

# Meet Herndon's 'Best Friends'

PET CONNECTION, PAGE 4

Anderson, the guinea pig,  
sits on owner Mia  
Bollerer's shoulder. More  
stories on people and pets  
in this week's Connection.

ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 5 ❖ OPINION, PAGE 8 ❖ SPORTS, PAGE 9 ❖ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

PHOTO BY SARAH ANDERSON/THE CONNECTION

# Herndon High to Present 'Bye Bye Birdie'

NEWS, PAGE 3

  
**PET CONNECTION**

PAGE 4



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PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Herndon officials and members of the business community cut the ribbon on the new Mellow Mushroom Monday, July 22.

## Mellow Mushroom Opens in Herndon

Pizza bakers offer wide selection of craft beer, pizzas, veggie and gluten free options.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

Members of the Herndon Town Council and business community, not to mention those interested in a good pizza pie, were on hand for the opening of Mellow Mushroom Pizza Bakers on Elden Street Monday, July 22. The location, which is at the former Fuddrucker's location, is the first in the Northern Virginia area.

"I can't think of a better place to get us started in Northern Virginia than Herndon," said Pooja Mehta, owner of the location. "We tailor our locations to the communities we're in, so with this location we chose a railroad theme, which is a nod to Herndon's history, but we also added some more futuristic elements, and some 'graffiti,' which can usually be found at train stations."

Mayor Lisa Merkel said she was excited to welcome a new restaurant to Herndon.

"We recently launched a new restaurant initiative, because we're trying to make Herndon a destination for the area's best restaurants," she said. "This plays right into that. I think this is going to be a huge success."

Mellow Mushroom's signature is their pizza, and the base for their pizza is their dough, which is fresh made and hand tossed. They also have options for vegetarians, vegans and those on a gluten free diet.

"My personal favorite thing on the menu is the Red Skin Potato pizza," Mehta said, referring to the pie with red potatoes, bacon, onions, cheddar, mozzarella, sour cream and ranch dressing. "It's like a baked potato with a crust."

Other menu items include hoagies, calzones, salads and appetizers.

They will also have 29 beers on tap, as well as Abita root beer on tap. The selections include a variety of beers from around the country, including local breweries such as Ashburn's Lost Rhino, Alexandria's Port City and Washington, D.C.'s DC Brau.

Shae Dannemiller, general manager, as well as the cicerone, which is the beer version of a sommelier, says they aimed to get a wide variety of beers into the restaurant.

"We wanted to be well-rounded, to have a selec-



From left, Pooja Mehta of Mellow Mushroom and Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel cut the ribbon on the Herndon location of Mellow Mushroom Monday, July 22.

tion that will appeal to a lot of tastes," he said. "We'll see some rotations over time, depending on what's selling and what people want to see."

Mellow Mushroom has a beer club, where members can get points for trying different beer types as they come in. Club rewards include special tastings, brewery tours and more.

"I've been to a Mellow Mushroom in Florida, and I've always remembered the pizza I had there, it had all sorts of different kinds of mushrooms, which are my favorite," said Chuck Gonzalez of Herndon. "I heard about the opening a few weeks ago, and I wanted to make sure I got here for lunch. Hopefully it's as good as I remember."

Mellow Mushroom is located at 1030 Elden Street.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Sarah Overton and Nathan Hawn (center) in the production of "Bye Bye Birdie."

## Herndon High to Present 'Bye Bye Birdie'

Performances set for July 26, 27 and 28.

BY RYAN DUNN

The Grand Musical Theatre Experience returns to Herndon High School in July this year with a production of the musical "Bye Bye Birdie." Last year, the production was of the musical "Oliver Twist," which was a tremendous success. "We chose 'Bye Bye Birdie' because it is a light fun musical for the summer," said Herndon Theatre Director Zoë Dillard. "We have had great parent support, and the drama boosters have paid for everything."

"Bye Bye Birdie" is a stage musical with a book by Michael Stewart, lyrics by Lee Adams, and music by Charles Strouse. The musical is a satire on American society set in 1958. The story was inspired by the phenomenon of Elvis Presley and his draft notice into the Army in 1957.

Dana Van Slyke will be musical director for this production. "This is the 20th musical at Herndon High that I will be helping produce, and my third Summer Theatre Production," said Van Slyke. Van Slyke works at Herndon High as the school choral director.

Chris Hrozencik, who graduated from Herndon High this year, returns to the stage as Albert Peterson, the manager for rock and roll superstar Conrad Birdie, who will be played by Nathan Hawn. "Albert's personal life and his work life are conflicting a lot, but the story has a happy ending," said Hrozencik. "I also like the little chaos that comes into a role like this." Hrozencik will be majoring in theatre at George Mason University.

THE SUMMER PRODUCTION is also an opportunity for teenagers to gain experience on the stage. Henry Metcalf, a sixth grader, plays a bartender in this musical. "I was in the production last year of Oliver Twist, so I decided to audition and join in this year's production. We have done several rehearsals, and I am definitely looking forward to joining drama club in high school."

The scenic set designer and light technician is Herndon High School student, Cameron Kelly, who also graduated this year. "I have been with the drama team for two years. I like this genre of show and helped design the set, I also help with the lighting."

Megan Overton, who also graduated from Herndon High this year, will be performing as Rose Alvarez. "In this production, we have kids from all over the county," said Overton. "When I got the role of Rose or Rosie, I was at first a little panicky, but then I listened to the music ..."

Annie Frazier, a rising senior, is playing the role of Ursula Merkle, Conrad Birdie's number one fan. "She [Ursula] is insane, obsessive. For me it is so exciting to play someone who is definitely not like me at all."

This production including both role actors and ensembles has a large cast. "There are 58 members in the cast," said Dillard. "This is the biggest cast we have ever had in our summer program, including persons from rising sixth to 12th grade. They have all been very dedicated, and we have been giving it all they got."

THE MUSICAL will be at Herndon High on July 26 and July 27 at 7:30 p.m. There will be a production on July 28 at 2 p.m. To learn more about this production, visit the Herndon Drama webpage at <http://www.herndonrama.org>.

## PET CONNECTION

# Meet Herndon's 'Best Friends'

❖ **Mia Bollerer, 7**, has a fluffy white guinea pig named Anderson, whose name, she says, "starts with an 'A' because he is so awesome!" She got Anderson on the day of the presidential election last year and remembers that she spent her first night with Anderson sitting on the couch with her family while watching the news. Mia has had fish in the past, but really loves that she can hug and snuggle with Anderson instead of just watching him in a cage. Anderson likes to sit on her chest and lick her nose. Mia says that one of the funniest things that Anderson has ever done was escape from his cage and then hide under the bed, refusing to come out. Mia and her little brother Owen, 5, love to play with Anderson and are very happy to have him as their pet.

❖ **The Chester family**, Diana, Al, Ryan and Justine, have two cats. Both are 8 years old and one is named Harley and the other is Maggie. The two cats get along fairly well; they like to sleep together and groom each other, but "Harley is very dominating over Maggie and likes to boss her around," according to Diana Fields, accountant. "Harley also likes to pretend that he is a dog and play fetch with straws and the plastic tops of milk cartons," says Justine, 17. Maggie, the calico cat, really loves Ryan. Though Maggie is not as friendly to strangers as Harley is, she loves to follow Ryan around and play with all of her toys. The Chester's love their cats and consider them members of their family.

❖ **Margaret Shaw, 18**, has two chinchillas named Jerry and Eskimo. According to Margaret, Jerry used to be very energetic when he was younger; one time, when the cage door was left open, she says that Jerry did a back flip off of the cage, landed on a shelf, and ran all around the play room. When she and her older sister, Kathryn, 22, were younger, they would bring the chinchillas into the shower and let them crawl around. They eat papaya and alfalfa grass. A fun fact about these creatures is, if you pull their tails, they break and fall off as a de-

fense mechanism. Margaret's favorite thing about her chinchillas is that they have little fingernails. Jerry and Eskimo are fun, cuddly, and entertaining, making them the perfect pets for Margaret and her family.

❖ **Carson Stewart** is the proud owner of neon tetras, guppies, and an albino catfish. He takes care of the fish himself and gave them fun names like Elvis, Michael Phelps and Jimmy Hendrix. Carson used to have a bigger tank with a bunch of fish and snails, but many of the fish ended up dying and the snail mysteriously disappeared. The Stewarts are a family of animal lovers and have had many pets in the past, including hamsters and a parakeet. The parakeet, who was a girl that they named Kevin, just like in the movie UP, was found in a tree near their house. Carson and his brother Barrett took care of Kevin before giving it to another bird loving neighbor. Barrett Stewart, 13, said that Kevin once escaped from his cage and flew right into a bowl of sauce! All of the Stewart's pets have been very well loved and the ones that have passed away have been buried with care in their back yard.

❖ **Grace** is a rambunctious labradoodle puppy who has lived with the Fisher family for almost a year. Jack Fisher, 11, explained that his family got Gracie after their last dog passed away and he and his brothers were very excited to have another pet in the house. "Gracie is really smart, even though she barks and runs to the door when there is a door bell on the tv," says Will Fisher, 6. Will also explained the ways that Gracie comes up with tricky ways to distract him by running around so that she can run off with a shoe, a ball, or some food. This puppy has so much energy and "it is crazy how high she can jump!" exclaimed Charlie Fisher, 9. Gracie will do anything to get food that is up on a high counter or table. This high-energy dog is the perfect companion for this family of three young boys.

— SARAH ANDERSON

### PEOPLE AND PETS



**Mia Bollerer with her guinea pig, Anderson.**



**Margaret Shaw holding her chinchilla, Eskimo, while her other pet, Jerry, sleeps in his hammock.**

PHOTOS BY SARAH ANDERSON/THE CONNECTION



**Diana Fields, Al Chester and Justine Chester with their two cats, Maggie and Harley.**



**Carson Stewart poses with his fish tank.**

# ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). The deadline is the Friday prior to the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/apr/11/fairfax-county-calendar/>.

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 24

**Animators of the 60s Film & Art Gallery.** All Day, at 1921 Freedom Drive, Reston. See original images from cartoon classics from the 1960's: The Flintstones, The Jetsons, Scooby Doo, Pink Panther, Top Cat and more; exhibit up through Monday, Aug. 5. 703-478-0778 or [artinsights.com](http://artinsights.com).

**Seniors Movie Day.** 10 a.m., at Bow Tie Cinemas, Reston Town Center, 11940 Market St., Reston. Reston Association presents "Quarter"; refreshments and door prizes available (free to 55 and older). 703-435-6530 or [www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org).

**Ryan Buckle & Friends.** 10-11 a.m., at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Ryan Buckle & Friends gives the young and the young at heart science they can sing to and enjoy. [www.ryanbuckleandfriends.com](http://www.ryanbuckleandfriends.com).

## THURSDAY/JULY 25

**Capoeira Community Demonstration.** 6-8 p.m., Reston Town Center, 11940 Market St., Reston. See a demonstration of Afro-Brazilian martial and self-defense form that brings together movement and music. [abadadc.org](http://abadadc.org).

**Gonzo's Nose.** 7:30-8:30 p.m., at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Gonzo's Nose brings solid musicianship to a massive set list of cover songs, which range from the early 80's up until songs that hit the radio just yesterday. [www.gonzosnose.com/](http://www.gonzosnose.com/).

## FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JULY 26-27

**Bye Bye Birdie.** 7:30 p.m., at Herndon High School, Door 6, 800 Bennett St., Herndon. The Grand Summer Theatre Production features local youth talent in the story of a teen heartthrob surrounded in the girl fanfare of a yesteryear Justin Bieber-type star. \$10. [www.herndonrama.org](http://www.herndonrama.org).

## FRIDAY/JULY 26

**The Reflex.** 6:30-10:30 p.m., at 777 Lynn St., Herndon. The Reflex plays hit songs of the 80's. <http://www.herndonrocks.com/>.

## SATURDAY/JULY 27

**Cooking Demonstration at Big**

**Bowl.** 9 a.m. Chef Oscar Huerta demonstrates how to prepare Panang Curry Chicken. \$25 for adults, \$10 for children 10 years and under. 703-787-8852 or [bigbowl.com](http://bigbowl.com).

## SATURDAY/JULY 27

**The Great Zucchini.** 10-11 a.m., Lake Fairfax Park Amphitheater, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. The Great Zucchini, a preschool and kindergarten entertainer, performs a colorful magic show where every child is a star and laughs are guaranteed. [www.thegreatzucchini.com](http://www.thegreatzucchini.com).

**Great Paws Walk.** 10 a.m.-noon, Great Falls Assisted Living, 1121 Reston Avenue, Herndon. This 1-mile, pet-friendly walk raises money for the Red Star Program by the American Humane Association, a disaster relief program. \$30, registration opens at 9:30 a.m., walkers will receive a dog bandana and refreshments. 703-421-0690, [www.greatfallsassistedliving.com](http://www.greatfallsassistedliving.com), or [sfields@greatfallsassistedliving.com](mailto:sfields@greatfallsassistedliving.com).

**Incendio.** 7:30-10 p.m., at the Pavilion, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Incendio plays Spanish flamenco with a latin fusion mix. <http://www.restontowncenter.com/events.html>.

## SATURDAY/JULY 27

**BBQ Brawl Presented by Northern Virginia Magazine.** 3-5 p.m., Reston Town Center Pavilion, 1818 Discovery Street, Reston. At Nova Wars, a friendly food fight, three restaurants compete for the King of NoVA BBQ title. [northernvirginiamag.com/novawars/](http://northernvirginiamag.com/novawars/)

## SATURDAY/JULY 27

**Artist's Reception for the Town Calendar Photography Competition.** 7 p.m., ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. The Council for the Arts of Herndon and ArtSpace present a reception for the 2013 Town Calendar Photography Competition. Free admission, open to the public, free parking and light refreshments available.

## MONDAY/JULY 29

**Deadline for League of Reston Artists' "Paint and Beyond" Exhibit Entries.** Artists are encouraged to enter paintings, mixed media, and other hangable two-dimensional works, excluding photography, in the exhibit. Torpedo Factory resident Connie Slack will judge the pieces. The works will be on display at the U.S. Geological Survey Aug. 2-29.

## PEOPLE AND PETS



PHOTO BY DIANE PIRRES/SPIRIT VOLUNTEER

**Meet Lucy** My name is Lucinda (Lucy for short). I'm a Haflinger mare and work at Spirit Open Equestrian. All our volunteers think I'm really cute. I love my job and riders love me 'cause I'm short and it's easy for them to get up on my back. Here I am in harness for the first time. Someday, I hope I can pull a cart and take folks in wheelchairs on drives with me. If you want to be my BFF, just give me a peppermint candy. (Photo taken at lower ring of Frying Pan Park).

## TUESDAY/JULY 30

**Bruno's Barnyard Bash.** 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., North Hills Pavilion, 1325 North Village Road, Reston. Enjoy the Reston Association's activities full of farm filled fun—including crafts, petting zoo, age appropriate games, delicious food, and plenty of photo opportunities. Reston Association member: \$8; Non-member: \$12. 703-435-6571 or [Events@reston.org](mailto:Events@reston.org).

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 31

**Trip to Toby's Dinner Theatre: "Les Miserables."** 9:15 a.m.-4:15 p.m. Reston Association is having a chartered bus trip to Toby's Dinner Theatre for a buffet lunch in Columbia, Md. to see "Les Miserables." Ages 55 and older, \$62 for RA members, \$68 for non-members, bus pick-up locations include Hunter Woods Shopping Center, Thoreau Place, 1951 Sagewood Lane, Lake Anne Plaza parking lot. Contact [Ashleigh@reston.org](mailto:Ashleigh@reston.org) or call 703-435-6577 for more information.

## THURSDAY/AUG. 1

**Golf Tournament Benefit for the Council for the Arts of Herndon.** 9 a.m. 909 Ferndale Ave, Herndon. This benefit is sponsored by Jimmy's Old Town Tavern. Scholarships may still be available.

Call 703-626-1066 for more information.

## THURSDAY/AUG. 1

**The Annandale Brass.** 7:30-8:30 p.m., at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Formed in 1997, the Annandale Brass is comprised of NOVA-Annandale Symphony Orchestra members and additional musicians. [reunionmusic.org](http://reunionmusic.org).

## FRIDAY/AUG. 2

**Kristen & the Noise.** 6:30-10:30 p.m., at 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Kristen & the Noise plays today's and yesterday's best covers and party tunes. [www.herndonrocks.com/](http://www.herndonrocks.com/).

**Weekend Bluegrass Concert Series.** Doors open at 7 p.m., show begins at 8 p.m., Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. The Bankesters perform a series of bluegrass music. \$12 for people aged 12 and above, children under 12 admitted for free. Smoke free, light snack service.

**The Bankesters.** 8 p.m., at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. An old school bluegrass family band composed of mom, dad, three daughters and one son-in-law present intricate vocal harmony and complex wood and string work. [http://www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net/?page\\_id=18](http://www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net/?page_id=18).



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## PET CONNECTION

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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:

**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 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

## The Challenge: Joining Together to Save Animals

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.

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,” said Barbara Hutcherson of Lost Dog.

“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](http://challenge.aspcapro.org).

— AMBER HEALY

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.”

### 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.



Chestnut



Geisha



Kenzi

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# PET CONNECTION

## Nell and Magic

Don and Linda Rutledge sent us these pictures of their cat Nell, waiting to be served, and her brother, Magic, enjoying the pillow. They are 3 years old and are from the Fancy Cat Rescue in Herndon.



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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

#### 86th Omitted

To the Editor:

I was pleased to see all the various Virginia candidates that you listed in an article in your last edition ("Virginia Voters Get More Choices in 2013," July 17-23). Virginia voters certainly have many choices this coming November.

However, I was disappointed that this same article in the Oak Hill/Herndon Connection failed to list the candidates who are running in the 86th District, the candidates whose district includes the Oak Hill and Herndon areas.

This coming November, Democrat Jennifer Boysko will be challenging Republican Tom Rust for a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates in the 86th District.

**Barbara Glakas**  
Herndon

### 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.

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By e-mail:  
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## Otter Divers Prevail Over Rolling Hills

**T**he Oakton Otter divers prevailed over Rolling Hills on Tuesday, July 17, with a score of 38 to 30, bringing their win-loss record to 1 and 3. Four Otter divers took first place in their respective categories: Molly Estes in Freshman Girls with a score of 63.95, Mackenzie Brennan in Junior Girls with a score of 114.80, Elena Colbert in Intermediate Girls with a score of 147.50, and AJ Colbert in Senior Girls with a score of 190.45. The Otter divers swept the top three places in Freshman Girls with Lexi Pierce placing second and Claire Newberry placing third. Other Otter divers who placed were: Blaise Wuest (Freshman Boys, third), Kenna Campfield (Junior Girls, third), Julia Powell (Intermediate Girls, second), Brad Burgeson (Intermediate Boys, second), Everi Osofsky (Senior Girls, second), and Gil Osofsky (Senior Boys, second). The Otters next and last dual meet is on Tuesday, July 23, against Tuckahoe at Oakton at 6 p.m.

**Mackenzie Brennan took first place in Junior Girls category with a score of 114.80**

**Molly Estes took first place in Freshman Girls category with a score of 63.95.**



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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.

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