-acre research vineyard, and the construction of a crush and fermentation facility.

When the winery and full-service entertainment facility opens, it will serve as a gateway to the Ag Reserve, designed to bring benign tourism into the Ag Reserve, a boon to the local economy, especially Poolesville. An expanding economy without permanent population growth is precisely the formula long sought by local leaders to preserve the small-town ambience.

Revenue will come not just from farmers paying for crushing, fermentation, and bottling services, but from its restaurant and grill, the great event/ballroom, and a large commercial kitchen, and additionally as an educational venue. Farmers will even pay to make retail/commercial products from their excess produce like jellies and sauces, etc.

Crossvines will be intricately involved with agriculture education, working with the University of Maryland, Montgomery College, and other state schools. The University of Maryland has even announced they will be offering a fermentation degree this coming September. Montgomery College would offer a certificate program in agriculture. Looking longer term, a new magnet program to Poolesville High School in Agriculture Science would further strengthen our high school’s importance within the larger county. Other educational opportunities include being a “classroom” for marketing and hospitality degrees.

The tour highlighted, section by section, the many revenue sources to the county government and to the local economy from the winery.

Supporting revenue starts right from the entryway onward throughout the entire facility. The entry serves not only as a welcome area for visitors but will sell wine from Crossvines and its participating grape farmers, and it will also sell excess local produce for Ag Reserve farms. This lobby area will also host a chef’s table for tasting a variety of local products that can be purchased for carryout or for consumption on the lawns and patios outdoors that also have fire pits.

In the attractive farmhouse-style building, there will be a standard restaurant and grill/pub with its exclusive secondary kitchen. Both will be open to the public and will also be an enhancement to the attractiveness of the golf course. The county will contract with a managing firm for the food and drink services. The design of the building and ambience of the restaurant with its abundant outdoor and patio views of the golf course and countryside are all designed to foster the feel of the Ag Reserve.

There will be a small, twenty-person private party room with fireplace that could also host lectures for students or a chef’s tasting room.

On the right side of the building is a special event space, elongated with lower ceilings for a more intimate feel, and with patio area access.

The large event room will be designed especially for weddings and other dining events and occasions to host large groups. It will have its own audio/visual capabilities.

The large and small fermentation tanks are already installed, having a production goal of ten thousand cases per year. Farmers can drop off their grapes for crushing, fermentation, and bottling. Farmers will have their own winemaker directing the exact formula to use, and Crossvines will also have an in-house winemaker to assist and manage the process.

The main, large kitchen will serve the catering needs of the special event room as well as the large ballroom. This commercial kitchen will derive additional revenue from processing excess produce from local farmers.

Poolesville Commission president, Jim Brown, in thanking Keith Miller for his leadership on this project, said, “The facility far exceeded anything we had conceived in previous years in our goal of trying to bring more jobs and economic growth to the town without adding to the resident population. It is truly the largest commercial and agriculture investment for our region, this will be the center of wine growing for the entire state and a gateway for needed tourism.”



Rendering of the main/event ballroom at Crossvines.

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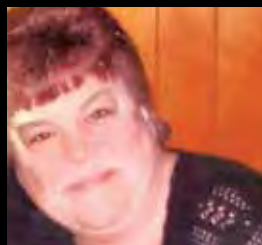
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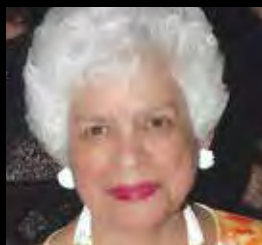
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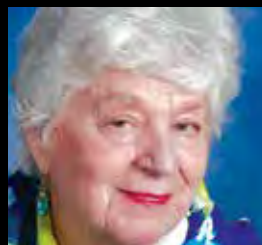
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- Deborah "Diane" Ayers (Crawford)
- Zannie Ellen Bates
- Mary Lou Berger
- Fern Cregger Bodmer
- Rita Muir Buell
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- James Thomas McGinley
- Victor L. Morgan, Jr.
- Peter Damian Mulcahy
- Myrtle Lou Nestor
- Ann Niblock
- Alfred (Buddy) D. Noyes, Jr
- Austin A. (Tony) Pirrone
- Vadym Pyatovolenko
- James Terry Radigan
- Nan Alexander Ransom
- Larry Ray Redden
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- Sharon A. Wright
- Mary Sue Zajdel

## Farewell.





Myrtle Lou Nestor



Ann Niblock



Alfred (Buddy) D. Noyes, Jr



Austin A. (Tony) Pirrone



Vadym Pyatovolenko



James Terry Radigan



Nan Alexander Ransom



Larry Ray Redden



Fanny Rivera



David Powell Rosenberg



Frederick Iwin Rosenberg



Richard Gene Rosser



Donald "Duck" Shirley Savage



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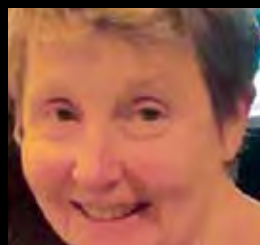
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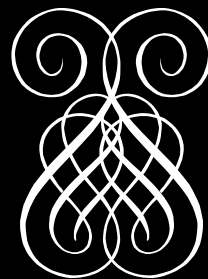
Mary D. Woodfield



Sharon A. Wright



Mary Sue Zajdel



Continued from page 12.

Things to Do

February 1

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball vs. Rockville. 6:00 p.m.

February 2

PHS Varsity Home Games

Girls' basketball vs. Walter Johnson. 6:00 p.m.

Boys' basketball vs. Walter Johnson. 7:15 p.m.

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## Remembrance

### Leo Joseph Bassett, Sr.

Leo Joseph Bassett, Sr. of Deale, Maryland, died peacefully on December 31, 2022 at the age of 88. Leo was born June 6, 1934 in Washington, D.C. to George and Mary Bassett.

Upon graduating high school, he attended the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design in Washington, D.C. In 1957, he was drafted into the U.S. Marine Corps where he spent two years as an illustrator.

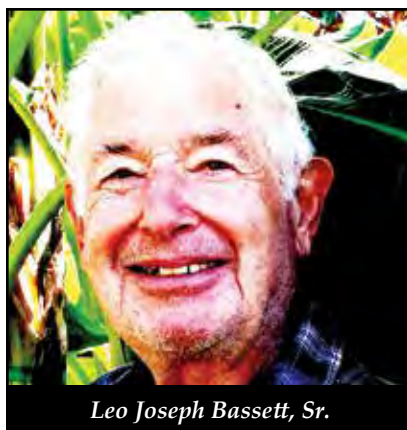
Leo's green thumb, eye for design, and artistic talents were reflected in his many projects throughout the years.

In Washington, D.C., he established Colonial Flower and Garden and the Green House. Other notable works by Leo include the landscape design at Roosevelt Island, the Kennedy Center, and the National Zoo's Panda House. Leo's floral and landscape designs were admired by many over the years at Clyde's Restaurants throughout the D.C. area. In the late 1990s, Leo ventured into the restaurant business and will be fondly remembered by many in the town of Poolesville as the owner/operator of Bassett's Restaurant.

Leo's love for restoring homes kept him very busy both in Poolesville and later after retirement in Deale.

He is survived by his sister Joan Ross; son, Leo Bassett, Jr. (Karyn Seymour), and daughter, Victoria Clyne (Ken Clyne); grandchildren, Caroline and Eric; and his late-wife Betty's sons, Brian and Mark Dawson.

Leo was preceded in death by his daughter, Maria Bassett; wife, Elizabeth Bassett; and brothers, George and James Bassett.



Leo Joseph Bassett, Sr.

Continued from page 5.

### Rock Hall: Part Two

At twelve, the doors were opened into the parlor where there was an enormous Christmas tree, gay with strings of popcorn and cranberries, fancy designs cut from colored paper, and many flickering candles. The children rushed in wide-eyed with excitement. There was a gift for every person, hand-embroidered handkerchiefs, pillowcases edged with tatting, bright blue or red scarfs and mittens, all made with loving care.

The Christmas dinner was served at three o'clock, splendid with oysters, fat brown turkey, sliced ham, home baked breads, a variety of vegetables and preserves, plum pudding, candles, and salted nuts. The grownups ate in the main dining room, and the children crowded in the lower dining room, intent on serious eating and boisterous fun.

For many summers, Mother and I visited her parents' home place in Maryland, and we were always entertained at nearby Rock Hall.



The view of Rock Hall in any season is worthy of a postcard.

Within my memory, a great uncle and two great aunts lived there. To me, Great Aunt Ginny, Great Aunt Julia, and Great Uncle McGill were always old. They were perfect host and hostesses, with the old Southern formality of speech and manners, but with little understanding of the changing world.

I remember one summer saying to my great aunts, "I wanted to go some special place with my friends, but I told them I couldn't afford it."

Shocked, Great Aunt Ginny said, "Why, Helen Wardlaw, no lady ever mentions the lack of money any more than she boasts of it."

I disagreed. "The Depression has hit everyone alike, and I see no disgrace in admitting it."

Great Aunt Julia shuddered at my mid-Western frankness. "My dear, it is very unladylike to speak of money—ever."

Later, I repeated the admonition to Mother's sister. She told me that Great Uncle McGill had been a major stockholder in a bank that failed. The Belts had lost very heavily during the Depression.

If they were asked to go someplace or do something that involved an expenditure of money, they would agree most graciously. When the time came to go, suddenly either Great Aunt Julia or Great Aunt Ginny would develop a severe headache, or Great Uncle McGill would have an important meeting, and so they would be unable to attend. Neither to their own family nor to close friends would they admit their financial problems. They would not even accept a couple of tickets to the concert that a cousin just happened to have.

Mother said that she imagined that those at Rock Hall had eaten very sparingly for many days in order to serve us in the accustomed luxury. It reminded me of the proud Southerners of the Civil War. I admired them for their uncomplaining pride, even if I didn't agree with them.

After staying in the house any length of time, I felt that I had wandered back to the nineteenth century. The dining room was large. The mahogany furniture was hand rubbed. The table, covered with fine linen cloth, was elegant with highly-polished coin silverware, gold-banded dishes, and glasses that rang with a clear tone. The meal was faultlessly served. Unconsciously, everyone lowered their voice and donned their most gracious manner.

Rock Hall, the scene of many happy events, was also a place of many sorrows. After the death of the "older generation," the house was sold to settle the estate, but the charming place and the faithful interest of those I knew will never dim in my memory. I repeat, I love Rock Hall.

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## Remembrances

### Donald Eugene Brooks

Donald Eugene Brooks, 96, of Gaithersburg, passed away on December 19, 2022.

He was the loving husband of Eva Roberson Brooks.

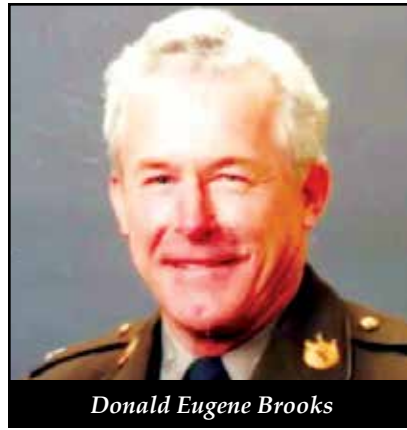
Born on November 3, 1926 in Poolesville, he was the son of the late James Evan Brooks and Anna Titus Brooks.

Donald is survived by his wife; his three children, Donna Brooks Sensoy, Don Michael Brooks (Sharon), and Lisa Brooks Hammond; eight grandchildren; and seventeen great-grandchildren.

He began his career with the Montgomery County Police Department in 1950, rising through the ranks until his retirement in 1991 as Chief of Police. In 1988, he and co-author Charles A. Federline published *A Worthy Innovation: A History of the Montgomery County Police, July 4, 1922-July 4, 1987*. This book was dedicated to the men and women who served Montgomery County as police officers and the civilian staff who supported them. This work was one of his proudest achievements. He was also an avid quail hunter and dog trainer and spent many happy days in the fields with his many friends.

His family and numerous grand- and great-grandchildren were a source of pride and delight. He thought each and all were beautiful, smart, and precious. His was a life well lived.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Donald's memory to Poolesville Memorial United Methodist Church, [www.pmumc.org](http://www.pmumc.org).



Donald Eugene Brooks

### Gary Brent Honemond

Gary Brent Honemond, of Dover, Pennsylvania, entered eternal rest on November 8, 2023.

Gary was born on March 28, 1958, to Ella Juanita and Benjamin H. Honemond, Sr. He was born and reared in Montgomery County and grew up in Dickerson. He attended Monocacy and Poolesville Elementary Schools and graduated from Poolesville High in 1976. In high school, he participated in basketball, football, and track where he was given the nickname of "Birdman."

He enlisted in the U.S. Army in June 1979, becoming an aircraft mechanic. He eventually became Crew Chief which he loved. After being discharged in 1984, he began working at Knorr Brake Company, Westminster, Maryland. He worked on large braking systems for rail and commercial vehicles. As a child, he disassembled bicycles and added parts to them.

He later worked for Giant Foods in Pennsylvania where he retired.

He married Mary Nicholson and was stepfather to Melissa and Amy and grandchildren. Following their divorce, he married his current wife Wanda, and was stepfather to John, Jr., Tina, Wendy, and step-grandfather to Ale'zaya, Autumn, Bianca, Summer, Raylan, Sean, Jr., and Mia.

He is survived by his wife Wanda; mother Ella Honemond; siblings Hope (Henry), Carole (Matthew), Sheila (Raimund), Benjamin Jr., Crystal, and Cheryl (Edward). He was preceded in death by brother James; brother-in-law Frederick Pruitt; and father Benjamin, Sr.

He was a very quiet man, a man of few words, but very kind and thoughtful. He will be missed by many.



Gary Brent Honemond

### Kate Szuberla Jauch

Kate Szuberla Jauch, a native of Scotia, New York and a resident of Poolesville, passed away on December 14, 2022, from complications related to leukemia.

Kate Jauch lived a life of impact. She was all-in on whatever lay ahead, wielding a wide smile, deep compassion, wicked humor, immense courage, and a fierce sense of justice and purpose to improve people's days and lives—at home, in the workplace, and in the community.

She was a 1996 graduate of Scotia-Glenville High School, a three-season athlete, and captain of the field hockey team. In 2000, she graduated from the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. She subsequently worked in labor and delivery at the MetroHealth Medical Center, Cleveland; Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C.; and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Kate was always, at heart, an educator. As a nurse, she taught women and mothers. As a patient, she used her illness to educate the next generation of healthcare providers. She was one of the first advocacy ambassadors for "Be the Match," a program managed by the National Marrow Donor Program. She carefully and often humorously chronicled her own illness (including her own bone marrow transplants), always with the hope of helping others who might face the same challenge.

No one benefitted more from Kate's passion for life than her family; nothing inspired her more than her husband Scott and their three children, Andrew, Will, and Greta. She is also survived by her parents, Charles and Marianne Szuberla, of Brunswick; a slew of cousins, aunts, and uncles; and her godparents, Gail and Lou Meagley of Altamont, New York (the embodiment of what godparents can be).

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Be the Match ([wesavelives.bethematch.org/participant/KateJauch](http://wesavelives.bethematch.org/participant/KateJauch)) or Planned Parenthood ([www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org)), and please consider joining the Be the Match registry, the greatest of all gifts.



Kate Szuberla Jauch

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Continued from page 1.

### White's Ferry Rally Cry: Two Years, Too Long! What Do We Want? White's Ferry Opened!

Virginia landing site or negotiate a permanent easement so that the ferry would never close again. Like the previous owners, they have been unable to come to terms on a fair price that allows the ferry to remain an affordable way to cross the river. An initial offer of \$600,000 for a permanent easement of use of the landing by Kuhn was rejected by Rockland Farm, LLC.

Devlin has refused these purchase offers, stating the land has been in the family for generations and they do not want to sell it. At one time, however, she stated that a purchase of the small lot could happen for \$2,000,000. That offer was not accepted as the owners found it unreasonable.

In subsequent discussions, she has asked for fifty cents per car, with future adjustments for inflation. This was not accepted as it would make her a de facto partner and a partnership is not desired by Kuhn; furthermore, an agreement on future inflationary adjustments could easily result in new disagreements only to have the ferry close again.

Devlin, in a press release just prior to the rally, renewed her proposal to buy the Maryland landing at a "handsome profit," but again, selling White's Ferry is not the new owner's purpose in buying it in the first place; moreover, she claims to have found an independent operator who will pay each side fifty cents car.

At this time, the impasse appears to leave little hope that an agreement can be reached since Mr. Kuhn seeks a permanent agreement at a price that will allow the ferry to operate without excessive increases in tolls. Kuhn has spoken about his plans to upgrade service on the ferry, bringing in digital payment options, lessen commute times, and other building and grounds upgrades, none of which could happen through proposals that have been thus far offered by Devlin.

The rally attendees, estimated to be well over four hundred, were enthusiastic and held homemade signs calling for the opening of the ferry. Joining Town of Poolesville Commission president Jim Brown in making comments were Evan Glass, president of Montgomery County Council, Councilmember Marilyn Balcombe, State Del. David Fraser-Hidalgo, PACC president Tom Kettler, Hosanna Community Church's pastor Chuck Copeland, and the infamous Mr. Grinch, who under a certain light looked a lot like Fair Access Committee's Link Hoewing. Also in attendance were State Del. Linda Foley, and Dale Tibbitts, assistant to county executive Marc Elrich.

Brown expressed the anguish of the failure to get the ferry open even after having so many people in important positions not being able to move the needle or resolve the impasse. He noted that, as an example, if an impasse by private sector parties prevented passage from Kensington to Takoma Park, the problem

would have received much more action and results. He urged people to write all county politicians.

With many local county office holders in attendance, Brown explained how much Montgomery County gains from consumers and travelers from Virginia. He added that over nine million miles of extra vehicle driving have occurred since the closure, an excess very damaging to the environment.

Evan Glass, president of the Montgomery County Council, said, "When I heard about the rally, not only as the new president of the council and but also as chair of the transportation and environment committees, I wanted to be here. For the last two years, working with colleagues and District 15 team, we have worked to get this interstate problem fixed. We will continue to advocate for its opening."

Marilyn Balcombe, newly-elected county councilmember, observed that the purpose of the rally is make sure no one forgets that we are here. "We need action and do it now, and your council is fully supportive, and we will do everything in our power to get the ferry open."

State Del. Fraser-Hidalgo assured the crowd that he has been urging the new governor and lieutenant governor to help break the impasse.

Tom Kettler, president of the PACC, which represents 150 local businesses, spoke about the loss of revenue to our economy with the ferry closed, estimating a loss of at least twenty percent to our area restaurants. "Everyone talks about Poolesville being the heart of the Agricultural Reserve, the heart of western Montgomery County. Well, if you think of Poolesville as the heart, we have a major artery blocked." Erika Myers of Bassett's joined Kettler on the platform to show her support and appreciation for what everyone was doing.

Pastor Copeland of Hosanna Community Church spoke with passion and personal attachment to the issue. With much of his family living in Leesburg, he brought an energized urgency to open the ferry: "We are very tired of the challenge. We need action." He spoke of our emotion of feeling neglected, "We don't feel any neighborly love" from the powers that be. "There is no way in God's green Earth they would shut down a main artery anywhere like this and not have it fixed within two years."

The crowd joined in chanting "Two Years, Too Long" and "What do we want? The ferry opened!"

A feeling of despair remained after the event, but a general belief emanated from the crowd that renewed energy has brought the issue back to public and political attention and, perhaps this time, there is a glimmer of hope for results.



Scan the QR code to contact Montgomery County elected officials about reopening the ferry.

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We have been blessed with some milder-than-usual winter weather this year, but we can never be sure that Mother Nature will not give us a big blast of frightful winter weather. By taking steps to protect your pet, you can enjoy the wintery weather and keep them safe and sound.

It is well known that cold weather is harder on our older, arthritic canine friends and those with chronic metabolic diseases like diabetes, thyroid disease, kidney disease, and liver disease, so the simplest step you can take is to get a senior pet exam. Go to your veterinarian and discuss the current living conditions of your dog and what danger signs to look for from your dog if the weather becomes inhospitable.

Simply put, if you are cold outside, your dog is also cold. Even dogs with thick natural winter-type coats can develop hypothermia in extended cold, wet, and windy conditions. If you would not be outside in the conditions present, your dog should not be either. Dogs with lighter or shorter hair coats will benefit from sweaters and coats, but even these weather protectors do not change the fact that in severe weather conditions your pet would be better off inside.

Dogs' feet are the most exposed to the elements. Snow, ice, Ice melt, mud, and hidden debris in the snow can all play havoc with their toes and pads. Snowballs can develop in the hair and be cold and painful, causing your dog not to be able to walk. Dog boots can be very effective in keeping your canine pals' feet clean, dry, and safe.

Snowblowing equipment, snow shovels, tractors, truck plows, and other snow moving equipment all have sharp edges and can be heavy. Cuts and broken bones are possible if your dog is around you when you are clearing snow. Heavy snow also makes it less possible for your dog to get out of the way and avoid objects.

Don't throw snowballs at your dogs. It can hit them in the eye and damage the cornea, or a piece of ice in the snowball could break a tooth.

Try to prevent your dogs from eating snow and drinking out of puddles. It seems like fun, but there can be compounds in the snow or water that are dangerous or deadly to your dog. Bring fresh cool water on a walk. It can be used to drink or wash an area where an injury has occurred.

Inside, let your pets pick the places where they would like to lie down. Do not place heaters directly on your dog and do not place a cage or crate directly next to a fireplace or woodstove. Dogs know when they are too warm or cool and should be allowed to regulate their body temperatures themselves.

Enjoy the winter, but be ever aware of you and your pets' surroundings and distance from a safe, warm environment.



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