



Once Upon a Bee Garden

Jude Lombardi, Bee Steward

As a member of the MWPT board, I was invited to write an article for the winter Newsletter. So here I sit, staring at the sea in Livorno, Italy, writing about the Mt. Washington Arboretum and my favorite spot there. The Mt Washington Arboretum Apiary, where the honeybees and their hives live with various other creatures throughout the year.

Since I started to care for the honeybees at the Arboretum in 2014, bees have become a passion of mine. This includes my desire to educate myself and others about various pollinators and their needs. As I see it, we humans and pollinators are interdependent for our survival on planet Earth.

These days, I find myself saturated with thoughts about how often we mow or not mow our lawns. Whether or not to

rake, mow, or leave the leaves in the winter? How do we create meadows so that there is less lawn to mow? What plants, flowers, or trees to plant so that they bloom and generate nectar in sequence throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons in order for all the pollinators to flourish?

Speaking of seasons, here we are in the winter months when the honeybees slow down and “cluster” in their hives. The average life of a honeybee in the summer is 4 – 6 weeks. In the winter, a honeybee can live up to 3-4 months. It is truly their downtime. Nature is amazing.

The honeybee rarely comes out of the hive if the temperature is below 55

See Bee, page 11



Bee Keeping at the Arboretum.

HOWLdy Neighbors!

HOWL PET SUPPLY, a popular, locally owned business, opened a new location next to Whole Foods in the spot formerly occupied by Loyal Companion. The original location in Hampden recently celebrated its 20th anniversary and has been the go-to spot for many pet owners in Mt. Washington. Now, it's right around the corner!

Howl's mission is simple. They offer high-quality, natural, ethically sourced, and manufactured foods and products for dogs, cats, and small animals. Owner Robin McDonald said, “Everything we carry we would happily give our own pets, and each employee here brings a wealth of

knowledge and experience to help better serve our customers because your pet is our passion!

The HOWL staff's personal attention and expertise are not often found in chain stores. For instance, in today's world, consumers worldwide increasingly prioritize health and wellness in their dietary choices. That credo also pertains to our beloved pets. McDonald offers her take on some of the best dog food choices. “The raw-food Zignature brand is good for dogs with allergies (no chicken), and the brands Stella & Chewy, Open Farm, and A-Pup-Above are considered human-grade, gently cooked food that you'll find in the freezer

section. And did you ever wonder why all-of-a-sudden your pup may stop eating or have a reaction to their everyday food? It could be that the ingredients in some dog foods can change (without notice).”

HOWL offers supplies for dogs, cats, small animals, and pet birds, including food, toys, treats, health and wellness products, and professional grooming services. Beds, crates, toys, collars, leads, harnesses, and apparel-HOWL has it all.

HOWL also has numerous products to help your pets live a full and healthy life. If your pet is anxious, HOWL carries several natural, gentle, non-medicated supplements to help your pet with

See HOWLdy, page 11

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CONTACT THE MWIA NEWSLETTER

The newsletter of the Mount Washington Improvement Association is distributed four times a year to all residents of Mount Washington. It includes information on the news, people, activities, and businesses of the neighborhood, as well as the actions of the Association's Board of Directors. Contact the newsletter at newsletter@mwia.org with story ideas, calendar listings, volunteer opportunities, and other inquiries. Advertising in the newsletter generates revenue to support the MWIA and the community. Interested advertisers should contact advertising@mwia.org for information on rates and publications. Advertising specifications are available online at www.mwia.org/mwia-newsletter.

Editor, President@MWIA.org

Area Captains are liaisons between the seven community areas and the MWIA. Contact your area captain to raise and discuss issues you would like to see addressed by the MWIA or obtain information about the neighborhood and other assistance. You can find a map of the seven areas at www.mwia.org/area-map.

GET TO KNOW THE PARK SCHOOL

PRE-K — GRADE 12 PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

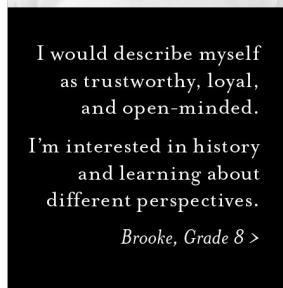


The Park School of Baltimore is a Pre-K through Grade 12 community with the mission of supporting young people in becoming confident questioners and responsible citizens of the world. www.parkschool.net



I love work time and choosing what to work on — like drawing in my journal and writing.

< Harrison, Kindergarten



I would describe myself as trustworthy, loyal, and open-minded. I'm interested in history and learning about different perspectives.

Brooke, Grade 8 >



I am an engineer. The process of designing and building is so exciting. Along with it comes real understanding and real solutions.

< Pablo, Grade 11

Local Filmmaker's Passion for Sports Sparks Documentary Fever

By SUE MAY

This summer, Mt. Washington resident and documentary filmmaker Jill Yesko made her film debut on Peacock with her latest sports feature, focused on telling the little-known story of the first women-only Tour De France bicycle race in the 1980s. A project five years in the making, Uphill Climb: The Women Who Conquered the Impossible Race, brings together two of Yesko's passions: athletics and storytelling.

Jill Yesko's love of sports began in high school, where she raced on her school's first women's track and field team. She later raced on Rutgers varsity women's track squad and played soccer. "I was a Title IX baby," says Yesko of the 1972 landmark statute that prohibits sex-based discrimination in any school or any other education program that receives funding from the federal government. "It gave me and my peers the opportunity to participate in sports—it's also the reason I became a filmmaker—to tell women's sports stories."

As a bicycle racer in the 1980s, Yesko represented the U.S. at the World University Games and competed in the Olympic Trials. After a career in journalism, including a stint as a contributing editor at Women's Sports & Fitness magazine, the first magazine dedicated to women in sports, she had what she joked was a "late onset of filmmaking."

"I was in my 50s when I was introduced to filmmaking," says Yesko, whose first documentary "Tainted Blood: The Untold Story of the 1984 Olympic Blood Doping Scandal" streams on Amazon. "It was such an exciting way of storytelling. I was immediately hooked." Tainted Blood is a story close to Yesko's heart. She was living and racing bicycles in Los Angeles during the 1984 Olympics when it was revealed that eight members of the US Olympic cycling team blood doped. "This was way before the Lance Armstrong doping story," says Yesko. "The '84 doping scandal was one of the most important but under-reported

stories in sports. I knew some of these riders, so it was deeply personal. I wanted to understand why they doped and to humanize rather than demonize them."

Yesko's next project tackled another controversial subject. "I made Broken Trust: Athlete Abuse Exposed [available on Kanopy] to show the impact of sexual abuse on athletes, both female and male, in a variety of sports, and how they overcame abuse to become advocates for change." The film has an educational guide for schools and sports teams and has been adopted in college sports curricula.

Yesko completed her most ambitious documentary this summer: "Uphill Climb: The Women Who Conquered the Impossible Race." Now streaming on NBC Peacock, the documentary is the uplifting story of the women who rode the Tour de France Féminin in the 1980s.



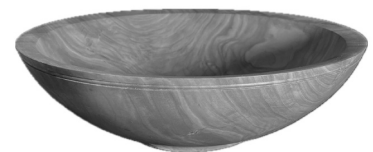
The Filmmaker With Her Subject.

"These women rode the same heart-stopping stages as the men, but their amazing history has largely been forgotten," says Yesko, who filmed the documentary in France, the UK, Holland, and the US over a period of 5 years. "This film was my love story to all of the women I raced with in the 1980s. It also helped me re-ignite my passion for cycling."

For now, Yesko doesn't have any plans for more films. "I'm resting on my laurels," she jokes. "But there are still so many great sports stories out there needing to be told."

Are you searching for a Mt. Washington grown, Earth-friendly, long-lasting, functional and food-safe gift for someone special?

Consider a bowl or platter handcrafted from a neighborhood tree. I currently have a large selection ranging in price from \$25-\$150.



Call, text or email to schedule a visit to my Mt. Washington workshop.

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CURB APPEAL By JOAN GOLDMAN — joan@cummingsrealtors.com



Does Anyone Really Care About Lead Paint?

When you go to sell a house, the listing agent will give you many pages of disclosures regarding lead paint. What does it mean, and why should I care?

Congress banned lead paint in 1971 for residential projects in construction by the government. Baltimore City banned lead paint for homes in 1950. Who knew we were so advanced? Lead has always been a problem that experts knew about, but it took the United States until 1978 to effectively ban lead from paint for all homes.

Since 1978, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has banned the manufacture of lead-based house paint due to its health concerns. The optimal word here was house.

However, lead paint is still widely available and is used in outdoor settings such as bridges, parking lots, road markings, water towers, boats, and, get this, playground equipment! Plus, many toys, especially in the 1970's and before.

Now, at a one-year-old well check-up, the pediatrician will do routine lead testing. My kids never had that.

I worked with a young couple who were looking for homes as they found out their 1-year-old had been lead poisoned from that doctor visit. They were renting, and they sued their landlord, as any rental in Baltimore must be registered with the city as well as have a clean lead test.

Should you test and find lead, there are two simple things to remedy it. One is new windows and front/back door, as opening and closing in a home with lead will cause the dust that makes the lead airborne. The other is encapsulation, which means to cover up, so if you repaint, you are, in essence, covering all the lead paint. It can be difficult to find a home in Baltimore built after 1978, so my buyers ultimately purchased a home with new windows, a new front and back door, and a recent painting of the entire home.

You can hire a visual lead inspector (\$75 to come out) to take samples of your home (\$10 per room) to see if you have lead. In a room with newer windows, they will sample the window ledge and floor. A room with old windows will be sampled at the window ledge, and with the window open, a sample from the window well and the floor. If a room has no window, the sample will be the floor only. Results take around three business days to get back.

Some lead inspectors use an XRF (x-ray fluorescence analyzer) meter that allows them to determine right then and there

if lead is under even multiple layers of paint (~\$350). They can determine the amount of lead, and if the reading is over 0.7 mg/c², that is considered a positive presence. But if the top level of paint is in good shape, you should be ok. I tell folks just to expect some leaded paint under the layers on your walls, especially the trim in an older home.

One telltale sign you have lead is called "alligatoring." When it is old or damaged, the lead paint will look like alligator skin. Look at your window wells to check. Lead is a heavy metal so it falls, which is why young children are especially vulnerable as they tend to be on the floor a lot. The most damage occurs in the brains of infants to 2 year olds.

In adults with exposure to lead poisoning, symptoms can be high blood pressure, kidney and reproductive issues, and loss of intelligence from the brain being affected. Though not typically feeling "sick," other health issues are headaches, stomach cramps, constipation, joint pain, difficulty sleeping, fatigue, irritability, and a lessening of libido. Sheesh that about covers almost all of us at some point. My kids say whenever I have a senior moment and can't remember something, that is because I grew up with leaded gas. They are not wrong.

*Odd fact. Many spices contain lead. Why? Either the environment (soil) or manufacturing. Even many organically grown spices have lead. In fact, spices are the second leading cause of lead poisoning in children after paint. The FDA is aware but, so far, has not set any limits.

Why was lead even in paint? First of all, it resists moisture, which can make it more durable, and let's face it, who wants to keep repainting? Also, it accelerates drying so you can finish faster.

The bottom line is there is NO SAFE amount of lead in humans. So if your home is built after 1978, you won't have lead in your house paint. If it was built in 1978 or before, you MAY have lead paint in your home.

Remember that if you bring in antique items that have been painted, you may be introducing leaded paint in your home. A friend got beautiful antique doors from Second Chance, and you know the rest.

Joan Goldman is a Realtor with Cummings & Co. and can be reached at 443-255-4858.

Rev. Tamara England Wilson, DMin Joins MWPH as Director of Community Benefit



Reverend Tamara England Wilson

On October 2, Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital (MWPH) welcomed its new director of community benefit, Rev. Tamara England Wilson, DMin. Dr. Wilson is a pastor in Baltimore City who has served as a clergyperson for nearly 20 years. She also worked for 19 years as a speech-language pathologist in Baltimore City Public Schools before pursuing her doctorate of ministry. She is a mother of two and has two grandchildren.

For her entire career, Dr. Wilson has been a passionate advocate for the Black community. Her work has spanned various issues affecting Black Americans, from sickle cell disease and breast cancer health-care disparities to underrepresentation in clinical research and vaccine hesitancy. Throughout her work, she has sought to uplift and amplify Black voices and perspectives with the goal of promoting equity for all.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Wilson accepted a job in the University of Maryland Medical Center’s community engagement department, where she worked to ease food insecurity in Baltimore City as a result of the pandemic.

“For me, anything that reduces the negative impact of race, tears down barriers, and provides resources that help people become self-sufficient, I’m in,” Dr. Wilson said.

Working with children has always been her passion, and she is delighted to join MWPH with a role that will enable her to bring resources to the community’s children


to help reduce healthcare disparities. “When the opportunity was presented to me not just to do specific tasks but also to delve into the strategy and explore how to reduce the equity gap in broader terms, I jumped at the opportunity,” Dr. Wilson said.

During her first couple of months at MWPH, Dr. Wilson has been learning about the hospital’s history, mission, and vision, as well as its current community health priority areas and the activities the hospital has engaged in to date to address those priority areas.

Her short-term goals are to talk with staff about community benefit as it relates




to federal guidelines and to help the hospital continue to increase its presence in communities across Baltimore City. In the long term, “I’d like to see a steady flow of programs that, over time, we can walk away from, having made a significant and sustainable impact in the lives of the communities we serve,” she said.

As she has settled in, she has been impressed by the MWPH staff’s genuine love and care for children. “In a world where there are so many problems, this is such a positive environment in which to work,” she said. “I feel I’m part of something great.”



Baltimore Clayworks

Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 am -5:00 pm
Sunday 12:00 pm -5:00 pm

Make	Share	Learn	Shop
			
baltimoreclayworks.org			
Clayworks - Thriving Neighborhood Art Center			
By Mj Goetschius and Claire Carberry			



Energy We Can Control

By LIBBY BAKER
 Libby.baker1@gmail.com
 & FRANK LEE
 techedteacher@gmail.com

ENERGY WE CAN CONTROL

We live in “Western Culture”. For the past 150 years, we have become trained and addicted to cheap, copious energy. Millions of years of plants created the vast and potent fuel tank we all draw on every hour of every day of our lives so far. One’s morning alarm goes off, likely a funky tune on a cell phone plugged in to charge from a vast power network, leading ultimately back to that fossil fuel tank formed in the Carboniferous Period, approximately 286 – 360 million years ago. Did you know that this fuel was all created BEFORE the age of dinosaurs? It is time to REALLY begin waking up to that cell phone alarm.

Just the past few generations of humans have actively and unknowingly discarded carbon byproducts into the stratospheres, forming an organic blanket over every aspect of life on earth. We are seeing it now as both warmer temperature records and chaotically turbulent weather, flood and fire extremes. Expect no let-up without changed human actions.

PROJECT DRAWDOWN

As we have mentioned before, Project Drawdown gives 100 technical strategies that can together 1) stop or slow carbon loading and 2) draw down the carbon load now in the atmosphere. Each is a proven technology that only requires breakthroughs to scale-up and gain our adoption. Here are the 100 solutions with references to the details. <https://drawdown.org/solutions/table-of-solutions>.

Every Western breadwinner occupation touches these 100 technologies which opens opportunities for workplace action solutions. The 100 solutions offer great study material, Service Learning and Science Project content for students of any age.

SUSTAINABLE TWENTY

From the 100 solutions here are the home scale measures:
 20 HIGH-IMPACT CLIMATE ACTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS
<https://drawdown.org/news/insights/the-powerful-role-of-household-actions-in-solving-climate-change>

Food

- Reduced Food Waste
- Plant Rich diets

Energy and Buildings

- Distributed Solar Photovoltaics
- Insulation and Air Sealing
- LED Lighting and Controls
- High Performance Glass
- High-Efficiency Heat Pumps
- Smart Thermostats
- Low-Flo Fixtures
- Solar Hot water

Individual Behavior

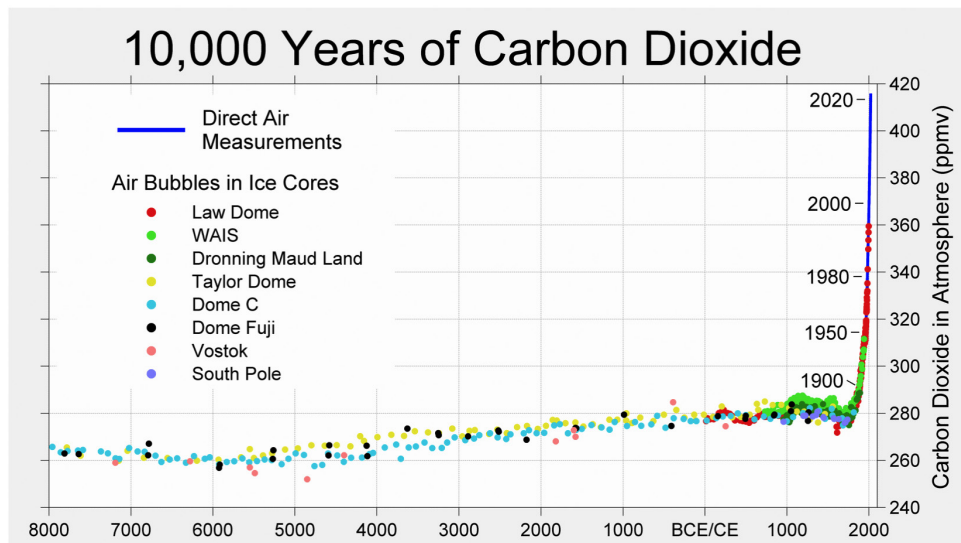
- Recycling
- Composting
- Recycled Paper
- Reduced Plastic
- Telepresence

Transportation and Energy

- Public Transportation
- Carpooling
- Electric Cars
- Electric Bicycles
- Hybrid Cars

YOUR TURN

We would love to hear from anyone in the Mount Washington community who is making a step towards Climate Carbon Drawdown: a school project; a workplace action; artwork or a song; or a career change. A comprehensive home energy improvement. Or even just a story about complete change-out to LED lights or an Electric Vehicle. Lawn to natural edible forest. Diet modifications. Induction stove top. Commuter biking. A personal epiphany. We hope to share and celebrate your successful actions here in Sustainable Living.



The Art of Food and Wine Matchmaking

By JAKE GROENKE

Pairing the right wine with a dish enhances all aspects of a meal. The food and the wine feed off each other and will change how your brain perceives what you're tasting.

Nailing a food and wine pairing is one of the most fun parts of our job. We get to help enhance someone's experience and make their night that much better. With a few simple rules to follow, you, too, can pair wine with your meals like a trained sommelier.

When thinking about pairings, first consider the main protein of your dish.

A white wine is likely a better option if it's a lighter protein—like scallops, sea bass, or tofu. You want a lighter and less intense wine not to overpower the food. A red may be a better choice if your main protein is more heavy—like steak, pork, or chicken.

Second, consider the preparation of the food.

If you're having a high-acid meal full of lemon or vinegar, you need a wine with acidity to match. Consider a Sauvignon Blanc, Chenin Blanc, Sangiovese, or Pinot Noir.

If the meal has tons of spice and is intensely flavorful—like Thai or Indian food—consider a lower-alcohol wine, maybe even one with a touch of sweetness. An off-dry Riesling or super juicy Gamay will keep your palate refreshed and ready for the next bite.

Last but not least, an essential consideration in the art of wine pairing is the influence of tannins.

Tannins are bitter, astringent compounds found in nature that dissuade animals from eating certain plants. They come from the skins, stems, and seeds of grapes. When a winemaker presses a grape to extract the juice, tannins are also released.

Luckily for food pairing, these compounds bind with proteins and make them rounder and richer. This is why high-tannin wines like Cabernet Sauvignon, Brunello, and Nebbiolo are such fantastic

pairings with steak. The meat's protein reduces the harshness of the tannins, resulting in a balanced and flavorful experience rather than leaving your mouth dry.

There are no hard-and-fast rules for food and wine pairing. It's always subjective, and I will always encourage people to drink what they enjoy.

My favorite guideline (and not just because of the sing-songy rhyme) is "If it grows together, then it goes together."

This approach is amazing because what it's really doing is allowing you to experience a particular culture. Their local dishes and drinks have been perfected (sometimes over centuries!) to become one.

Great examples of this are Italian Sangiovese and tomato sauce, Spanish Tempranillo and jamon Iberico, French Muscadet, and oysters, or Argentine Malbec and steak.

So, if you're stuck while attempting your next pairing, think of the origins of your dish. Odds are, there's a traditional beverage that is a phenomenal match. And when in doubt, remember: Champagne goes with everything!

Jake Groenke is the owner of the new Mt. Washington Wine + Spirits, located at 1340 Smith Avenue in Mt. Washington Mill. Our passion is demystifying the world of wine, making it approachable and enjoyable. Open seven days a week, join us for weekly tastings or a glass of wine at the tasting bar.

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Community Calendar

Tuesday, December 12 - 7:00 PM

Open MWIA Meeting

Mount Washington School Lower Building
Visit for registration information and agendas.
<https://www.mwia.org/mwia-meetings>

Tuesday, December 19 - 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

Baltimore Clayworks - Virtual Artist Talk with Victoria Walton

Artists are at the center of the mission of Baltimore Clayworks and provide the organization with talent and innovation to inspire our community and enliven the artistic impact of ceramics in our region. Meet the artists and learn about their work, inspiration, and creative processes. Talks are live. Free to the public.

Sunday, February 18 - 2 PM

REI Book Club

Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann. The book discussion date will be Sunday, Feb. 18 at 2:00 pm as an online Zoom event. Register at <https://bit.ly/REI-KOFM>

Tuesday, February 20 - 7:00 PM

Open MWIA Meeting

Mount Washington School Lower Building
Visit for registration information and agendas.
<https://www.mwia.org/mwia-meetings>

RECURRING EVENTS

Mount Washington Farmers Market

Every Sunday
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Northwest Park (2101 W. Rogers Ave., Baltimore, MD 21209)
For more information visit: <https://www.mwfarmersmarket.org/>

Friends of Northwest Park Clean-Up

Last Sunday of each Month
11:00 a.m.
Visit <https://www.fonwp.org/> for updates and information

Ivy and Vine Control

Every Tuesday
10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Contact mtwashtrees@gmail.com for more info.

Watch for announcements for regular community clean-ups, and please help keep our parks and trails clean by practicing leave-no-trace principles.



School Spotlight

Throughout many upcoming changes this season at The Mount Washington School, the PTO has been doing its best to raise much-needed funds through events like our annual Phone-A-Thon, which took place in mid-November. (Didn't get a call or text? Email mws.pto.president@gmail.com and ask to be added to our donor list!) It is always a good time to donate to our school at mountwashingtonschool.org/donate – our school PTO is a nonprofit organization, and your donations are tax-deductible.

We also want to provide more fun and free community events, and we continue to partner with our School Family Community Council to create these opportunities. PTO is hosting our inaugural MWS Holiday Market at the school, which will be the pickup location for our Winter Greens fundraiser and a showcase for local vendors to encourage us all to shop small this season. The Painting Workshop and Baltimore Clayworks will generously sponsor FREE holiday art activities. Students will receive free art kits from TPW that include a canvas, paints, and brush, and Clayworks will provide two of their talented artists to help students and neighbors make small winter-themed ornaments.

We are also excited to have our first free Movie Night with a PJ Party theme (BYO pillows and blankets!) It is a great opportunity for our families to gather and enjoy an easy pizza dinner. We will watch "Elemental" this semester, and our Green Committee students will educate us about the Winter Solstice.

As we look ahead to 2024, our first event will be reinstating the school talent show: The Mount Washington Tigers Got Talent! We're also excited to partner with our neighbor and MWS alumni, Hiatus Cheesecakes, for our Valentine's fundraiser that is sure to be decadent and delicious.

Thank you for supporting your neighborhood school this year and every year!

Cheers,
Kata Kane
PTO President 2023-2024



Mt. Washington
Pediatric Hospital—
Where Children Go to
Heal and Grow

*Serving Baltimore and beyond
for over a century.*



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410-578-8600 | mwph.org

School Calendar Events

DECEMBER 2:
Inaugural Holiday Market at MWS
10 am-2 pm

Join us at the school to pick up Winter Greens orders, shop small with local vendors, and support MWS. There will be FREE art activities for students, generously sponsored by The Painting Workshop and Baltimore Clayworks.

DECEMBER 6:
Chipotle Dine Out Fundraiser
Order or Dine-In with Chipotle in Quarry Lake and mention The Mount Washington School.

DECEMBER 6 AND 13:
Talent Show - Tryout Dates
Share your skills on the big stage! Come after school to try out for "The Mount Washington Tigers Got Talent!" Talent Show. Coming to you live from school in January.

DECEMBER 9
Middle & High School Choice Fair
10 am, Baltimore Convention Center
More info: baltimorecityschools.org/choice

DECEMBER 13
MWS PTO Board Meeting
6 pm, Zoom
More info: mountwashingtonschool.org/pto

DECEMBER 15:
Family Movie Night - Elemental at MWS
6 pm Doors, 6:30 pm Showtime
Come in your PJs to celebrate the Winter Solstice. This event is free for families, and there will be pizza, popcorn, and more!

DECEMBER 19
Abbey Burger Bistro Dine Out Fundraiser
Order or Dine-In with Abbey Burger (Village location only) and mention The Mount Washington School.

JANUARY 8:
Order Valentine Cheesecakes
Hiatus Cheesecakes, a local business created by our neighbor, entrepreneur, and alumni of MWS, will be taking orders for their delicious desserts. All funds raised support MWS! Pickup will be the weekend before Valentine's Day: perfect timing to treat yourself.

Magruder Khan Group Long & Foster Real Estate Inc.

LONG & FOSTER
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MT. WASHINGTON
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MT. WASHINGTON
5602 EVERHURST RD
\$507,000



MT. WASHINGTON
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MT. WASHINGTON
2007 SOUTH RD
\$794,000



MAGRUDER KHAN GROUP

410.377.2270

BILL MAGRUDER
410.456.2490
Bill.magruder@LNF.com

AZAM KHAN
410.375.7748
Azam@LNF.com

Chestnuts!

By MICHAEL KOBAN
mkoban@aol.com

Who has not heard the first line of “The Christmas Song,” where Nat King Coles unforgettably sings, “Chestnuts roasting by an open fire . . .”? If you’ve ever been to NYC or Chicago or Tokyo or European cities in the fall-winter months, it is difficult to resist the tantalizing aroma of roasted chestnuts, sold by vendors in small bags.



chemicals released by the blight. By its nature, this project is mired in legal and scientific controversy, and the engineered species will have the designation of GMO (Genetically Modified Organism).

My chestnut tree was already yielding an abundance of nuts when I first moved to my Mt. Washington address in 1988. I do not know the species or if it is a hybrid, but I do enjoy their yearly Fall offerings! Burs with mature chestnuts fall for at least two weeks; after that, many hundreds of fallen burs have underdeveloped nuts.

In a recent posting to the Mt. Washington Google Groups list-serve (October 2, 2023), I asked if neighbors would like some, and many responded. A few were



So, what can you do with a chestnut? The obvious choice is to eat them!

But then you need to know how to prepare chestnuts. What you do NOT want to do is to put them into the oven without scoring them with a sharp knife. If anyone tried to cook a whole raw egg by microwaving it, you know what kind of a mess that produces, and an exploded chestnut is no different. There are three approaches to cooking chestnuts. One is to boil them; another is to boil and then roast; and others prefer just to roast them. It is important to note, however, that when removing the cooked nut from its jacket, peel away the thin, dark membrane because it is bitter. The nuts should have a golden-yellow color to them, as shown below (photo credit: <https://drivemehungry.com/roasted-chestnuts/>)

Here is a good article on preparing them:

<https://www.drdauidludwig.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/The-Secret-To-Roasted-Chestnuts.pdf>

Chestnuts can be enjoyed cooked and



But what is a chestnut? It is the edible nut of the beech family of trees (Fagaceae) with a mild sweet potato-like taste and characterized by sea urchin-like spines on an outer bur (see photo below and note the thick gloves). The nut is nutritionally dense with antioxidants and is unique in having a high vitamin C content. The American chestnut tree (*Castanea dentata*) was a major part of East Coast forests until it almost went extinct due to the Asian chestnut blight, an invasive species. Most chestnut trees in the US are of Chinese origin or Chinese/American hybrids. Interestingly, the reintroduction of the American chestnut tree to the landscape is taking on a modern science approach, and that is to genetically modify the species by inserting a gene from wheat that breaks down one of the chestnut tree-killing

concerned that my chestnuts might actually be poisonous horse chestnuts. They are not. Horse and American/Chinese chestnuts have different burs (photo credit: Michigan State University Extension). On the left is an edible sweet chestnut. The bur has an extremely spiny covering and is characteristically 4-celled when opened. The bur on the right is the horse chestnut. It has far fewer spikes. Both nuts, however, look alike (not shown).

“as is,” but they are also quite versatile. A simple search for “chestnut recipes” returns hundreds of delightful dishes, including a part of turkey dressing. Personally, I favor chestnut soups with assorted mushrooms because they add background sweetness and thicken the broth after they are homogenized in a food processor or blender.



“Bee,” continued from page 1

degrees. We put quilt boxes this time of year on the hives for the winter so the worker bees don't have to work so hard to keep themselves and their mother-queen at just the right temperature.

Yet, they don't hibernate, so they still eat. This is why they store honey for the winter months- to survive. However, as our climate changes and includes really warm winter days, the bees often have difficulty determining whether or not it is spring and look for nectar where there is none. This can be problematic.

There is so much to tell you about the bees. People seem to love talking to me about the bees. Neighbors refer others to me on the listserv when there are

questions about bees in or around their houses or when they spot a swarm in their yard and want to help save it. I like that. So I wonder if neighbors, readers of the newsletter, might want a periodic short column where I attempt to answer questions about the bees and other pollinators and what they need from us.

Have you any questions about bees? If so, contact me at: jlombardi@jombardi.net.



“HOWLdy,” continued from page 1

excessive worry and anxiety. Whether your cat or dog needs an extra boost to get through a new situation, you're headed to the vet or groomer, troubleshooting long-term behavioral issues, taking a long trip, or introducing pets to the family, or loud noises on the fourth of July or New Year's, HOWL has you covered.

If you want to celebrate your pet's birthday or Bark Mitzvah, the experts at HOWL will put together a package including specialty yogurt pup cups, a glitter party crown, and swag bags!

HOWL is extremely community-oriented, including donating to fundraisers for the Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital and earmarking a portion of its proceeds to the BARCS Franky Fund. Named after Franky, a special puppy who was the first care recipient through this fund, the Franky Fund provides outside emergency and specialized medical care to homeless animals in need. Animals requiring critical assessment and immediate lifesaving treatment are sent to partnering veterinary hospitals to evaluate and treat them at a lower cost to BARCS.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I admit I am more than a little obsessed with the weather. I sometimes think I may have missed a calling. I follow a ton of different meteorologists and weather-focused groups on social media, and I look at all the maps and more detailed weather reports provided by the National Weather Service and NOAA. And so, the question on everyone's mind heading into this holiday and winter season is, will it snow more than last year? I believe the answer to that question is yes - simply because how could it snow less? And how much? Synthesizing all my reading, here is my amateur prognostication: The influence of El Niño means a wet winter, but with warmer temperatures overall, this probably means quite a few near misses - with just a few degrees keeping rain from turning into snow and from snow sticking on the ground.

But I'm hopeful that we will have at least one solid snowstorm that will keep us home to enjoy how beautiful Mount Washington is when covered in that heavy white blanket. A sound-absorbing frost that creates a special stillness perfectly observed with a steaming cup of hot chocolate. Hopefully, there is enough snow for some angels, snowpeople, snow forts, and snowball fights that are part of a complete childhood (I'm not sure how people actually grow up in Florida).

A couple of important MWIA notes for the neighborhood. First, membership renewal reminders will come in the mail in early 2024. Your membership dues support our community events grants to key community partners such as the Mount Washington School, Mount Washington Preservation Trust, and our fabulous Farmer's Market. With

your membership, you receive an amazing value card - allowing you to save while supporting our local merchants.

Second, we will have some great winter events ahead. Stay warm and cozy while joining us virtually for the Race Equity and Inclusion book discussion- Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann. Read the book or watch the movie and join the conversation via Zoom on Sunday, Feb. 18, at 2:00 pm. Also, we hope to bring back the very popular MWIA Progressive Dinner - so watch for the announcements to register as a host or a participant. Attend one of our upcoming open meetings on Tuesday, January 9 (by Zoom) and Tuesday, February 20, in person at the Mount Washington School Lower Building. For more information, email president@mwia.org or visit www.mwia.org.

Lastly, we will recruit new board members in the Spring of 2024. If you would like to learn more about serving on the MWIA board, I will happily spring for coffee - just email me, and we'll find time to sit down.

And remember this Japanese Proverb - One kind word can warm three winter months.

Here's to a REAL winter!

Ellie Mitchell
President, MWIA
president@mwia.org