

Duchess of Great Falls

PET CONNECTION, PAGE 16

Declan Pitsinger of Great Falls
playing soccer with Duchess.
More stories on people and pets
in this week's Connection.

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Louise Archer Elementary School in Vienna is one of the schools benefiting from Our Daily Bread's summer food program, an extension of the nonprofits Food4Thought weekend program.

Making Sure Children Don't Go Hungry

Our Daily Bread provides meals for children during summer break.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

For most children, summer means the end of homework and tests, and the beginning of cookouts and carefree summer vacations.

For thousands of children from low-income families, summer can also mean going hungry.

Free and reduced food programs—which provide children access to nutritious breakfasts, lunches and snacks—end along with the school year, leaving many students at risk for hunger over the summer months.

“Summer is a very difficult time for parents who are depending on the school’s free or reduced lunches,” said Lisa Whetzel, executive director of Our Daily Bread, a Fairfax County volunteer-based nonprofit. “As a community, it’s important to make sure that children have access to the healthy food they need during the summer months.”

To help meet that need, Our Daily Bread launched a new program this summer to provide healthy meals and household supplies to 42 families whose children attend three local elementary schools—Marshall Road, Cunningham Park and Louise Archer.

According to Fairfax County Public Schools, 47,874 students—more than 26 percent of the school system’s total student population—received free and reduced lunches during the 2012-2013 school year.

Whetzel said the program is an extension of ODB’s Food4Thought program, which began in 2011 in partnership with concerned parents at Marshall Road Elementary School. Volunteers created packages of non-perishable food and drinks to send home each weekend with 19 children in the school who participated in the federal food subsidy program. Volunteers collected donations within the school and



Volunteers and staff of Our Daily Bread, a volunteer-based nonprofit that helps low-income residents in Fairfax County, collect food at its Vienna pantry.

supplemented it with food from Our Daily Bread’s Vienna Pantry.

“This new partnership with Marshall Road is successful because there is a champion within the school,” Whetzel said. “If there is not a willing social worker and PTA, it cannot work. We applaud Jean Wyman and the PTA for seeing the need in their school and reaching out to ODB to make this work.”

Our Daily Bread is also working with Daniels Run Elementary School in Fairfax City, and hopes to expand Food4Thought and its summer extension program to more local schools as they gain more funding, community support and resources.

“We welcome working with as many schools as request our assistance. We can help them get started by explaining the process,” she said.

For more information on Our Daily Bread’s programs, go to www.odbfairfax.org. To donate to the Vienna food pantry, contact Christina Garris at 703-273-8829.



PHOTO BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

The replacement of the bridge at Beach Mill Road is almost halfway complete, and VDOT estimates it will be completed by late August.

Bridge Replacement On Schedule

Beach Mill Road Bridge construction nearly halfway complete.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Replacement of the bridge on Beach Mill Road is one month into construction, and according to the Virginia Department of Transportation, it is proceeding according to schedule.

As of July 10, VDOT says construction is almost 49 percent complete. The steel piles for the bridge foundations are in place and reinforcement for the two abutment foundations are almost complete. Concrete was poured Friday, July 19.

The new structure will have a timber deck, and will be a single lane within the current right of way.

Nicholas Roper, an engineer with VDOT, says the new bridge is designed to last 50 to 75 years, and it has more capacity to handle high-water events than the old bridge, which was 40 percent undersized for a 10-year flood.

The original bridge from 1940 was washed out during severe storms in September 2011, and between then and this June, a temporary box cul-

vert was installed.

The bridge was closed to traffic on June 19, with a marked detour leading drivers to Springvale Road, Utterback Store Road and Georgetown Pike.

“Every time I go the extra 10 minutes of the detour, I tell myself that after this summer, that bridge will be the one bridge in Great Falls that we won’t have to worry about being flooded,” said Dawn Keating of Great Falls. “I’ve learned to limit my movements during heavy storm periods, particularly those crazy thunderstorms we tend to get in early June, so if this is a long-term solution, I’m all for it.”

According to VDOT, the bridge carries about 1,700 cars per day.

Per the terms of VDOT’s contract, the bridge must have “substantial completion” by Tuesday, Aug. 30. After that date, the contractor will begin paying a fee for each day it is not completed.

VDOT currently estimates it will open by the end of August. The latest the bridge will open is Sept. 30, per the contract.

“Every time I go the extra 10 minutes of the detour, I tell myself that after this summer, that bridge will be the one bridge in Great Falls that we won’t have to worry about being flooded.”

— Dawn Keating of Great Falls

NEWS

Great Falls resident John Dibble and his dog Noochie. Dibble has written his first novel, "Difficult Run," which is set in Great Falls Park.

PHOTOS
CONTRIBUTED



Author Finds Mystery In Great Falls Park

John Dibble's first novel, "Difficult Run," features murder and mystery in Great Falls Park.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

John Dibble is used to finding solace in Great Falls Park. He often walks the paths of the park with his dog Noochie. His familiarity with the park made it the perfect setting for his first novel, the mystery thriller "Difficult Run," named for the stream that first inspired him.

"I loved the name, it interested me so much, I knew I wanted to make that my setting, and from there it was necessary to have the story involve the park police and the park," he said. "I was working on another story when this one just grabbed me. I put the original one on the side and got into this one so quickly, because I knew I just had to get it all out on paper."

"DIFFICULT RUN" tells the story of a gruesome double murder in Great Falls Park. Park Police Detective M.J. Powers is tasked with solving the case, a case she quickly realizes has very little evidence to go on.

"I knew pretty early on that I wanted to have the detective be a woman," he said. "I've worked with women detectives, and one thing I've noticed is that they seem to trust their intuition a lot more when it comes to solving a case. That's certainly the case with M.J."

After the crime in the opening pages, M.J. Powers embarks on a fast-paced journey that brings her across many different characters and more twists and turns than the Great Falls Park trails she spends the novel running and exploring.

Dibble, a Washington, D.C. based lawyer, used his experience as a prosecutor when it came to dealing with a case that seemed to go ice cold.

"I've seen a lot of cases that seem to have absolutely no leads, which often happens in homicides unless there's a witness," he said. "There's a lot of dead ends, and the pressure is always very high in a case like this, and I wanted to show how resolute M.J. was when it came to tracking down clues."

He also did his research when necessary. He went through the six-week Park Police Citizens Academy, spoke with friends that were experienced runners (M.J. Powers is an avid runner in the novel) and dove into the history of Great Falls Park.

"I've always spent a lot of time in the park, and I especially like taking the trails south, to Difficult Run. Once you get along the trail, everything just becomes a little more ominous, and seeing where the run hits the Potomac is just amazing," he said. "You look at it, and it seems to belong in a western wilderness, not 13-14 miles from the nation's capital."

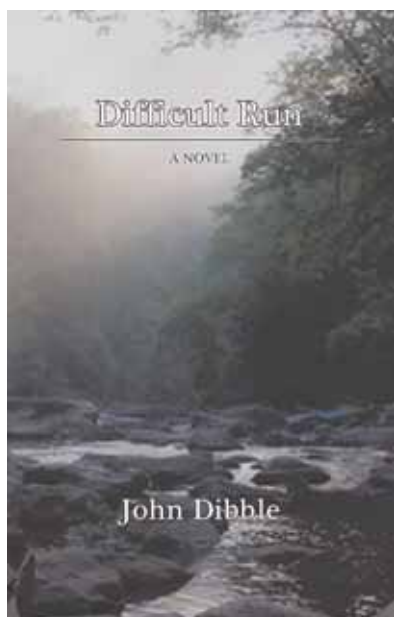
Dibble says he has always gone by the motto "if you write, you read." His favorite authors are the masters of the thriller, Nelson DeMille, David Baldacci, Stephen King, Vince Flynn, Lee Childs and Dean Koontz.

AS HE WROTE THE BOOK, his ideas would come to him on his walks through the park, which he would quickly jot down on notepads upon returning home.

"I had some great readers along the way, my wife especially, who would give me feedback. I think not doing that would have been a big mistake," he said. "You have to have other readers. I wrote it, so I should like it, but other people should be able to as well. And as much as I like to write, I like it more when people like what I write."

Dibble says that he has started thinking about possible sequels, involving M.J. Powers and the Park Police, but not necessarily Great Falls Park.

"Difficult Run" is available online at amazon.com and other retailers, in paperback and as an e-book.



Great Falls resident John Dibble has written his first novel, "Difficult Run," a mystery thriller set at Great Falls Park.



PHOTOS BY SANDY CHO/THE CONNECTION

David Ludwinsky explains the process of collecting tobacco to an audience inside the tobacco farm.

Claude Moore Farm Holds Market Fair

Visitors of all ages enjoyed activities at the annual fair.

BY SANDY CHO
THE CONNECTION

The sounds of violin and shouts of laughter filled the air as people explored the grounds, played games and listened to live music last weekend, July 20-21, at the annual Summer Market Fair held at the Claude Moore Colonial Farm.

Located in McLean, the Claude Moore Colonial Farm reenacts the typical farm life of Virginia in 1771, just before the American Revolution. Visitors can walk on a stone path that leads to a tobacco barn, tobacco field, a typical colonial house, and even live animals that were kept during that time.

The Market Fair Grounds, however, is where the fair is held, where visitors can eat roasted chicken, watch plays and try activities that were typical of the time. The admission was \$6 for adults and \$3 for children and senior citizens.

"We've been here several times and my wife wanted to go to the Market Fair," said Ryan Phillips, who is a Human Resources (HR) manager. "We really enjoy this place. It's good for our girls to see the history."

There were also many activities for children. They were able to use watercolors to paint fans, create little dolls and play games, such as bobbing for apples.

"I like the painting," Elinor Sonnet, 4, said. "I painted a girl with her dolly."

The fair was a good way for visitors to be acquainted with history and see how life was back then. Even some British visitors were interested to see what America was like back then.

"We just wanted to try something American," said Jo Greening, who moved to this area about a year ago from England. "It was a good way to see something historical and special."



Lydia Olson, 2, shows her father Morgan Olson the colors she has painted on her fan.



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PET CONNECTION Hamster Haven

BY MELODEE BOOS

If I left it up to my twin 9-year-old girls, our house would be overrun with dogs, cats, chickens and any other varmint they happen to run across. I'm an animal person myself, so the nuts haven't fallen far from the tree. Though we currently have two dogs and a cat, I decided 9 was an appropriate age for the girls to have a pet of their own. One for which they are fully responsible. Gloria wanted a bird. Rose wanted a snake. We took a jaunt to the local Petco and asked the experts. The snake was eliminated as an option pretty quickly. Who was going to feed it live mice? The bird was for more advanced pet owners so that option was rejected. The salesperson steered us to the rodents.

Before I continue let me share a bit of my history. When I was young I was a hamster owner. Back in those days, I bought my hamster (there was only one type of hamster to choose from), stuck it in an aquarium with a wheel and that was that. If I remember correctly, I

fed it sunflower seeds. Fast forward to today. Now there are many types of hamsters. The best-known species of hamster is the golden hamster, which is also called: fancy hamster, honey bear, panda bear, black bear, polar bear and teddy bear. Basically, if bear is in the title it's a golden hamster. Other hamsters include the dwarf hamster and Roborovski hamster (better known as the robo hamster). They were all very small and fast (like a mouse without a tail). I didn't recognize anything that looked like my idea of a hamster (slow and fat).

Our Petco expert warned us not to over-feed the hamsters and those hamsters living together must be from the same litter or they will fight. With that sage advice, the girls each picked a hamster. We were also persuaded to purchase a hamster habitat, which includes tunnels, slides and a wheel. Of course we had to buy a hamster ball, food and a chew toy as well. With our wallet quite a bit lighter, we headed home and set up the hamster haven.

SEE PEOPLE, PAGE 9



Rose and Gloria Boos with Chip the hamster (the lone survivor). Both girls are 9 years old, attend Great Falls Elementary School and are rising fourth graders.

PEOPLE
AND
PETS



June 23 in the Boos backyard: Evelyn O'Sullivan, Anna O'Sullivan, Gloria Boos, Rose Boos and Cecelia O'Sullivan, all of Great Falls, holding the 3-week-old rescued kitten Cy-clops, who veterinarians deemed healthy, even though he only had one eye open.

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- Diplomate, American Board of Orthodontics (Board Certified)
- Premier Invisalign Provider 2012, 2013
- Attending Faculty— Orthodontic Department Children's/Washington Hospital

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NEWS

First at Sully Station Relay Carnival

Rapids 9-10 Boys Individual Medley Relay Team achieved a first place at the Northern Virginia Swim League (NVSL) Division 5 Relay Carnival held at Sully Station, breaking a 15-year-old Great Falls Swim & Tennis record in the process and advancing to the NVSL

All-Star Relays at Lincolnia.

The team of Tyler Lentine (Backstroke), Steven Jungers (Butterfly), Will Long (Breaststroke) and Joseph Fallon (Freestyle) then put on their best performance at the NVSL All-Star relays by shattering their two-week old record by an additional second finishing with a 1:14.60



Great Falls Rapids Boys 9-10 Relay Team members Will Long, Steven Jungers, Tyler Lentine and Joseph Fallon with coach Brittany Vocke (coach James Cutler not pictured).

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

THIS IS "HARRY"



Harry is an affectionate fellow that loves the companionship of other cats and does not like to be alone. Come meet this sweet fellow today!

THE CONNECTION
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OPINION

Stemming Gun Violence

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

While President Obama in his statement about the Trayvon Martin case reminded us, "we are a nation of laws, and a jury has spoken," he went on to say that "we should ask ourselves if we're doing all we can to stem the tide of gun violence that claims too many lives across this country on a daily basis." Not only are we not doing enough, but we are seeing actions on the part of congressmen and senators and state legislators fearful of the gun lobby that may well result in more gun violence. When handguns used in the commission of crimes were traced to Virginia in such great numbers that the state became known as the "gun-running capital of the east,"



the state legislature put in place a limitation of one handgun purchase per month. This year the General Assembly repealed that law. If 12 pistols were too few a year, one can now buy however many are desired!

According to a USA Today editorial, in 1981 19 states prohibited people from carrying a hidden weapon in public, "but a powerful gun lobby has turned that system upside down." Four states now allow persons to carry hidden firearms without a permit, and in 35 states, including Virginia, officials must issue permits to just about anyone who applies unless they have committed a felony. Hidden guns are now allowed in restaurants and bars and public places.

Most frightening of all are the changes in state law to allow persons to stand their ground and use deadly force in any location one is legally

allowed to be without first attempting to retreat. Florida was the first state to adopt such a law that had been drafted by the National Rifle Association and promoted by the American Legislative Exchange Council to almost two dozen states. The instructions to the jury in the Zimmerman case made it clear that if "he had a right to be where he had a right to be, he had no duty to retreat." Efforts to enact a "stand your ground" law have been made in Virginia and are likely to continue until successful. Not only is there a proliferation of guns, but laws are being rewritten to expand the instances in which they can be used against another.

There were the tragedies at Virginia Tech, Columbine, Newtown and thousands of other instances of gun violence. What will be the tragedy that will cause us to wake up and insist that no constitutional right can be argued that reduces the safety of others and enhances the potential for violence?



PEOPLE AND PETS

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova with Frodo and Sam.

PHOTO
CONTRIBUTED

Meet Frodo and Sam

Lou and I adopted Mister Frodo from Home Alone Cat Rescue about two years ago. We have a soft spot for big orange cats. Frodo is part Maine coon (large with furry feet) and part American bobtail (large with short tail). A description of the American bobtail breed on the internet says they are "born scared"—which sums up Frodo. He is the proverbial "fraidy cat." For the first few weeks after we adopted him, Frodo refused to go into the living room, dining room or master bedroom for fear of our ceiling fans, even when they weren't moving. When he accidentally escapes the house, he comes scurrying right back when birds chirp at him. Despite being timid, Frodo is very playful. He "races us" up and down the stairs and loves to chase Lou's laser toy.

Last year I decided Frodo might benefit from the company of another cat. When I ran into Lee District School Board Representative Tammy Derenak Koufax at the Lee District Bridge Walk last summer, she showed me a photo of three kittens she and her children, Matthew and Halle, were fostering as part of a School Project. They

were less than a month old and adorable. Sam looked like a little tiger cub! Her siblings, solid soot grey, looked like little bears. They had been found living behind a restaurant in Washington D.C. My husband and I fell in love with Sam at first sight.

Once Sam was old enough to come home with us, we introduced Sam and Frodo over a few days, keeping Sam separated in the guest room. It took a few months for them to work out "dominance issues," but now they are chasing each other around the house and amusing each other. Sam has a fascination with water. We have to keep her water bowl upstairs in the tub because she splashes the water all over the place. When she does this, Frodo looks at her as though she is completely uncouth. It's hard to believe Sam was a feral kitten. She is very affectionate and loves to have her head stroked.

Pets definitely add an important dimension to our lives!

—SHARON BULOVA AND LOU DEFALAISE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Wrong Priorities

To the Editor:

We seem to have money for everything these days—bank bailouts, congressional investigations, even potential invasions of Syria. Just not our kids. We slash food stamps and cut early education and our elected officials just whistle past the graveyard. New polling shows Virginians think these priorities are all wrong, and expect our leaders to invest in our kids. We should make those running for office in Virginia this year tell us where they stand on these issues.

John Horejsi
SALT Coordinator
Vienna

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail:
greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

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WEDNESDAY/JULY 24

NVTA Final Public Hearing on 2014 Projects. 6 p.m., at Council Chambers at City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority holds a public hearing on the proposed FY2014 project list to gather public input and share info; hearing followed by an official NVTA meeting. Speakers must sign-in at 5:30 p.m., prior to 6 p.m. start. www.thenovaauthority.org/.

Friends of the Town Green Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Individuals interested in becoming a Friend or learning more about the program are welcome to attend. <http://www.viennava.gov/index.aspx?NID=108>.

THURSDAY/AUG. 1

Lifetime Leadership Program Information Session. 11 a.m.-noon, Leadership Fairfax offices, 8230 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 350, Vienna. This program helps those with a lifetime of leadership skills help the community. 703-752-7504 or <http://www.leadershipfairfax.org/lifetimeleadersprogram>.

People And Pets

FROM PAGE 6

Violence alert: if you are younger than 13, dear reader, please ask your parents for permission to continue reading and be forewarned.

Day 1: the girls set up the hamster habitat and deposited both hamsters into their new home.

Day 2: one of the hamsters died peacefully in the food bowl. There were waterworks as we took her little body back to Petco. Come to find out there is a 3-day guarantee for the little critters. After a five minute examination, the experts told us we had overfed her. We got another hamster. To us, the new hamster didn't look so hungry, so we had high hopes.

Day 3: the girls fed the hamsters the exact amount of food per the experts.

Day 4: I checked on the hamsters and found that the new hamster had eaten part of the old hamster. Obviously he was hungrier than he looked. I had no idea hamsters were cannibals. Live and learn (though the dead hamster didn't live or learn). It was a case of survival of the fittest (quite Darwinian). Since it was obvious how the hamster died, we didn't take it back to Petco.

Several weeks later—we now have one lone hamster. The girls take turns caring for her and are very responsible. Perhaps there's a snake in our future after all.

Summer Concert on the Green

Sunday, July 28

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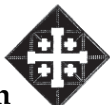
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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Taking a Rest

Dolce DeGrandis, friend of Bill and Monica DeGrandis of Great Falls.

ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY/JULY 24-28

The Mystical World of Tibet. At Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Monks from Drepung Loseling Monastery display sand painting and perform as part of The Mystical Arts of Tibet world tour (many events free). \$0-\$20. <http://www.unityoffairfax.org/auspicious-event> or 703-281-1767.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 24

Student Art at Starbucks. All day, at Great Falls Village Center Starbucks, 9863 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The 100-pus artist organization Great Falls Studios works with area art teachers and students to create rotating exhibits in the conference room space of the coffee house; the Forestville art student work, currently up, is part of the exhibit on display through October. www.greatfallsstudios.com.

Alastair Moock. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Parents' Choice Award winner sings songs about being a kid. \$8. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

Brandi Carlile. 8 p.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Brandi Carlile plays with special guests include Americana Music Award-winner Justin Townes Earle and Brooklyn-based trio The Lone Bellow. \$30-\$40. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

THURSDAY/JULY 25

Alastair Moock. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna.

Parents' Choice Award winner sings songs about being a kid. \$8. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

Collecting Art: How to Buy. 7 p.m., at the McLean Project for the Arts in the Emerson Gallery, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. A talk for those who want to buy original art but aren't sure of what they like or where to find it. 703-790-1953 or info@mpaart.org.

Thrillbillys. 7:30-8:30 p.m., Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Meet Johnny Castle, David Kitchen, Robbie Magruder and Andy Rutherford, four performers with several Wammie nominations. <http://www.thethrillbillys.com>.

Gordon Lightfoot. 8 p.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. From Canada, Gordon Lightfoot has original songs like "Early Morning Rain" and "For Loving Me" that have been covered by icons like Elvis and Johnny Cash. \$25-\$42. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

FRIDAY/JULY 26

Peter and the Wolf. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Pushcart Players present a twist on Sergei Prokofiev's musical fairytale about a boy who learns to be courageous and resourceful in the face of danger. \$10. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

Chef's Table. 6:30 p.m., Wildfire, Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor, McLean. Taste the talent of Executive Chef at Wildfire, Eddie Ishaq in a custom four-course menu. \$60. 703-442-9110.



Art by Emma R., a sixth grader at Forestville Elementary School. Emma's work is on exhibit alongside her classmate's art at the Great Falls Village Starbucks now through October.



Loy McGaughy "PaperScape 1," watercolor/collage, is featured with artist collages at the "Everything Under the Sun" exhibit at the Vienna Art Society Gallery on the Village Green. See the exhibit Saturday, July 27, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

1812 Overture and More! 8:15 p.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. The National Symphony orchestra performs a selection of fanfare and classical pieces, led by conductor Ankush Kumar Bahl, the NSO will perform snippets from Tchaikovsky's greatest works and piano prodigy Benjamin Grosvenor

will perform Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor. \$22-\$55. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

SATURDAY/JULY 27

Everything Under the Sun Exhibit. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at the Vienna Art Society Gallery on the Village Green, 513 Maple Ave. W., Vienna. Award-winning Reston artist Loy McGaughy's collection of colorful collages are on exhibit through Aug. 24. 703-319-3220 or www.viennaartsociety.org.

Peter and the Wolf. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Pushcart Players present a twist on Sergei Prokofiev's musical fairytale about a boy who learns to be courageous and resourceful in the face of danger. \$10. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

America the Beautiful. 8:30 p.m., at 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. The NSO, conducted by Emil de Cou, performs works by Aaron Copland, George Gershwin and John Williams, with Ansel Adams' photographs projected on huge screens. \$22-\$55. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

SUNDAY/JULY 28

Village Jazz Band. 6:30 p.m., at 144 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. The Village Jazz Band plays traditional soul jazz. <http://www.viennava.gov>.

Callaghan Live. 7:30 p.m., Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave E Vienna. Nashville-based singer-songwriter Callaghan plans to continue on the road this summer. <https://jamminjava.com>

Wicked Divas. 8:15 p.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Singers Julia Murney and Stephanie J. Block cover an array of Broadway highlights from musicals like Wicked and Spamalat with the NSO, led by Steven Reincke. \$22-\$55. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

TUESDAY/JULY 30

Timbalooloo. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna.

Oran Etkin, with Clara the Clarinet and Big Mama Tuba introduce children to world music and jazz through storytelling and songs. \$8. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. 8:30 p.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Aspen Santa Fe Ballet combines ballet and modern dance into its contemporary style and will perform original works from emerging and internationally renowned choreographers. \$4-\$40. <http://www.wolftrap.org>.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 31

Timbalooloo. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Oran Etkin, with Clara the Clarinet and Big Mama Tuba introduce children to world music. \$8. <http://www.wolftrap.org>.

SOJA With John Butler Trio. 7 p.m., at the Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Reggae-rockers perform tracks from their Bob Marley-inspired album. www.wolftrap.org.

THURSDAY/AUG. 1

Robbie Schaefer. 10:30 a.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Robbie Schaefer performs tunes from his CD, Songs for Kids Like Us, while also performing latest songs. \$10. http://www.wolftrap.org/Filene_Center.aspx.

Mystic Warriors. 7:30-8:30 p.m., at Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna. A mixture of various flutes, string and percussion instruments. mysticwarriors.com.

Bugs Bunny at the Symphony II. 8:30 p.m., at Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Bugs Bunny and his friends come to life with cartoons shown on the huge screens in-house and on the lawn while the score is played live by the NSO, conducted by George Daugherty. \$22-\$55. <http://www.wolftrap.org/>

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SPORTS



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Left to right: Micaela Grassi, Maggie Duff, Shannon Sparks, Jessica Hawken, Mat Campet (head coach), Amanda Maruca, Sarah Allen, Pearce Bloom, Chris Blankingship.



River Bend's 13-14 Girls 200M Medley Relay Team defeated Westwood at their dual meet on Saturday and broke a team record; lowering the mark to 2.26.43. Relay team members (left to right): Micaela Grassi (Butterfly), Katherine Allen (Breaststroke), Lauren Bell (Freestyle) and Veronica Merrill (Backstroke).

StingRays Win Fourth Championship

The undefeated River Bend StingRays beat Westwood (300-216) to win their fourth consecutive DCCL Blue Division Championship. After paying tribute to graduating seniors and team coaches, Pearce Bloom and Sarah Allen, the

StingRays went on to break three team records: Pearce Bloom broke his own 15-18 Boys 50M Fly record by lowering the mark to 27.22; The 13-14 Girls 200M Medley Relay Team (Veronica Merrill, Katherine Allen, Lauren Bell and Micaela Grassi) lowered the mark to 2.26.43; and

the 15-18 Boys 200M Medley Relay Team (Bloom, Julian Villacorta, Tommy Rogers and Carter Bennett) lowered the mark to 2:01.65.

Leading the StingRays with four first place finishes were: Aiden Bond, Haley Smith, Will Koeppen and Micaela Grassi.

Winning two events each were Eliza Pastore, Faith O'Connor and Sophia Ambrose. Other blue ribbon winners: Ryan Bond, Connor Smith, Anna Takis, Carter Bennett, Davis Riffe, Olivia McDonnell, Ryan Windus, Sarah Allen and Pearce Bloom.

Langley Club Celebrates Despite Loss

The Langley Wildthings (2-2-1) celebrated this week, despite a 226-194 loss to the Dunn Loring Dolphins. The team set four new club records and honored their graduating swimmers, Kat Owczarski, Chris Paul and Jack Reilly.

WILDTHING DOUBLE WINNERS WERE:

- ❖ Luke Watson for Boys 8 & Under 25 M Freestyle and Butterfly,
- ❖ Vincent Watson for Boys 9-10 50 M Freestyle and Breaststroke,
- ❖ Maggie Bellaschi for Girls 11-12 50 M Freestyle and Butterfly,
- ❖ Jack Reilly for Boys 15-18 50 M Freestyle and Breaststroke,
- ❖ Katie Robinson for Girls 15-18 50 M Backstroke and Breaststroke.

Jack Reilly closed out his years as a Wildthing by breaking The Langley Club record for Boys 15-18 Freestyle with a time of 25.25; he set the previous record last week, when he bested a record that had been on top for 42 years.

INDIVIDUAL RACE WINNERS WERE:

- Audrey Wallach for Girls 9-10 50 M Freestyle
- Jack Hoeymans for Boys 11-12 50 M Freestyle
- Brady Quinn for Boys 8 & Under 25 M Backstroke
- Matthew Buchanan for Boys 9-10 50 M Backstroke
- Nate Johnson for Boys 15-18 50 M Backstroke

Kelly Crittenberger for Boys 8 & Under 25 M Breaststroke

Maria Grazia Favro for Girls 8 & U 25 M Breaststroke

Ellie Ryan for Girls 11-12 50 M Breaststroke

Jinwon Bailar for Boys 13-14 50 M Butterfly

Kat Owczarski for Girls 15-18 50 M Butterfly

Blue ribbon relay races were won by the teams of: Boys 8&U 100 M Freestyle: Luke Watson, Collin Troy, Peter Kaldes, Gardiner Tyler

Boys 9-10 100 M Medley: Matthew Buchanan, Benjamin Scott, Vincent Watson, Sean Mullery

Girls 11-12 100 M Medley: Adair Sand, Ellie Ryan, Maggie Bellaschi, Samantha Feldman

Boys 15-18 200 M Medley: Nathan Johnson, Nathan Robinson, Chris Paul, Jack Reilly

Boys 18&U 200 M Freestyle Mixed Age: Jack Hoeymans, Vincent Watson, Jinwon Bailar, Jack Reilly

Maggie Bellaschi beat her own Girls 11-12 50 M Butterfly record with a time of 34.14; she set the previous record of 34.34 earlier this summer.

Jinwon Bailar broke his own Boys 13-14 50 M Butterfly record, set five days earlier, with a time of 27.33.

Nathan Johnson bested the Boys 15-18 50 M Backstroke record, previously set by himself on July 1 with a new time of 29.34.



From left—Langley Wildthings seniors Jack Reilly, Kat Owczarski and Chris Paul.

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A Delicate Balance – At Home



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

How appropriate is it to tell a cancer patient something negative (that he likely doesn't want to hear) – yet needs to know, and which might ultimately quash his fighting spirit and adversely affect his day – and night? Moreover, would withholding certain discouraging observations intermittently along the cancer-treatment way, in order for said patient to feel good and positive about himself – and better prepare him for any and all news/results which might upset his precariously imperfect life and moreover, likely chip away at his emotional wherewithal as well – cause more harm than 100-percent honesty all the time? If this sounds as if I'm splitting philosophical hairs, the tool I would need to do so in any possibly effective way has yet to be invented, literally or figuratively. Yet this is the life I live as a terminal cancer patient, alive and reasonably well, reliant on my wife, primarily, for a kind of support one rarely anticipates providing and for which either one is hardly prepared.

If this quandary were a line, it wouldn't exactly be a line of demarcation, more like a line of decapitation (figuratively speaking of course). These are lines which are clearly not defined. You couldn't find them on a map even if you were a cartographer with 20 years' experience making maps. These are lines which are blurry at best and if seen at all, likely seen from a satellite snooping high in the sky that neither the government says exists, or the reason for its existence, exists. This is a line, to invoke a well-known Ken Beatrice-ism (Ken hosted a sports talk radio program called "Sports Call" for over 20 years in the Washington, D.C. area) on which you wouldn't want to live (meaning the difference between talent and circumstances was impossible to quantify).

But this is the line of my life on which I try to live, balance, navigate, manipulate and delude myself as the various cancer-driven emotions and circumstances arise. It makes the 3.9-inch width of a balance beam seem more like 39 inches. However, there are striking similarities between this apparatus and life as a cancer patient: the falls can sometimes be devastating, physically, but more often, it is the emotional toll which disrupts the most. When I lose my balance and fall, it's as if I actually can't get up.

Most days I can manage this sort of co-dependency. Other days, I can't. Living in the past at the same time as you're trying to live in the present and plan for the future and trying as well to take both positives and negatives in the identical stride are challenges I really didn't anticipate having to overcome at such a relatively early age: 54 and a half.

Nevertheless, life goes on, for which I'm extremely grateful. Some days/circumstances are definitely worse than others, but at least I'm still in the game. For how long, though? (See, I can't even finish a column without stumbling over myself.)

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

PET CONNECTION



This is Jill, a former “lost dog” who joined the Howell family and inspired their volunteer work with Lost Dog.



Princess is one of many foster dogs taken in by Marcia Tiersky, president of the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation, over the past 10 years.



This kitten, fostered by Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation volunteer Beth Stevens, is “a polydactyl,” meaning she has extra toes.



Parker, formerly a “lost dog,” was adopted by Beth Stevens before she became a Lost Dog volunteer.



This dog, called Batman, was a foster in Lisa Marie Czop’s home.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Helping Save Lives, One Pet at a Time

Area residents explain their dedication to the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation.

BY AMBER HEALY
THE CONNECTION

Behind every adoption successfully completed by the Arlington-based Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation, there’s a volunteer with a happy heart.

There’s a small volunteer army across Northern Virginia that turns out every weekend to help cats and dogs find homes, but there’s never a shortage of others looking for a safe place to be fed, sheltered and loved. Volunteers are what make the organization run, from walking dogs at adoption events to petting cats to making sure adoptable animals have safe transportation from rural shelters to this area for medical care.

These volunteers are playing, and will continue to play, a major role in Lost Dog

and Cat Rescue Foundation’s participation in the ASPCA/Rachael Ray \$100,000 challenge, an ongoing competition in which the rescue group and others across the country are trying to surpass the number of animal adoptions recorded between June 1 and Aug. 31.

But why do people agree to share their limited free time with animals? What brings them in, and what makes them stay?

Here are a few of their stories:

CALL HIM THE CAT MAN. Harry Shubin and his wife, Julie, know what it’s like to get sweet-talked into taking on more responsibility.

“Always a cat person,” Shubin, a Fairfax resident, was introduced to Lost Dog through a secretary at work when his family was looking to adopt a kitten after the loss of a cat he’d had for 16 years. He was

more interested in adopting an older cat, but his family had other ideas. So they went to an adoption event. Within a little time, he had “managed to convince everyone that we should come home with an adult cat too.”

It took a while to find the right cats, and Friday nights became the family’s time to go to adoption events, chat with volunteers and spend time with the animals. During an adoption event about six months after they started going regularly, someone asked Shubin if he was interested in adopting.

“Before I could say no, someone opened up and said no, they’re just volunteers,” he said.

A year later, Shubin, offi-



PHOTO BY AMBER HEALY/ THE CONNECTION

Barbara Hutcherson and Marcia Tiersky help dogs out of the transport crates loaded into a van used by the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation to bring them to the 11 adoption events the rescue group hosts each weekend.

The Challenge: Joining Together to Save Animals

There are dozens of animal welfare organizations across the country working to secure “forever homes” for dogs and cats of all ages. And while there’s a general camaraderie amongst them, stemming from their common cause, what’s a little friendly competition among peers?

For the past few years, the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) has sponsored a nationwide contest to challenge shelters to see how many more animals they could adopt between June and August beyond the total the year before.

The idea was to “spur innovation, increase public support, empower staff and, most importantly, save more lives,” said Bert Troughton, ASPCA’s vice president and a leader of what has become the ASPCA/Rachael Ray \$100K challenge.

The organizations that adopt the most animals above totals from June to August the year before wins not only in terms of putting cats and dogs in loving, happy homes, but a sizeable chunk of change to save even more.

“We know that the contest can help save more lives in the long-term too, because all of

the added attention and support contestants earn during the contest can be harnessed for continued life-saving,” Troughton said.

ASPCA started the challenge in 2010, and in 2012, TV personality and animal lover Rachael Ray joined up with the organization, as she did again this year, allowing the organization to offer more than \$600,000 in prize grants:

A \$100,000 grand prize grant will be awarded to the organization that reports the largest increase in adoptions over the total from the year before. Other awards include a \$25,000 “community engagement award,” and \$25,000 to the first place finisher in each of five divisions, as well as \$15,000 to the second place finishers. Lost Dog is in eighth place overall and second place in their division as of Monday, July 22.

“It’s a whole lot of work and a whole lot of fun because every single life saved is a victory — regardless of who wins the grant prizes for the biggest increases,” Troughton said.

This year, 49 organizations in 30 states are competing for the grants, he said. To see the challenge details, visit challenge.aspcapro.org.

— AMBER HEALY

cially a volunteer with cat adoption events at the Tysons Corner PetSmart, was asked to help find a cat volunteer coordinator for the center in the store, where cats sometimes live before they’re adopted.

“We had about 30 volunteers at the time,” and Shubin said he made it clear — at least to him — that he was not interested in being responsible for keeping track of which volunteers had which cats at which time. But something happened and, before he knew it, Shubin was put in charge of the cat volunteers, a team he now counts at about 400 people.

“I refused twice,” he said with a laugh. He’s not alone in being drafted to help out. His wife and daughter are both cat adoption counselors, meeting with prospective cat owners before paperwork is signed and formalized.

He credits PetSmart for being a great partner with Lost Dog, hosting many of the adoption events throughout each weekend. He frequently checks in with the store to make sure the cats that are there have been

fed and checked in on by volunteers, and the managers make sure to receive copies of all adoption paperwork as well.

Other rescue groups might cringe at the thought of allowing an adoption to be made the same day people meet a cat, but Shubin believes that’s the best way to go.

“We’d rather adopt more cats to 85 percent perfect people than wait for that 99 percent perfect house,” he said. “We can always take an animal back” if the situation doesn’t work out for some reason. And there are always more cats to adopt, looking for good homes.

HER DAUGHTER’S DOING. Judy Haynes of Herndon was trying to help her daughter find a way to complete her volunteer requirement for an eighth grade civics class. Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation was one of the few groups that would allow 14-year-olds to help out with parental supervision, so the mother-daughter

SEE VOLUNTEERING, PAGE 16

PET CONNECTION

The first night the Duchess came home: Declan with Duchess.



PHOTOS BY GERALDINE PITSINGER

Duchess of Great Falls

BY GERALDINE PITSINGER
GREAT FALLS

Our son Declan has been begging us for a dog for the last several years. We finally received our dog, a German shepherd named Duchess, in late February. She was definitely worth the wait. We've only had her for a few months but she is such a part of our family that we can not imagine what life would be like without her. She is so sweet and has such a wonderful disposition. She loves people, especially children and gives millions of "doggy kisses" to everyone.

One unique characteristic about Duchess is that she is a sports fanatic.

Duchess loves to play soccer, chase us while we ride bikes and she loves to play frisbee. It is amazing to watch Duchess jump several feet in the air to catch a giant frisbee. She jumps higher than my son Declan is tall, it is incredible to watch.

Once she catches the frisbee she runs around with it in her mouth until someone catches her (which is not easy since she is as fast as lightning). She can also play fetch for hours at a time. She is very loving and loyal as well.

I was actually kind of hesitant to get a dog, knowing how much work they might be or how much time you need to devote to them, especially when they are just a puppy, but I can not even begin to explain how absolutely thrilled our entire family is now that we have Duchess as part of our family.



Declan with Duchess and father Todd Pitsinger.

Volunteering Saves Lives

FROM PAGE 15
team signed up.

That was four years ago.

"We started out holding leashes for the dogs," Haynes said. When their own dog passed away, they thought about fostering from the organization.

That led to a "foster failure," as the family soon adopted a "20 pound terrier who doesn't tolerate dogs bigger than she is. Now we foster a lot of Chihuahuas," Haynes said. The family has fostered at least 20 dogs in four years.

The power of knowing a dog has found the right home is awesome, Haynes added. She recalled one woman and little boy who came in to look at dogs during an event. Through the course of chatting with them, Haynes learned that the boy was in a foster home, and the woman wanted to help him feel more comfortable and safe.

"They were made for each other," she said.

Staying with Lost Dog now that her two teenagers have surpassed their eighth grade civics obligations was an easy decision. "It's very rewarding to do this," she said. "The volunteers, Barb and Pam, there are so many great people involved."

A SECOND JOB, A LABOR OF LOVE. Marcia Tiersky was just looking for a way to share her time.

Now the president of the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation board, Tiersky, who started volunteering with the organization in 2002, helps oversee quarterly board meetings in addition

to interviewing potential adopters, answering questions from anywhere and everywhere, fostering dogs and updating the website when new animals arrive for adoption.

"LDCRF is sort of my second unpaid job that is a labor of love," she said. "Knowing that we are helping thousands of dogs and cats each year is extremely fulfilling. It gives me hope that my life has a purpose."

The organization has grown from three adoption events per week, averaging 20 adoptions each week, to 11 adoption events each week, averaging 50-70 adoptions each weekend. In her 10 years as president, the number of volunteers also has expanded, now numbering in the thousands.

"It's amazing," she said. "And it's all because of our wonderful volunteers. We could not do what we do if we did not have people to hold the dogs, show the cats, conduct interviews, do paperwork, answer adopter questions, respond to emails and calls on the phone line, and generally spread word of mouth about the rescue."



Mason, a Lost Dog cat, strolls on a leash during an adoption event.

MONEY WON EQUALS LIVES SAVED. All volunteers interviewed were asked what Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation's winning the \$100,000 challenge would mean to the organization, and the response was unanimous.

Winning that money would mean more animals could be saved.

Editor's note: Writer Amber Healy is an occasional cat volunteer with Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation.

Lost Dog: For the Love of Animals

In 2001, there were too many dogs without homes and too few people to help them.

That wasn't acceptable to Pamela McAlwee and Ross Underwood, lifelong animal lovers who wanted to save dogs and cats alike from shelters where their futures were non-existent if they weren't adopted.

McAlwee and Underwood were a few years into running a gourmet take-out pizza deli on Washington Boulevard in the Westover neighborhood of Arlington, when McAlwee went to help a friend find a dog to adopt. While visiting a shelter, she saw six dogs that were about to be put down within a few days. She promptly took all six home that night. She got them spayed or neutered and cleaned up and put a classified ad in a newspaper, and in between orders for pepperoni and cheese and vegetarian pizzas, she worked to find good homes for them all. She did this several times, adopting dogs about to be euthanized and finding homes for them.

That's how the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation was born, out of the take-out phone number for what's now the original location of the Lost Dog Cafe. McAlwee had worked with other rescue groups before, but she wanted to focus more on finding good homes for the animals instead of waiting for a "perfect" placement. The rescue group started with 25 dogs.

Now there are 150 dogs at a ranch in Sumerduck, Va., owned by Lost Dog, as the rescue organization is known, along with 20 cats and an assortment of other animals, including a horse. Other dogs and cats live with fosters — more than 100 dogs are currently in temporary homes until they're adopted.

How to Help

To learn more about the ASPCA/Rachael Ray \$100,000 challenge, find a new pet, donate or volunteer with the Lost Dog and Cat Rescue Foundation, go to www.lostdogrescue.org.

"It's amazing what we accomplish with an all-volunteer base," said Barbara Hutcherson, Lost Dog's adoptions coordinator.

Lost Dog is the only organization in Northern Virginia participating in the ASPCA challenge. The rescue had to verify its numbers and qualify in order to

participate, proving the volunteer base and "the commitment to really take this challenge and run with it," Hutcherson said.

If Lost Dog wins one of the grants provided through the challenge, the winnings likely will be used for vet bills. "It's difficult when you're looking at a list of shelter animals and you have to ask if you can afford the big vet bill for one animal" compared to smaller fees for multiple animals, Hutcherson said. "We want to take them all. It's uncomfortable, but we want to do every single thing we can."

Funding for the rescue comes from adoption fees, donations, and from proceeds from the four Lost Dog Cafe locations across Northern Virginia and the Stray Cat Cafe, next to the original Lost Dog Cafe in Westover.

— AMBER HEALY

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PET CONNECTION



Open House at Seneca Hill

Canine Companions for Independence puppy Romer III enjoys a free swim at Seneca Hill's aquatic center. Free access to the pool was one of the many things available during the Seneca Hill Animal Hospital, Resort and Spa Open House.

PHOTOS BY NIKKI CHESHIRE/THE CONNECTION



Dell, an elkhound mix owned by Potomac Falls resident Katherine Parramore, plays with Canine Companions for Independence dog Wellington II in one of Seneca Hill's many play yards. Pools of water were set out to provide a way for the dogs to cool off.



Potomac Falls resident Katherine Parramore plays with her elkhound mix Dell and Canine Companions for Independence puppy Romer III. The dogs could run and play in the yards, and were provided with a wide variety of toys and play structures.



The Homan family poses in front of the boutique inside Seneca Hill Animal Hospital, Resort and Spa with their puppy Cisco. Pictured from left are daughter Jessie Homan, John Homan and Dr. Janice Homan.

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