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Students from Monocacy Elementary school made Christmas tree ornaments, representing the Maryland in the National Christmas Tree Pageant for Peace. More in School News on Page 9.



John and Carolyn Repass recently celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Read all about it in Tidbits on Page 3.



Christmas, the Monocle, and Jim Spory. They just go together. Tidbits is still on Page 3.

# The Monocacy MONOCLE

Keeping An Eye On Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

December 12, 2008

Volume V, Number 16.

## A Christmas Lilly

By Rande Davis

The first Christmas tells of an innocent child and the wonderful gift of love given to the world. Our Christmas story is no different.

It begins with George and Tracee Staples of Poolesville, who were inexplicably given a challenge in life as their son, Ben, and young daughter, Lilly, were born with profound hearing loss. Without any family history of hearing loss, the Staples were left with no explanation as to why this would occur twice in their family.

When Ben was born twenty years ago in West Germany, the world was at a different time and place in its understanding and consideration of the needs for persons with disabilities. Through uncharted paths, the family found its way, each day at a time, through difficulties and victories, kindness and hostility, facing known and unknown challenges. For Ben, a bright and talented young man with a strong sense of humor, his path would reach a pinnacle right after Thanksgiving Day 2008. He left home to go to college at one of the most prestigious universities in the nation that also has one of the most premier colleges for persons with hearing disabilities: Rochester Institute of Technology's (RIT) - National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

The journey for his young six-year-old sister, Lilly, is just now beginning. Lilly is in first grade at Monocacy Elementary School where she attends regular classes, working, learning, and playing side by side with

all the other children. She has a cochlear implant and, through a microphone earpiece, can hear the voices of her teachers or students transmitted directly to her ear. Still, she is just in first grade and learning to read, and the words she hears can be confusing if not sometimes humorous. For Lilly, her principal's name becomes not Ms. Duranko but Ms. Rainbow, a title in a sense, even more appropriate. Ms. Zito, a Deaf and Hard of Hearing professional, becomes Ms. Squito (mosquito) and one which the other students gravitate to as well.

In one sense, the story is also about dedicated and courageous parents as well as a supportive community. Through Ben's experience, the



Monocacy Elementary School first Grader, Lilly Staples, is joined by her educators Linda Stolba, Suzanne Shorts, and Beth Dermo.

Staples clearly understood how important it is for Lilly to be fully integrated into life even with a hearing loss. Her most promising route for a normal life is through an educational experience which is the same

-Continued on Page 20.

## Doing a World of Good in Another World

By Dominique Agnew

This past October, Jack Reid of Beallsville traveled with a team of medical workers and other helpers to the town of Carcasse in Haiti to bring medical aid and supplies. This was Jack's second trip to Haiti since the parish of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Barnesville adopted St. Joseph's Parish in Carcasse as its twin parish about a year ago.

In recent years, the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. has twinned with the Diocese of Jérémie in Haiti and instituted the Twinning Program, encouraging its diocesan parishes to twin with parishes of Haiti, as



This sixteen-year-old boy has been blinded by cataracts. An operation will give him his sight

well. This came as a result of a U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops pushing for a more "international commitment of the Church in the United States." St. Mary's began considering the idea of twinning a few years ago, but the illness and passing of Father Lawrence delayed the implementation of the pro-

-Continued on Page 26.

Family Album



The Family Album is sponsored by  
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Despite a cold evening, a large turnout approaching five hundred people came to the Holiday Lighting Ceremony at Whalen Commons to visit Santa, sing carols, and listen to musical entertainment.



The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce held their holiday party at The Members Club at Four Streams in Beallsville.

Santa made an early visit to Poolesville to be at the Holiday Lighting Ceremony. He will return to the area on December 13 at the UMCVFD breakfast before making it back on Christmas Eve.



The Community and Economic Development Committee organized the Holiday Lighting festival. Surrounding Santa Claus (reported to be great friends with Chief Earl Moore of the UMCVFD) are Lyn Bodmer, Karen Michaels, and Cathy Bupp. Back row helpers are Commissioner Tom Yeatts, Helen Gunther, Mary Beth Dewey, Tim Whitehouse, George Coakley and Tom Kettler.



This Christmas tree in the lobby of the Town Hall is decorated with ornaments made by students from Poolesville Elementary and John Poole Middle Schools.



Combined choirs from Poolesville churches performed at the recent Thanksgiving Ecumenical Community service

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## In the Garden Beyond the Poinsettia

By Maureen O'Connell

While the poinsettia is probably the most popular of the holiday plants, there are many others available with which you can decorate your home during the Christmas season and grow indoors throughout the year. Here are some of my favorites and some tips for keeping them healthy.

As ubiquitous as the poinsettia is this time of the year, I still love this plant. It

is the first Christmas decoration that I buy each year. It has a very interesting history. During the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, the Aztecs used the plant's sap to control fevers, and the bracts (modified leaves) were used to make a reddish dye. In the seventeenth century, German botanist Wilenow assigned it the botanical name *Euphorbia pulcherrima* (very beautiful). Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first United States ambassador to Mexico in the 1820s, found this shrub growing alongside a road in Mexico. He brought it back to his greenhouse in South Carolina and introduced it to the United States. As the plant became more popular, William Prescott, a

historian and horticulturist, named the plant in honor of Joel Poinsett's discovery. In the early 1900s, the Ecke family of California grew poinsettias outdoors for use as landscape plants and cut flowers. To this day, the Eckes are recognized as the leading producer of poinsettias in the United States. This plant has come a long way from the original red color. You can now find them in varying shades of red, pink, white, yellow, and multi-colors. If you treat it right, this beautiful plant will keep its colorful bracts for two to three months. For a reason unknown to me, I have found that the pink-colored ones keep their flowers longer than the other colors. To keep them looking fresh, place them in bright light, but out of direct sunlight. Allow the soil surface to dry out between watering. Don't overwater or let the plant stand in water. Your house's temperature is important. Flowering plants do well in my house because, as anyone who has visited my

house knows, I keep my house quite cool. An ideal temperature for poinsettias is 65° to 70° Fahrenheit during the day and 60° to 65° Fahrenheit during the night. After the bracts have dropped from the plant, keep it in good light, water as needed, and it will continue to set out new green leaves. In the spring, you can plant it outdoors, and it will continue to grow.

Cyclamen is another popular Christmas holiday flowering plant. Its elegant flowers rise on arched stalks, sweeping back its petals to show off a leafy skirt in shades of pewter and green. This plant is content indoors with indirect light and a 65° F. temperature. Water well when the soil surface is dry. It comes in gorgeous shades of red, pink, white, and magenta. With good care, it will last two to four months with each bloom lasting two to three weeks.

The Christmas cactus is a very puzzling plant. Its scientific name is *Zygocactus*. In its

- Continued on Page 25.

## Tidbits

### Winners of the Youth Fotoweeek Contest Announced

Congratulations to winners of the Youth Fotoweeek Contest sponsored by FotoWeek and the Washington Post. Nearly 2,000 entries representing grades K through 12 were received from students in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. Poolesville High School was heavily represented in this prestigious competition. Junior Aaron Bernstein received a first place win in his category, with senior Emily Stubbs and freshman Bonnie Giovanetti both winning third place awards. The first place winner received a cash prize, camera, and a camera for the school. Third place winners received cameras, and all finalists were honored at an opening night celebration at the Fotoweeek Gallery in Georgetown. Winning photos will be exhibited through November 22 at FotoWeek Central in Georgetown at 3338 M Street, NW.

### Giarratano Leaves Poolesville Physical Therapy

Julie Giarratano was surprised when many clients and friends of Poolesville Physical Therapy stopped by to see her on her last day there. For the past sixteen years, Julie has worked side by side with Pat Hess. Julie told the Monocle that the Poolesville

Physical Therapy office was like a home away from home for her. "I will never forget all the laughs, the challenges, the tears, and the love that so many people shared with me. Leaving this job was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. I am humbled and honored to have met and worked with so many great people who have become my friends. Pat Hess will always be a dear, dear friend to me, and someone I love more than I can say. May God bless everyone." Julie has taken a position at Shady Grove Hospital.

### Living Life Like St. Paul

Kyle Broady, who serves as the new Pastor of Worship and Family Ministries at Poolesville Baptist Church, is enjoying his new position at the church even though life is a bit more like the missionary journey of St. Paul than he might otherwise prefer. That is because while the Broady family tries to sell their home in Kansas, Kyle shares life with Dennis and Lynne Stillson, the owners of Cugini's Restaurant. The couple has welcomed him into their home like Priscilla and Aquila, the tent-making couple mentioned in the Bible who shared their home with St. Paul. Kyle oversees the music, youth, and children's ministries

-Continued on Page 18.



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# Commentary

## Maybe Things Are Looking Up

By John Clayton

There simply isn't a lot of good news to enjoy these days. Between the almost unfathomable crashes of our economy and markets, and the worldwide misery that has followed and will apparently endure for some time, the continuation of our seemingly endless foreign wars, and the passage of a Ficker amendment by Montgomery County voters, the world indeed seems turned upside down. I turned to the evening news to try and get some inspiration for a December column and was greeted by several reports concerning the bankruptcy filing by the Tribune Company, owner of, according to their website, ten daily newspapers and commuter tabloids, among other things. Most of the broadcasts provided helpful sidebars about the impending death of the newspaper sector. Deck the halls, indeed.

With our problems so daunting, it is probably just as well that the country is changing its leadership. I say that without trying to score any partisan points, but just to make an observation—the timing is right for a changing of the guard. The president-elect has stirred the hopes of many people in many sectors of our society, and as he readies to come on board and face his challenges, he appears to be focusing on a pragmatic let's-solve-the-problems approach, more than an ideological or purely partisan approach. There's a fellow on "Saturday Night Live," whom I saw while I was waiting to see if Tina Fey as Sarah Palin was coming back on (or maybe it was just Sarah Palin— I get so confused), whose shtick is to yell "Just

Fix It!" whenever anyone says pretty much of anything. Funny or not, he clearly has the pulse of the nation under his thumb. One other confirmation that the president-elect is going for the centrist fix-it approach is that the news hole is beginning to fill with the news that the Democratic left wing is getting a little annoyed at his lack of attention to more leftist pursuits. This is probably a good sign. After all, if both the right wing and the left wing think that his approach is too much on the other side, he is probably about where most people think he should be.

Here at the Monocle, we are coming close to finishing up our fifth year of publication. As was pointed out in our last issue, we started at about the same time that Ray Hoewing started Poolesville On-line. Ray has now closed up POL, to the disappointment of the Poolesville community, and the detriment of all admirers of straightforward and honest reporting, but fortunately this was of his own choosing and he remains an active contributor to our greater community. Again, best wishes, Ray. We can't say we outlasted Ray because we're biweekly (usually) and he was weekly (always). I think we have to go at least ten years to match him.

As we move through the holiday season and approach the New Year, it is once again time to express our thanks to our readers, advertisers, and contributors who make it possible for us to continue to bring out the Monocacy Monocle. We continue to appreciate the comments we receive from people who enjoy our work, and we take seriously the criticisms and suggestions that help to improve our product. We are taking one of those little divergences from our biweekly schedule to enjoy this holiday season, but we will be back on January 9 with a new issue, ready to take on a new year of keeping our eye on local news.

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Keeping An Eye On Local News

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# Local News

## UMCVFD Urges Residents to Clearly Mark Their Property

By Jack Toomey

An emergency can occur at any hour at any residence. In the upper county area, many roads are not well illuminated by street lights, and some homes are located far off the road. When the fire department responds to these emergencies, sometimes personnel cannot locate a home for a critical few minutes because the homeowner has not erected readable house numbers at a place that the emergency workers can easily see.

The Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department is trying to rectify this problem by distributing house address signs that reflect light and can be identified from a long

distance. Captain Adam Pegler, a twenty-seven-year veteran of the fire department, is in charge of the project and summed up the importance of his personnel being able to locate a house quickly. He said that when he was stationed in Rockville, an ambulance could easily circle a block looking for an address, but "up here you can't go around the block." Pegler said that the UMCVFD is responsible for over a hundred square miles of territory, and when time is precious, the signs "allow us to identify the address from a distance." He also remarked that the signs help him because "it is not so much where I am going but where I have been," explaining that it helps him identify blocks of homes for future reference. Pegler explained that the signs are made inside the firehouse and that personnel will then respond to the home with a pole and the sign and assemble it on the property.

Sue Dabbondanza, the administrative officer for the fire department, said that over four hundred signs and posts have

been distributed since the project began. Residents who are interested in having the signs and poles erected on their property are asked to make a donation to the department. Those who are interested in having a reflective sign can call Ms. Dabbondanza at 301-972-8888 during business hours.

A phone call to the firehouse and a donation will ensure that a reflective sign and post will be positioned on your property, but, more importantly, the placing of the sign may allow an emergency worker to quickly locate your house in a future emergency.



Firefighter Dan Small, Captain Tim Thorne, and Firefighter Jeff Metz assemble a sign on Peachtree Road.

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## School News

# CHS Selected in Young Inventors Competition

Students from Clarksburg High School decided to use their summer break to accept a challenge to join a competition for young inventors. The challenge came from Lemelson-MIT in a program entitled InvenTeam. Lemelson-MIT InvenTeams is a national grants initiative of the Lemelson-MIT Program to foster inventiveness among high school students. InvenTeams, composed of high school students, teachers, and mentors, are asked to collaboratively identify a problem that they want to solve, research the problem, and then develop a prototype invention as an in-class or extracurricular project. Grants of up to \$10,000 support each team's efforts. InvenTeams are encouraged to work with community partners, specifically the

potential beneficiaries of their invention.

Student Justin Roth, the media and public relations manager for the Coyotes Inventors Club, reported to the Monocle on their involvement in the program.

In July and August, a small group of students from Clarksburg High School, including Shrey Tarpara, Alex Ivanov, Anik Saha, Ian Grissom, Justin Roth, Michael Goodier, Micaela Larson, Elysa Marchicelli, Eric Hong, and Christie Opiekun, met to form an InvenTeam and to make a decision on the final project choice. They also worked to develop part of the proposal during the summer, as it was due shortly after returning to school in early September. Their invention idea is the development of a pressure-sensitive illuminated computer cable, which would illuminate on contact when touched. They have been able to develop models to demonstrate the functionality of various components of the cable.

They submitted the invention statement and budget outline to MIT on September 12. In recently

receiving the news that the CHS team had been selected as one of only sixteen Lemelson-MIT high school teams in the nation, they have begun meeting regularly to work on the development of the prototype. To help them, they received a grant of just under \$9,000 from Lemelson-MIT. Additionally, they are invited to participate in the March Madness of the Mind event at the Smithsonian Museum of American

History next spring. Their goal is present the project at that event and at the MIT campus next June as part of the EurekaFest (the InvenTeam program's culminating activity). They are assisted by both outside mentors from the electrical engineering field and technology education teachers here at Clarksburg to develop the prototype.

## Youth Sports

# Durr, Reid, Harris: Poolesville Track's Triple Threat

By Jeff Stuart

The Poolesville High School indoor and outdoor track squads boast at least a trio of outstanding athletes. Inside the close-knit track community, they have certainly heard of the three Falcons runners, hurdler Olivia Durr, distance runner Jenny Reid, and sprinter Karissa Harris; outside that community, not so much. But that's okay with them. They did not choose to run track for the publicity. None had participated in track events prior to high school. Seniors Durr and Reid came to the track team from soccer after being urged to do so by former soccer and track coach, Scott Mathias. They wanted to

improve their conditioning. They did so much more than that. They were singled out as mocorunning.com's freshmen of the year in 2006. Harris, a junior, came to track via Coach Gina Grubb's field hockey team. She scored goals for the field hockey team, and people told her she was fast. She wanted to find out how fast. Turns out she is fast—very. She was listed among mocorunning.com's freshmen of the year in 2007. All three found an appealing sense of family on the track team. "I love going to Virginia Tech and Penn State Relays and rooming with the girls, especially Jen," says Durr. "We always have so much fun, I love it." Reid also cites the VT and Penn trips as career highlights. Jenny abandoned soccer for cross country this fall because she "loves to run." The cross country team missed qualifying for the state tournament by a single point, but she placed tenth in the Maryland XC girls 3M event at Hereford High School on November 8. Before that, she finished first in the Poolesville Day 5K Run on September 20.

Last year, Reid won the indoor gold medal in the state 1600-meter race, her proudest accomplishment. "And winning the states indoor [as a team] 2008," she says. At the region, she finished first in the 1,600- and 3,200-meter races for the second year in a row, and anchored the Falcons' winning 4x800 relay team.

In the states, Durr took third place in both the 55-meter hurdles and the high jump.



Sprinter Karissa Harris, distance runner Jenny Reid, and hurdler Olivia Durr of the PHS track team.

-Continued on Page 22..

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## Local News

### Patton Signs for Lacrosse Scholarship To Belmont Abbey College

By Rande Davis

Megan Patton, a senior at Poolesville High School, recently signed a scholarship agreement to play lacrosse for the Belmont Abbey College Crusaders. In attending Belmont Abbey, located in North Carolina, Megan becomes part of the over 130-year-history of the college.

Belmont Abbey College's head coach, Shaun Williamson, who was recently named Division II Coach of the Year, told the Monocle that he was "very pleased to have Megan commit to Belmont Abbey. I believe she is going to be a great kid to coach and watch develop into a talented player over the next four years. I believe Megan's ability will complement the other players at the Abbey."

Mike Haight coached Megan through her club team years with the Jackals. He is head coach at Our Lady of Good Counsel High School and his team produced Montgomery County's only nationally-ranked school lacrosse team in 2007. He was thrilled for Megan and was especially supportive in his comments regarding her scholarship: "If you ever want to know what it takes to play college lacrosse, you don't need



*PHS senior Megan Patton signs a scholarship offer from Belmont Abbey College to play for their Division II lacrosse team. She is joined by PHS Athletic Director Fred Swick and her parents*

to look much further than Megan Patton. She never missed a practice in two years for me, and her effort and ability continued to improve. I know she is academically solid in the classroom which also plays a huge role in pursuing college athletics. We've had many discussions about how important schoolwork is as well as her lacrosse playing. She is taking many Advanced Placement courses this year and has close to a 4.0 GPA."

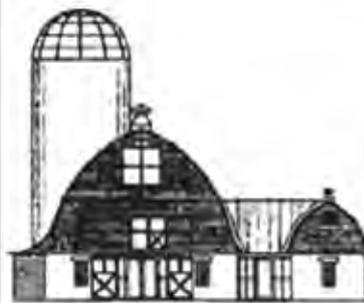
He regards her potential as unlimited and due to her hard working habits. He looks forward to seeing her athletic growth in the next few years. As to her play on the club team, "She took her game to new levels this past fall at the Downingtown Fall Classic Lacrosse tournament by dominating the draw control and pounding the ball in the back of the net. She is extremely tall for lacrosse standards, and this sets her out from her competition."

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With the arrival of the 2008 holiday season and tough economic times we feel that updated information on the guidelines for **recycling, reducing, and reusing** in Montgomery County would be helpful together with some practical advice on recycling.

The Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS) has continued to expand the recycling of plastics and **nearly all plastic containers**, including tubs and lids from your kitchen, bath and laundry may now be placed in the "commingled material bins" in addition to containers of glass and metal (and foil and metal scrap). Plastic bags, wrap, styrofoam (such as "clamshells") are **not** accepted.

However, be aware that **any container with hazardous materials must not be placed in these bins**. Toxic materials, including oil paints, automotive (antifreeze) and garden products (pesticides) must be safely delivered to the Shady Grove Transfer Station. An increasingly difficult problem will be the energy saving florescent bulbs (CFLs) which contain the poison mercury. Until a disposal plan has been developed, Sugarloaf believes that a determined effort must be made by the County to collect these bulbs in special bins placed in grocery stores, pharmacies and similar places so that they do not end up in the Dickerson incinerator.

Improved holiday party recycling can be achieved by labeling several receptacles in one location. A list of acceptable items – ending with the word "ONLY" – furthers your success. Large parties should have receptacles in two or three locations to handle a surge in the volume of recyclables.

**Reduced consumption reduces recycling.** Reusable grocery bags are a great start, and avoiding single-serve packaging – in favor of larger recyclable containers – also helps. Minimize foil and baggie use by collecting clean bags from bread and other foods and packing lunches and leftovers in these reusable containers. When you do receive a grocery bag try to reuse it. Most grocers have special bins for recycling used plastic bags, and paper can be recycled at home.

The County website ([www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)) offers extensive information on composting, how to donate usable construction materials, recycle all electronics, and dispose of hardened latex paints.

A couple of useful phone numbers: With large appliances or quantities of scrap metal a special pickup should be scheduled by calling 240-777-6410 and in the unlikely case you cannot find what you are looking for on the website you can call DSWS directly: 240-777-6400.

## Youth Sports

# Coyotes Come Up Short in Playoffs

By Jeff Stuart

The football season ended suddenly for the Clarksburg Coyotes. After completing their second consecutive unbeaten season with a 41-6 win over Lansdowne on October 31 and a 33-0 victory at Watkins Mill on November 7, the Coyotes (10-1), the number two seed in the region behind Century, seemed poised to make a deep run in the 2A Maryland State Playoffs. Middletown (8-4) was the number three seed, but the Coyotes were the host on Friday, November 14 and had defeated the Knights handily, 33-7, a year ago in the friendly confines of Coyote Canyon. The goal was to get beyond the region and to the state semis on November 28—but it was not

to be. The Coyotes picked up three consecutive first downs on their first possession against the Knights and scored on their second when Avery Graham raced fifty-seven yards from scrimmage for a touchdown—but behind three touchdown passes from quarterback Rob Michels, the Knights scored twenty-one unanswered points in the second quarter.

Mark Small's 53-yard run gave the Coyotes a first and goal on the seven in the third quarter and gave them a chance, but Clarksburg couldn't punch it in. Middletown prevailed, 21-7, in constant rain that seemed much colder at game's end. So one and done in the region tournament. Cruel, but it happens. That is the nature of the playoffs.

In their last game of the season, November 7, almost a year to the day after the Coyotes outlasted Watkins Mill, 24-18, in four overtimes at home to preserve their first undefeated campaign, Clarksburg ventured into the hostile Wolverines'

stadium and prevailed easily, 33-0, despite evidence of a burgeoning rivalry. A 40-yard pass from Martin to Daughtry put the Coyotes up, 6-0, after one quarter. In the second quarter, Martin hit Daughtry again and then junior Patrick Isaacs (65 yards for touchdowns in the second quarter) scored on a 63-yard run.

The week before, the Coyotes ripped visiting Lansdowne of Baltimore, 41-6. Martin threw four touchdown passes: one to Isaacs, one to Veith, one to Daughtry, and one to junior Jeff Gatling. Isaacs had a 70-yard kickoff return to open the second half.

"Our season was a huge success," said Head Coach Larry Hurd. "It was sad the way it ended because our seniors deserved so much more. We had our ups and downs this season. We fought through some injuries, but we played extremely well at times. We are happy with the success we have had so far in the first three years of the school's existence and hope to continue to grow."

The seniors that helped launch this remarkably successful program at an entirely new school three years ago and led it to two straight undefeated seasons are: Paris Keriakou, Jamaal Germany, Myles Daughtry, Cody Martin, Mark Small, Corey Myers, Vincent Wood, Mike Moore, Devin Reeves, Avery Graham, Chris Mundon, Abiye Ibiebele, Donald Sivert, Constandino Sofillas, Tristan McCall, James Goss, Marcus Kinney, Walter Leslie. If we can lift the cloud of gloom that

accompanied the season ending loss for a bit, it is time for them to take a well deserved bow, because two consecutive unbeaten regular seasons is an extraordinary achievement.

"Cody Martin ended the season with twenty-four touchdown passes and only four interceptions," said the coach. "He threw for 1700 yards. Mark Small ended the season with over 1000 yards rushing. Andrew Veith had thirty-one receptions." Graham has committed to play for the University of Maryland next fall. He was explosive on offense, averaging 10.8 yards per carry this season and was solid at linebacker. Martin completed fifty-eight percent of his passes. His favorite targets were Veith and Myles Daughtry (30 catches, 773 yards). The Coyotes as a team were good enough to win, even when appearing to play down to the level of lesser opponents as they did in a 12-7 win, but a 49-7 slaughter over visiting Wootton (7-4) showed the brilliance Clarksburg was capable of. The Coyotes scored more than fifty points once, more than forty on three other occasions, and more than thirty three other times. It was an extraordinary regular season.

Clarksburg will move from 2A to 3A in its fourth season next year and will go head to head with 3A power Damascus in the 2009-2010 season. Mark that one on your calendar

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# School News

## MES Represents Maryland at National Christmas Tree Pageant for Peace

By Rande Davis

Monocacy Elementary School received the distinctive honor of having been selected to represent the state of Maryland in the annual National Christmas Tree Pageant for Peace Program.

Since 1923, the United States has held a tradition of lighting a National Christmas Tree. In 1978, a live forty-foot Colorado blue spruce was transplanted from York, Pennsylvania to its present site on the Ellipse. In 1954, a Pathway of Peace, fifty-six smaller, decorated trees representing all fifty states, five territories, and the District of Columbia, was planted surrounding the National Christmas Tree. Each

year, sponsoring organizations from each state provide tree decorations that are encased in protective plastic globes to shield them from the weather.

This year, Monocacy Elementary was selected to have its students make decorations that symbolize aspects of the state of Maryland. Among the symbols, the students chose to draw pictures representing blue crabs, Sugarloaf Mountain, the Monocacy Aqueduct, corn, the beach, dairy farms, Ravens/Orioles, the Chesapeake Bay, and the black-eyed Susan.

The project was organized through the student government with nearly thirty students participating. The school originally sought to enter the program over four years ago, and the students were thrilled to finally have been chosen this year.

Using standard water colors, icons were drawn on a postcard-sized paper of the various themes. Then, each drawing was placed in the protective plastic globe, and a

ten-inch wire was attached.

The Monocle asked the president of the student government, Frank Quaranta, what was the best and the hardest part of the task. "The wiring was the most difficult since we had to make sure each wire would hang exactly ten inches. The best part was that it was

not just one person but a whole group of students who came together to do it."

On December 4, Frank was joined by his parents and teacher sponsors, Mrs. Soderstrum and Mrs. Eye, at the tree-lighting ceremony which was nationally televised.



Amelia King proudly displays her offering for the Maryland Christmas tree on the Ellipse in Washington, D.C.

## OUR LADY OF THE PRESENTATION 2008 Christmas Season Schedule



### DECEMBER 24: CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 pm Children's Christmas Mass with Gospel Pageant

6:30 pm Vigil Mass of Christmas

12:00 am Midnight Mass

### DECEMBER 25: CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 am Solemn Mass of Christmas

### DECEMBER 31: NEW YEAR'S EVE

5:30 pm Vigil Mass

### JANUARY 1: NEW YEAR'S DAY

10:00 am Mass of New Year's

...so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.

Romans 12: 5

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# Center Stage Of Kids and Equines

By Dominique Agnew

The long-awaited sequel has finally arrived. Horse lovers of all ages will rejoice to know that Mary Ann Powell, Poolesville author and artist, has just had her second book published. In 2007, her first novel, *Emerson*, was published by Author House in Indiana with great success. Mary Ann hadn't planned on a sequel, but readers wanted to know how the lives of the characters would continue, so 2008 saw the publication of *Prince Alley Em*.

*Prince Alley Em* continues the adventures of Carol Spencer, her friend Gloria, the Spencer family, and their Loafing Hills Horse Farm at the foot of our beloved Sugarloaf Mountain. Carol, who was a teenager in *Emerson*, is now in her twenties in *Prince Alley Em*, and she's expanded her repertoire of horse activities. Also, Mary Ann has added some familiar locations and horse happenings such as: Red Eagle Ranch Polo, the Douglas Horse Rescue Farm, and Barnesville's Circle of Hope.

The stories are works of fiction, but with thirty-five years of

having owned and operated a horse farm in Poolesville, Mary Ann knows what she's talking about when she says, "All the horse stuff is based on true experiences." She also knows kids. In 2000, she retired from the Montgomery County Public Schools after nearly thirty years as a guidance counselor, many of them at Poolesville High School.

Logically, one would think that it was upon her retirement that she decided to write. On the contrary, "I have been writing all my life," she says. Mary Ann has a file drawer full of unpublished stories. *Emerson* was just the beginning, and she had written it "years and years ago." In fact, when she submitted *Emerson* to the publisher, it was as a short story. The publisher encouraged her "to lengthen [the story] and add some romance," she chuckles, but it's perfect for all ages. "Parents have said it's the best thing they've read," she says.

When Mary Ann wasn't running her horse farm, working at the high school, or writing, she was composing music (country songs that are can be heard on Nashville stations), writing poems, and painting. Her paintings always have an equine theme and can be found at the Surrey Shop in Potomac. The artistic talent has definitely passed through the family.

Mary Ann's mother painted on fine china, and her granddaughter, Valerie Powell, did the artwork for both *Emerson* and *Prince Alley Em*.

Mary Ann will be available to sign copies of her books at the Poolesville Library on Wednesday, December 17 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday, December 20, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.



Author and artist Mary Ann Powell

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Also, don't forget gift certificates from the area's restaurants: Bassett's, Cugini's, Domino's, House of Poolesville, Kristopher's, The Corner, Subway, Poolesville Beer & Wine, Austin's Café, and McDonald's.

Store	Gift Ideas	Store	Gift Ideas
Poolesville Hardware	Decorations, toys, gifts, especially for Dad	Selby's Market	Poolesville wear and everything you need for holiday foods
Poolesville Beer & Wine	Beer and Wines for the Holiday parties	CVS	Rows and Rows of Christmas items and gifts
M & T Bank	Savings Bonds	Jo's Framing	Framing and Gifts
Healthworks	Workout clothes and gift memberships	Cabin Fever Inside Jo's Frame	Gifts and Home décor items to benefit cancer research
Heartside Antiques	Antiques, collectibles, and old books	When Pigs Fly Inside Jo's Frame	Vintage furniture, antiques, gifts for all occasions
Sugarleaf Mountain Vineyard	Wines	Broad Run Farms Inside Jo's Frame	Furniture from Mary Sears
UpCounty Beer & Wine - Clarksburg	Wine and party goods	Bob's Bikes	New Bikes, and bike accessories
Bedmer's Stoves	Woodstoves and pottery	Potomac Framing	Frames and Pictures
Crafts-A-Plenty	Many Poolesville exclusives; gifts	BB & T	Saving Bonds
Marygro Coffee - Clarksburg	Gourmet ground coffee, mugs, more	John Poole Store & Museum	Antiques, books, ornaments, more
Books by Local authors	<i>Emerson and Prince Billy Eat These novels by Mary Ann Powell 301-407-2124</i> <i>Luminous Mad - poetry</i> <i>Herons Jacksonville 301-344-0747</i> <i>Wade - A Character Study</i> <i>Arthur Voss 301-972-0101</i>	Books by Local Authors	<i>The Potomac Land - George Washington and the Waterway West - history by Robert Kapsch 301-424-4084</i> <i>Twilight Years - Historical history Jeff Stuart 301-109-0000</i>

**Local News**

**Historic Sites Seek Restoration**

By Kristen Milton

County planners are looking for partners to help get two Up-County historic icons restored. The Darby House and Store and the Joseph White House, both near Beallsville, have been stabilized in recent years but still need a lot of work.

The two sites, plus Sandy Springs's Red Door Store, were discussed at the October 30 Montgomery County Planning Board meeting in preparation for soliciting Requests for Proposals (RFPs) from outside groups interested in restoring the sites. Joey Lampl, Cultural Resources Manager for parks, said they were hoping for curatorships where a private partner assumes the cost of restoration in exchange for a long-term low-to-no-

rent ease of the property. There are currently two such partnerships in the county: the Boyd-Maughlin House in Boyds and the Hyattstown Mill.

The board purchased the Darby House and Store, located at the intersection of Darnestown and Beallsville roads, in 2004, and the Joseph White House on Bucklodge Road near the Rickman Horse Park was donated to the county in 2007 by the Rickman family.

Work at the 1910 Darby Store in the past year has revealed numerous challenges, Lampl said, including mold, lead, asbestos and extensive water damage. A tarp now covering part of the roof is "a six-month patch" at best, she said. Nonetheless, the store still boasts original shelves and counters and "a wonderful feel," Lampl said. Some artifacts, such as old magazines, also continue to be recovered at the site.

A list of possible uses for the store, including a restaurant,

*-Continued on Page 23.*



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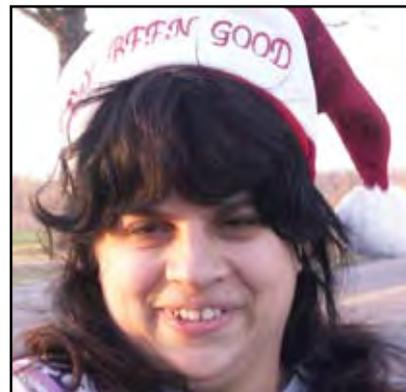
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*but Santa... can explain!*

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Erika Waters Assistant School Administrator CHS	Father Herbert Priest Our Lady of the Presentation	Gina Grubb Assistant Athletic Director PHS	Jace Broadhurst Pastor Poolesville Baptist Church
Kathy Albert Post Office Boyd's	Cathy Hoponick Secretary PHS	Kerry Sell Health Technician Monocacy Elementary	Mary Land Secretary Front Office CHS
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## Center Stage

### Playing with Fire (and Mud)

By Dominique Agnew

Drive through Buckeystown, and the years fall away. Ancient oaks and maples dapple the sunlight; beautiful churches raise their spires to the firmament; Victorian painted ladies welcome neighbors with inviting porches and bright, friendly façades; and there in the heart of Buckeystown, at the bottom of two hills, also welcoming friends, is Bodmer's Stoves and Pottery—an incongruous match, perhaps. What do stoves and pottery have to do one with the other? Besides fire, of course, the stoves and pottery at Bodmer's are united by one of the owners, Nancy Bodmer, potter. Bodmer's, owned and established by Ed and Nancy Bodmer since the mid-seventies, sells an assortment of stoves, and they sell pottery, much of it

Nancy's works, some is the work of other potters.

As with many artists, the road to art for Nancy took a circuitous path. Before becoming a full-time artist, Nancy was a dental hygienist, a career she truly enjoyed, but she "always felt a creative urge," she says. Her love of clay came to her in her mid-twenties, she says. When she and Ed were first married, in 1970, they lived in Rockville where she met someone who was a potter. By 1971, she was taking evening classes, but finding it very frustrating. She knew she wanted to work on the potter's wheel, but it took her a year before she felt comfortable throwing and creating pieces on the wheel. By 1972, Ed and Nancy had bought their present-day home in Buckeystown, and Nancy's first studio was in the dug-out basement. She had a little wheel on an orange crate, and she began creating pots. Meanwhile, Hurricane Agnes blew through, flooded the base-

ment with three feet of water, and created little balls of clay out of Nancy's pots. Needless to say, Nancy needed a new studio which was created from the conversion of a garage. Nancy was still working as a dental hygienist at this time, but a little less so.

It was the 1970s, an era which heralded a burgeoning interest in crafts and craft shows. "This was a wonderful time," says Nancy. She took her pieces to the Frederick Craft Fair (which no longer exists). She also joined the Craftpeople's Guild of Frederick County, eventually becoming its president. As Nancy became more involved with craft shows, dental hygiene fell by the wayside and ceased completely in 1976. "I felt a need to do pottery full time," Nancy explains. At about this time, the Bodmers were able to purchase the property adjacent to their house. Vacant for more than a decade, the property had last been a gas station in 1963. Ed and Nancy immediately began selling woodstoves. It was also



Nancy Bodmer

a place for her craft, Nancy says. She laughs when she imagines going to a realtor and requesting a property where you could live in a home next door to your business. It would be nearly impossible to find. "Fate steps in sometimes," she says. By 1977, they "couldn't get stoves quickly enough."

At the same time, the Craftpeople's Guild had grown so much that it needed a home which it found in the old Schiffer-

*-Continued on Page 23.*



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## Things To Do

Look for updates to Things to Do on [www.monocacymonocle.com](http://www.monocacymonocle.com)

Special Holiday Programs

### December 12, 13, and 14

Weinberg Center  
Maryland Regional Ballet  
The Nutcracker Ballet  
Weinberg Center - Frederick  
December 12 – 8:00 p.m.  
December 13 – 2:00 and 8:00 p.m.  
December 14 – 2:00 p.m.  
Costs: range from \$11.00 to \$25.00

### December 12 and 13

John Poole Middle School Play  
Midsummer Night's Dream  
7:00 p.m.

### December 12

Entertainment Night  
Cugini's Restaurant  
No BS – band  
8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

### December 13

Santa Breakfast

UMCVFD – Beallsville Fire Station  
Bring a New Toy  
\$5.00 over twelve years  
\$4.00 three to eleven years  
Free – under three years

Celebrate! Come to the Music  
Frederick Children's Chorus  
Tuscarora High School  
7:30 p.m.

Fall Play  
Chorus Line  
Clarksburg High School  
7:00 p.m.

### December 14

Celebrate Christmas – Island Style  
Musical Presentation  
Poolesville Baptist Church  
7:00 p.m.

### December 16

Winter Combined Concert  
PHS and JPMS  
Choral and Orchestra  
Poolesville High School Auditorium  
7:00 p.m.

### December 17

for "some modest expansion of the housing stock" although the number of new hookups will be few due to limitations at the Poolesville plant. Poolesville's wastewater treatment plant serves the Jonesville/ Jerusalem area, north of its town limits, because of a 1984 agreement between the town, the county, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. WSSC agreed to make financial contributions to the plant in order to provide sewage service to the area at a time when residential wells were being contaminated by private sewage systems.

The new Jerusalem homes will have private drives off the current cul de sac, and the planning board required an additional turnaround space to be constructed at the request of the fire department to allow for safe access of fire equipment. No area residents commented on the plan either at the November 20 hearing or by writing previous to the unanimous approval.

### Master plan work continues

The planning board held its

Winter Concert  
Poolesville Elementary Music Dept.  
At Poolesville High School  
7:00 p.m.

Book Signing  
*Prince Alley Em* by Mary Ann Powell  
Poolesville Library  
3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### December 18

Winter Orchestra Concert  
Clarksburg High School  
7:00 p.m.

### December 19

Generation Variations  
Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theatre  
Poolesville High School  
7:30 p.m.

### December 18, 19, 20, and 21

A Christmas Carol  
Weinberg Center Frederick  
December 18 – 10:00 a.m.  
December 19 – 7:30 p.m.  
December 20 – 2:00 and 7:30 p.m.  
December 21 – 2:00 p.m.

seventh work session on the Germantown Master Plan November 17 as the document continues its slow progress toward review by the county council. The board and staff have been working on updating the 1989 Germantown Master Plan, which is intended to serve as a guiding vision for development in the area in coming years. Topics at the latest session included thorny outstanding zoning issues as well as the question of staging.

Roger King, Jr. attended to express his concern about the future of the Middlebrook Mobile Home Park. The area is being considered as a possible location for affordable housing in the future as well as a receiving site for transferable development rights (TDRs) created by the formation of the Agricultural Reserve in 1980. King said the park already serves as affordable housing

-Continued on Page 22.

Dickens's heartwarming holiday classic for all ages.  
Costs range from \$12.00 to \$22.00

### December 20

Entertainment Night  
Bassett's Restaurant  
Mindy Miller – Acoustic Guitar  
10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

Book Signing  
*Prince Alley Em* by Mary Ann Powell  
Poolesville Library  
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

### December 21

Traditional Santa Ride through Poolesville  
Santa Rides on Fire Engine Through Poolesville  
Begins at 5:30 p.m.

### December 22

Winter Choral Performance  
Clarksburg High School  
7:00 p.m.

### December 23

Grandparents' Day and concert  
Monocacy Elementary School  
10:00 a.m.

14th Annual Messiah Sing-Along  
Frederick Chamber Singers  
Weinberg Center - Frederick  
Costs: \$18.00, \$12.00, \$10.00

### December 31

Hooray for Hollywood  
New Year's Eve Gala  
Weinberg Center  
8:00 p.m.  
Black tie party with all the fixings  
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New Year's Eve Money Bingo  
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## Local News

### Planning Board Approves Two Jerusalem Church Homes

By Kristen Milton

Two additional homes were recently approved for the Jerusalem community by the Montgomery County Planning Board, although only one of the homes will be connected to the already-stressed Poolesville Wastewater Treatment Plant. The 3.6-acre Prather Property, located at the end of Jerusalem Church Terrace, already hosts one home which will be kept according to the plans approved by the board November 20. Of the two new homes, one will be connected to public water supplied by Poolesville, and the other will use a private well and septic system.

Planner Rich Weaver noted that the water availability allows

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## Local News

### State Officials Engage Residents On Water Quality Issues in Poolesville

By Rande Davis

The December 8, 2008 Town of Poolesville public meeting was convened to provide public awareness and dialogue about the quality of the town's water supply, to present the most current information available from the recent testing on the town's water supply, to hear testimony from state officials, and to listen to residents on the issue.

The current discussion on the quality of the water supply has come up at this time primarily for two reasons. The first reason is to report the results from monitoring four wells within the town supply for alpha emitting radionuclides, which include gross alpha activity, radium, and uranium. The second centers on concerns expressed by some residents about any possible carcinogenic effect from the town water supply.

In 2005, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) identified four wells that potentially had elevated levels of gross alpha radionuclides (Wells 4, 7, and Well 9/10). The MDE required that the town monitor those wells to determine if corrective action would be required. The established protocol under the circumstances is to monitor the levels of alpha emitters and average the recorded results to determine if there is a sustainable problem with corrective action required.

Radionuclides are naturally occurring compounds in the aquifer, which decay and emit radiation. Examples include radon, radium, uranium, and thorium. The level of allowable alpha radionuclides in the water supply by the MDE must be under 15 pCi/L (Pico Curies per liter) based on an average of four quarterly samples. Should contamination exceed that amount in a sustained way, then treatment would be required.

The town government un-

dertook a number of actions to safeguard the public and to find out the extent of any potential problem. Independent from the testing by the state, the town contracted Kathy Mihm (C.P.G.), geologist of S. S. Papadopoulos & Associates in Bethesda, to simultaneously test the water supply, report the findings to the commissioners, and to provide corrective actions should they be recommended. Although not required by the MDE, the town on its own accord closed Well 10, the well reporting the highest level of gross alpha radionuclides, until such time that tests prove the acceptability of the well.

In Mrs. Mihm's report, she emphasized that uranium, radium, and radon are all naturally-occurring alpha emitters which emit radioactivity from decay of the elements. The water supply from Wells 9 and 10 are mixed so two tests are done, conjointly and separately. Through nearly forty tests since 2005 by two separate laboratories, only Well 10, the one that has been shut down from public use, showed a level for gross alpha activity of 15.22 pCi/L which is just above the 15 pCi/L allowable level.

Corrective action, should it become necessary, will be costly, and the town has already set aside \$600,000 in the event that becomes the recommended course of action.

The issue of radon as the second largest cause of lung cancer was also discussed as it relates to the water supply. However, the problem regarding radon, an inert, tasteless, odorless gas, is primarily an airborne issue of concern and less so in the water. Mrs. Mihm reports that radon issues from water supply typically do not amount to more than five percent of the overall possible concern within a home. As of yet, the federal Environmental Protection Agency has not fully developed governmental guidelines for radon. However, there are available inexpensive (less than \$15.00) radon testing kits for homeowners concerned with the issue and they can test their home for the level of radon in indoor air. Corrective action through aeration processes for excess radon levels can range from nearly negligible to \$2,500.00 depending on the individual home.

Accepting invitations to attend

this public meeting from the state government were Nancy Reilman, Chief, SDWA Implementation Division – Water Supply Program, and Clifford S. Mitchell, MS, MD, MPH, director of Environmental/Health Coordination, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Programs. Both state officials were present primarily to hear from the town and citizens but did accept questions from the commissioners and residents.

Of the more than fifteen citizens attending the presentation, a number of citizens came forward expressing their deep concerns and fears regarding the water supply and any possible carcinogenic effects from the water on the population. Among them was Fred Kelly whose wife developed a very rare form of cancer in her thirty-first week of pregnancy and reported that four other cancers have been diagnosed in persons living "within his block." Another individual talked of cancers in children within the area in numbers far greater than could reasonably be expected and that her doctor advised her that the cause "is in the water supply and she should

move." The possibility of accumulated causes of cancer rather than one specific cause was also raised for concern. This general concern of "cancer clusters" was pressed upon the commissioners for their awareness as the town wrestles with cost/benefit issues and what prudent actions, if any, need to be taken. While some expressed opinions that, costs aside, the town should implement corrective action regardless of testing results, others opined that the causes of cancer are too unknown and variable to support such action unless the final testing proves definitively advisable.

The state representatives were invited to come forward to make comments and answer questions from the commissioners and audience. Reilman reported that the state has been recording and monitoring radionuclide issues since 1995 in over 500 communities throughout the state. She reported that with levels of radon currently ranging from 300 to 2500 pCi/L, there is little or no risk since levels of 4000

-Continued on Page 18.

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# Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

## Present

November 19 Burglary, 17100 block of Chiswell Road, Poolesville.

November 21 Burglary, 17400 block of Hughes Road, Poolesville.

November 23 Disorderly Conduct, 17400 block of Hughes Road, Poolesville.

November 25 Theft of a Vehicle, 24200 block of River Road, Poolesville.

## Past

December 14, 1981 A twenty-year-old Kensington man was shot to death on a Dickerson farm while target shooting with friends. Police said that the victim was shot by a friend who, while walking back to a truck to reload his gun, kept his finger on the trigger and accidentally discharged the gun, striking his friend.

December 14, 1955 A Darnestown farmhand was shot to death by his eighteen-year-old son on the estate of a prominent Rockville attorney. The defendant had spent most of the day drinking before he attacked the son of the estate owner. When the father attempted to intervene, the boy picked up a shotgun and shot his father in the chest.

December 17, 1885 A brawl broke out in a Poolesville store when a man, doing his Christmas shopping, became enraged when told that a particular item was not in stock. During the fight, he was said to have chewed off the finger of the storekeeper. The injured man was borne to the home of a doctor where he was treated.

December 19, 1929 Montgomery County police arrested a Washington man after an exciting high speed chase that began near the county line in Ashton. The officers spotted three cars entering Montgomery County at a high speed and gave chase, suspecting that the cars contained liquor,

and ended up shooting out the tires of one of the cars. The driver of the disabled car ran into the woods but was soon arrested. Inside the car, the officers found 240 gallons of liquor bound for the Washington Christmas trade.

December 21, 1931 A group of hunters found a woman's skeleton in a wooded area known as Big Pines between River Road and the road to Travilah. Found near the body was a pair of high-heeled shoes and a purse containing an 1856 cent. An exhaustive investigation was started by police who were trying to deter-

mine who the woman was and how she died.

December 24, 1941 Montgomery County police were kept busy responding to numerous reports of an illuminated object in the sky over the communities of Barnesville, Beallsville, Dickerson, Poolesville, and Boyds. Because of the fears of an air attack and blackout restrictions that were in effect, the army was notified. The next day, an officer discovered footprints on the rooftops of several homes when he went back to interview witnesses.



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### High School Varsity Home Games

Winter Sports  
 December 12 to January 9

#### Poolesville High School Varsity Home Games

<b>Boys' Basketball:</b>		<b>Girls' Basketball</b>
1/5 Rockville 5:15 p.m.	12/12 Brunswick 7:00 p.m.	
	1/5 Rockville 7:00 p.m.	

**Wrestling:**

12/13 Walter Johnson & Watkins Mill 1:00 p.m.
12/17 Clarksburg 7:00 p.m.

**Swim Team**

12/13 Blake at Olney Swim Center 11:30 a.m.
12/20 Quince Orchard (Germantown Swim Center) 9:15 a.m.

#### Clarksburg High School Varsity Home Games

<b>Boys' Basketball:</b>		<b>Girls' Basketball</b>
12/16 Northwood 7:00 p.m.	12/12 Northwest 7:00 p.m.	
12/19 Poolesville 5:15 p.m.	12/19 Poolesville 7:00 p.m.	
1/5 Watkins Mill 5:15 p.m.	1/5 Watkins Mill 7:00 p.m.	

**Wrestling**

12/20 Damascus & Quince Orchard 1:00 p.m.
1/6 Einstein 6:00 p.m.

**Swim Team**

12/13 Wheaton (Montgomery College/Takoma Park) 12:00 p.m.
---



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 Fri. & Sat. 11:00am-10:00pm Sun: 9:00am -9:00pm

**"Town Meeting Water Report"**  
Continued From page 16.

pCi/L are standard in outdoor areas. Link Hoewing asked if she found the citizens' "poignant stories of illnesses typical across the state" as she attends such meetings. She indicated that the concerns raised were not unusual.

Tom Yeatts wanted to know if other towns proactively used outside independent consultants to assist in the monitoring of the water supply as Poolesville has done. She indicated that most rely solely on the state.

In addressing the issue of "cancer clusters," Dr. Mitchell talked of how challenging and difficult it can be to assess each situation, especially in smaller populations and encouraged reporting all cancer incidents to the cancer registry. He indicated that isolating carcinogenic causes to just water supply outside of extreme situations (like towns located on toxic dumps) can be as frustrating to the researcher as it is to the concerned citizen.

In other town issues raised during the meeting, a proposal

from Commissioner Tom Yeatts to establish guidelines in managing the time used by individuals during open forum was accepted by a 4-1 vote. Commissioner Kuhlman voted against the proposal on the basis that abuse by the public is rare, and specific limitations are not necessary. Those guidelines will be determined and offered for a vote at a later date.

Conrad Potemra raised concerns over testing of the new wells and whether or not the cost for any possible remedial action is to be borne by the developers. Town Manager Wade Yost reported that the new wells have been tested, are not in violation, and do not need corrective action.

Rudy Gole admonished the commissioners to remember that they have previously promised to return the reserved \$600,000 to the taxpayers should corrective action on the radionuclides prove unnecessary and not to use those funds for other water issues should they come up.

Bob Pierce read a statement against the town subsidizing schools, churches, and the county pool for water use. Other municipi-

palities expect these institutions to pay their share of water usage fees. He also reported that he is asking the town's ethics commission to review whether or not such a policy is within the ethical standards of the town government.

**"Tidbits" Continued From Page 3.**

at PBC. He obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Music with an emphasis in Music Education from Belmont University in Nashville,

Tennessee. Following that, he and his wife moved to Missouri where he taught vocal music in the Kansas City Public Schools. Once receiving the call to ministry, he entered the Divinity Program at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he is currently pursuing his master's degree with an emphasis in Christian Education. Kyle is delighted to be married to his college sweetheart, Sarah, and is proud to be father to his three boys, Benjamin, Samuel, and Joshua.

**80th Anniversary of the Town's Christmas Tree**

As residents gathered in celebration for the annual Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony, we were reminded that this tradition extends back nearly eighty years.. It was then that a young man named Frank Davis planted an evergreen that still stands as one of the tallest trees in the town. While standing in the dark these days, the old tree still dominates the area across from Jon's Video near the center of town. The young upstart tree on Whalen Commons is just a shrub compared to the old tree, but for children of all ages, especially those who grew up in Poolesville, Frank's tree will be forever the town tree, with or without lights. Frank lives in California now, but keeps abreast of all the wonderful things about his hometown as a loyal subscriber to the Monocle.

**Spory Makes the Cover of the Monocle—Again**

Jim Spory, the noted wood-crafter and active member in the Oddfellows, despite having severely arthritic hands, had quite a run of making the cover of the Monocle for the December holiday issue for a number of years in a row. Once it was due to being involved in a severe

The next town meeting on January 5 is the annual State of the Town meeting which will provide an overview of the status of financial and infrastructure conditions of the town. Participation and comments from the public are encouraged.

automobile accident, from which he miraculously has recovered. Another time he was given accolades for taking first place in woodworking crafts. This time he is there just because he is a remarkable individual who extends an uplifting Christmas-like spirit every day of the year.

**Devin McAtee Earns Eagle Rank**

Devin McAtee, a senior at Poolesville High School, recently was awarded his Eagle Scout. As part of that program, a scout has to select, plan, organize, and implement a community service project. Scout McAtee chose the theme of Women's Safety Awareness. In a two-part seminar instructing participants in how to avoid being a victim and what to do should they become one, he helped thirty-five women in the community learn the basics of self defense. He was assisted in the project by David Baker of the Montgomery County Police Department and Mrs. Bunnie Gordon from the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program. For the instructions in self-defense, he was assisted by Mark Williams and Kevin Nastick, instructors at BMI Karate.

To help in the costs, he has Selby's Market, Poolesville Hardware, Total Automotive, Poolesville Beer and Wine, J.D.'s Beer and Wine, Jon's Video, and Drs. Pike and Valega to thank. From excess funds from a bake sale, he was also able to donate to Relay for Life. In his summary of the program, he stated his pleasure to have been able to combine his love of martial arts and a commitment to scouting to help over thirty-five women to not become victims.

**50th Wedding Anniversary Celebrated by the Repasses**

Congratulations to John and Carolyn Repass on their fiftieth wedding anniversary this past November. Friends and family joined them at Holly Hills Country Club for a wonderful evening of celebration to mark the occasion.

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### Every Sunday

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10:30 am Worship

### December 14

7:00 pm Christmas Musical

### December 24

7:00 pm Candlelight Service

[www.poolesvillebaptist.com](http://www.poolesvillebaptist.com)



## EPISCOPAL

**St. Peter's Episcopal Church**  
20100 Fisher Avenue  
Poolesville, MD 20837  
301-349-2073  
E-mail: [stpeters387@verizon.net](mailto:stpeters387@verizon.net)

\*\*\*

### Every Sunday

You're invited to worship with us.  
8:15 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
6:00 pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays, CREB cont. worship

### December 24: Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Children's Pageant  
10:00 pm Carols and Hymns  
10:30 pm Christmas Mass

### December 25: Christmas Day

10:00 am Holy Eucharist

[www.stpeterspoolesville.org](http://www.stpeterspoolesville.org)

## METHODIST

**Memorial United Methodist Church**  
17821 Elgin Road  
Poolesville, MD 20837  
301-349-2010  
E-mail: [pmumcmail@aol.com](mailto:pmumcmail@aol.com)

\*\*\*

### Every Sunday

9:15 am Church School (all ages)  
10:15 am Worship  
*Advent and Christmas services will focus on the first two chapters of Luke.*

### December 13

5:00 pm Youth Fellowship  
Progressive Dinner

### December 14

6:00 pm Sunday School Program

### December 17

6:00 pm Christmas Caroling  
(youth and adults)

### December 21

5:00 pm Outdoor play and live nativity

### December 24: Christmas Eve

5:00 pm Worship with communion  
7:45 pm Christmas Music in the sanctuary  
8:00 pm Worship with communion

[www.pmumc.org](http://www.pmumc.org)

## PRESBYTERIAN

**Poolesville Presbyterian Church**  
17800 Elgin Road  
Poolesville, MD 20837  
301-972-7452  
E-mail: [ruth.everhart@verizon.net](mailto:ruth.everhart@verizon.net)

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### Every Sunday in Advent

You're invited to worship with us.  
11:00 am Worship  
*Repentance, Faith, Holiness, Love*  
*Repentance prepares us to enter through the door of Faith into the house of Holiness that Love built at Christmas.*

### December 14

5:00 pm Christmas Party

### December 21

11:00 am Children's Pageant

### December 24: Christmas Eve

6:30 pm Outdoor Christmas Music  
7:00 pm Traditional Candle Light Service

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### Every Saturday

5:30 pm Vigil Mass

### Every Sunday

8:00 am Mass  
10:45 am Mass

### December 24: Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Children's Christmas Mass with Gospel Pageant  
6:30 pm Vigil Mass of Christmas  
12:00 am Midnight Mass

### December 25: Christmas Day

10:00 am Solemn Mass of Christmas

### December 31: New Year's Eve

5:30 pm Vigil Mass

### January 1: New Year's Day

10:00 am Mass of New Year's

[www.ol-presentation-md.org](http://www.ol-presentation-md.org)

*...so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.*

*Romans 12: 5*

*"MES Child" Continued  
From Page 1.*

as others'. Yet, she has special needs. Even during her preschool years, she received help from Tracy Zito, whose assistance was so helpful to Lilly's brother. The Staples knew how successful a fully-integrated program could be but also knew the resistance to that approach can be quite strong. They understood that such an approach comes with extra costs, but they also knew that the costs spent today are more than made up for later in life as she becomes less in need of assistance and as she develops language and understanding skills which will allow her someday to be a fully participating, non-dependent individual contributing back to the society that came to her aid early in life.

When Mrs. Staples first approached the principal of Monocacy Elementary School about Lilly's potential placement there, she was uncertain as to what to expect regarding support. To her relief, Ms. Duranko was not only supportive but joyfully embraced having Lilly in the classroom. "She was a principal with the vision," states Tracee Staples. "She has had direct personal and professional experience with children who are deaf and hard of hearing. I was truly overwhelmed with gratitude that an administrator shared our hopes and dreams for Lilly to be fully included in a mainstream classroom."

To succeed, a team would need to be united in its efforts in finding ways to have Lilly fully accepted by classmates. Her kindergarten teacher, Susan Myers, proved to be a huge asset in Lilly's initial year of immersion into the "real world." Suzanne Shorts, who works one on one every day with Lilly, took special classes in cued speech. Cued speech is often referred to as literacy for the deaf. It is a communication system that enhances spoken language development by visually emphasizing phonological information. This improves the speech reading abilities of children with hearing loss who may not be able to learn entirely

through amplified hearing. Suzanne will help her in learning and in taking tests. In separate interviews concerning Lilly, both Suzanne Shorts and Mrs. Stolba, her current first grade teacher, use the same words to describe her: delightful, energetic, very bright, strong spirited, willing to take on any task. For Mrs. Stolba, the "warmest thing to see is how the other kids warm up to Lilly."

The staff and students at Monocacy Elementary have surrounded Lilly with love, comfort, and support in the various responsibilities they hold. In addition to Mrs. Stolba, Mrs. Myers, and Suzanne Shorts, others like Deaf/Hard of Hearing teacher, Ms. Zito, speech pathologist Kristy Martin, reading specialist Rachel Brewster, and case manager Beth Dormo round out a professional team that gives Lilly the opportunity to ensure her full educational or academic development.

Still, in the final analysis, it turns out that it is not what they give to Lilly that is central to our story, but what Lilly gives back to them and her classmates. Ms. Zito tells the Monocle, "Lilly brings warmth to my heart every time I have the opportunity to work with her. Her smile lights up the classroom. I get great pleasure out of seeing her grow both academically and socially. Lilly is one special young lady."

The uplifting and spiritual gifts she brings to the classroom and to her teachers and classmates are rewards immeasurable, not simply because Lilly is deaf but because Lilly is Lilly—an endearingly gifted spirit of joy. When speaking of her and how she manages her tasks and challenges, it is quite common to see tears well up—the tears are tears of joy, not sadness. It's as though some of life's greatest secrets are held by her, and all that has to be done to learn from her is to be with her. Her friends and classmates seem to innately understand this. They laugh, kid, and even quarrel with her with no regard to her hearing loss. It is doubtful that any educator or new technology could bring to the students that share classes



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with Lilly the important benefits and lessons she brings to them. As Suzanne Shorts points out, "While many can hear and not understand, Lilly may not have hearing, but she does have understanding."

Lilly has dealt with her personal challenges all her life and while she is still so young, she may not fully understand the depth of the challenges to face her. For that, however, she also has her heroic mentors to turn to, starting with her parents and the successful modeling provided by big brother, Ben. The lessons she is to learn from her brother are best articulated in a letter to him by his father as Ben left home, on his own, for the first time in his life.

George Staples told his son in the letter that Ben's life "began a wonderful yet challenging journey and education. Each step of the way you never failed to go beyond everyone's expectations. At first, no one was convinced you could not hear because of how expressive and intuitive you were. Your ability to read people, their expressions and emotions,

together with your extraordinary sense of humor has taken you far beyond many of your peers, both hearing and not. I am both happy and sad that we are at this point in our lives. So very happy because my very strong son overcame so many hurdles that were put in his way, to excel in school and earn the right to go to college. I'm very sad because my working partner, buddy, and friend is leaving for New York. I have to remind myself that babies grow into young boys, and young boys into strong men, and you, Son, are a strong young man, and you are ready to face the challenges ahead."

Good lessons for us all to learn from a small child and a grown young man as Christmas comes and the New Year begins.

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**"CHS/PHS Indoor Track" Continued**  
From Page 6.

Olivia was chosen as moco-running.com's athlete of the week last March, posting a winning time of 1:05.82 in the 400-meter hurdles, and finishing second in the 100-meter hurdles (15.84) at Wootton High School's Patriot Invitational. Her proudest accomplishment is placing twelfth in nationals for the 400 hurdles during the summer season. Durr and Harris led the 4x400 meter relay team to a gold, and Reid anchored the gold medal 4x800 relay team. Karris is the defending indoor 1A champion in the 55-meter and 300-meter. "It is definitely our goal to win another regional championship," said Durr. It would be the eighth straight for the Falcon girls. They are the defending state champs, having claimed the Maryland indoor crown last February at the Prince George's County Sports Complex.

In her last outdoor track competitions last May, Durr set a new 1A 100-meter hurdle record in 14.74. She won by one hundredth of a second. Reid placed third in

the outdoor 1600-meter run at the 1A state championship in 05:27.9. Harris placed fifth in the 100-meter dash, after winning the event in the 1A west region. Overall, the girls placed fourth in the outdoor states.

Reid and Durr are finishing up outstanding careers at Poolesville. They will literally pass the baton to Harris who will be back next year. Durr, Reid, and Harris will team together on the 4x400 relay team. The three will lead the indoor and outdoor teams. Coach Trumbull thinks that again makes them the team to beat. As for passing the baton, when asked about the trauma some American Beijing Olympians went through, not being able to hand off properly, the coach sympathized, "Continuous practice is the only way to prevent dropping the baton," says Trumbull. "With all four runners running at full speed, it doesn't take much to throw the exchange off. Anything can happen even though they practiced it so much they could do it in their sleep. There could be a stronger headwind or someone is injured or just not feeling well. The littlest things can hinder a relay."

When asked to name a track role model, Karris and Olivia both chose Allyson Felix, a two-time Olympic silver medalist and a two-time Athletics World Championship gold medalist in the 200 meters. Felix won a gold at the Beijing 2008 Olympics as a member of the U.S. women's 4x400 meter relay team. Jenny, loyally, chose Coach Trumbull, who was standing close by and smiling. Trumbull attended Lockhaven University and ran cross country and steeple chase events. Olivia, Jenny, and Karissa are teammates on the Maryland Titans, a non-profit organization established in 2004 to promote the sport of track and field in Montgomery County. The Titans are members of both the USA Track and Field and Amateur Athletic Union, and compete in local, regional, and national meets.

"Olivia is a fast, tenacious player who centered our defense this season," says head soccer coach, Christina Mann. "She reads the field well, can run just about anyone down, and is great out of the air. Her speed and aggressiveness were keys to our successful

defending this year."

"Karissa plays a forward position in field hockey," says Head Coach Gina Grubb. "She worked hard this year and developed her stick skills to be able to use her speed and skills to get by opponents. She has the potential to be very good because of her speed. If she works on the off season to become more confident in her skills, she will do very well next year."

Former coach Mathias, now at Clarksburg, weighs in, "Olivia and Jenny are simply awesome. They are great girls, great students, and great athletes. From the first day of soccer practice when they were just little freshmen, it was obvious that they were special. Even though I no longer have the privilege of coaching them, it has been great seeing them grow and develop into champions."

**"Planning Board Update"**  
Continued From Page 15.

for his neighbors, who own their homes but rent the land they sit on. "With what I make at the city of Rockville, I couldn't afford to live anywhere else," King said. "I don't know what to do... My wife, she's at work freaking right now."

Chairman Royce Hanson said there was still time to influence the future of the park during the council's master plan review in early 2009 and during the passage of any zoning amendments that would follow. Clark Wagner, vice president of Bozzuto Homes Inc., added that while the company is in communication with the park owner, development of the site was at least three years in the future. "It's very early," Wagner said. Planning staff also noted that relocation assistance would be available if current residents were required to move. Commissioner Jean Cryor recommended that King and his neighbors form a home owners' association and monitor the planning process. "I would do it immediately," she said.

Middlebrook Mobile Home Park takes up more than half of the forty-two-acre planning area called the Fox Chapel District. The board eventually decided to increase the number of homes

"These three girls are the core of our team," said Coach Trumbull. "Their successes, experience, and leadership should spread to the younger members of the team, helping us become a threat for the state title once again in 1A. I am excited to see what each girl is capable of doing this year, and I do not have a doubt in my mind that they will exceed expectations this year."

Star athletes always make their coaches look great. Olivia, Jenny, and Karissa always sparkle, rain or shine. Olivia is looking at Dartmouth College as a possibility for next fall, while Jenny is looking at North Carolina and Villanova. Harris will bring her speed and experience back to lead the Falcons in field hockey and track once again.

per acre in that area, which will allow townhouses or apartments to be constructed. The decision was part of a three-hour work session that also included discussion on future sites for the relocation of the Cider Barrel, a one-time farm stand that closed in 2002. The unique red and blue building currently sits abandoned on Route 355 but is on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

**Coming up**

Plans for Clarksburg Town Center are due to return to the planning board December 11.

At a marathon November 6 hearing, the board approved some elements of the 270-acre development but asked for more information on various issues including parking and a recreation center. The development, including both residential and commercial construction, is to be located at the intersection of Clarksburg Road and Snowden Farm Parkway. No testimony will be taken at the hearing, but written comments can be submitted by email through noon December 10 at MCP-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org.



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**"Playing With Fire" Continued From Page 14**

stadt House in Frederick. Nancy ran the gallery for ten years when it closed in 1990. By that time, she had to devote her time to the store and to pottery. Over the years, Nancy says, "I think I've made everything in clay except the kitchen sink," teapots, jewelry, wind chimes, goblets. "I consider myself a craftsperson," she says, "but I am also an artist," applying the art to the craft.

Then, times began to change. The craft movement waned. With the technology of today and everything made in China, anyone can go to a store and find a pretty piece of pottery for a few dollars. Fortunately, for some, "having a coffee mug with a beautiful glaze, knowing who made it," gives artisan-made pottery a value not to be found in the chain stores. While the world was changing globally, it was also changing in Nancy's hometown. The Buckeystown of the seventies and eighties had antique stores, house tours, and festivals—not the Buckeystown of today. "It led me to change my direction in my craft," Nancy explains. Her focus shifted to the special-occasion plates she began creating in 1976.

Nancy was inspired by the Fraktur folk artwork of Pennsylvania Dutch country. With Slovak on her mother's side, and German on her father's, she traveled into Dutch country frequently during her childhood.

The iconic birds, hearts, and tulips of Fraktur, particularly popular from the mid-1700s to the mid-1800s, are frequently echoed in the plates Nancy creates. Also the sciffito technique of carving away a white slip that is painted on the plates to let the red clay show through is another strong influence that is evident in Nancy's plates. The plates are then finished with a clear glaze.

Marking such important moments as weddings, births, anniversaries, graduations, and whatever clients can think up, Nancy's plates are extremely popular and, for her, particularly rewarding. "It's wonderful," she says of making the plates. She still creates other pieces, but with the plates, she doesn't have to guess what people want, they order the plates in advance. Nancy started making plates over thirty years ago, the first one for her older daughter. Now, she makes more than four hundred plates per year—most with original artwork, some with logos. Every two weeks, she looks forward to the enjoyable task of making whatever has been ordered. "I

-Continued on Page 25.

**"Historic Sites" Continued From Page 11.**

book store, grocery or non-profit office, drew some skepticism from Commissioner Jean Cryor. "Frankly I don't think you could make a living there," she said. "You might enjoy doing something like a hobby, but a commercial use that would be viable—it would be hard to believe." Chairman Royce Hanson said commercial activity at the location would likely need to be combined with an interpretive element focusing on the location's decades as a country store.

The adjacent Darby House, which recently received new paint and roof repairs using original shingles found under the site, was suggested as a possible home for a bed and breakfast—there are five bedrooms—or a private residence, non-profit office, or antique shop.

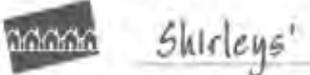
While the Darby structures were the most challenging of the three sites, Lampl said she believed its neighbor, the 1820 Jo-

seph White House, would be the easiest to find a tenant. Possible uses included a three-bedroom bed and breakfast, winery, or private home.

Hanson said he would like to see an agricultural connection preserved if possible; suggesting that the nearly one hundred acres connected to the site could be leased for farming separate from activity at the house itself.

Lampl had presented the information on the historic sites in part because of zoning questions and other issues. However board members said they would prefer to see what response the RFPs received before taking any action. "If you can find a partner who has a good use," Hanson said, "...then it's up to us to make it work."

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## Big Board

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### Help WUMCO Help!

As you plan your holiday events and look to celebrate the season in many different ways, be sure to remember WUMCO Help!, a service organization that targets the special needs for our area. Canned foods and new, unwrapped toys are always welcome. With challenging economic times, a cash donation is so important to the wonderful community resource and the funds necessary need to come from residents. Please consider a donation by sending a check to WUMCO, P.O. Box 247, Poolesville, MD 20837. If you would like to volunteer some of your time, call 301-972-8481.

### School Cluster Winter and Holiday Performance Schedules

December is a great time to experience the many talents of students in the area. First on tap is the fall play offered by John Poole Middle School, Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream which runs December 12 and 13. Then at

Clarksburg High School, the drama department presents the popular Chorus Line which will be on December 13 in the school auditorium starting at 7:00 p.m. Next up is Poolesville High and John Poole Middle Schools combined winter extravaganza of choral and orchestra performances on December 16 starting at 7:00 p.m. Poolesville Elementary School offers its winter concert on December 17 starting at 7:00 p.m., but remember, they perform at Poolesville High School. On December 18, Clarksburg High has scheduled its winter concert also starting at 7:00 p.m. On December 22 at 7:00 p.m., Clarksburg High School offers its annual Winter Choral Program, also starting at 7:00 p.m. Monocacy Elementary School presents Grand Parents and Concert Day on December 23. Their program begins at 10:00 a.m.

### Santa Breakfast at UMCVFD Fire Station in Beallsville

Enjoy a traditional Santa Breakfast on Saturday December 13 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Warm your tummy and your heart as you view the electric toy train layout and enjoy a delicious, all-you-can-eat breakfast

of scrambled eggs, pancakes, bacon, sausage, juice, fruit salad, and coffee. Savor the warmth of the engine room while viewing the Christmas classic, Santa is Coming to Town. The video will repeat so you can sit, relax, and enjoy the Christmas spirit. Of course, Santa himself will be there to hear the wishes of all the good little boys and girls. The cost for the breakfast is \$5.00 for twelve years and older, \$4.00 for three years to eleven, and free for under three.

### Celebrate! Come to the Music

The Frederick Children's Chorus, under the baton of Judy DuBose, artistic director, presents a concert of moving music and holiday classics Saturday, December 13 at 7:30 p.m. at Tuscarora High School. Ticket prices are \$12.00 for adults and \$6.00 for students. For more information, visit [www.fredcc.org](http://www.fredcc.org).

### JPMS and PHS Musicians to Perform Winter Prism Concert

Don't miss the Winter Prism Concert featuring the music departments of Poolesville High School and John Poole Middle School, Tuesday, December 16, 7:00 p.m., at the PHS auditorium. This unique evening of music highlights the talent and dedication of both PHS and JPMS students. Support music education and performance in our school and join your neighbors for this community event. For additional information, contact Lisa Nubgaard, [lnubgaard@aol.com](mailto:lnubgaard@aol.com) or Heidi Rosvold-Brenholtz, [hrosvold@verizon.net](mailto:hrosvold@verizon.net).

### Generation Variations

On December 19, at 7:30 on the Poolesville High School stage, Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theatre will present "Generation Variations," comprising the new and the old, the very traditional and the contemporary in dance and music under the artistic direction of Fran Ichijo. See the "classics" separated by one hundred years: Tchaikovsky and Elvis, Beethoven and the Beatles. The students will dance through history from European classics to American classics, showing the proud heritage of both eras. Hope Garden Children's Ballet Theater is the non-profit performing arm of Hope Garden Ballet, housed at Healthworks Fitness Center here in Poolesville under the directorship of Fran Ichijo. For more information,

visit [www.hopegardenballet.org](http://www.hopegardenballet.org).  
**Traditional Santa Ride through Poolesville**

Santa has happily agreed to return on Sunday, December 21 to greet the children of Poolesville. Santa will be riding atop the fire engine of the Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department starting at 5:30 p.m. Santa has asked the volunteer firefighters to help him distribute candy canes to the children of Poolesville.

When you see the fire engine, please come out and welcome Santa. He will be glad to receive cookies, brownies, or other goodies. This will help sustain him and his firefighter elves. For safety, the fire engines cannot enter cul-de-sacs or narrow lanes. Additionally, parents, please take care that the children and pets stay on the sidewalk, and do not closely approach the apparatus. Santa sends his jolliest thanks.

Questions please contact volunteer firefighter/EMT, Jeffery Eck at 240-529-3438

### Winter Lights

The Gaithersburg's Winter Lights Festival returns for a thirteenth season of magical delight December 5, 2008 through January 3, 2009. Admission is \$12.00 per car.

### Hooray for Hollywood

Ring in the New Year at the premier event of the season and help the Weinberg Center, a non-profit organization. The New Year's gala is a black tie benefit which features all the glamour of Hollywood with dancing with the hit band, Round Midnight, a Monte Carlo gaming room, fabulous hors d'oeuvres, desserts, an open bar, elegant party favors, and more. The event is on December 31 from 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Tickets are \$150.00 per person. For ticket information contact Weinberg-Gala@enforme.com or Weinberg-Center.org.

### State of the Town Annual Meeting

Poolesville residents may want to schedule to attend the annual State of the Town public meeting on January 5 starting at 7:30 p.m. This will be a great opportunity to experience for yourself the functioning of your local government, receive direct updates, and have your chance to ask the questions you have been wanting to have answered.

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*"Beyond the Poinsettia" Continued  
From Page 3.*

native habitat of South American jungles, it grows as an epiphyte on trees, so it is well adapted to low light levels indoors. I say that the plant is a puzzle, at least for me, because of its many contradictions. Sometimes my Christmas cactus blooms around Christmastime, and at other times it blooms around Thanksgiving. Plant experts say that good, well-drained soil is a must for this plant. It is not a true cactus, so it is not as drought tolerant as its name infers. One garden reference book that I have gives a schedule of "the ideal life of a Christmas cactus." Well, mine has been raised wrong its entire life, and yet it rewards me every year about now, give or take a few weeks, with the most flamboyant display of bright lipstick-red blooms for about one month. I don't know how it continues to live, yet alone bloom, so extravagantly. It lives in a concrete-like soil. After it blooms, I stick it in some dim corner of the family room and totally neglect it. I never water it, and it is usually covered with dust. In the summer, I move it outdoors to a dim corner of the porch, and I continue to neglect it. In the fall, when I bring in the porch furniture, I bring it back

indoors and stick it in the same dark hole in the family room. About the first of October, when I notice fat, little, white-green buds starting to form at the tips of the serrated, dust-covered leaves, I bring it back to the world of the living. I water the concrete well, place it in a sunny window sill, and voilà, come November, I am rewarded for all my hard, caring work with dozens of fantastic blooms. I can't say that this method will work for you, but it seems to work miracles for me.

The Christmas Rose, *Hel-leborus niger*, is an exceptional perennial that belongs in every gardener's shade garden. You can enjoy this winter treasure indoors now and well into early spring. Its luscious white blooms and rich, dark green foliage will brighten any room. This plant is available at local garden centers and through the White Flower Farm catalogue. In the spring, you can plant it outdoors.

Kalanchoe is a succulent which is popular as a flowering plant this time of year. Give it bright light to direct sun, barely moist soil, temperatures of 60° to 70° F., and it will give you four to six weeks of bloom.

The Jerusalem Cherry is a compact plant with red fruit. It is very attractive as a Christmas flower and is very easy to care

for. The Christmas Pepper plant is a very similar plant. They both will bear fruit, with little care, for about one month.

The Dwarf Chenille plant, with its fuzzy-textured, scarlet trailing blooms, was made for Christmas. It makes a high-performing, reliable houseplant for a sunny window sill. With minimal care, you can carry it through the winter, and in the spring it can be grown outdoors as a tender perennial.

For all of you who believe that you have two brown thumbs, here is the ideal plant for you. Clivia is both beautiful and indestructible. Thriving even in a north window, it requires little care, growing larger and more impressive with age. It is often recommended as a plant for a second home. That alone tells you how demanding it is. White Flower Farm offers three varieties: Clivia *miniata*, Clivia 'Golden Dragon,' and Clivia 'Victorian Peach.' In early spring, the first one bursts forth with clusters of orange, lily-shaped blooms that are carried on strong stems and lasts for several weeks. The 'Golden Dragon' has absolutely clear yellow flowers with no hint of orange or red. You will have to be a patient gardener with this one, as White Flower Farm's plants are a year away from blooming. The last one is a new strain that is the first peach-flowered Clivia offered by White Flower Farm. It thrives in indirect light. This would be a good gift for a friend who has little success with most flowering plants.

What gardener would not love a plant that promises fragrance beyond description in the dead of winter? *Jasminum polyanthum* is such a plant. This handsome sub-tropical vine has dark green leaves that provide a backdrop for a display of elegant, fragrant, white flowers in January. This beautiful plant, however, demands proper care and attention. I have had good and bad luck with this one, so I hesitate to recommend it, unless you can provide its specific conditions. Jasmine is easily grown as a houseplant, but it will not tolerate dry heat or dry soil. Temperatures above 65° F. are to be avoided while the buds are developing. White Flower Farm says that if jasmine is placed in a cool spot with bright, indirect light, they guarantee bloom. Try this plant in your house; it is well worth the effort.

Recently, I visited several local greenhouses and garden centers to see what flowering plants were available. They offered most of the above-mentioned ones. White Flower Farm also carries them all.

In Old Saxon, December was called "mid-winter monath." During this month, the outdoor garden offers no flowers to fill even one vase in the house. But one does not have to wait until spring for the beauty of flowers. Our home in winter can be our garden.

Best wishes for the holiday season, and in 2009 may we go onward and upward in the garden.

*"Playing With Fire" Continued From  
Page 23.*

love doing them even after thirty years," she says. Over seventy-five percent of the plates are mailed, and her plates are in every state of the union and six foreign countries.

Despite all the changes Nancy has seen over the past three decades, Buckeystown still holds a special place in her heart. Through her art, she says, "I feel very connected to the community of humanity." From living and working in Buckeystown, she feels grounded, "I feel like I belong." She has also given so much back to the town. Part town historian, Nancy wrote four books about Buckeystown. She organized Smithsonian house

tours and Christmas house tours. She got the town on the national register of historic places. She even helped to put up the street lights and plaques on the houses.

Nancy thinks herself truly lucky to be where she is today. "I realize how fortunate I am," she says. She can create her beautiful pottery and run her business next door to her home, all in the charming town she has come to love and for which she has given her time and her energy. "I truly appreciate every day."



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*"Haiti" Continued From Page 1.*

gram. Finally, this past January, the parish of St. Joseph's was chosen, and Jack made his first visit to meet St. Joseph's priest, Father Verdieu Joissaint, some of the parishioners, and to begin to assess their needs. "They need so much," Jack says.

To begin his research on how to best meet the needs of St. Joseph's, Jack met with Pat Labuda of St. Francis of Assisi in nearby Derwood which has been twinned with St. Paul's in Léon, Haiti since 1987. Initially, St. Francis would send a medical team yearly to St. Paul's, now they organize three mission trips per year, and Pat has expanded their reach outside of the parish of St. Paul's to other parishes in the Diocese of Jérémie.

Haiti has been described as the poorest nation—the only third world nation—in the Western Hemisphere—the complete opposite of its beginnings. Its modern history began as a French slave colony—one of the wealthiest in the Caribbean due to heavy slave importation and at the expense of the environment—but a slave uprising in 1791 led to Haiti's hard-fought independence in 1804 making Haiti the first independent black republic. Unfortunately, the revolution destroyed the economy, and Haiti has had a politically and economically tumultuous history to this very day. Eighty percent of the population lives under the poverty line, with fifty-four percent living in abject poverty. After three hundred years of total abuse to the land, an easy long-term solution is impossible—the prospects for Haitians are dire. Incessant erosion decimates the land as trees are constantly cut for fire for cooking. "[Haiti] is an ecological disaster stopping every form of achievement," Jack says.

Jérémie and the parish of St. Joseph are located on the southwestern tip of Haiti. A parish must have at least ten thousand members to exist; St. Joseph's has fifteen thousand. St. Joseph's encompasses three villages, Bigarose, Cap Afou, and Carcas-

se, with one priest, one church, and a number of outlying chapels. The state school is in total disrepair, and one of the things Father Verdieu is trying to accomplish is the construction of a new school because he realizes that, at a minimum, what Haitians need to overcome their crippling situation is education and health.

The result of Jack's first trip last January gave St. Mary's two beginning goals to tackle: a satellite for communication and water. The first need has been met. St. Mary's raised the money, and Father Verdieu did the work on his end. During Jack's first visit, cell phone service existed only at the top of a mountain. Apart from that, there was no phone, no internet, no real communication. Now there is communication between the twinned parishes, and maybe the internet will provide the parishioners in Haiti a means to help themselves as much as they can. The second goal of providing potable water is a tougher one to meet but a crucial one. "We don't want to [send] money without having a good idea of the best way to go about it," Jack explains. Water can be had from either sources—springs or wells—or from rainwater using cisterns. There also needs to be a cultural education to keep animals away from water sources. Everywhere, water has been contaminated with E. coli. Jack says, "There is tremendous infant mortality due to bad water."

Jack's second trip in October was mostly a medical mission. Pat Labuda arranged for the funding of all the supplies—a medical trip usually costs roughly ten thousand dollars—but she encourages parishes to fund their missions. Accompanying Jack from the U.S. were two doctors, one nurse practitioner, and one neonatal nurse, all volunteers, all paying their own travel and food. Joining them at St. Joseph's were three translators from Jérémie—Haiti has two official languages, French and Haitian Créole, in which the translators must be fluent, as well as English—and Father Verdieu's brother who is completing medical school. Before

October, there had never been a medical mission to Carcassee. "To my knowledge, many people in this area had never seen a doctor before," added Jack. Thanks to superb organization by Father Verdieu, the medical team was able to efficiently see over one thousand patients in one week. Many patients had treatable illnesses that required medication. "We spent a lot of time counting pills," Jack added. If surgery was required, they were referred to the nearby hospital in Jérémie. If necessary, patients can be sent to Port-au-Prince or the Dominican Republic. Many ailments could have been prevented, many can be corrected, for some, it's too late, the time for treating the illness or deformity has passed and irrevocable damage cannot be reversed. The sixteen-year-old with cataracts is an amazing example of the change the medical missions can bring. "Because of this mission," says Jack, "he's gonna see."

Francis Mackie of Dickerson, who joined Jack on this last mission as a translator for Jack, gave a succinct description of conditions for Haitians. "It was an incredible shock to see the poverty these people are in," he said. "The people live off of what they can get around them." Things that we take for granted here do not exist there, and the government is so ineffective that "for the moment, there is no way out, no possibility to make things better." Despite these horrid living conditions, the people, on the whole, are the kindest, nicest, most generous he has ever met.

Jack was also impressed by their generosity. "For people who don't have enough to eat, they gave us a feast every day," he explains. "They went out of their way to make everyone feel welcome, to make sure we had enough to eat."

Presently, St. Mary's specifically raises funds for its twin parish every fourth Sunday each month, and sometimes on those fourth Sundays, an extra fundraiser is added to increase the revenue. Jack eloquently spoke of his call to help the people of Haiti when he described to the parishioners of St. Mary's the benefits of twinning with and helping a parish in Haiti. "When I am asked why Haiti and not someplace in America, my answer is: I don't believe God sees us as Americans or Haitians but rather as his children, each having the same worth but with different needs and abilities. This world is made up of many different nationalities, but all are of one family in God, and Haiti is just another opportunity made possible by God to follow the path we call Christianity. When asked why us and why now, my answer is: if not us, then who? And if not now, then when?"

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