The Justices from Maryland
by Jim O’Hara

How many Supreme Court Justices have been from the state of Maryland? Well, that depends on what you mean by “from.”

If by “from” you mean the number of Justices born in Maryland, there have been six. If by “from” you mean the number of Justices appointed from Maryland, the answer is five. If you mean the number buried here, the answer is again, six.

Let’s clarify. It is not rare for someone to be born in one place, and then to spend college days somewhere else, and then to work in several other places as an adult. That kind of moving from place to place has also been common for Supreme Court Justices—even the ones from the 19th or early 20th century.

The Supreme Court has a way of calculating where a Justice is “from.” They mean the place noted by the President when the nomination is sent to the Senate. As an example, Justice William Douglas was born in Minnesota. While he was very young, his family moved to Yakima, Washington. But when President Franklin Roosevelt named him to the Supreme Court, he was on the faculty at Yale. Hence, he was appointed from Connecticut.

Applying the appointment norm, Maryland has had five Justices. Four were appointed before the Civil War, and the fifth is now on the Court. President George Washington appointed Thomas Johnson and Samuel Chase. Johnson was a former Governor, and Chase was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. James Madison appointed Gabriel Duval, a longtime Maryland Judge and later a high officer of the Treasury Department. President Andrew Jackson named Roger B. Taney, who had been both Attorney General...
and Secretary of the Treasury. All four of these men were born in Maryland, lived their adult lives here, and are buried here.

The present Chief Justice, John Roberts, is also from Maryland. Although born in Indiana, and raised in New York, Roberts came to Maryland after graduation from Harvard. He has lived most of his adult life in Montgomery County. Of the four deceased Maryland Justices, one is buried in Baltimore City, two are interred in Frederick, and one in Prince George’s County.

Two other Justices were born in Maryland. David Davis was born in Cecil County and raised in Annapolis. He moved to Illinois as a young man and became a close friend of Abraham Lincoln, who later appointed him to the Supreme Court. Of course, the most famous of the Justices born in Maryland was Thurgood Marshall. But Marshall lived most of his adult life in New York, and it was from New York that he was appointed. Maryland remembers this famous native son with a beautiful monument on the grounds of the State House in Annapolis. Baltimore's major airport also bears his name.

Many Supreme Court Justices have lived in Maryland during their tenure on the Court. And two of them are buried in Maryland. Justice John A. Campbell of Alabama is in Greenmount Cemetery in Baltimore. Justice George Sutherland of Utah is buried in Suitland. Since the Confederation in 1787, and the election of George Washington in 1788, there have been 112 Supreme Court Justices. Although Maryland is one of the original 13 states, it is small in land area, and of moderate size in population. Nineteen states—including two of the original 13—have never had a Justice. Maryland with five, including two of the seventeen Chief Justices, has done very well.

Why I’m Not a Writer
by Leight Johnson

Tennessee Williams was an alcoholic who suffered from depression. He had paralysis as a young child. His father, rarely home, resented his son’s homosexuality and called him “Miss Nancy.” His early success as a playwright (*A Streetcar Named Desire*) led to later fears of being unable to repeat it. He died an accidental death by choking on a bottle cap.

Anais Nin, famous for her diaries, once said that her best lover (of whom she had many) was her own father, who had deserted his family when she was young. She was once married to two men at the same time. She is known, as well, for her lovers, who included Henry Miller, Edmund Wilson, Gore Vidal, and Otto Rank.

John Cheever, at the height of his success, began a 20-year struggle with alcoholism. This was a problem he did not fully admit to until his family placed him in a rehabilitation center in 1975.


I could go on all day, but you get the idea. It seems that many successful writers have suffered extreme tragedy in their lives, and were able to utilize those experiences in their writing. I, alas, have no such colorful background on which to draw.

I was the only child of happily married parents, with no brothers with whom to conduct a sibling rivalry. We were not well-to-do, but certainly not poor. My father was 18 years my mother’s senior, but he didn’t abandon his family, was not an alcoholic, a gambler, or a womanizer (in a small town like Milford I would have known.)

I never flunked out of school, got arrested, fathered a child out of wedlock, or suffered depression. I never made the paper for embezzlement or mail fraud. I’m comfortably heterosexual and unlikely to change.

How can I write a Book-of-the-Month Club novel with a background like that?
The gift of receiving.

I thank you!

This is the way I ended my Grand Rounds talk, at Johns Hopkins Bayview on February 5, 2013, a talk entitled “Over the Rainbow: From Personal Physician to Visiting Friend.” My poem, “The Gift of Receiving,” was addressed to the 30-odd patients who were in the audience that day. In the preceding 30 minutes, I had capped off my medical career by reflecting on recent visits to the homes of a number of my longstanding patients, this time as their friend.

How did this come about?

When I began telling patients my plan to stop practice in June 2012, I found myself saying something like “You’ve told me so much about you at our many visits…you know I’d like to come by and see you at home…this time just as your friend.” Everyone said that sounded fine. I began to keep my part of the bargain in July 2012 and by now have had memorable visits to the homes of about 35 former patients. After each visit, I scribbled a few notes, then wrote a thank-you letter that mentioned one or two details from the visit. For example, in a letter to two sisters whose 89-year-old mother was a big part of my visit to their home:

“…I have always known, from our talks during your medical visits, that the love shared between everyone in your family was THE story of your lives. How I came to appreciate that love while your dear mom rocked in the rocking chair and told many stories of life on the farm in North Carolina, where she and her parents, and before that her grandparents, worked so hard. I will never forget how they made do with so little, of the way they made mattresses with the shucks from corn, of drying the corn to get it milled into corn meal, and more and more. How I do hope you all will be able to make a video or audio recording of her memories. She and I could have talked for hours, I think. How moved I was by the story of bringing her skin-and-bones father from New York to Baltimore
to care for him during his last year. Something I loved sharing with everyone was how dreams bring back people long dead just the way they were in the prime of life. And Dana, how I appreciated the story of how you met Girard as he drove you to your car on the Hopkins shuttle!”

A few highlights that I mentioned in my Grand Rounds talk were a common theme (religious life and spirituality), memorable one-of-a-kind stories, and a few personal connections with my life.

—Religious life and spirituality: I had heard many patients allude to their faith, and when I entered their world it was often present … in pictures, religious objects, a CD of spirituals written by my patient, a pastor, and performed by his family, but above all in what they wanted to tell me.

—A memorable story: A memorable story came from my 85-year-old patient whom I knew had once lived in Mexico. At my visit, she filled in the story. It turned out that during World War II her teenage girl friends in Highlandtown dared her to ask a good looking Mexican wartime worker for a date (“he doesn’t know English… he won’t understand…”). She took the dare, he (the foreman of a group) answered “Why, sure!” She got the date, they fell in love, married, moved to Mexico City, raised a family. AND she discovered that her father-in-law was Cezar Lopez de Lara, hero of the Mexican revolution and at that time governor of a large state in Mexico! What a good time I had poring over her scrapbook from her life in Mexico. A number of connections with my life turned up:

—Grandpa’s summers: A jovial 95-year-old man told me that every summer since his boyhood, and still today, he went to Go Home Bay, a little place off the Georgian Bay of Canada that nobody knew about. Except me, since my Canadian grandfather too went there every summer and wrote lovingly about it in his autobiography. During the visit to my former patient, I saw Go Home Bay for the first time in the family photo album.

—My father’s doctoring: My father, a general internist, died in 1948 at age 40 when I was eight. I cherished his old-fashioned sphygmomanometer (blood pressure cuff), with a tie-up cloth over the inflatable balloon and a column of mercury. Thanks to my patient, a can-do guy who cared for all the equipment at then City Hospital, that old device was repeatedly spruced up. Thus, I could use it on occasional house calls, meaning that in a small way I had my hands on my own father’s life as a doctor. At my visit to my former patient, I enjoyed telling him that he had helped me to touch base with my long-dead father.

—Twin-hood: I am a twin, and at my visits, I shared much twin lore with multiple patients whom I had known were twins themselves, had married a twin, were parents of twins, or took care of twin grandchildren.

—Royal Crown Cola: I thought that RC Cola had long since disappeared, but not so. It is better seen as an endangered species, per my patient for whom it is to this day his cola drink of choice. At his home, he handed me a six-pack of RC after I had recounted memories of my summer of 1954, a summer when I rode a Royal Crown truck and delivered wooden cases of bottled RC to small stores all over downtown Baltimore.

—Marc Chagall: at our last medical visit my patient, whom I knew to be an avid art collector/dealer, gave me a DVD of the life of Marc Chagall, with wonderful footage in French. “How did you know?” I asked, meaning how she knew that from the start of our marriage Marie Claire and I have had favorite Chagall reproductions in our bedroom and have adored his work. When Marie Claire and I visited her home, she insisted that we accept several unique books about Chagall from her library.

I have always felt that the gift of receiving, a welcoming readiness to learn more about one another, is the way friends become friends. In their way, as can be seen from the stories above, each of the former patients I have visited has offered me that precious gift.
Into the Wild Blue Yonder: Dream of a Lifetime
by Barbara Orbock

It was early on a Wednesday morning and I was sitting on my front porch with a glass of orange juice, scanning The Sun paper. Tucked at the bottom of a page of ads for erectile dysfunction meds and facial surgery to make you look younger, I spied an announcement that rides in the Memphis Belle were being offered at Martin Airport the following Sunday. The ride was pricey, but not as much as facial surgery; I already felt like a kid again and we hadn’t even taken off. Still, I hesitated. I called Dave at work and put the question to him—should we splurge and do this? Answer, “I’ve been hearing since I met you about your dream to fly in a B17, so go for it. I’ll come and take your picture.”

Let me regress here and explain. In 1944 I lived in a small section near Towson called Armagh Village. There were no interesting girls to play with so I joined a group of elementary school boys who alternated their time playing baseball and waging war against Hitler. Meanwhile, overseas, B17s were blasting German munitions plants and newsreels were touting their crews as heroes. All I wanted was to grow up and fly one. This, of course, was a fairy tale and all our gang could do was pretend. So, being innovative, we adopted one of our neighbor’s trees that had two very strong horizontal branches to use as our bomber. We had a pilot, a co-pilot, and a gunner, and I usually got to be the bombardier. After taking off and shooting down the attacking Nazi fighters, I would then empty, one by one, a bucket of rocks on the enemy target we had set up below. Now, sixty-eight years later, although there would be no action, I would at last get to fly in the real thing.

The flight would take about 45 minutes, but beforehand I had to meet with my seven fellow crew members and our guide. We would be introduced to the pilot and co-pilot once we boarded. Each of us had to tell what had prompted us to sign up for the flight. Most explained that they were either plane fanatics or had had a father or uncle who had been part of a wartime crew. I was the only female, so when it was my turn I related the dream of a nine-year-old tomboy. At first the men looked at me as if I were slightly barmy, but then they clapped and congratulated me for having the best story.

Dave took my picture by the wing of the plane and we lined up to board. Once on the plane we had to find a seat and strap in, using original B17 safety belts. The guide handed each of us earplugs because he said it would be very noisy. I was next to an open window and it was quite windy and I realized, as we taxied...
down the runway for takeoff, that these windows would remain open. I should have known that you couldn’t shoot those mammoth guns through Plexiglas.

Across from me was a faded photograph of the original crew of the “Belle.” This plane and those that manned her were the first to complete 25 successful raids over Germany. This entitled them to go back to the States and tour with her to raise money for the war effort.

After takeoff we were free to roam the plane, sit up with the pilots, crawl down under to the turret where, in wartime, the bombardier scanned the target below. The guns had no real ammo but we could swing them around and pretend. The bomb bay was close to our seats so we had to circle around it to travel through the plane. The top and belly turrets were both closed to us. Ground temperature was 70 but aloft, with open windows it was COLD. Now I knew why the WWII fliers needed lambskin-lined jackets, earflaps, and gloves.

The flight took us over parts of Baltimore County and City, the Harbor, Fort McHenry, the loading docks, and out to the Key Bridge. The day was beautiful and we were encouraged to go to the open windows and take photos. I did just that, knowing they would enhance the memory of this once-in-a-lifetime day. For an hour I had indeed been nine years old again.

Our landing was spot on with hardly a bounce. On the way home Dave asked if there were any more weird rides on my bucket list. My answer—if I ever see an offer for a flight on a P51 Mustang, I’ll hock the silverware to take it.

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**Safety Deposit Box—Opened and Reopened**

by August K. Spector

Safe deposit boxes,
We cram everything important,
Carefully placing our valuables,
Closing, locking them within,
Believing they will prove useful someday.

Our children, safety deposit boxes.
Within we cram everything considered important,
Carefully teaching our behavior, values, spiritual beliefs,
Hopefully to be found useful someday.
Our children watch, listen as we open and close the box,
   As we do good or not,
   As we speak well or not,
   As we grow or not.
Teachable moments.

Our children grow,
They open and close,
   Reaching for things crammed within,
   Reaching for something useful,
   Accepting some, using some, rejecting others.

Today my behavior went into the box,
Behavior giving me an unsettled feeling,
My child watching, listening,
Behavior locked in the box.
When the box is finally opened,
   Will it be imitated?
   Will it be discarded?
   Will it be passed to yet another box?

A shared journey,
This safety deposit box,
Opened and reopened.

A Day in Bremen
by Jacob Radin

It had been a stressful year during which the company
for which I was Treasurer had been acquired by
Beatrice Foods, a Chicago conglomerate. Now my
wife Peggy and I were on our way to London for a
vacation.

One of the problems on my desk when I left was a
substantial overdue paint bill owed by a German ship
builder who had ignored our demands for payment.
The company was located in Bremen, a short hop
from London. I decided that this would be an
opportune time to pay them a visit. Arrangements
were made through our sales representative in
Germany, a native of the Netherlands named Adenauer.

Early one morning, several days after our arrival in
London, I picked up my briefcase, grabbed the passport
on the night table, kissed Peggy goodbye. Always
resourceful, she had plans for the day of my absence.

Everything was going smoothly. I hailed a cab, reached
Heathrow in ample time, sailed through Customs.
Relaxed in my seat, I reached for my briefcase to
transfer the passport to my coat pocket. Casually, I
opened it and felt a cold chill run down my spine.
Smiling at me from the passport was Peggy’s face.

I realized that, in my hasty departure that morning, I had picked up the wrong passport.

My stomach began to churn. My mind raced furiously. Would I end up stranded in Bremen? Could I be put under arrest? Would I be able to make my meeting on time?

If I did not return as expected, Peggy would be frantic.

The plane landed and I was greeted by our sales rep. Adenauer, a person whom I had never met. We had always had pleasant dealings, by phone and mail though, and I had been instrumental in helping him get his company car upgraded from a Volkswagen to a more substantial vehicle.

Adenauer was a bright savvy man. He had spent much of his life around shipyards, where he picked up knowledge of a number of languages. I explained my predicament to him. Together we approached the customs officer. My companion greeted him familiarly in German. The officer opened the passport, stared at the photo of Peggy. Then he looked at me. Once again, he looked down at Peggy’s face.

“Nein!” he exclaimed, as he struck his open palm against the resounding desk.

Adenauer calmed him down, explained what had happened. After some discussion a solution was found—a one-day pass to visit Germany. The pass would also ease my departure later that day.

Our business meeting in the afternoon was completed without any problems. Adenauer and I returned to the airport where the morning scenario was replayed. I pulled out the one-day pass and I was on my way.

Even though it was a stormy night over the North Sea, I was relieved to be returning to London and to Peggy. A final problem remained—how would I enter Heathrow with Peggy’s passport?

I explained what had happened to the Immigration officer in London. He found it highly amusing, and called to his buddy in the next lane to come over and look. Together they chuckled over the carelessness of the morning crew, and then waived me through without the usual stamp.

Graduation
by Karen Primack

On a cold March day a couple of years ago, I attended the most wonderful graduation ceremony of my life, and it wasn’t even for any member of my family. It was an occasion marking the academic achievements of 25 male students earning an AA degree and five earning a BA degree. The coursework was tough, developed for the students of prestigious Bard College.

Although these students might take only one or two courses at a time, they do not shy away from
challenging work. For instance, now that four years of German have been taught, many are petitioning for Mandarin Chinese to be offered next.

The ceremony began with a brass quintet playing a lovely rendition of “Gaudeamus Igitur” and the college president leading a procession of guests and faculty wearing their colorful academic robes. Speakers included a state representative and Bard president Leon Botstein, a distinguished scholar, musician, and conductor.

The best part, however, was a series of moving talks by five AA graduates and one BA recipient. Most credited their mothers for keeping them safe and instilling a love of learning. And all said they had become better people because of their Bard education. All but one were the first degree-earners in their families.

The site was the 100-year-old Eastern Correctional Facility, a striking, castle-like maximum-security prison in Napanoch, NY, near the Shawangunk Mountain Ridge. The students are all prison inmates serving long terms.

Our daughter Gretchen was an English teacher and academic adviser for the program and raves about the caliber of many of the students. She decided not to join the faculty procession in an academic gown because she chose to sit in the audience like a “friend.” She has taught a required English Composition course as well as an elective on sonnets. One of her graduates told me she was the “toughest person in this room,” which was saying a lot, since there were prisoners and their guards in abundance! “But she’s fair,” he added, quite seriously.

The ceremony was followed by a celebratory luncheon for the students and their extended families, often with young children. (One of the graduates had fathered three children during conjugal visits with his wife during his incarceration.) Gretchen was obviously proud of her students and introduced us to every one of them and their families. They seemed close-knit, of modest means, and dressed in their Sunday best for the occasion. One AA graduating student told me of his interest in political philosophy. Thinking of my studies of Plato and John Locke, I asked him which philosophers he had read, and he immediately named Hannah Arendt, among other 20th century scholars.

Another AA is a math major with a strong interest in philosophy; he has earned 151 credits so far—and he has nine more years to serve.

We fell in love with all of them, and wish them well.

Co-Active Life Coaching—What is it?

by Liz Lehmann

As a life coach I meet with each client once a week, generally by phone. The client sets the agenda when asked what they would like to talk about that day. It may be progress toward a goal or it may be an incident that upset them. Whatever they are concerned about is what the coach will address.

Examples of powerful questions are: What’s important about that? What one step could you take now to start moving toward that goal? Who do you want to be? What do you imagine the impact of that would be? Clients have the answers or can find them.

Co-Life coaches are people who help others bring about change in their lives. They work toward identifying the client’s goals, solve a problem, break a habit, or initiate a change. Throughout our hectic lives we develop a propensity for searching for a guiding light that will help us shift our position a bit. By seeing different perspectives we may bring about the change we seek to better our lives. A life coach sees the potential you harbor within yourself. She listens from a place of support and empathy, entirely clear of her own agenda.

A coach travels with you on a journey toward growth, change, and fulfillment. She does this not by offering advice or dictating proper action. She does this by asking powerful questions, the answers to which are within you. A coach helps you know the person you are and the person you are capable of becoming. Coaching is one of the best ways to make changes in your lives. It is very hard to do that on your own. As human beings we tend not to be fully integrated. Coaching helps integrate many aspects of ourselves which makes us more effective.
Life coaches cannot help everyone. If you are a fairly positive, growth-oriented person and have a particular goal you wish to achieve, then coaching may be your best investment. But change is not easy and a client must be willing to spend the time to become aware of his strengths, values, and life purpose. Coaches also identify the inner voices that are important when we initiate changes in our lives. Active coaching model refers to the fundamental nature of a coaching relationship in which the client and coach are equals for the purpose of meeting the client’s need.

The foundation of co-active coaching rests on four cornerstones: The client is naturally creative, resourceful, and whole. Co-active coaching addresses the client’s whole life. The agenda comes from the client; the relationship is a designed alliance.

Life coaching is a challenge that engages my mind and helps clients fulfill their dreams. As an octogenarian, I find this latest career choice is most satisfying.

A Polar Bear Day
by Martha McCoy

My husband and I have been pretty lonesome since our youngest son, Sam, died in October and unable to feel much joy in the upcoming holiday season. Sam always had been our live-in spirit of Christmas. We feel empty inside and, searching for distraction, decide to visit the zoo.

The world is clear and cold—24 degrees—and the sky alight with an overabundance of stars. The zoo is quiet and serene. Walking silently side by side, we are lost in our own thoughts. Rounding a small curve in the path, we see the polar bears. Illuminated by lights, these huge, beautiful creatures stretch toward the sky, soaking up the winter’s beauty. We lean against the railing and watch.

The polar bears play to the house, a crowd of two—my husband and me—as if it were a packed house. They skate on the ice, dive deeply into the water then surge up again in a beautiful arc that belies such massive girth. Twisting and turning in their graceful routine, the bears repeat this sequence over and over. Mesmerized by the polar bears’ grace and enthusiasm, our sadness abates. We stay until the zoo closes.

It has been seven years since our first visit to the polar bears. Since that time, each year during December, when the night is cold and clear, we know it’s time to visit the zoo where once, when we were cold inside and out, the simple joy of watching polar bears at play still helps to warm our aching hearts.

In the Spring 2013 issue, the poem Halfway Home was incorrectly attributed to “Anonymous.” It was written by Martha McCoy. We regret the error.

Humor Column
by Leight Johnson

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?
WITNESS: He said, “Where am I, Cathy?”
ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?
WITNESS: My name is Susan!

____________________________________________

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?
WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

____________________________________________

ATTORNEY: Are you sexually active?
WITNESS: No, I just lie there.

____________________________________________

ATTORNEY: What is your date of birth?
WITNESS: July 18th.
ATTORNEY: What year?
WITNESS: Every year.
ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn’t it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn’t know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

WITNESS: Oral...

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: He’s 20, much like your IQ.

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town I’m going with male.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral...

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No..

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

(My apologies to the attorneys among us, many of whom are good people.)
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Johns Hopkins University, Osher at JHU, 6740 Alexander Bell Drive, Columbia, MD 21046-2100, 410-516-9719.

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