

The Monocacy

MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

A Biweekly Newspaper

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Andie Devynck, Monocle Writer, Passes Away

By Rande Davis

Andie Caplan Devynck, the *Monocle's* equestrian columnist, passed away suddenly at her home on Edwards Ferry Road. Her husband, Didier, was in Africa at the time of her passing. We are awaiting official confirmation of the cause of her death.

Andie was a highly energetic personality, often enthusiastically focused on projects and events in her busy life, and a very talented and creative writer. Typical of her sense of humor, she entitled her equestrian column *Yeas and Neighs*, and was an absolute master at clever column titles.

She and her husband wasted no time in getting involved in the community and local issues upon their arrival into the community a few years ago. She opened her massage therapy service, Poolesville Healing Arts, while Didier, a French translator, opened up his side-business, Poolesville Framing

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Andie Caplan Devynck



Vets Joe Butt and Bob Cissel broke bread together. Find out what brought them together in Family Album on page 2.



England's famed Minack Theatre. Read about it in Garden on page 4.



Colin Savage has the better of his opponent. Details in Youth Sports on page 11.



If anyone thinks there are only deer in the Ag Reserve, they otter take a closer look! See more on page 12.

New Town Manager Ready to Go

By Link Hoewing

New town manager Seth Rivard has done his homework and looks forward to his new job. In an hour-long conversation at town hall, Rivard talked enthusiastically about the challenges ahead and demonstrated a good grasp of the issues he sees as critical in the coming months.

Rivard, who had been the Community Development Director for Charles Town, West Virginia, said that every town has a "vision of what it wants to be," and Poolesville is no different. He knows that the town's vision is tied closely to its history as a rural community located "within the Ag Reserve." The town "will not see too much more residential growth," and this means its vision and future are tied more to "creating a strong main street" and enhancing its existing assets, such as its parks and its "walkability."

Rivard highlighted, in this regard, the importance of the high school to the town's future and its vision. He noted the work of the Fair Access Committee (FAC) and said that he recognizes that the high school is a key part of the community. He has spent his career working in towns located in rural areas and knows it is often the case that government services are lacking in such places. He sees the importance of being successful in building a new high school and the co-located community/senior center and clinic for which FAC has been pushing. These new facilities will become a vital part of the town's future, he said, and offer the potential for a range of new services and programs to benefit the citizens of the Upcounty.

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New Town Manager Seth Rivard.

Family Album



Jennifer Jardine and her kids had fun at St. Peter's community dinner.



Joy Zucker-Tiemann and her son Noah (right) are joined by friends at the St. Peter's community dinner.



Clockwise from top left: Jocelyn Harris, Drew McKone, Tim Harris, and Robert Brooks.



The PASC Pickleball program has been a huge success. Participating in a senior pickleball tournament were: Joe McIntyre, Donetin Swick, Patrick McMahon, Claire Gunstein-Kirby, and Norm Spencer.



PASC pickleball tournament players: Kathy Swick, I.J. Hudson, Mary Pat Hudson, and George Coakley.

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Town Government

Town Approves Report to State On Wastewater Treatment Plant

By Link Hoewing

The commissioners heard a report from town engineer John Strong concerning an annual report the town must prepare on the operation of the wastewater treatment plant.

In discussing the four-page report, Strong said that the town has a permit from the state allowing it to release up to 750,000 gallons of treated sewage per day. Daily levels of treated sewage are affected by a number of factors, including demand from households and businesses, levels of rainfall and inflow from the town's sewer system. Strong said that the two-year "running average" of output from the sewer plant was only 620,000 gallons, far below the 750,000 gallon-per-day limit imposed by the state.

Strong noted that a little over a hundred permits for future water and sewer connections are likely to be issued by the town based on all known projects. If you subtract the amount of sewer capacity that would be used for these new homes from the amount of unused capacity that remains under the state limit, 70,000 gallons of capacity remain available. This does not mean that more development can occur because most of the land that is available for development in town has already either been developed or is in the process of planning or construction.

Strong explained that while this is good news, inflow from the town's sewer system—water that leaks into pipes through cracks or openings and then gets sent to the treatment plant—remains a problem. He discussed three lateral pipes (the pipes that go from homes to the main sewer lines) that were recently replaced because roots had broken the pipes. With the inflow monitors the town installed recently, monitoring can be done, and it should be possible to identify continued inflow problems and correct them.

After hearing the report, the commissioners voted unanimously to send it to the state as required.

After discussing the sewer plant report, Commissioner Valaree Dickerson expressed concern that a recently-adopted policy regarding daily presence by town commissioners at town hall was being violated. On a 4-1 vote, the commissioners had decided that no commissioner should spend more than two hours a day at town hall. The purpose of the new policy is to ensure that the new town manager will have space to establish his new operating procedures and time to get to know the staff and community. In making the new policy, commissioners decided that their presence at town hall for extended periods could complicate the already-difficult transition for the new town manager. The commissioners also seemed to feel that they could do much of what they needed to do in terms of communicating and preparing for meetings using their own home computers and phones.

Dickerson added that Commission President Jerry Klobukowski seemed to be continuing to spend far more than two hours a day at town hall. She said that the commissioners had adopted the new policy and that he should not "be able to flaunt the collective will of the body."

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Rande(m) Thoughts Saying Goodbye To a Friend

By Rande Davis

In my column, I most often prefer to share my thoughts on the local news and events of the day with only an occasional foray into the personal. I am saddened this time because the news of the day is also so deeply personal. Any time any of one of us loses a family member, friend, or colleague, it is a tragic and heart-rending occurrence. With the death of Andie Caplan Devynck, our dear friend and colleague and the writer of our equestrian column, my thoughts right now are consumed with her.

This is the second time a *Monocle* family member has left us. A few years back, we lost our Daytripper writer, Ingeborg Westfall. As I think now of

Andie, I cannot help but recall Ingeborg. Both she and Andie shared the gift of writing, of storytelling. The telling of Andie's passing is the case of someone caught in the dark room with seemingly no doors, a room we all can be in on occasion. We will never know what gifts of joy and discovery Andie might still have brought us. If only she had understood that all rooms have doors, no matter how hard at times they may be to find.

In life, Andie was a very special person and her unique qualities make it even that more difficult to imagine her gone. She defined exuberance, vibrancy, and enthusiasm. Never shy, she was more than outgoing. I could tease her as being a real firecracker, someone who could figuratively move on so fast that I could almost imagine the cloud of dust behind her. Now all is still, with no dust. In our life, surely, she was our White Rabbit. Now she is gone, and she will be missed.

health fairs and local wellness events at numerous businesses. When 9/11 occurred, her professional organization asked for volunteers to work with first responders at the Pentagon, so she took her body cushions and floor mat and went to Crystal City to help out.

She recently began taking graduate courses in psychology with the goal of obtaining a master's degree.

Growing up in Long Island where her father was a journalist, and coupled with her abiding love of her horses, she came to the *Monocle* primarily as an equestrian writer but was occasionally assigned local news items.

Her many friends in the community will be planning a memorial service, the date and place to be announced in the coming weeks.

Garden

Shakespeare and a Garden by the Sea

By Maureen O'Connell

Carved into a rocky, granite cliff top overlooking the crashing waves of the Atlantic Ocean is an internationally-famous open-air theatre, the Minack Theatre. It is located on the outskirts of the small village of Porthcurno in Cornwall, the county on the south coast of England's rugged southwestern tip. You can't get any further west than the ancient Celtic kingdom of Cornwall. Eighty-eight years ago on this spot, there was nothing but a sloping gully of gorse and heather and granite boulders. When I was there this past November, the theatre's 2019 season was coming to a close, but there were still some hardy sub-tropical plants blooming in the nooks and crannies of the granite slope and in the garden on the top of the cliff.

The Minack was planned, built (mostly by hand), and financed by an extraordinary woman, Rowena Cade (1893-1983). Her love of drama and the theatre brought to life a playhouse that most people said could never be built.

One would have to move "heaven and earth," and she did. She saw the theatre from its first performance of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in 1932 all the way to become the thriving playhouse which today attracts more than 250,000 visitors a year.

Rowena Cade grew up in the Edwardian world of Cheltenham on the edge of the Cotswolds in England. Rowena's father died in 1917, and when World War I ended a year later, she and her mother lived a nomadic existence for a couple of years before settling in Cornwall with its rugged granite cliffs. Her life is a tale of imagination, determination, and a life-long love of the theatre, which was responsible for the Minack's birth. She threw herself into the theatre scene in Porthcurno. She bought the whole of the Minack (meaning "rocky") headland and commissioned a local architect and builder to create what is now the Minack House, next to the future theatre—but she did not stop there. When local players were looking for a suitable location to stage *The Tempest*, a tale set on a rocky and remote island, Rowena volunteered her gardens, but there was nowhere for an audience to sit. These visionary ponderings were the birth of the

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Andie Devynck, *Monocle* Writer, Passes Away

Shop, both located on the second floor of the Frederick Poole House, next to Bassett's restaurant.

She first began her massage therapy business in 1995 after studying at the Baltimore School of Massage. While a student, she traveled on weekends to Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, to work at Coolfont, the resort in the hills above the town. Then in 1996, she became the director of massage services for the McLean Racquet and Health Club. From there, her career expanded to working for various major hotels like the Mayflower and the Ritz Carlton doing on-site and on-call work. She also enjoyed donating her time doing chair massage at

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New Town Manager Ready to Go

In his previous position as Community Development Director, Rivard was responsible for planning and zoning code enforcement among other things. Charles Town is a member of Main Street America, a national organization dedicated to the strengthening of communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. The organization helps towns thrive by preserving their historical character and capitalizing on their economic assets.

A key focus for Rivard in the coming months will be working with the commissioners and the Planning Commission in developing a new master plan for the town. Central to the current plan is the continued enhancement of the town's main street through such programs as the Streetscape Plan. Rivard pointed out that Main Street America stresses four pillars for local vitality and effective planning: Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Vitality. The town has already done a lot to enhance its vitality by the work that has gone into Whalen Commons, the town's assumption from the state of Fisher Avenue which gives it more control over its future, and its extensive parks, pathways, and sidewalk system. There are any opportunities to build on this work, and he believes the master plan can help ensure a strong vision for the future.

Charles Town, while similar in size to Poolesville and located in a rural area, has a mayor/council form of government in which the mayor is elected separately from the council and has separate authorities and powers. Poolesville, by contrast, has a commission which has a president who is a commissioner but is elected to lead town affairs by the other commissioners. It is sometimes called a "weak executive" system in which the commissioners as a body decide most matters collectively.

Rivard was asked if this different form of government presented any challenges for him as a new town manager. He said that no matter what form of government a town has, "I respect the governing body of the town. Their desires are important in guiding my work." He added, "Small communities are easier to work with since everyone is close and has direct access to each other and the citizens."

Regarding the current town employees, Rivard had high praise for what he has seen so far. He has heard a lot about the dedication of the staff and has already learned about the many activities in town such as Pool-essville Day, Friday on the Commons, and the annual lighting ceremony. He thinks there may be opportunities to build off of these activities in new ways. For example, he pointed out how important high school sports games are in his area and wonders whether there may be ways to encourage more attendees at high school games to head out to local restaurants afterwards.

Rivard also had high praise for the town's dedication to maintenance of its roads, parks, and infrastructure. It can be tempting to skip continued upkeep of infrastructure and use the money for more immediate and—what can seem to be—more pressing needs. This can lead to serious trouble down the road as repairs pile up and parks crumble. He plans to continue to focus on infrastructure investments and added that the Parks Board has already prepared a plan that identifies sidewalks that need to be repaired or extended.

In his final thoughts during our interview, Rivard said, "I want to be careful where I step and get to know the community well" in the weeks ahead. "I may not be living here, but I will be part of the town's activities and will be at its events." His goal is to build on the work that has been done to create "an even more vibrant community."

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Continued from page 4.

Shakespeare and a Garden by the Sea

world's most famous outdoor theatre. Grass seating terraces were laboriously dug out by hand, and heavy boulders were somehow moved to build the first stage in 1932. The Minack was born.

The theatre and the surrounding Cornwall area were badly damaged during World War II. Porthcurno was an important target as it was the home to the cable and wireless telegraph station which relayed vital messages between London and the world. Rowena had to rebuild her dream, and by 1949 the theatre was again open for business.

While Rowena landscaped the cliffs and area around the house and theatre, the gardens you can see today have been achieved by local gardeners Niall and Jill Milligan. They selected plants that reflected the nature of the site, while keeping in mind the salt spray and gales winds of the ocean, the damp and foggy winters, and baking summers to which the plants would be exposed.

Cornwall is on the eastern edge of the Gulf Stream and, as a result, enjoys a mild maritime climate. It has a sub-tropical climate on par with parts of Vietnam and Mexico. You find plants there that are more usually found growing in the Canary Islands, South Africa, Mexico, and the Andes. It has the mildest and sunniest climate in the United Kingdom. In November, I saw growing many tender plants from all quarters of the globe: Silver Trees and Birds of Paradise from the Canary Islands, geraniums from Madeira, agaves from Mexico, poppies from California, as well as varieties of *Echeveria*, *Aeonium*, *aloe*, *Agapanthus*, *Protea*, *Yucca*, *Puya*, and *Kniphofia*.

The Minack Theatre is open from April to October, with performances on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The 2019 season featured plays from Shakespeare (the *Pirates of Penzance* is a big favorite, of course), Cole Porter's *A Swell Party*, *The Addams Family*, *The Wind in the Willows*, and many other plays and performances for all ages.

The dream which Rowena Cade created back in 1932 is alive and well. "Each summer night at 8:00 p.m., under a darkening sky, the lights come up, the music starts, the actors step onto the stage, and the magic of the Minack, which has entranced countless audiences over the past eighty-eight years, begins to weave its spell once again." From the pamphlet, "The Minack Story."

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Town Approves Report to State on Wastewater Treatment Plant

Klobukowski said that he has extensive duties in his role as president of the Montgomery County chapter of the Maryland Municipal League and often must spend time downloading documents and printing them, and he sometimes needs help in doing some of this work. He also said that he is not "meddling or micromanaging staff—that is not true."

Dickerson asked town attorney Jay Gullo how the town commissioners could enforce the new policy. Gullo answered that they needed to work together as a body to enforce it. There are simply no good alternatives beyond that. Commissioner Martin Radigan said, "We must find another way to make this work" and urged that discussion be ended while commissioners think further about the issue.

Radigan next raised a concern he said he heard from some town residents about the possibility of "twenty-four-hour businesses" opening. He asked town attorney Jay Gullo what the town could do about the potential impacts of such businesses. Gullo replied that, in part, the issue has to do with "nearby land uses" with respect to such businesses. If a twenty-four-hour business were to be located near residential areas, it would be one thing. If, on the other hand, it were to open in an area of commercial uses and existing businesses, it would be another. Town Manager Seth Rivard said he would do research on the issue and bring back information and background for the commissioners.

In a final brief discussion, Radigan pointed out that the town has a wealth of cultural and historical offerings and locations and wondered if more could be done to boost "economic growth by encouraging more people to visit the town" to see these offerings. Rivard said that he was thinking about creating one-day visit guides that could attract people to spend a day in Poolesville. Including historical sites and cultural opportunities could be part of such guides, and he promised to get back to the commissioners about his ideas.

In Your Own Backyard

Autumn Adventures Along the C&O Canal: Part Two

By Jon Wolz

Steve Horvath and I cleaned and painted a total of thirty-six picnic tables this fall including six tables at the Big Slackwater boat ramp area and twenty tables at the Antietam Creek Campground. We hope to paint more tables in 2020. We met a lot of people who stopped as we worked and thanked us for what we were doing. One day, we were taking a break from painting at Dam 4 on the Potomac River, and I took a photo of the dam and river. I entered the photo in the C&O Canal Trust's November photo contest, and that photo won the contest!

I participated in a hike led by Pat White of the C&O Canal Association along with other members from Dargen Bend boat ramp parking lot along the canal to an old iron mine that predates the canal. We walked two and a half miles down the towpath from Mile 65 to Lock 36. At Lock 36, Pat led us in the direction of a very old wood-framed house that I later read is haunted. We climbed up the hill to the mine that has the appearance of a ravine that was dug out into the mountainside. The dirt from the mine is piled up on top of both sides of the ravine. Red iron can be seen on the rock leaching and running down the walls. On the hike back to the parking lot, we pulled nine tires out of the canal prism and filled a large trash bag with miscellaneous trash.

Jim Heins, who heads the Volunteers in the Park for the C&O Canal Association, together with his volunteers constructed and installed seventeen benches this year in the park. So far, a total of thirty-seven benches have been installed by Jim and his volunteers, including several in our backyard in Montgomery County. Funding for benches was donated by Daofeng He and his wife Angela Yang Cui. They saw a need to provide a necessary amenity for park visitors. The C&O Canal Trust has a program in which citizens can sponsor a bench for \$3,000 for three years in memory of a loved one. I participated in installing a bench at the Catoctin Creek Aqueduct as a last-minute replacement for a volunteer who could not help that day.

This fall, I noticed that towpath resurfacing began near us again and was completed by the end of November from White's Ferry to the Monocacy Aqueduct. The rehabilitation involves removing rocks, tree roots, the grassy medium strip, and grading the towpath to help with water runoff from rains or floods. The new resurfaced towpath has a base layer of crusher run, gravel and stone dust packed together. The new surface is definitely very smooth as compared to

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When not serving as the Grand Noble of the Poolesville Oddfellows, Steve Horvath seeks out other volunteer opportunities, including painting picnic tables in the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

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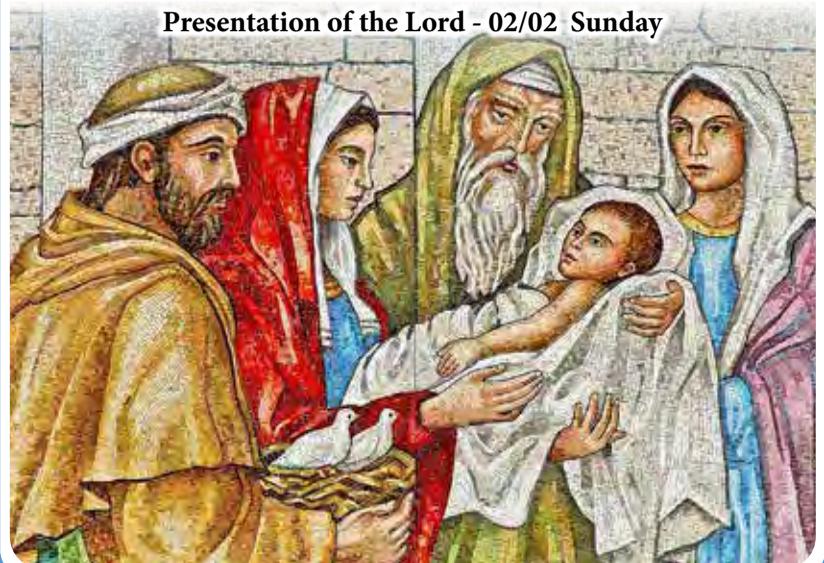
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Autumn Adventures along the C&O Canal: Part Two

the old towpath surface. Earlier this year, the towpath was resurfaced from Edwards Ferry to White's Ferry and from Mile 54 near Brunswick to Mile 71.4 (Packhorse Ford). Currently, the towpath resurfacing work is starting from the upstream side of the Monocacy Aqueduct to Mile 54, and this work should have been completed by the end of 2019. By the end of 2019, there will have been forty-seven miles of completed towpath resurfacing for the 184.5-mile towpath. If you are on the towpath where work is being done, you may want to avoid that area until the workers have finished. In 2020, in our backyard, work will begin from the Seneca Creek Aqueduct to Edwards Ferry. Also for 2020, work will continue upriver beginning at Mile 76 and north from there in several locations. This work is jointly funded by grants from Maryland's Transportation Alternative Program grants and by the National Park Service.

I am very fortunate and grateful to be a volunteer for the C&O Canal Association and to be able to share my experiences along the canal and our backyard in the *Monocacy Monocle*.

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Things To Do

Poolesville Area Senior Center

All events at 17750 W. Willard Road, Poolesville

Pickleball: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 8:30 a.m.

Zumba Gold: Wednesday at 1:00 p.m.

Mahjong: Thursdays, Room 129, 10:00 a.m.

Chair/Slow Flow Yoga: Mondays, 11:00 am in the café

The Blue Hearth is open every weekend.

January 26

Important Opportunity for FAC

Are you represented on the Montgomery County Council? The Charter Review Commission wants to know. The Montgomery County Charter Commission is holding the first of five public listening sessions to determine whether the structure of the County Council should be changed after the 2020 census. This hearing is especially for residents of Council District #1 which is comprised of Chevy Chase, Bethesda, Potomac, Poolesville, and the Agricultural Reserve. If you would like to pre-register to testify, please sign up. If you have a prepared statement, which is not necessary for testimony at these sessions, then please bring a courtesy copy to share with the Commission. *Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, Conference Room West-A, 4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda* (public parking in building). 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

January 27

Nightingale Special Event

Adult Book Discussion. 17750 West Willard Road. 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

January 28

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball. Northwood. 7:15 p.m.

January 31

PHS Varsity Home Game

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

February 1

Nightingale Special Event

Science Club: Elementary age. 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

February 3

Poolesville Town Commissioners' Meeting

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:30 p.m.

PHS Varsity Home Game

Boys' basketball. Northwest. 7:15 p.m.

February 5

Monthly Community Dinner

Baked chicken, white rice, mixed vegetables, applesauce, dinner rolls, and lots of homemade desserts. Open to all and free at *Memorial United Methodist Church*. 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Poolesville Planning Commission

Poolesville Town Hall. 7:30 p.m.

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball. Clarksburg. 7:15 p.m.

February 6

PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling. Blake. 7:15 p.m.

Nightingale Special Event: Family Storytime

Ages: Preschool and Kindergarten, Babies and Toddlers. 10:30 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.

February 7

PHS Varsity Home Game

Girls' basketball. Walter Johnson. 7:15 p.m.

UMCVFD Auxiliary Bingo Night

Featuring cash and gift cards with door prizes. Admission is \$20 which includes a game card with three chances to win in each game. Doors open: 5:30 p.m. Games begin: 7:00 p.m. *UMCVFD Firehouse, 19801 Beallsville Road, Beallsville*.

February 8

PHS Varsity Home Game

Wrestling. Damascus and Blair. 2:30 p.m.

PASC Special Event: Heart-N-Soul

The Fifth Annual Gala fundraiser, a community event to benefit the Poolesville Area Senior Center, featuring Gina's Soul Party. Dance and silent auction; dinner catered by Bassett's; cash bar (beer and wine). Dress to impress. Must be 21 or over to attend. \$75 per person. For tickets, call 301-875-7701. *St. Peter's Parish Hall*. 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Sugarloaf Citizens' Association Informational Meeting

Briefing on Ash Removal from Incinerator by GenOn, the Dickerson Power Plant. *SCA Headquarters, Linden Farm, 20900 Martinsburg Road, Dickerson*. No RSVP needed. Please join us. Beverages will be provided. 10:00 a.m.

February 9

SCA Special Event: 8th Annual Mid-Winter Dreams

Join with other garden enthusiasts in

Continued on page 17.



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Youth Sports

Savage Leads Poolesville in Dorsey Duals

By Jeff Stuart

The 5th Annual Dorsey Duals Wrestling Tournament, hosted by Poolesville High School in honor of Coach Kevin Dorsey, is in the books. It has become a highlight of the Falcons' athletic calendar and a premier statewide event.

The eleven teams participating were Poolesville, Blake, Bullis, Century, Colonial Forge, Middletown, Mt. Hebron, North Stafford, Patuxent, Richard Montgomery, and WT Woodson. There were travel school buses from Fairfax and Stafford Counties in Virginia and from Calvert, Frederick, Howard, and Carroll Counties in Maryland parked in the PHS lot. The event took place on Friday, January 10, and Saturday, January 11 on five mats, two in both gyms, and one in the PHS Cafeteria and Poolesville practice area.

The duals finished with a second place team finish for PHS, and senior Colin Savage earned Outstanding Wrestler award in the upper weight classes (153-heavyweight).

Middletown took top honors, and Bullis finished third. The award for the most pins in the least amount of time went to Austin Brown of Bullis at 182 who had eight pins in 2:55. The Outstanding Wrestler award in the lower weights (195-145) went to 106-pounder Enzo Bell from Bullis.

"The team went 8-2," said Coach Tim Tao. "We lost a very close one to Middletown, then bounced back to beat a very tough Bullis team. Savage, Kevin Fultz (138), and Xavier Kresslein (170) all went 10-0 over the weekend, while Jackson Barney (152) was able to beat state-ranked Liam Handle from Bullis. We finally got freshman Mason Hillegas in the lineup at 113, and he looked very good. He missed most of the beginning of the season with a broken toe, so it is great to have him on the mat now. As a team with five freshman rookies in the starting lineup, we looked very good, and I hope to continue to progress and do well in region dual/state dual tournaments."

In a featured match between state-ranked wrestlers Savage of Poolesville and Issac Ruderman of Bullis, Savage prevailed 16-6. "He was flat," said Savage, after



Wrestlers Kevin Fultz, Xavier Kresslein, Colin Savage, and Jacob Zeranski.

that bout, feeling he should have had a pin early in the bout. Colin suffered a blow to the head with less than a minute remaining in the third period, and the bout was stopped for several minutes while he was evaluated per the concussion protocol. Ruderman had rallied in that final period. While pleased with his personal performance, Colin thought the Falcons could have done better as a team

Continued on page 13.

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Monocacy Wildlife

What Wildlife? A Month-by-Month Observation

By Susan Petro

Does the Ag Reserve have wildlife? Apparently, one of our elected leaders didn't think so. Caroline Taylor, executive director of Montgomery Countryside Alliance, said when residents raised concerns about how siting large-scale industrial energy generation on acres of green fields in the Reserve might affect wildlife habitat, County Executive Marc Elrich responded, "What habitat? What do you have out there besides white-tailed deer?"

Those questions inspired me to go back through a year's worth of wildlife pictures to see exactly what wildlife we do have.

January is for the colorful winter birds that visited my well-stocked feeders. Purple, red (house) finches and goldfinches, cardinals, blue jays, dark-eyed juncos, white-throated sparrows, and nuthatches were just a handful of birds that appeared.



January:
An American goldfinch with winter feathers in the snow.

Winter is a perfect time for viewing hawks soaring over local fields. In the summer months, the dense vegetation makes finding hawks, owls, and bald eagles more difficult. In January, bald eagles were busy adding sticks and grasses to their nests to prepare for laying eggs.

The month of February netted my first red fox photographic opportunity. Foxes generally rely on small rodents and insects for much of their dietary needs and don't generally pose a hazard to family pets—unless it's a chicken, of course.

Migrating ducks with strange names like buffleheads, hooded mergansers,



February:
A pregnant red fox traveled our rural roads.

and colorful wood ducks appeared in our local ponds and waterways in the winter months. Brightly-colored meadowlarks were spotted at a rural meadow by a horse farm.

In March, the trees were still bare, and some migrating birds were beginning to work their way north. A quick-flying belted kingfisher diving to catch fish or bugs was spotted at Hughes Hollow, a nearby birding hot spot located in the McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area. A young bald eagle flew overhead.

The first great egrets of the season, a majestic white bird with a long S-shaped neck and standing over three



March:
Graceful great egrets returned to build a large rookery near White's Ferry.

feet tall, appeared and began building a rookery on a tiny island located near White's Ferry. Little white snowdrops began to emerge from the ground cover as the first butterflies of the season took notice.

April is likely the busiest month for wildlife as an abundance of migrating warblers and other birds returned or passed through on their journeys north. Some of the birds stayed to raise this year's brood. A rare river otter was spotted at a local horse farm, a large osprey circled overhead.

Continued on page 13.

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Continued from page 12.

Local Author Presents New Book

A colorful rose-breasted grosbeak made a first appearance at my feeder, and the season's first green herons were spotted in nearby waterways. Red-winged blackbirds were building nests in the cattail reeds growing around the edges of area ponds.

May was an exciting month for wildlife finds. A barred owl was spotted sitting on an overhead branch; a baby beaver with an infantile cry swam in a nearby marsh. Baby animals abound in May, including our own baby eaglet now big enough to be clearly seen in the towering nest overhead. Ducklings and goslings were bountiful. A young yellow-crowned heron was spotted plucking a crayfish out of shallow water off of Sycamore Landing Road.

By June, many flowers were blooming, including natural milkweed which attracts monarchs and other butterflies. Colorful swallowtails in shades of yellow, turquoise, blue, black, and orange fluttered from flower to flower. Our baby eaglet was as big as mom and dad and had taken its first flight from the nest.

July is a particularly exciting month for residents and visitors of the Agricultural Reserve as the fields of sunflowers come into bloom, attracting a large variety of colorful birds like the iridescent blue indigo bunting, bright yellow goldfinches, orchard orioles, and the orange Baltimore orioles, just to name a few.

By August, the tiny, aerobic, ruby-throated hummingbirds were thirstily filling up with nectar from flowers or sugar formula in local feeders for their preparation to head south for the winter. Baby fawns were growing, but their white spots remained.

In September, a great blue heron was spotted standing along the shoreline, searching for fish, frogs, or small mammals to snag with its long, sharp beak. A large snapping turtle emerged from a duckweed-filled pond, snapping up bugs as it came up for air. A large red-tailed hawk was spotted flying overhead.

By October, many young animals and birds were on their own and learning how to fend for themselves. A young red-shouldered hawk landed in

a neighborhood tree and announced its presence. Birds attracted by bird feeders also become a source of food for area birds of prey.

In November, squirrels were busily eating and storing fallen nuts and acorns for the upcoming winter. A yellow-bellied sapsucker marched up, down, and around a tree in search of a

tasty treat. Flocks of geese circled overhead. A family of bald eagles found a fresh carcass next to an area farm.

The month of December yielded a special treat not commonly seen this far north. A family of sandhill cranes chose a field across from the Poolesville Golf Course to overwinter. Sandhill cranes are not native to Maryland

and are usually found much further south in Florida and Texas. Last year, there were two, and this year three or four returned and, as of this writing, are still visiting the area.

According to the Ebird.com website, 332 species of birds were spotted by birdwatchers in Montgomery County, mostly in the Agricultural Reserve.



April:
A rare river otter was spotted feasting on fish in an area pond.



May:
A barred owl looked down from a tree branch.



June:
A zebra swallowtail feasted on area wildflowers.



July:
An iridescent blue indigo bunting enjoyed a blooming sunflower.



August:
A ruby-throated hummingbird indulged in succulent blossoms.



September:
A great blue heron scanned the shoreline.



October:
A red-shouldered hawk alit in a neighborhood tree.



November:
A juvenile bald eagle landed in a tree while an adult looked on from below.



December:
A trio of non-native sandhill cranes overwintered in a Poolesville field.

Continued from page 11.

Savage Leads Poolesville in Dorsey Duals

in the tournament. "We should not have lost to Colonial Forge," he said.

"We didn't wrestle well that match."

In the final bout of Poolesville's opening bout against Patuxent on Friday, Falcon heavyweight Albert Chin, a junior, scored his first varsity win, coming back from an early

near-pin situation to pin his Patuxent opponent. That put an exclamation point on a team win for the Falcons, 60-24. "It made me feel great," said Chin. "This is my first year wrestling."

The coaches and wrestlers would

like to thank the many local sponsors of the tournament; the many volunteers who manned the entrance desk, the concession stands, and the coaches' hospitality room; and all the teams involved.



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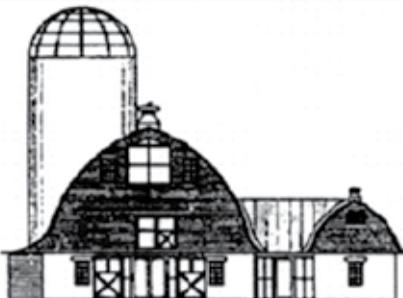
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Removal of Five Million Tons of Coal Ash From Dickerson Power Plant

Informational Meeting
Saturday, February 8 at 10:00 a.m.
Sugarloaf Citizens' Association Headquarters
Linden Farm
20900 Martinsburg Road, Dickerson

The owner of the Dickerson coal-fired power plant, GenOn, has begun removing toxic coal ash from its landfill to prevent groundwater contamination into the Potomac.

This state- and federally-mandated remediation plan is a positive step for our area; however, the remediation plan involves hauling some 5 million tons of ash by truck to two cement factories—one in Union Bridge and the other in West Virginia—over 10 years.

We have concerns about the process, which on some days will involve several dozen trucks entering and leaving Gen-On's facility in Dickerson. In our area, the trucks use Martinsburg Road and Route 28.

We have been working closely with GenOn, the Maryland Department of the Environment, and Sen. Brian Feldman to assure that the removal plan is as safe and non-intrusive to the surrounding residents as possible.

All local residents are invited to join us for a community meeting with GenOn representatives and the company doing the hauling. After a presentation on the removal plan, residents will have the opportunity to ask questions about the process, hauling, and route as well as the process for reporting any concerns throughout the removal period.

No RSVP needed. Please join us. Beverages will be provided.

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Police Blotter: Past and Present

By Jack Toomey

Present Crimes

DUI Arrest: 19000 block of Dowden Circle.

Past Crime: 1971

A District police officer was accidentally shot to death by a Montgomery County police officer as they struggled to arrest a man who had robbed a liquor store and kidnapped the owner. Police said that a gunman had kidnapped the owner of the liquor store near Chevy Chase Circle and had driven into Montgomery County with D.C. Police in pursuit. The getaway car entered the Beltway and Montgomery and D.C. Police stopped the car at University Boulevard. In the struggle to arrest the robber, the Montgomery County officer's gun discharged, killing the D.C. officer.

An English teacher at Kennedy High School was charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor and a sex offense after police found a seventeen-year-old runaway living at the teacher's house in Glen Echo. Police said that the teacher had met the girl at school, and she had accompanied him home where she stayed for several weeks.

Police put out a public warning about the dangers to female teenagers who hitchhiked. A police official said that two years before, the sight of a female hitchhiker was rare, but in 1971, it was quite common. With the increase in girls hitchhiking also came the danger of rape and other sexual offenses which were on the rise.

Police arrested four Rockville men and charged them with various crimes after they assaulted a young man at the parking lot of Montgomery Community College in Rockville. Police said that the men argued with the man inside a dance being held there, and the man ran out the door into the parking lot where he was stabbed five times and hit over the head with a board. The man was able to drive himself to a nearby gas station where he called police.

Police found the body of a high-ranking Pagan motorcycle gang member floating in the Potomac River. It was said that "Little Jesus" was under indictment for shooting a member of another gang. An investigation was underway to determine how Little Jesus ended up in the river.

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

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Remembrances

Robert B. Harney

Robert "Bob" Bartholomew Harney, 90, of Dickerson, passed away on January 2, 2020.

Robert was the loving companion of thirty-five years to Sue Paro.

Born on October 20, 1929 in Roseland, New Jersey, he was the son of the late William J. and Dorothy Chivers Harney, and he was one of twelve brothers and sisters growing up in the Baltimore area.

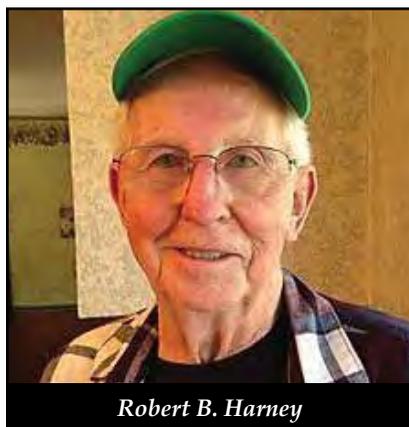
Bob proudly served in the U.S. Army and was stationed at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico until July 1948. He served under Dr. Wernher von Braun, the American-German Aerospace Engineer, whose team helped to develop highly-classified military missiles and equipment for the U.S.

After his military service, Bob went to work for Bilton Insulation and became one of their top salesmen. He enjoyed working with his hands and eventually started his own general contracting business.

He lived in Virginia for many years where he was involved in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and the Knights of Columbus, where he became a Grand Knight. He moved from Virginia to Maryland and, after living in Bowie for a few years, he moved to Poolesville where he opened a small gift shop in town called Country Junction. When an opportunity arose several years later, he closed that shop and opened a gift shop in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. The shop was quite popular with tourists.

He bought a mobile home on the Shenandoah River so that he could work in the shop on weekends, and when the shop was closed, he enjoyed relaxing and fishing on the river.

Bob stayed busy working all his life, but still managed to have a large family along the way. He married Joan Crook (deceased) and they had two sons, Stephen (deceased in 1991) and Gary. After his first marriage, he married Carol Marino (deceased) and they had one son, Paul. Bob later met Sue Paro, and they have been together for over thirty-five years. Sue has two children, whom Bob always treated as his own, Andrea Paro and Tom Paro. Along with all these children came ten grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.



Robert B. Harney

John W. Warren

John W. Warren died on January 7, 2020 after a valiant eighteen-month battle with lung cancer. John was born on October 24, 1943, in Wakefield, Virginia.

He liked to say that his real life began when he moved to Maryland where he met his wife, Marcia Young, at a local roller-skating rink.

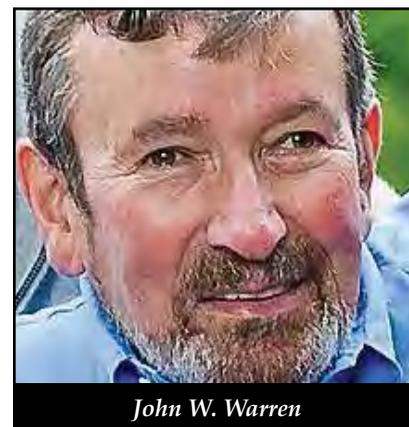
John was a general contractor, and in 1993 he founded his own firm, the Warren-Young Group.

He and Marcia loved to travel. They biked together in Denali, tasted wine in Siena, zip-lined in Costa Rica, rode the rapids in Newfoundland, took a barge trip on the Canal du Midi, and toured Kenya and Tanzania on safari. Their most recent trip was an October river cruise from Budapest to Prague.

For the past seventeen years, John and Marcia have lived on a ten-acre "farmette" in Dickerson where John indulged his passion for gardening, cooking, and the outdoors. He was a Master Gardener and always had the best tomatoes in the neighborhood. John was also known as the "Grill Meister," and his pulled pork, burnt ends, and smoked brisket were legend. He adored his German short-haired pointer, Sadie, and was most happy riding with her on the tractor and walking with her in the woods.

Mourning his death will be his many friends and his adoring family: his son, Adam Chase; his daughter-in-law, Alison; his twin granddaughters, Lauren and Alexis; his brothers-in-law Steve Young (Kathy) and Bob Young; and his grieving wife, Marcia.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center.



John W. Warren

Continued from page 10.

Things to Do

shared discussion of gardening, favorite veggies, techniques, and dream about this spring's gardens. Tea and light snacks. 20900 Martinsburg Road, Dickerson. 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

February 15 and 16

St. Mary's Antique Show and Sale

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Celebrating 31 Years of Service

New Year, New Resolutions, Same results

By Peter H. Eeg, BSc, DVM, CVLF

Happy New Year and many more. Now that we have that out of the way, let's talk about the Elephant (Asian or African) in the room after New Year's Day: The Resolution Sprint.

Studies have determined that making a New Year's Resolution is 75% likely to fall by the wayside within the first two weeks of implementation.

It is also a fact that New Year's Resolutions often drag your furry friends into the mix. This comes in the form of increased exercise, changes in diet, changes in sleep patterns, changes in people, places, and things with which we interact and changes in our behaviors and attitudes.

Since our furry pals don't get a say in the resolution, they sometimes enjoy (but often suffer from) but mostly are the unwilling participants in activities that dramatically change the behavior cues that they have become used to seeing from their humans.

Pets like consistent behavior from their humans, the humans their humans know, and the environment around them. Altering these very important behavior consistencies by a New Year's Resolution can create unwanted responses from your pet.

Resolutions are a consistent theme in Human Culture. They are entered into rapidly. There is often not enough consideration for the time, effort, and changes the resolution may bring. The results are—usually—returning to the regular status quo or—at worst—stopping activities altogether with a screeching thud.

Your pets fall under the weight of your good intentions and suffer changes in behavior they are used to seeing and getting from you. These changes can cause them to refuse activities, change their reaction to you, create nervousness, increase aggression, change eating habits and a host of other potential problems.

The best plan for your pets when you institute a New Year's Resolution is to leave them the heck out of it. If increasing your exercise rate is a desire, let your pets watch you sweat. If dietary changes are your goal, don't include your four-legged pals. If old acquaintance be forgot, make sure your pets get to say goodbye. Keeping their behavior the same is the game here. You change all you want, just leave your furry friends to normalcy.

If you must include your pets in your "fun" resolutions, talk to your veterinarian about the unintended effects it could have on your pet. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of crazy resolution change.

So Happy New Year—and you do you!

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