



This man proudly showed a painting of his ancestral home. Our Black History article on page 5 fills you in.



The Poolesville Seniors hosted a movie night about a White House public servant. The person is the father of one of these guys. Check out Tidbits on page 8.



As a founder of the Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce, this man provided heartfelt reflections about its origin. Learn more on page 10.



This is the nearby site of a Civil War battle. Where? Find out in Mystery History on page 16.

## Commissioners Hear Report on Staff Salaries And Consider Budget and Grant Requests

By Link Hoewing

The Town of Poolesville commissioners held two meetings in February, on February 3 and on February 18.

At their first monthly meeting, the commissioners heard from Tara Scholz, the town’s Events Coordinator, about the budget for the events the town plans to sponsor for the coming year. In 2024, the town planned to hold twelve events, including SpringFest, Rocktoberfest, the Holiday Lighting Ceremony, and a range of events in the summer under the banner of “Friday on the Commons.” She said that the weather was a factor in many of the events the town planned, but in the end, it was able to successfully hold eleven of the twelve events on the schedule.

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Poolesville Pride

## Falcon Swimmers Make It an Even Dozen State Titles; Girls Finish Second

By Jeff Stuart

The Poolesville High School boys’ swim team won its twelfth Class 3A/2A/1A State Title at the 2025 MPSSAA Swimming and Diving State Championships on February 22 at the University of Maryland’s Eppley Recreation Center. It was their second straight title. The Falcons finished with 365.2 points. Runner-up Rockville had 224. Rockville ended a string of ten straight titles by the Falcons when claiming the title in 2023.

The Poolesville girls finished in second place with 290 points. First place Damascus High School finished with 298.5. Rockville had 218.4.

The girls’ title was on the line going into the final event, the 400 Yard Freestyle Relay. The PHS team of sophomore Vivian She, juniors Sophie Huang and Lilian Congdon, and

Continued on page 21.



State champs for the twelfth time!

## Family Album



Left and above: Poolesville Area Chamber members at the annual business meeting and dinner held at Crossvines.



Above and below: Great fun was had by all who attended the Poolesville Area Senior Center's annual Valentine's Day Heart and Soul Celebration.



## Local News

### Solar Project Opposed in Maryland Agricultural Reserve

By David Givens

Solar power developer Chaberton told Maryland regulators on February 7 that a settlement with farm and community groups over a proposed 4MW project in Montgomery County is not possible, and the company will continue to pursue a certificate of public convenience and necessity.

“Despite our efforts to integrate agriculture into the operations, the intervenors do not find it to be a sufficient compromise and are still opposing the project,” Ryan Bowell, vice president of development, told Delmarva Farmer.

The intervenors are the Montgomery Countryside Alliance (MCA), Sugarloaf Citizens’ Association, Montgomery County Farm Bureau, and Montgomery Agricultural Producers.

The project is proposed on about nineteen acres of Agricultural Reserve land in Dickerson, where the county limits solar fields to 2MW capacity. A 2023 community solar law gives approval of projects from 2MW to 5MW to the state Public Service Commission (PSC).

The commission will take testimony from the company and the intervenors into next month, and hearings will continue through April.

A certificate would give Chaberton the permission to construct the facility, called Sugarloaf I, and includes issuance of air quality and water appropriations permits.

Based on an analysis from the county planning board, the county council has said it is “concerned” about Sugarloaf I without outright objecting to it. The council told the PSC in a letter last month of a desire to develop solar consistent with zoning. MCA’S Caroline Taylor told the *Monocle* that, to be clear, “The Planning board voted to recommend denial, and that the county correspondence to the PSC asks that the PSC give appropriate weight to MC local zoning and master planning.”

The planning board staff found Chaberton’s application meets zoning standards with two major exceptions. The project would be located on Class II soils, considered prime agricultural land, and, at 4MW of output capacity, is twice the size the county would permit in the Agricultural Reserve.

The planning board recommends denial of a mandatory referral, a state-mandated but advisory process for proposed land use projects to ensure quality community planning and development.

Chaberton said, at a commission hearing in Beallsville on February 4, that it will take proposals for agrivoltaics at the site.

Agrivoltaics are the co-location of farming or grazing activities at a solar field, a practice accepted in Europe that is being explored in many regions of the U.S.

Project opponents doubted that agrivoltaics would work and called them an afterthought to placate the community.

Miles Braxton, CEO of consultant Okovate, which is advising Chaberton, said his firm’s research found that crops or livestock grazing are appropriate at the location, but that pollinators and apiaries are most feasible, given the spacing of solar panel rows.

The intervenors told the PSC that agrivoltaics is not a recognized exception under current Montgomery County zoning, and that this alternative proposed by Chaberton should be rejected on that basis alone. “At this time ... there is insufficient data to indicate that agrivoltaics will be successful in our growing conditions,” Caroline Taylor said in written testimony.

Opponents said that the project would discourage leasing of land for agricultural uses, since landowners can receive exponentially higher values from solar developers. Land access is a hurdle for new farmers in the county.

Richard Thoms, whose farm borders Sugarloaf I, explained that current annual grazing fees of \$250 per acre can’t compete with solar leases of \$5,000 per acre. Residents complained that they gave up their rights to rezone their property and fetch higher values when the Agricultural Reserve was created in 1980.

Thoms and others said the project was not needed in Dickerson and that more solar fields should be placed in southern Montgomery County.

A handful of speakers said that the impact and threat of climate change overrides objections to the project, while others said county zoning was so restrictive that no community solar projects have yet to be approved in the reserve.

Continued on page 21.

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## Rande(m) Thoughts Water, Water Everywhere, and Still Many Drops to Drink

By Rande Davis

February turned out to be one of our more active months for group dinners and, I might add, expensive as well. While I couldn't attend every opportunity, if I had gone accompanied by my wife, the total cost would have been \$380. From the looks of things, it appears we still have a community that can well afford a few hundred unexpected recreational costs since attendance has been reported as robust to all of them. I am not sure of the impact on our restaurant businesses from so many expensive alternatives to their services. Still maybe we need to create a community calendar of events scheduled so that planners may have a better idea of what they may be up against to ensure a successful fundraiser. I even think creating one may be a perfect project for the *Monocle*. If your group has dinner or other fundraising events scheduled now for anytime in 2025, please send me an email, I will try to create one (rdavis@monocacymonocle.com).

I read a couple of items on Facebook that intrigued me and might you as well. One person wanted to know how many charitable or nonprofit groups are available for which one might volunteer. We often tell each other how wonderful we all are and how wonderful Poolesville is, and the proof is there to quantify. By my count, there are over forty great causes for us to choose from, starting with the sixteen churches that serve our community and not to mention their numerous sub-set causes (e.g., St. Mary's Haiti Twinning Project, St. Peter's South African Mission). At the PACC monthly networking breakfasts, of members attending, nearly half are nonprofit. This robust caregiving culture is

remarkable and should anyone feel isolated or without a mission in life, we have quite a few opportunities to solve their dilemma.

Remember, when asking your members to participate in your organization's activities, they may be part of more than just your group. No one likes a ball hog.

The other issue on Facebook was about our water supply and the potential for crisis due to climate change down the road. I am awaiting the town's full response in March and April to the concern before reporting on it in detail, but for now, I can caution residents not to panic. While there are projections of climate change that could cause widespread problems in times of drought by the year 2040, the Maryland Department of the Environment and the town hydrologist don't share those same dire projections. Of course, a great question in trying to solve a problem is to ask, "What's the worst that can happen," then plan to ward off those consequences. I think we will find, in the coming weeks, that our community will respond to this issue as it always has, calmly, thoughtfully, and with an open mind. Our supply of water is currently double the standard daily use of water per household, so we have safe redundancy to protect us. Still, we need to safeguard our supply and conserve our usage properly to prevent any long-term radical changes that might possibly come our way. If your level of alarm on this issue is causing you stress, don't fret. After witnessing how we handle whatever consequences develop in our town for nearly half a century, I want to assure you we will use our standard process of community discussion, listening, reasoning, and then mutually deciding. After all, through the many debates in these many years the town has gone through, and often quite heated, the result is that Poolesville has been well-managed, and the proof is that the town remains what we all want: small, close, caring and, even, fun.

## Kolm's Corner



## The Monocacy MONOCLE

Keeping an Eye on Local News

Published and Edited by  
John Clayton and Rande Davis

John Clayton  
Production  
Financial  
301.461.8840  
jclayton@monocacymonocle.com

Rande Davis  
Advertising  
Circulation  
301.509.9232  
rdavis@monocacymonocle.com

Dominique Agnew  
Copyediting  
dqagnew@gmail.com

editor@monocacymonocle.com  
advertising@monocacymonocle.com  
www.monocacymonocle.com

**Monocacy Press, LLC**  
John Clayton, President  
Rande Davis, Vice President  
P.O. Box 372  
Barnesville, MD 20838-0372  
301.461.8840

### Contributing Writers

Link Hoewing  
linkhoe@aol.com

Maureen O'Connell  
mafoconnell@msn.com

Jeffrey S. Stuart  
sark10@juno.com

Jon Wolz  
wolzjon@hotmail.com

Joy Zucker-Tiemann

### Contributing Photographer

Terri Pitts  
terri.pitts@gmail.com

### Layout and Graphics

AnyArt Solutions LLC  
sales@AnyArtSolutions.com

### Fun Facts Contributor

Laura Muncy  
laura@AnyArtSolutions.com

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## Local News

### Black History Appreciation Event at Town Hall

By Rande Davis

The Town of Poolesville sponsored a Black History Month special event on February 22 at Poolesville Town Hall. The moderators for the occasion were Link Hoewing and Commissioner Ed Reed. The theme for the convocation was the contributions of some of our historical local African American families and their communities. Featured speakers were Skip Etheridge (Sugarland), Chuck Copeland (Warren-Martinsburg Historic Site) and Troy Gardner, who grew up in the Sugarland Community and actually attended St. Paul's Historic church as a youth.

Mr. Etheridge emphasized the dynamic economic sophistication of Sugarland as a town that was a fully self-sufficient community centered on family, faith, and the care for the whole community. Coming from the harsh realities of slavery, he spoke with justifiable pride for the level of skill and complexities evident in life in the place of his ancestors.



*Commission President Jim Brown, Rev. Chuck Copeland, Troy Gardner, Link Hoewing, Skip Etheridge, Councilmember Andrew Friedson, Rockville Mayor Monique Ashton, Commissioner Sarah Paksima, and Commissioner Ed Reed.*

Reverend Chuck Copeland shared similar enthusiasm for the contributions of his Thompson family and others on land that was purchased after the Civil War and on which his family has resided for many generations since the 1880s. In referencing difficult historical racial strife in Poolesville in past generations, he was ebullient about relations today and for his deep love of a town he so dearly loves today.

Troy Gardner shared his personal perspective of a person who grew up in the Sugarland community. While there were challenging times when he was in high school, he expressed appreciation for his fellow white students, especially his football teammates who rallied in support of him after one unfortunate situation. The cordiality and respect they had for each other fills his heart even today.

Although organized just a few days before, attendance filled the town hall, and the sponsors were especially grateful for the attendance of PHS principal Mark Carothers, Councilmember Andrew Friedson, Monique Ashton, mayor of Rockville, and a staff member for Councilmember Laurie-Anne Sayles

## Of Poetry and Prose

[discoverpoetry.org](http://discoverpoetry.org)

### March Sunset

Pines cut dark on a bronze sky . . .  
A juniper tree laughing to the harp of  
the wind . . .  
Last year's oak leaves rustling . . .

And oh, the sky like a heart of fire  
Burned down to those coals that have  
the color of fruit . . .  
Cherries . . . light red grapes . . .

— Hilda Conklings

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## Senior News

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

Registration is required, but all events are open to the entire community and free unless otherwise noted. In case of bad weather or unusual circumstances, consult [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org). Most in-person events take place at Poolesville Presbyterian Church's Speer Hall at 17800 Elgin Road (Rte. 109).

#### March 4

##### Bridge Practice Hands

This is a hands-on review using Bridge Basics 3: Popular Conventions by Audrey Grant. *Speer Hall*. Noon.

#### March 5

##### Birthday Club Card Crafting

Volunteers will create handmade birthday cards to mail to the Poolesville Seniors Birthday Club members throughout the year. *Speer Hall*. 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

##### Managing Daily Life with Digital Tools: Emergencies and Managing Your Health Care

Join tech guru Jessica Wallach for the second installment of her Managing Daily Life with Digital Tools series. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

#### March 6 and March 11

##### Beginning Bridge Classes

Join Mary Conlon for eight lessons in Beginning Bridge, based on *Bridge Basics One* by Audrey Grant. Will include prescribed hands that will be played to learn. Session will be about an hour and a half. *Speer Hall*. 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

##### Chair One Fitness with Deirdre

Join Deirdre, a certified Chair One Fitness Instructor for a chair-based dance program that delivers a musically driven 45-minute, interactive workout that uplifts people through dance and fitness movements. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m.

#### March 11

##### Shamrock Shenanigans BINGO

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Shamrock Shenanigans BINGO. Irish dancing and songs, trivia, bingo, and prizes! Wear your favorite Irish gear. Bring a friend for an afternoon of conversation, competition, snacks, beverages, and prizes. Open to all ages. Please register at [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org).

*Poolesville Baptist Church*. 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

#### March 12

##### Darts Social

Join the fun with easy darts games that anyone can play! We supply the darts, you supply the nimble fingers and deadeye aim. *Speer Hall*. 2:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.

##### Managing Daily Life with Digital Tools: Everyday Questions

See program description under March 6.

#### March 13

##### Trail Hike: Lower Magruder Trail (Rain Date 3/19)

Join Gwen Haney and Karen Dansby for a hike on the Lower Magruder Trail. This is a relatively easy six-mile hike from the Damascus Recreational Park to where it meets the Seneca Greenway Trail and Seneca Creek State Park at Watkins Road. 23723 *Kings Valley Road*. 9:00 a.m.

##### Hip-Hop Dance Class with Kim Harris

Get the party started! Learn one complete hip-hop dance each monthly session. *Speer Hall*. 6:30 p.m.

#### March 17

##### PS Book Club: Atonement

On a hot summer day in 1935, thirteen-year-old Briony Tallis witnesses a moment's flirtation between her older sister, Cecilia, and Robbie Turner, the son of a servant and Cecilia's childhood friend, but Briony's incomplete grasp of adult motives—together with her precocious literary gifts—brings about a crime that will change all their lives. Virtual on Zoom. 7:00p.m.

#### March 18

##### Bridge Practice Hands

See program description under March 4.

#### March 19

##### Fire Prevention and Fire Safety

Join Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service for an informative, fun, and lifesaving fire safety presentation, "It's About Time!—Fire & Injury Prevention at Home" for Poolesville residents and seniors. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

#### March 20

##### Historic Ag Reserve with Kenny Sholes

Join local historian Kenny Sholes for the next Historic Ag Reserve Properties presentation. Virtual on Zoom. 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

##### Chair One Fitness with Deirdre

See program description under March 6.

#### March 21

##### Movie Night Classic Film: *The Quiet Man*

Join us for *The Quiet Man*, a 1952 romantic comedy drama about an American boxer who retires to Ireland, directed and produced by John Ford and starring John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, Victor McLaglen, Barry Fitzgerald, Arthur Shields, and Ward Bond. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m.

#### March 26

##### Sing-Along: The British are Coming

Join the sing-along featuring classic British Invasion hits from the sixties through the seventies: The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Fleetwood Mac, Herman's Hermits, and more. Sing along with the words projected up on a big screen. *Speer Hall*. 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

#### March 28

##### Line Dancing w/Ashley Kelch

Enjoy a free evening of line dancing with basic instruction that builds up to more complicated moves. Join the fun, work out, and meet new people. *St. Peter's Episcopal Church*. 7:00 p.m.

Continued on page 7.



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Continued from page 6.

Senior News

Weekly Events

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

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

Mondays

**Walking Club.** *Whalen Commons Flagpole.* 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

**Ping Pong Afternoon.** *Speer Hall.* 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tuesdays

**Tai-Chi** with Maureen Ivusic. *PMUMC and virtual.* 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

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

Wednesdays

**Zumba Gold with Karen McPhatter.** *Speer Hall.* 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Trivia Game Night.** If you love Trivia, come join a team with Poolesville Seniors on the first Wednesday of the month. For more information, email [info@poolesvilleseniors.org](mailto:info@poolesvilleseniors.org). 7:00 p.m. *Virtual.*

Thursdays

**Mahjong with Joyce Kral.** Beginner and seasoned players are welcome. *Speer Hall.* 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Knitting/Crochet Instruction and Support.** *Poolesville Presbyterian Manse.* 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For more information or to register for any of the programs listed here, visit the Poolesville Seniors website: [poolesvilleseniors.org](http://poolesvilleseniors.org) and receive the link for virtual events or directions for in-person events. View recorded presentations on their YouTube channel. Contact 301-875-7701 or email [info@poolesvilleseniors.org](mailto:info@poolesvilleseniors.org) with questions.

**Of Poetry and Prose**

March

We like March, his shoes are purple,  
 He is new and high;  
 Makes he mud for dog and peddler,  
 Makes he forest dry;  
 Knows the adder's tongue  
 his coming,  
 And begets her spot.  
 Stands the sun so close and mighty  
 That our minds are hot.  
 News is he of all the others;  
 Bold it were to die  
 With the blue-birds buccaneering  
 On his British sky.

—Emily Dickinson

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## Tidbits

### An Eye for an Eye, Times 1,000

Our Monocacy Lions Club reports that they have sent close to one thousand pairs of eyeglasses to the Lions International Recycling Center. Most of the eyeglasses were collected throughout 2024 in their drop box near Whalen Commons in front of the Poolesville Vet Clinic. Reusable glasses are distributed to optical missions around the world. Those that are damaged or unusable are sent for precious metal reclamation and scrap processing. The Lions thank Lion Roger Brenholtz for spearheading this great cause by sorting and packaging all those glasses. If you are interested in helping out with the eyeglass recycling program or in donating hearing aids, you can drop them off in their glasses box or email Cathy Mattax at [cathymattax@gmail.com](mailto:cathymattax@gmail.com).

### Empty Bowls for Empty Stomachs

Empty Bowls is an international project to fight hunger and is personalized by artists and art organizations on a community level. In Poolesville, it is hosted by Riverworks, which coordinates the donations of soup and refreshments from local donors.

A partner and beneficiary in the program, Backpack Bites, delivers weekly meals to twenty-four families at Poolesville Elementary School and thirteen families at Monocacy Elementary School.

Students create a soup bowl, and for \$20.00, Locals Restaurant fills it with a choice of one of its specialty soups. For those who bring their own bowl, they receive the soup for just \$10.00. All proceeds go to Backpack Bites. If enough money is raised for Backpack Bites to cover the entire school year, then the remaining funds will cover a summer lunch program run by WUMCO. The event will take place on March 14 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Locals Restaurant.

The organizers are especially encouraging folks to consider donations, even if they're unable to attend the event in person. Donations can be made through the Riverworks website on the Empty Bowls event page. While it may be hard to immediately locate, the link for donations is directly above the link for tickets.

### The Eagles and WUMCO Are Winners

The Monocacy Elementary School SGA sponsored a fun fundraiser for WUMCO Help. They requested students to donate canned foods for our local food pantry,

but the twist was for the students to use the cans to vote for the team they hoped would win the Super Bowl by placing them in either an Eagles bin or one for the Chiefs. They not only picked the Eagles to win, but more importantly, they delivered 788 cans of food to WUMCO. Let's all hope that next year there will be a Commanders bin!

### Poolesville Seniors Celebrate Black History Month on Movie Night

#### Local Connection to Eugene Allen, the Butler

The Poolesville Area Senior Center sponsors a movie night each month, and in February they chose to show the movie *The Butler* (starring Oprah Winfrey and Jane Fonda) for a very special reason. The fictional movie is loosely based on the life of Eugene Allen, the butler who served eight presidents in the White House over thirty-four years. The guest speaker for the evening was his son, Charles Allen. Charles is a boyhood friend of Skip Etheridge, both having known each other since the first grade.

Continued on page 25.

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Monocacy SGA officers: Robbie Ritter (4<sup>th</sup> grade), Everly Baker (5<sup>th</sup> grade), Lucy Mott (5<sup>th</sup> grade), and Kate Miller (4<sup>th</sup> grade). Students predicted the Super Bowl winner by donating canned goods to WUMCO.

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## Local News

### Fatal Accident on White's Ferry Road

A fatal accident occurred on February 21 on White's Ferry Road. According to Montgomery County Police, "At approximately 6:03 p.m., 1<sup>st</sup> District officers and Montgomery County Fire Rescue personnel responded to White's Ferry Road near the intersection of Partnership Road for the report of a collision involving a white Ford and a green Acura."

The adult male driver of the white Ford remained on the scene with no reported injuries. The fifty-one-year-old male driver of the green Acura, Marcos Anton Solorzano Ramirez of Gaithersburg, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Ramirez worked for Poolesville Auto Body, located with Poolesville Tire and Auto. "Forever missed: Marcos, a father, a husband, and a passionate body man who always strived to deliver excellence and quality in his work that he transformed into an art," said Stefan of Poolesville Auto Body. "He did his best to put every single car to the pre-existing condition and subsequently the love of his life was cars. Sadly, he left us...and our community shop will never be the same."

A Gofundme page has been created: Support for Marcos Solórzano's Family. The Montgomery County Department of Police—Collision Reconstruction Unit is investigating this collision. CRU detectives are asking for anyone who may have witnessed the collision to call 240-773-6620. More information will be released when it is available.



The intersection of Whites Ferry Road and Partnership Road.

Photo from The MOCO Show.

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## Focus on Business

### PACC Holds Annual Meeting

By Rande Davis

The Poolesville Area Chamber of Commerce (PACC) hosted its formal annual dinner and business meeting at the Crossvines Event Center this past February. Tom Kettler of Kettler Forlines Homes, the current president of PACC, noted that the organization has had a very successful year, and the PACC now boasts over 169 members.

Kettler was the master of ceremonies and introduced various members of the Board of Directors, each presenting the accomplishments of 2024 and the goals for 2025.

The highlight of each annual meeting is the selection and recognition of one of its members for their outstanding community service above and beyond their commercial or professional role in the community. This year, Heidi Brenholtz, although not a business owner, received the prestigious award for her many contributions and voluntary service over many years to the community through decades of living and working in the area.

As a child, she encouraged her parents to buy a home in Poolesville as she became attached to it after visiting the town. She has been a leader in issues relating to the preservation of the Ag Reserve and has served on the Sugarloaf Citizens' Association's Board of Directors. She has been a contributor and volunteer for WUMCO Help and joined the Monocacy Lions and rose to become the first woman president of the local service organization. As a member of the Lions, she has been their key representative as a partner in managing the annual PACC 5K race. The race has seen significant growth under her leadership in both the number of participants and in funds raised.

The featured speakers for the evening were: Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller, who gave an update on Gov. Wes Moore's administration's work in the state; and Frank Jamison, from Jamison Real Estate, who, as a founder of the organization in 1979, provided insight into the history of the chamber.

Frank recalled when the late Jay Schwartzman of Poolesville Beer and Wine first approached him about creating an advocacy group for the business community in Poolesville. The town, at that time, had recently made significant growth with the buildout of two townhome sites and the single home developments in Wesmond and Westerly, and he felt the economic growth of the town would be enhanced through such a group.

They soon were able to attract ten to fifteen local businessowners to establish the chamber with local attorney Frank Wilson writing the first articles of incorporation. Along with Frank Jamison, Jay Schwartzman, and Frank Wilson, local realtor Brooks Wood, and publisher and civil engineer Eugene Halmos also became the first Board of Directors.

They not only found ways to help promote awareness and appreciation for our area's businessowners but were leaders in helping to fight the incinerators and the concept of building a highway through the Ag Reserve. There were many who helped stop the highway, but none was more effective than Lib Tolbert, the legendary mayor of Barnesville. In the annals of Democratic Party politics in Maryland, Lib is considered a GOAT for her tenacity and ability to bring people together (Republicans, too) to achieve objectives. Frank reminisced about the early days of the chamber and said, "I enjoyed the people I met along the way, as we promoted businesses and fought against the inclinator and highway (he noted the contribution of William Price and Bill Roberts) and have to say, as we did so, I so much liked being the driver for Miss Lib."

The local chamber today provides many services to its members with monthly network breakfast meetings, as well as multiple happy hour and social networking meetings that bring businesses together on a personal level.

Representatives of the chamber regularly monitor and provide input on government matters to ensure the commercial interests of its members are better understood by elected officials. Most notably, PACC has been active in assisting the development of the ten-year Poolesville Comprehensive Plan (due to be finalized this spring) and in support of the Fair Access Committee in its work on bolstering the county government's understanding of the needs of the Poolesville area community.

Visit the *Monocle* online at [www.monocacymonocle.com](http://www.monocacymonocle.com)



## Community Dinner on Shrove Tuesday

Join us for a heartwarming community dinner on Tuesday, March 4, at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Poolesville, starting at 5:30 p.m.

Enjoy delicious food, great company, and a chance to connect with your neighbors. This is a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. We have many toppings, plus bacon, sausage, and desserts. Bring your appetite!

The dinner is free, but we do accept donations. We look forward to seeing you there!

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## Garden

### A Gardener's Confession

By Maureen O'Connell

A confession can be about many faults or sins towards friends or foes; a gardener might sin against flora or fauna, or nothing. It can include a gardener's struggles—or successes—in creating a place or sanctuary in the enjoyment of a garden.

A garden lives in a state of evolution. Every season in the garden is different: Some are "glory years," some good but not outstanding, and some just okay and not worth worrying about and saving. Why? There are a variety of reasons, some old, some new: climate, diseases and pests, invasive plants taking control, or a gardener's laziness. As I get older, my aches and pains diminish my enthusiasm for gardening, especially when it is ninety-five degrees in the shade. In my many years of gardening in Barnesville, I have usually dealt with it. My two sous-gardeners, Labs Winston and Spencer, love our morning and evening garden walks: We check on our plants' progress as we hunt for emerging spring plant shoots. Who survived the winter and who did not? Sometimes my near misses reflect my plants' goals to go a little wild as I experiment with new exotic plants, but that is part of the adventure. I love the changes that happen in my garden throughout the seasons. I never give up and throw in the trowel.

Here comes my confession: Last year, about early to mid-June, I gave up caring what the garden would look like in July, August, September, and the fall months. It was very hot and there was little rain, and I had travel plans. When I stopped spraying with insecticides and pesticides many years ago, I lost my wonderful eighty-five rose bushes, the stars of my garden. There were other plants, but the magic and the glory days of my roses were gone. I live near farms and woodlands where "the deer, the squirrels, and the rabbits roam." They were always around, but last year they seemed hungrier, and they do have to eat. Non-toxic Deer and Squirrel Away spray and pellets no longer worked. They ate everything—even plants they supposedly did not like were gone. The Japanese beetles stayed for just about a week; nothing left for them to munch on.

Where were my Oriental Lilies 'Stargazer' and 'Casablanca'? They were leafless and flowerless stalks. Even the many, reliable Black-eyed Susans were without flowers; I had a garden of stalks. To avoid being too negative, not all my plants were disappointing. I should comment that their success was not a factor of their locations (sun or shade). Here are some of my 2024 success stories: false indigo (*Baptisia*), Crocosmia, Russian Sage (*Perovskia*), Allium, hostas, yarrow, coreopsis, catmint (*Nepeta*), and daylilies.

This is a maybe yes, maybe no confession. My downfall will soon come with the arrival in the mail of the 2025 White Flower Farms garden catalogue. I will read all about the new "can't fail" plants. Maybe I will order one or two. Maybe, against my better judgment, I will visit a garden center and buy more plants that I don't need. We will see.

As I said, gardens live in a state of evolution. Without changes, the garden would be without its essential spark—and, no doubt, so would we. We as gardeners must respond to the land under our feet and to the



A garden favorite, the 'Stargazer' Lily.



False indigo (Baptisia).

Continued on page 13.



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**When:** First Saturday of each month from 9 AM – NOON

**Where:** Vail Christian Education Building  
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**The Boyds Presbyterian Church (BPC)**

is hosting a monthly *Adults Getting Together* event for those interested in meeting, socializing, and sharing like interests.

Bring your favorite non-alcoholic morning beverage, needle work, puzzles, cards, coloring/drawing medium, books, etc. to re-acquaint with long-time friends and make some new ones.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Leaman at [meleaman41@gmail.com](mailto:meleaman41@gmail.com) or 301-972-5744.

Please join us and nurture your personal faith journey on Sunday mornings at 10 AM, in-person or on Zoom at: <https://bit.ly/3h8917D>.

All are welcome. Fellowship immediately follows the service.



Continued from page 12.

A Gardener's Confession

environment around us. We grow with the garden; we must garden with the place and not against it. To succeed in a garden, we must strike a balance.

Don't give up. As I said in my last column, onward and upward in the garden. This is my confession not yours.



Crocosmia.



Coreopsis lanceolata 'Sterntaler'.

Do you have a garden-related topic you would like to read about? We welcome your suggestions. Send to editor@monocacymonocle.com

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## Things to Do

### March 3

#### Homework Help

Teen volunteers will be available to help elementary students with homework and informal academic support. Ages 4-11. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### March 4

#### Regenerators: Zero Waste Solutions Club

Learn and share your strategies for at-home eco-friendly solutions with neighbors. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### March 5

#### Managing Daily Life with Digital Tools—Emergencies and Healthcare

Discover digital tools to help keep healthcare information organized and to help in emergencies. This program is in association with the Poolesville Seniors. Registration required. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### March 6

#### English Conversation Club

Join us to practice English conversation in a friendly, informal setting. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

### March 7

#### Tax Help

Free appointment-only tax preparation assistance from AARP Tax-Aide volunteers. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

#### Family Storytime

Music, crafts, and more. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 10:30 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.

### March 8

#### Playdate at the Library!

Drop in, meet your neighbors, and enjoy free play time with puppets, puzzles, and games for the very youngest. Every Saturday morning. Ages 0-5. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

#### Science Saturdays

Join us for "Let it Fly" by Science Connections. Space is limited, registration required. Ages 6-10. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### March 10

#### Homework Help

Teen volunteers will be available to

help elementary students with homework and informal academic support. Ages 4-11. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### March 11

#### Pajama Storytime

Stories and activities that develop language skills and imagination. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 6:30 p.m. to 7:10 p.m.

#### Village Piecemakers Monthly Meeting

Theme: Scrap Quilts Part 2. Contact@villagepiecemakers.org. For further information, call or text 240-994-0977. *Poolesville Town Hall*. 7:30 p.m.

### March 14

#### PES PTA Staff vs. Parents Basketball Game

All proceeds outside of the raffle to the PTA. There will be a raffle by the SGA to win unique experiences with staff and VIP guests. The SGA has decided that these funds will be donated to support the LA wildfire relief efforts. Food and drink will be available for purchase. \$5 donation per family requested. As school gym is closed, it will be at *Mary of Nazareth Church* (Across from Harris Teeter). Doors open: 5:15 p.m.; game starts: 6:00 p.m.

### March 15

#### Playdate at the Library!

Drop in, meet your neighbors, and enjoy free play time with puppets, puzzles, and games for the very youngest. Every Saturday morning. Ages 0-5. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### March 17

#### Homework Help

Teen volunteers will be available to help elementary students with homework and informal academic support. Ages 4-11. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### March 21

#### Family Storytime

Music, crafts, and more. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 10:30 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.

#### PHS Varsity Homes Games

Girls' tennis vs. Richard Montgomery at 3:30 p.m.

Boys' lacrosse vs. Clarksburg at 7:15 p.m.

### March 22

#### Playdate at the Library!

Drop in, meet your neighbors, and enjoy free play time with puppets, puzzles, and games for the very

youngest. Every Saturday morning. Ages 0-5. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

#### Mini Remote-Controlled Robots Engineering: Calling Poolesville Future Innovators!

Learn about engineering, coding, and mechanics while testing and controlling small robots. Join the President of Poolesville High School's MESA (Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement) Club and explore the basics of engineering. Ages 6-10. Free. Materials are included. Registration required. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### March 24

#### Homework Help

Teen volunteers will be available to help elementary students with homework and informal academic support. Ages 4-11. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

#### PHS Varsity Homes Games

Baseball vs. Northwest at 3:45 p.m.

Softball vs. Northwest at 3:45 p.m.

### March 25

#### Pajama Storytime

Stories and activities that develop language skills and imagination. Free. *Maggie Nightingale Library*. 6:30 p.m. to 7:10 p.m.

#### PHS Varsity Homes Game

Boys' lacrosse vs. Watkins Mill at 7:15 p.m.

### March 26

#### American Legion/Monocacy Lions Blood Drive

*Poolesville Baptist Church*. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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#### PHS Varsity Homes Games

Softball vs. Wootton at 3:45 p.m.

Girls' tennis vs. Blake at 3:30 p.m.

Boys' volleyball vs. Whitman at 5:30 p.m.

Coed volleyball vs. Whitman at 7:15 p.m.

### March 27

#### PHS Varsity Home Game

Baseball vs. Wootton at 3:45 p.m.

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# A Monocacy Moment



**White's Ferry:  
Crossing the Potomac, October 17, 1909.**  
It appears that the only means of propulsion across the river in this photo was by 'poling'—moving the ferry across the river using long poles to push against the riverbed.

# Protect the Ag Reserve

*Ongoing and new challenges to the environment, farmland, and open space in our area require persistent vigilance.*

■ **Solar installations on farmland.** Solar companies are pushing in the state legislature and Montgomery County to gain the right to put large ground-based solar facilities on good quality farmland. We support solar energy but not when it threatens to take arable land out of food production.



■ **Waste management.** Our fight to shut down the Dickerson trash incinerator continues as the county ramps up its initiative to overhaul waste disposal and recycling systems over the next decade. The incinerator is the county's single largest source of pollution and greenhouse gases. County officials claim they can't shutter the incinerator for another six to seven years. We disagree. It should be shut down within three years or less, as county leaders previously committed to do.

■ **Data Centers.** A proposal to build a data center and battery storage campus in Dickerson continues to move forward. Along with Montgomery Countryside Alliance, we are closely monitoring the county's regulatory process as it assesses the proposal. If approved, the project would be the largest real estate and industrial development in our area in decades.

*You can read more about all these issues on our website.*

*You're invited! Join us for SCA's annual meeting on March 29, 9:30 to 11:30am, at Linden Farm, 20900 Martinsburg Rd in Dickerson. Breakfast and catch-up on regional issues. No need to RSVP.*

## OTHER SCA INITIATIVES

- ✓ Promoting regenerative agriculture and table crop farming
- ✓ Monitoring the evolution of agritourism in the Ag Reserve
- ✓ Preventing development near Sugarloaf Mountain
- ✓ Tracking energy infrastructure projects that threaten farmland

*Help us advocate on behalf of the Ag Reserve. Consider becoming an SCA member and supporter. For more information, visit [sugarloaforcitizens.org](http://sugarloaforcitizens.org) or email us at [info@sugarloaforcitizens.org](mailto:info@sugarloaforcitizens.org)*



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## Mystery History

### The Battle of Seneca Creek

By Jim Poole and Rande Davis

Most of us in the Upcounty are very aware of the special blessing we have in the Historic Medley District, LLC which preserves the John Poole Jr. home, the Old Town Hall and Bank building and, of course, the Seneca Schoolhouse. The school is a widely heralded and recognized living history experience for hundreds of elementary-aged students who visit and spend a whole day learning exactly as young folks did in the 1800s.

What might not be quite as well understood about HMD is the role they play in recording and sharing our local history for fifty decades.

A perfect example of this role is exemplified by a correspondence sent to HMD and how Julie Shapiro coordinated the local history buffs to aid a person seeking information on a long-deceased relative.

In February, Julie received a voicemail at HMD from a gentleman (Eli Whitescarver of Texas) looking for information about an ancestor by the name of George H. Whitescarver (1839 to June 11, 1863). Lieutenant Whitescarver served in the Confederate 43<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Cavalry in Colonel Mosby's Rangers. Through research, Eli found that George was killed on June 11, 1863 during the Battle of Seneca Mills, and may have been buried in a garden at someone's home in Seneca. He had heard stories of Civil War soldiers being buried in Seneca, and that some bodies were eventually moved. Whitescarver was looking for more information about his ancestor, including where in Seneca he may have been buried and if we have any further information about him. He is trying to complete a family ancestry book concerning his family's history and reached out to HMD for help.

Julie immediately shared this with the local leading Civil War and history buffs from the area: Jim Poole, Glenn Wallace, Knight Kiplinger, Jon Wolz, Ken Sholes, and yours truly.

While we have not been able to identify where his burial site may have been, Jim Poole immediately responded with the knowledge of the history of the battle at Seneca. We hope you enjoy Jim's report:



An 1864 map showing Seneca Mills during the Civil War.

Photo by Allen C. Browne.

#### Prelude to Gettysburg

Early on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1863, Maj. John S. Mosby led his newly-organized Battalion of Mosby's Rangers and a company of Prince William Cavalry on a raid into Maryland at Rowser's Ford just below the mouth of Seneca Creek. In his

Continued on page 20.



*Academic struggles and behavior problems are rarely because a child is stupid, bad, or lazy ...*

  
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## Poolesville Green

### Greener on the Other Side?

By Jasheen Kaur and Shivom Pandey

We all know of the ideal American lawn: spring green, clean trimmed, evenly seeded, and blindingly bright in the sun. Unbeknownst to most, the traditional American lawn is quite detrimental to the environment and—just as important—to your pocketbook! In this column, we'll talk about both negative and positive aspects of lawns, as well as alternatives to the traditional way we plant and maintain them.

The price of traditional lawn care is composed of various factors, costing Americans an estimated \$25 billion annually (*Lawn Nation*, 2020). Mowing, leaf removal, aeration, dethatching, seeding, and others all contribute to the cost of the lawn. The average annual cost for all these factors in total is \$3,525 (*Healthline Media*, 2021); however, this price fluctuates greatly based on care habits. Types of grass also make a difference, with some grasses costing \$280 to \$400 a month for mowing alone, and others costing \$140 to \$200 (based on a quarter acre of grass).

Beyond finances, we have the issue of water usage. Per year, American lawns use roughly twenty trillion gallons of water. The average American family uses over three hundred gallons of water daily, thirty percent of which goes to outdoor use (United States, Office of Water, 2021).

Now, let's get our hands dirty. Pesticides, weed killers, and fertilizers are efficient, standard means of maintaining the pristine American lawn, but they come with a cost to the environment. These chemicals are linked to pollution of water bodies, soil degradation, and ecological imbalances. Pesticides alone sicken roughly one hundred thousand Americans and poison sixty to seventy million birds annually (US National Forest Service, D. Pimentel, 1992), not to mention the water runoff full of nitrogen and phosphorus. Fertilizers can cause soil degradation and lead to an increase in nitrogen levels in water bodies. This can lead to the growth of harmful algae and other aquatic plants, which can cause oxygen depletion and kill fish. Improper use of fertilizer wastes billions of dollars a year.

One of our favorite things about Maryland is its nature. Who doesn't like to see a deer in their backyard every once in a while? Unfortunately, turf grass isn't the best for native species, decreasing the overall amount of native pollinators in the environment. Biodiverse lawns are a cost-friendly alternative. The installation fee for native vegetation is roughly \$2,000 to \$4,000 per acre, as opposed to \$4,000 to \$8,000 for turfgrass. The University of Maryland Extension Service states that tall fescue is the optimal grass type for Maryland turf, a grass that costs \$3 to \$7 per pound of seed and takes six to eight pounds to cover one thousand square feet.

There are many great alternatives to turfgrass if people are willing to make the switch. Clovers, for example, cost about the same as tall fescue, but require much less seed. White clover only costs around \$1 to cover one thousand square feet of lawn.

In the grand scheme of lawn budgeting, \$10 to \$20 on seed prices may not be worth the switch, but taking into account maintenance saves even more money.

Continued on page 22.



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## local food & community

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[localsfarmmarket.com](http://localsfarmmarket.com) (order online!)

Continued from page 1.

### Commissioners Hear Report on Staff Salaries and Consider Budget and Grant Requests

In the coming year, the town plans to hold fourteen events, including taking over the Scarecrow Contest, which had originated with WUMCO which ran it for many years. The basic budget request includes an increase from \$65,000 last year to \$73,000 this year. In part, the added costs are for things like tents which are increasingly necessary due to the many adverse weather events affecting the area. She also pointed out that, to improve safety at events, the town will be paying for crossing guards.

Scholz said that part of the increase is because the Springfest turnout was down due to bad weather, and the event lost money. Because the town will now be running the Scarecrow Contest, it will need to add money to operate that event. She is also requesting an additional \$7,000 on top of the \$73,000 base request as a hedge against extreme weather and the need to rent more tents and equipment to adapt to these conditions. The town attempts to get sponsorships for events but has had limited success.

Town Assistant Manager Niles Anderegg then provided an overview of a survey of staff salaries that has just been completed. The two purposes of the survey were to look at the competitive market that the town faces in terms of getting and keeping staff and to determine what changes in salaries and/or benefits might be needed to help retain staff. A 2022 survey resulted in a ten percent increase in newly-hired staff, a five percent increase in the salaries of all staff except for the administration, and full payment of healthcare benefits.

Anderegg went on to say that the 2024 survey shows that entry level pay needs to be increased based on what competing jurisdictions pay their employees. The study recommends that administration staff should get a four percent increase which would still put them only at the mid-level of staff in other competing jurisdictions. The commissioners will consider these proposals as part of their budget review process as they come up with a new budget proposal for the next fiscal year.

Town Manager Wade Yost explained that the town commissioners will have a public work session on April 1 to consider a draft budget proposal, and the public is welcome to attend. The plan now is for the commissioners to hold a public hearing on the budget at their April 21 meeting and then vote on it at their May 5 meeting. The new fiscal year starts on July 1.

At their February 18 meeting, the commissioners devoted much of the session to hearing comments from leaders and supporters of Poolesville Pride regarding a grant request the group has made to support its activities. Three leaders from Poolesville Pride, Jonathan Adamson, treasurer, Sabrina Sanchez, vice president, and Yair Oded, a board member, appeared to discuss the budget request.

Sanchez said that last year's grant from the town was used very productively, and the money helped the group sponsor a number of events and activities. It allowed the group to be participants in the Poolesville Day Parade, and they had a booth at the event to hand out information as well. They also made a Poolesville Pride scarecrow entry for the Scarecrow Contest. They held a post-Halloween party in November for the community. They also held a Pride Month event at Riverworks, which was attended by approximately fifteen hundred people.

Adamson said he was "happy to see this in our town and, as a community, we are taking continued steps to make sure all are seen and heard." He went on to say, however, that "there are cracks in the larger ecosystem, and I see firsthand some of the mental health stresses many in our community are facing." He said members of the LGBTQ+ community have to deal with all of the daily issues that everyone has to in society, but at the same time they have to see attacks from groups on websites, from government leaders, and cuts potentially to important programs. He concluded by saying that Poolesville Pride wants to "have everyone see Poolesville as a welcoming place."

Several commissioners responded to the comments.

Commissioner Sarah Paksima said, "We don't have control over a lot of things, but in this small place of Poolesville, we can create a safe place."

Commissioner Ed Reed said, "It is important to have a safe place where everyone can be who they are."

Commissioner Bryan Bupp said, "I believe in our community, and we are, in reality, a lot of smaller communities. Together, we make up Poolesville."

Kelly Hueting, a supporter of Poolesville Pride, spoke next. She said she was "thrilled to see that Poolesville had a Pride Festival last year." She said she grew up in a family that was not tolerant. You would never be able to tell that from how her family acted in public, but it was the reality. She said that she was

eventually drawn into teaching since teachers were some of the most inspirational characters in her life. She said the grant to Poolesville Pride is important because the "sad reality is that lives are at stake." People who identify as LGBTQ+ are four times more likely to commit suicide. For youth who live in a community that is accepting and supportive, that statistic can be cut in half. In her view, "That alone should be the reason to continue this grant."

Kaitlin Harding, a student leader at Poolesville High School with the Queer Student Union added that their club has twenty-seven members. "Poolesville is so special. When I came here, I felt so much better."

Sharham Paksima appeared next to speak. He said he talked to a straight couple from Hagerstown who attended the Pride event at Locals. They told him that they just had to come and see what Poolesville is doing. He said, "The focus is not on development but what is going to happen next. What will our town be like?"

In its last piece of business, the commissioners took up for final consideration the water fee changes that it has been considering for a few months. The *Monocle* has had extensive coverage of the proposed new schedule. Overall, the fees will be increased by five percent a year for three years. The new schedule also increases charges for large, institutional users who do not pay other taxes in town such as the schools. Finally, the proposal protects households who use the least amount of water, often single people, very small families, or in some cases, older people with fixed incomes. The rates are lower than actual costs for these users so, in effect, their rates are subsidized by other users.

The proposed fees passed unanimously with all five commissioners present.

## Of Poetry and Prose

[discoverpoetry.org](http://discoverpoetry.org)

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# Monocacy Critters

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Beautiful female Cardinal.

Photo by IJ Hudson

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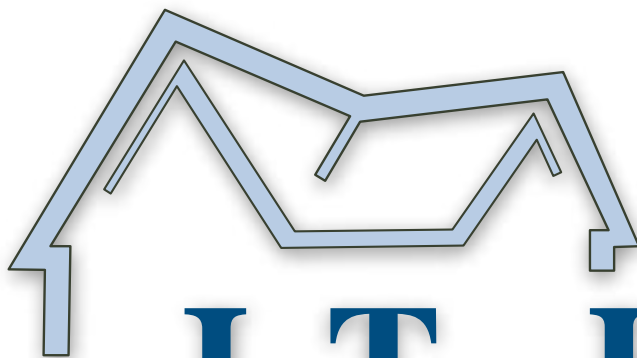


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Continued from page 16.

### The Battle of Seneca Creek

command was William H. Trundle, a man raised near Dickerson who had a canal hauling business at the mouth of the Monocacy, that is, until the federal soldiers burnt his warehouse. Because of his business, he knew the area well.

Private Trundle crossed the river with two other men, first to capture the pickets at Violette's Lock, then signaled the way was cleared. This they did with little resistance and managed to capture a canal boat and five mules.

Suddenly, a four-man mounted federal patrol came upon them, and shots were exchanged. Trundle's party managed to capture them, but this alerted the pickets near a drawbridge over the canal who turned and ran to their nearby camp.

By this time, Mosby's whole raiding party was over and riding fast up the canal. His objective was to capture the camp of Company "I", 6<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry (on or near Bretton Woods Golf Course) who guarded the area. On being forewarned, Federal Captain Deane was trying to get his ninety men into a defensive line of battle.

On seeing the advance of Mosby's men in the early light, he fled towards Seneca Creek and hastily took up a position behind the bridge by Darby's Mill on River Road (Poole's Store area). At the time, there was a lot of underbrush and trees preventing them from forming a line of battle, so they used them to hide. Behind this, the road went through a deep ravine that curved up the high hill, and some of the men took position there.

Mosby charged through their camp. Finding it deserted, he turned his men, heading towards the 6<sup>th</sup>'s new position. Without hesitation, they charged across the bridge in a hail of gunfire, and a fierce hand-to-hand battle broke out in the ravine. Captain Brawner of the Prince William Cavalry was killed in this action. Private John Ballard of his company saw this and in turn cut the offending Federal down with one saber blow to the head. Lieutenant Whitescarver of Mosby's command, who was at the head of the charge as it crossed the bridge, was also killed just after making the other side.

Privates Alfred Glasscock and William Hibbs were wounded. The Federals lost Privates Warren E. Johnson, Wesley Power, Frederick von Helmerich, and David Whalen. Privates John G. Anderson, Joseph Akerman, Joseph Boleu, John Boyle, Jerry Dudley, Daniel L. Dutcher, James H. Gould, Joseph Harper, Thomas Neal, Daniel O'Connell, Daniel Rouse, Andrew Sammon, Charles Schreiber, and William Shaw were captured. Of these privates, Rouse and Sammon were wounded.

The 6<sup>th</sup> broke and ran towards Poolesville, forming up three times only to fall back when almost surrounded. Finally, about three miles outside of Poolesville, Mosby broke off contact and went back to Seneca. There, he looted and burned the camp of the 6<sup>th</sup>. He then retraced his movements to bring off seventeen prisoners, twenty-three horses, and five mules. He arrived back in Virginia around 2:00 p.m.

The Darby family, who were sleeping at the time in the large house across from the mill, were awakened by the sound of battle and ran to the windows to see what all the shooting was about. When the fighting stopped, Mr. Darby ventured out. He found the bodies of the two Confederates (no mention of the Federals) and the wreckage of his broken fences. He had the Confederates' bodies picked up and placed in his warehouse, thinking the army would come and claim the bodies. When no one came, he had them buried behind his home. A few weeks later, the sister of one of the soldiers came to claim her brother's body that was verified by his ring and had it shipped back to Virginia.

Meanwhile, three or four men from the 6<sup>th</sup> arrived at Camp Heintzelman, horses well spent and fear in their eyes. They had left camp in such a rush they left their hats and coats behind. They and their horses were covered in dust and reeked of sweat. They gave the alarm that Mosby was coming.

Colonel Jewett gave orders for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Maine and 10<sup>th</sup> Vermont Infantry to quickly draw up into a line of battle on the nearby hill. He placed two sections of the 10<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Battery in the center with the 11<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry protecting the flanks. They stayed this way for four hours with all their wagons packed in case of a hasty retreat. All the while, they fortified the hill by digging entrenchments. Scouts were sent out and, finding no sign of Mosby, stood down around noon. This would later be jokingly called the "Battle of Benson's Hill" by the infantry, named after the farmer who owned the hill.

Mosby reported to General Stuart who took an interest in Roswer's Ford and would use it later that month.

After reading this report, Mr. Whitescarver was so grateful for all the help and concern expressed by the folks of HMD that he wrote Julie in response:

"Hello, Julie,

I haven't been able to find a location of Fredrick and Frances Whitescarver

(George's parents). The oral history of the family is that George's body was never recovered. He may have been moved, but it's possible he may be on the property still. I genuinely have no idea. My existing family is very small. It's just myself and my Aunt Billie serving as family historians. We both greatly appreciate all the help we've received and the genuine interest y'all have in trying to figure out a very old and almost forgotten family mystery. Thank you again, Eli."

Having HMD is so vital to our community both in its building preservation as well as helping as a broad resource for our history and culture. Did you know that there is a very special way you, or a girl/boy scout, seniors, or high school students can be a part of HMD and help this dynamic resource prosper? As we begin a new tourist season with spring right around the corner, HMD wants to open the John Poole House at least one day every weekend. Having personnel on hand to host an open house at the Poole home and our bank museum is a great way to give back to this community you so love. HMD wants to start by being open from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., either on Saturday or Sunday. If you would like to help and be part of this great gift to the town, please drop me an email with your contact information. We would like to have at least a team of sixteen people, so no one has to volunteer more than once per month. Please email me at rdavis@monocacymonocle.com or call 301-509-9232.

## Fun Fact...

[mdot.maryland.gov](http://mdot.maryland.gov)

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Continued from page 1.

**Falcon Swimmers Make It an Even Dozen State Titles; Girls Finish Second**

sophomore Christine Wang, finished just three seconds behind first-place Damascus. The girls defeated Damascus in a dual meet on December 7 to open the season, 87-82.

At about 4:00 p.m., the boys' 200 Yard Medley Relay team, sophomore Christian Lavarone-Garza, senior Ethan Qian, sophomore Isaac Soles, and junior Eli Ferrara, opened the meet, claiming first place.

The boys' team of junior Ethan Lee, sophomore Anson Ye, senior Jaden Hou, and Ferrara claimed first in the 200 Yard Freestyle Relay. Qian won the only individual first place finish for the Falcons, winning the 100 Yard Breaststroke. He placed second in the 200 Yard IM. Lee was third. Ferrara was second in 100 Yard Freestyle. Hou was fourth. Junior Justin Jarczyński was second in the 500 Yard Freestyle. Soles was third. In the 100 Yard Backstroke, junior James Lawrence was second. Lavarone-Garza was seventh. Ferrara was third in the 50 Yard Freestyle. Hou was fourth. In the 100 Yard Butterfly, Lee was third, and Soles was fourth. In the 200 Yard Freestyle, Jarczyński placed fourth and Lawrence fifth.

"I am extremely proud of the boys," said the team's coach, Jonathan Leong. "We set a new team record in the 200 Free Relay. I challenged the boys to be in the top five in every race; all but one finish was in the top five. This capped the boys' perfect season which they had not done since the 2018-2019 season."

The girls' 200 Yard Freestyle Relay team, Huang, Wang, Congdon, and sophomore Veronica Mitin, placed first. The highest individual finish was a second place by She in the 100 Yard Butterfly. Huang finished third in both the 100 Yard Freestyle and the 100 Yard Backstroke. Freshman Maddie Wilson finished fourth in the girls 500 Yard Freestyle. The girls' 200 Yard Medley Relay team, junior Anabel Sha, senior Amelia Goettsch, She, and Mitin, finished fifth. She was fifth in the 100 Yard Backstroke. Mitin was fifth in the 50 Yard Freestyle.

"The girls knew they were going to have a tough time making up the points that Damascus jumped out to, but we slowly chipped away, and with the last four events, the 200 Free Relay, finishing first, moving up in seed in backstroke and breaststroke, we knew we were two points behind going into the end relay and the winner was going to take the championship. That was one of the most courageous swims I've seen by the girls. We knew the math didn't add up in our favor, but they left it all in the pool—and had some of the fastest swims of their lives. I give a lot of credit to the Damascus girls and Coach Kevin Beabout, they put together a great lineup and did what they needed to do. Many of the Poolesville and Damascus girls train together, so it was a friendly time, and although our pride hurt a little bit, we were happy for our friends who hoisted their trophy. Next year, we'll just have to grow out our fingernails a little longer to make up for that .6 of a second."

In the boys' diving competition held on February 21, senior Gabriel Hermann finished seventh.

Continued from page 3.

**Solar Project Opposed in Maryland Agricultural Reserve**

A bill was introduced in the Maryland Senate on January 28 requiring local governments to expedite review and approval of site development plans for solar panels and battery storage.

A hearing is scheduled February 28 on Senate Bill 931, introduced by Brian Feldman of District 15, a wide-ranging area that includes much of Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve.

The bill also defines agrivoltaics as a broad range of activities, including growing grains, table crops, row crops, poultry, livestock, dairy, horse boarding, turf farming, ornamental plants, aquaculture, silviculture, and any other activity recognized by the state department of agriculture.

Taylor said the MCA is against the bill. The county council voted on February 10 by eight to zero with two abstentions to work to oppose the bill in the state legislature.

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Continued from page 17.

**Greener on the Other Side?**

As opposed to the standard American lawn, landowners only need to mow their lawns a couple of times a year, a number that fluctuates slightly with the desired look of the land.

Aside from the planting period, clovers only need to be watered once or twice a week in rainless periods. In terms of fertilizer or chemicals, clover doesn't require either—they actually produce their own nitrogen fertilizer! They also prevent soil erosion and improve drainage; furthermore, they outcompete broad-leaf weeds, reducing the need for weeding chemicals. Basically, clover lawns aid local ecosystems, creating lush, habitable land for animals and insects while being highly affordable, maintenance-free, and environmentally friendly.

It is commonly—but incorrectly—believed that diverse lawns that use native plants decrease property value. In fact, some of Maryland's highest-selling houses are those with unique and environmentally-friendly landscaping; however, there are some negative aspects to the alternatives too. Clovers attract pollinators due to their small flowers, an issue that may cause problems for individuals with allergies or sensitivity to bees. An increase in mowing frequency can limit the growth of these flowers. Another alternative is planting microclover, *Trifolium repens L*, a clover species that produces fewer flowers but comes with its own expenses and issues. Although clovers are considered perennials, their life span is relatively short, leading to a reseeding requirement every two to three years. The most problematic issue is foot traffic: clovers are not well suited for areas with heavy foot traffic, posing a problem for some public spaces. To increase turf strength and mitigate the problem, both clover and grass can be mixed into a blend, utilizing clover's self-fertilizing ability and reducing the need for fertilizer in the entire lawn.

With this information in hand, you can decide, is the grass really greener on the other side?

*Jasheen Kaur and Shivom Pandey are students at Clarksburg High School and the founders of the environmental organization, LawnsMD.*

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## Remembrance

### Clark Wesley Boyer, Jr.

Clark Wesley Boyer, Jr., 79, of Darnestown, passed away Sunday, February 2, 2025 after a long and courageous battle with prostate cancer. Clark, affectionately known as Sonny, was the son of Clark Wesley Boyer, Sr. and Virginia Roberts Boyer who both predeceased him.



Clark Wesley Boyer, Jr.

Sonny grew up on his father's dairy farm in Darnestown, graduated from Gaithersburg High School in 1963, and attended West Virginia University. He worked briefly for his uncle, William Ward, as an electrician's helper, and the remainder of his long career was spent with the C&P Telephone Company and the Bell affiliates.

Sonny particularly loved riding his motorcycle and had treasured memories of his cross-country trip with his son James. He was a private pilot and kept a single engine airplane on his father's farm for a number of years. He also enjoyed hunting and fishing. Sonny loved people and was friends with everyone he met. He was a fantastic storyteller and loved conversing with his friends.

Sonny is survived by his wife of fifty-three years, Diane (Bodmer) Boyer; son, James Wesley Boyer of Colorado; daughter, Mary Elizabeth Boyer (Brian O'Boyle) of Gaithersburg; and sister, Dawn Boyer Porter (Ted) of Davidsonville. He has many sisters and brothers-in-law, wonderful nieces and nephews, beloved cousins, and innumerable close friends. He will be greatly missed. Sonny was so very proud of his children.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Montgomery County Humane Society [www.mchumane.org](http://www.mchumane.org) where Sonny adopted some of his best friends.

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# Remembrance

## Darryl Mathew Kuka

Former Poolesville Commissioner Darryl Mathew Kuka passed away Monday, October 14, 2024 in Laguna Hills, California at the age of 80 after a brief illness. He was born on January 11, 1944 in Minneapolis, Minnesota and is predeceased by his parents, Mathew (Tom) and Viola Kuka. He is survived by his daughters, Mel Lane of Florida and Dr. Tracy Vera of Illinois; his son, Thomas of Delaware; seven grandchildren; and two great-granddaughters.

Darryl graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College in 1966. He had a long career in contracts and purchasing before retiring in 2011. He was involved in local politics, serving as Planning Commissioner and Commissioner of the Town of Poolesville, during the 1990s.

Darryl had a keen interest in hunting and target shooting. He was also a bourbon aficionado, collecting many varieties. He loved grilling and cooking on his smoker. His pulled pork was second to none.

He believed in giving back to the community and served as a volunteer at an outdoor shooting range and in both the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office and the Shallotte Police Department after retiring to Shallotte, North Carolina in 2013.

Darryl will be cremated and buried in Carver, Minnesota next to his wife.



Darryl Mathew Kuka

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## Remembrances

### Carol Estabrook Dorrrough

Carol Estabrook Dorrrough was a force of nature—not warm and fuzzy—but she was your very best friend when you needed one—and most of us needed one. Carol passed away on Saturday, February 1, 2025 in Murrells Inlet, South Carolina after a valiant battle with cancer.

Born at George Washington Hospital in Washington, D.C., Carol grew up in Bethesda, attended Walt Whitman High School, and obtained a master's degree in financial management from Hood College. Carol's first job was with Marriott Corporation headquarters where she worked for eighteen years. She commented on how, every year, J.W. Marriott, Jr. would shake hands with everyone at headquarters, always remembering each person's first name. Carol worked for ICMA Retirement Corporation, followed by a short stint at her brother's company, Enterprise Woodcraft & Design. Later she was a director at the Fertilizer Institute of Washington, D.C.

One of Carol's modes of relaxation and physical therapy, which might have been prompted by a challenge from her ex-husband, was the weekly mowing of the three acres of grass surrounding her home in Adamstown. She spoke of it often and would fondly comment on her John Deere tractor. Carol frequented Firestone's Culinary Tavern in Frederick over many years. This was where you could meet the spectrum of humanity, ranging from a rocket scientist to a home builder to people on both sides of the political landscape. Carol was outspoken, would engage anyone in conversation, and preferred her Woodford neat.

Carol met Bob Dorrrough at a neighbor's backyard party, and they fell madly in love. For many years they travelled, shared Bob's passion for automobiles, and built a home in Murrells Inlet, South Carolina. Bob was a hands-on hot rod enthusiast, and they would visit numerous car shows across the country—he loved sharing his 1934 Chevy stories with everyone. Bob passed away in 2012 from a long battle with mesothelioma.

Carol is survived by her sister, Laurie Estabrook Buell (Michael), and brother, Randy Estabrook (Marie Bundy); son, Michael Clements, and stepdaughters, Chontelle Hockenbery (Bryan) and Chrissie Harney (Paul); grandchildren, Nicqolas and Jacob Clements (Allie), Gavin and Kylee Hockenbery (Hunter), Loran and Greg Lillard, Megan and Morgan Harney, and Tina Kelly (Blake); great-grandchildren, Archie Clements, Adayln Lillard, Charlotte Kelly, and Penelope Kelly; numerous nieces and nephews; and many, many friends. Carol was preceded in death by her parents and her sister, Tracy Johnson (Jimmy).



Carol Estabrook Dorrrough

### Christopher Michael Lepine

Christopher Michael Lepine died on the evening of January 26, near Gregory, San Patricio County, Texas.

Born February 9, 1988 in Olney, Chris most recently worked as the Lead Multi-Craft Technician at the Feralloy Corporation steel processing center in Sinton, Texas. He was known for his hard work, intuitive self-learning abilities to perform repairs on equipment, and teaching others. When recently informed that Chris was colorblind, his boss was heard to exclaim, "Well, that explains a lot of things!" A new role had just been created for Chris for which he would travel to other company facilities to fix equipment and train others to do the same. He never quite understood how truly smart he really was.

Chris moved to—and found his element in—Corpus Christi. He loved the shipyard, the oil rigs, the huge equipment and machinery, the factories, the grime, the unpleasant smells, and getting his hands greasy. When not at work breaking all-time-company-high overtime records, Chris spent as much time as he could with those who meant more to him than all others, Wylie and Maggie. For Chris, there was no greater love than the love he had for his children. The picture that accompanies this obituary is a cropped photo. We don't believe a photograph of Chris exists from the last few years that doesn't include one of the two children sitting on his lap. We went through dozens—couldn't find one. Ice cream, pizza, days together at the white sandy beaches, it was always about his children for him.

Chris grew up on a small farm in Barnesville. He loved helping "Grandfather" care for the steers, repair fences, and complete other small projects around the farm. Chris was always good with his hands and tools and was born to repair stuff (okay, sometimes he just took stuff apart).

In elementary and middle schools, Chris loved to play football. He was injured in almost every game he played. "Tape it up, Coach, and send me back in." Chris never missed a quarter of play.

In his formative years, we are proud to report, Chris didn't cause too much trouble in high school, but that's mostly because he wasn't there. He did, however, become the first graduate of the Lewis Orchards work-study program, earning him his first A and a graduation diploma from Poolesville High School. The school stopped calling his father and just started calling the orchard to find him.

When not eating fried chicken from Dickerson Market, Chris was seen around town being the fun-loving elusive type he really enjoyed being (Chris 3, DNR 0). He was never one to miss a field party (usually his idea) or bring a lighter to start the bonfire. Quite the outdoorsman, Chris could often be found fishing, boating, or engaging in his favorite activity, year-round deer hunting. Constructing the tiki bar by the pond was one of his favorite accomplishments.

Chris bought his first home and moved to Bayside, Texas in the fall of 2023. He was really proud of his last project, a complete security camera system covering every square inch both inside and outside the home. Did we mention that he never bothered to lock his doors?

Survivors include his son, Wylie, and daughter, Magnolia, both of Portland, Texas, and their siblings, Stone, Remmington, and Jace; parents, Paul Lepine (Beth) of Barnesville and Lisa Larr (Lester) of Deltona, Florida; sister, Jennifer Lepine Quick (Jason) also of Deltona; step-brother Anthony Hough, of Baltimore; grandparents, Juanita Lepine of Barnesville and Jan Alexander of Cincinnati, Ohio; aunts, Cathy Lepine of Middletown and Kim Wiethorn, Florence, Kentucky; and cousins, Andrew and Ellie, Christie and Daniel, Emily, Joanna, and Gabe.

Chris was preceded in death by his grandfather, Jack Lepine, Sr.; and uncles, Jack Lepine, Jr. and Mark Lepine (Tracy).



Christopher Michael Lepine

Continued from page 8.

#### Tidbits

##### Poolesville Post Office on Limited Service Due to Car Accident

The Poolesville Post Office has been on limited service due to an automobile jumping the curb and ramming the front door entrance area on January 27. The driver maintains the automobile had mechanical failure.

Persons with a post box are required to stay in their car at the rear of the building for mail pickup, call 301-605-0544, and a postal employee will bring their mail to them. For stamps and mailing, it is recommended to go to the Boyds Post Office should they need a digital receipt; otherwise, they can go to Dickerson or Barnesville.



Due to a car jumping the curb and crashing into the front entrance on January 27, the post office in Poolesville is on restricted services.

Postmaster Loretta McCabe cannot provide an estimated time frame for the repair and the opening of full services again. The process requires bids to go out and a selection made before a contractor can begin work.



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### To Brush or Not to Brush, That's the Question

Peter H. Eeg, DVM

More and more data show how effective daily tooth brushing is for both people and their pets.

People use human toothpastes that have a variety of tastes, flavors, and additives. Dogs and cats should use toothpaste specifically designed for them. Their toothpaste has one or several enzymes that inhibit bacterial formation of the type of bacteria that promotes tartar build up. Most dogs and cats have some level of tartar that is negatively impacting their gums and the gum/tooth junction by two years.

How do I get my furry friends to let me brush, you ask? That is the million-dollar question. It is always best to begin as a puppy or kitten and combine with treats to make the experience rewarding and attractive to your four-legged pals. Keep it short and do not brush a lot. One or two swipes with the toothbrush is all you need to disperse the enzymatic toothpaste over the surface of the teeth. This gives the toothpaste a chance to mix with their saliva and coat the teeth uniformly.

Daily brushing of your cats' and dogs' teeth going forward from a young age can reduce tartar buildup by over 56% and can reduce the chances of gum/root disease and the need for anesthetized dentals.

Be sure to schedule annual examinations so your veterinarian can check your four-footed pals' teeth along with a general checkup. Catching dental disease early can significantly improve the chances for your pets to keep their pretty teeth for the duration of their lives.

For pets that do not like or will not tolerate a toothbrush in the mouth, a one-inch section of the enzymatic toothpaste on their upper lip for them to lick can help to reduce tartar buildup. There are also several mouthwashes that can be added to their drinking water daily to help reduce the tartar-building bacteria that is in their mouths.

Please discuss your furry pals' dental needs with your veterinarian next time they are in for a checkup. If you have concerns about their oral health, make a separate appointment to specifically check the teeth.

You can also visit [VOHC.com](http://VOHC.com) to learn more about pet dental care and review approved products.



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