

Langley, Cooper Orchestras Share the Spotlight

Great Falls Literary
Talent on Display

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Great Falls Citizens
Association Talks
Ticks and Trails

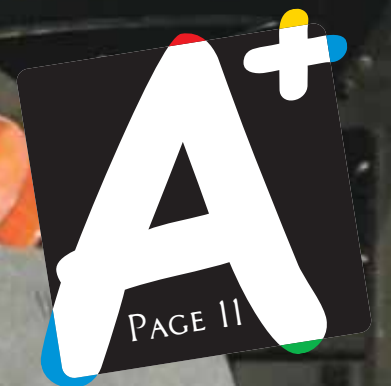
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NEWS, PAGE 3

Conductor Bo-Min Son leads the Cooper Symphonic Orchestra in del Borgo's 'Arlington Sketches' in joint performance with Langley High Orchestra.

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PHOTO BY CHI PHAM





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Great Falls Citizens Association Vice President Bill Canis runs the Town Hall Meeting. His panel of expert speakers on topics related to deer management were Jim McGlone with the Virginia Dept. of Forestry, Josh Smith with Fairfax County Dept. of Health, and Virginia State Trooper Hendrick.



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Great Falls Citizens Association Talks Ticks and Trails

Town Hall Meeting addresses 'Deer Management' and the future of 'Trails, Paths and Sidewalks' in the village.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Braving frigid gusts of wind that left some of them without power at home, residents came out in force for the Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) Town Hall Meeting on the night of Wednesday, March 12. The agenda consisted of only two topics – “Deer Management” and the future of “Trails, Paths and Sidewalks” in the village, but there was enough material and discussion to fill the 3 hours allotted.

Bill Canis, Vice President of the GFCA as well as Co-Chair of its Environment, Parks and Trails Committee, was the evening’s facilitator, introducing a trio of expert speakers during the portion of the program related to the increasing deer population and their impact on the environment, personal health and vehicular safety. Before yielding the floor, Canis informed the audience that the Deer Management topic would be addressed in two parts, starting with this meeting, and continuing at the association’s next meeting on April 8. He also urged them to participate by taking an online survey on the topic at www.surveymonkey.com/s/FOREST2TH, or by a link on their website at www/GFCA.org.

Jim McGlone, an Urban Forest Conservationist with the Virginia Department of Forestry, was the first to take the podium, and gave a comprehensive overview of the structure of a forest, and what it should look like if it is healthy, in balance, and sustainable for the future. Citing a long term study of the Mason Neck State Park in Lorton, which has similar characteristics to the local forests, McGlone demonstrated how the deer population explosion, due to the lack of what he termed an “apex predator” to naturally control their numbers, was gradually destroying the lower layers of the forests. “And my backyard,” commented an attendee to some laughs and a lot of head-nodding in agreement. By devouring the lower levels of the forest, “that starts to affect other forest consumers like songbirds and small mammals,” said McGlone. “Then there are fewer birds to eat the insects and you start to see more insect-borne disease.” He also spoke to issues of storm water management and air quality when the young trees and shrubs and

grasses of the lower forest are wiped out. Possibly the worst effect of all, “they are eating the future forest,” he added. “There is nothing left to continue the growth of the forest.”

NEXT UP was Josh Smith, an environmental health specialist and biologist with Fairfax County Dept. of Health, who took the audience through the lifecycle of a tick, specifically the “black-legged” or “deer tick,” the culprit that can carry Lyme disease with its bite. “Deer are the hosts, but not the carriers,” explained Smith. “This is the time of year when the ticks are hatching, and many people get infected at the earliest stage in the tick’s lifecycle because it is so small and hard to spot. Most cases of Lyme disease are reported between April and July, “but remember,” he warned, “any nice day can bring out ticks. We’ve seen them active between Christmas and New Year’s Day, just because the temperatures spiked a bit higher than normal for that time of year.” In 2013, 202 cases of Lyme disease were reported in Fairfax County; 20 cases of Spotted Fever and 10 of Anaplasmosis were also reported last year.

Smith provided a number of practical approaches to prevent becoming a victim of Lyme disease, “some of which you won’t like, like wearing long sleeves and long pants and tucking those pants into boots. Not the most comfortable summer outfit!” he joked. “But at least always take a shower when you come indoors, and do a complete tick check. Get a friend, spouse, whomever to help check those spots it’s hard for you to see. If you find one, or more than one, remove it and for your health’s sake, have it identified.” Fairfax County Health Department at 10777 Main Street in Fairfax will identify ticks at no charge. A video, showing close up the most effective way to remove a tick – “always use tweezers and prop the body of the tick up before you pull up and away,” – was shown to some groans from the viewers.

Several audience members asked about chemical treatment against ticks. “Treatments that contain DEET are the only ones that repel ticks,” responded Smith. “But read those labels and follow them carefully,” he cautioned. “And be aware, many broad-spec

SEE TOWN HALL, PAGE 4



PHOTOS BY CHI PHAM

Langley HS Orchestra freshmen students pose for the camera after a fantastic performance in the Pyramid Pride Concert. From left: Violist Katherine Quion, violinists Su Yeon Yoo, Jackie Fraley, and Sadaf Sizardkhani.

Langley, Cooper Orchestras Share the Spotlight

BY QUAN PHAM
SENIOR/LANGLEY HIGH

On the evening of March 13, the Langley High School Orchestra and Cooper Middle School Orchestra shared the stage in the annual Pyramid concert. Before the

concert, a dinner was held to welcome the Middle School students and give them a chance to mingle with the older musicians.

The concert featured seven different orchestras; three from Cooper and four from Langley, and each orchestra was led by either Cooper MS conductor, Ms. Bo-Min Son, or Langley HS conductor Dr. Scott McCormick. Langley’s Freshman Orchestra opened the concert with two pieces by Shostakovich and Gilière.

The freshmen were followed by the Cooper Concert Orchestra’s performance of “Conquistador!” The concert continued with Langley and Cooper Orchestras switching between orchestras and performing a variety of musical themes. The Langley

Sophomore Orchestra performed “Point Lookout” by Brian Balmages, which captures

the songs and scenery during the Civil War. Cooper Symphonic Orchestra treated the audience to “Arlington Sketches” by Elliot del Borgo. The Langley Symphonic Orchestra’s performance of “Carmen Suite” by Georges Bizet changed the atmosphere of the auditorium into an opera house. Cooper’s Chamber Orchestra played “Iditarod”

by Soon Hee Newbold to wrap up the selections from Cooper. There were Interlude performances on the piano by Lyric Yu and Theron Masters, which captivated the audience. The last piece of the evening was “Tema Russo” from “Serenade for Strings” by Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky, performed by the top musicians of Langley combining the Philharmonic Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra.

The Pyramid Concerts are a time for Cooper and Langley students to unite and play for one community. It is also an opportunity to inspire younger musicians to continue playing and join these organizations. David Cramer (father of senior violinist Alexandra Cramer) said, “It was a wonderful concert and ran very smoothly.”



Cooper Chamber Orchestra’s James Rau (left) and Bella Valcourt hold down the cello section for their entire orchestra.



Cancer had act one. Isabel received the encore.

At 15 months old, Isabel was diagnosed with a tumor on her left kidney. It was growing rapidly and immediate action was required. Isabel's parents turned to the experts who specialize in pediatric cancer. Watch her journey at JustRightForChildren.com/Isabel.

“ I’m Isabel
and I like
to dance. ”

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WÖRKER/THE CONNECTION
Fairfax County Department of Health environmental health specialist Joshua Smith speaks to the Great Falls Citizens Association Town Hall Meeting. Smith offered suggestions on how to prevent tick bites and how to safely remove the insects.



Architect Robert Mobley, AIA, is a long term resident of Great Falls. At the Citizens Association Town Hall Meeting, Mobley gave a comprehensive presentation that discussed the history of trails, paths and sidewalks in the village and surrounding area, and made several recommendations on making Great Falls “more walkable, more connected, and more accessible.”

Town Hall Meeting Talks Ticks and Trails

FROM PAGE 3

trum insecticides will kill all other insects, not just the ticks, and could effect other small mammals, as well.” Smith also recommended clothing treated with Permethrin.

The final guest speaker on the topic of the deer and human relationship was State Trooper Hendrick, who showed a video that demonstrated how deer see cars. “There’s a reason for the saying ‘a deer in the headlights look.’ Deer are actually blinded by headlights because of their exceptional night vision,” said Trooper Hendrick. “Their pupils are that large. And they see a car coming straight at them as a stationary object.” Hendrick stated that in 2013, of the 11,685 reportable car crashes in Fairfax County, only 83 were deer crashes.

“But that number does not reflect incidents that were not classified as ‘reportable’ or that were not reported to law enforcement in the first place,” he noted. If a deer is killed during a collision, or if someone notices a dead deer, Hendrick advised that they call the Virginia Department of Transportation, the authority charged with the removal of dead deer on the roadways.

THE SECOND PORTION of the evening’s program was a presentation by Robert Mobley, a resident of Great Falls since 1973, and an architect who has been practicing

in the village since 1979. Mobley has spent countless time and energy researching and reviewing the current state of paths, sidewalks and trails and came before the assembly with suggestions and recommendations to make Great Falls more walkable and connected. His vision includes soft roads that would connect neighborhoods to each other and to area parks, with hard surface roads connecting to the village center and beyond to the new paths being constructed along Rte. 7 that would then connect to Reston, the Washington and Old Dominion Trail and to the new Metro Station at Wiehle Avenue.

For the hard surface roads, Mobley says “porous asphalt would be the best.” Despite the fact that it is more expensive at installation, it requires less maintenance and re-surfacing, and can be partly made from recycled materials. “Reston says they

haven’t re-surfaced in twenty-five years, whereas stone dust roads really need to be re-done twice a year in order to be properly maintained.”

More on Mobley’s approach to connecting Great Falls via trails, paths and sidewalks, and more detail from the speakers’ presentations is available on the GFCA website at www.gfca.org. The Great Falls Citizens Association fiscal year is coming to a close and they are offering discounted memberships for the rest of this year, and reminding residents they purchase membership online at their website.

“This is the time of year when the ticks are hatching, and many people get infected at the earliest stage in the tick’s lifecycle because it is so small and hard to spot.”

— Josh Smith, an environmental health specialist and biologist

NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

St. Patrick's Snow Day in Great Falls

Enjoying a St. Patrick's Day Snow Day, from left: Avery and Lexie Perez, Allie Wakeman; Front: Caitlyn Shumadine.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL A. SHULER

Windstorm Hits Great Falls

This large tree came down across Beach Mill at Falcon Ridge subdivision during last Tuesday night's (March 11) windstorm causing power outages for the surrounding neighborhoods. Beach Mill was closed until late into the night.

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OPINION

Income Gap Alive and Well

Statistics make life in the area sound idyllic, but many families are left out in the land of plenty.

Northern Virginia is a place of wonder and plenty. So says the New York Times this past week in, "Income Gap Meet the Longevity Gap," (March 15, 2014).

Fairfax County is cited as place whose residents "are among the longest-lived in the country," and compared to McDowell County, W.Va., where residents have one of the shortest life expectancies. In Fairfax, "men have an average life expectancy of 82 years and women, 85, about the same as in Sweden. In McDowell, the averages are 64 and 73, about the same as in Iraq."

If you are reading this, chances are that the Connection was delivered to your single family home in an affluent neighborhood. In fact, many of us do live in the Northern Virginia described in the New York Times. All it takes is money.

"In Fairfax, there are ample doctors, hospi-

tals, recreation centers, shops, restaurants, grocery stores, nursing homes and day care centers, with public and private entities providing cradle-to-grave services to prosperous communities."

But here is where the crack in the wall appears: "The jobs tend to be good jobs, providing health insurance and pensions, even if there is a growing low-wage work force of health aides, janitors, fast-food workers and the like."

In Fairfax County Public Schools, more than 49,000 of the 185,000 students are poor enough to qualify for subsidized or free meals. In Fairfax County, more than 100,000 people lack health insurance, including 35,000 who could be covered now at no cost to themselves or the state if they lived in West Virginia because West Virginia has embraced the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, so its poorest residents do have access to health care. Not so in Virginia.

In Northern Virginia, we have our own income gap, and likely our own longevity gap. In Northern Virginia, we have a health care crisis. In Northern Virginia, we do have an affordable housing crisis.

Tens of thousands of working poor people in Northern Virginia, families with at least one full time job, cannot afford to rent an apartment. Earnings of at least \$1,100 a week would be required to afford market rate rent in Fairfax County according to the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance. But the county's 50,000 retail workers, for example, average about \$635 a week according to the Virginia Employment Commission. The county's 40,000-plus food service workers average \$415 a week. Even the county's 38,000 local government employees average \$950 weekly, a stretch in this area.

To read the story in the New York Times, go to www.NYTimes.com and search "income gap."

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GFCA Appeals for Greater Citizens Involvement

To the Editor:

In recent weeks several letters have raised questions about the construction of the Walker Road "Diet Plan," which is reshaping the road between Great Falls' two shopping areas. While the construction has been disruptive, Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA), Fairfax County

and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) believe that when work is completed, the changes will improve safety for cars and pedestrians and improve the appearance of the village commercial area.

Previously, five lanes of traffic made crossing Walker Road hazardous for pedestrians and bicyclists.

This current plan was preceded by a 1999 traffic calming study that found speeding in that stretch of roadway was a chronic problem. The study led to the recommendation to reduce the speed and put in a crosswalk. The current Diet Plan followed on this 1999 plan and was actively shaped during the years 2006-2011 by public meetings of residents and the Great Falls Business and Professional Association

(BPA) and was a fact-based pro-

cess. The former owner of Great Falls Hardware, who was among the first businessmen to support the Diet Plan, said his only regret was that the project didn't come soon enough to save his business. The vast majority of BPA members agreed it would make the downtown area more pedestrian-friendly. No less than seven articles, some that included design proposals, were published in the Connection and other local papers and after consideration of several options, a final design was chosen by Fairfax DOT and approved by VDOT.

While not everyone will agree on the Diet Plan or other civic issues, GFCA encourages and seeks participation by all, with the conviction that broad citizen participation will lead to a better community. The Walker Road Diet Plan was discussed publicly at monthly GFCA meetings, repeatedly in GFCA newsletters, on the GFCA website (www.gfca.org) and in Connection articles over many years. GFCA's commitment to citizen involvement is demonstrated by 3 recent community surveys – on the Exxon Groundwater Contamination, on Transportation & Paths, and now on Forest & Deer Management. The latter is just launched and residents are encouraged to visit our website to register their opinions.

Those that send letters that complain about lack of public notice would do better to attend GFCA meetings at the Grange on the sec-

ond Tuesday of every month – our meetings are open to all. The www.gfca.org website

provides details for each Town Hall meeting. Both GFCA and The Connection try to inform the public as to community issues. So residents can weigh in when subjects are being discussed and plans are being laid. Complaining after projects have been approved by county and state governments is not as constructive as participating in their formulation. We encourage the community and the reporters to attend GFCA meetings and hearings, visit the Web site and read the paper, voice their opinions, and play a role in creating solutions.

Our little village sits on the edge of Tysons, the fastest growing urban area in Virginia. Over the next few years, many development challenges will face our semi-rural area. Route 7 and Silver Line transportation projects are among them. Only the active participation of all parties, the citizens, the GFCA and the paper to serve our residents can provide the best for our community. GFCA asks all interested Great Falls citizens to come to our meetings and join our committees. No other organization in Great Falls is looked to more by public officials, or has as much influence in shaping local initiatives, so we ask all Great Falls citizens to join us in this cause.

Eric Knudsen
GFCA President

Commending Election Officials During Sunshine Week

To the Editor:

During this year's Sunshine Week, the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area salutes the Fairfax County Electoral Board, General Registrar and employees of the Fairfax County Office of Elections for their transparency and willingness to share information with the public in the follow-up to the 2013 general election.

Their handling of the election reporting, canvass, provisional ballot determinations and recounts in the races for Virginia Attorney General and 33rd District Senate seats exemplified the best principles of open government. The Office of Elections frequently published updates on election reporting problems and the extended provisional ballot determination process, later on providing details about the progress of the recounts, all the while describing the safeguards in place to protect the integrity of the ballot.

That integrity is essential for our system of government to work.

This is why during Sunshine Week we commend the Fairfax County Office of Elections for sharing important voting results and

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 7

Great Falls
CONNECTION

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

information with the residents of Fairfax County, detailing exactly how their votes in these important elections were counted and protected.

Jones and Helen Kelly,
Co-Presidents
League of Women Voters of the
Fairfax Area

Saying 'No' With No Alternative

To the Editor:

Thank you for your considerate opinion that a vote against Medicaid expansion is a vote against Virginia. This opinion unfortunately gets little attention in the debate.

Those opposed to health care for the working poor in Virginia also opposed an increase in the minimum wage, which has not been increased at the Federal level since 2009.

And there is no logic to their reasoning why they oppose an expansion in health care coverage for as many as 400,000 Virginians. Nor do they offer an acceptable alternative.

Bruce Neilson
Fairfax

Not Cute at All

To the Editor:

There you go again, Mary, spotting that "free" federal money ["Voting against Virginia?" – Connection, March 12-18, 2014]. Don't you realize that many, if not most, of your readers see through your flowery attempts to sell an imaginary utopia? I mean, it used to be cute to read your "pie in the sky" collectivist fantasies when one could assume that your "intentions were good." But that same old intellectually deficient, emotional appeal doesn't manage to pass the sniff test anymore. It isn't cute at all, but rather sad; for those that unknowingly read your predictable, shortsighted and poorly vetted "opinion" with the hope that there is a feasible, sustainable solution to be found in there somewhere. But also rather insulting; that you do not realize that most of your readers are not so gullible. At least the Connection is "free;" even if federal money isn't.

Brent Emory
Vienna

Incorrect Assertion

To the Editor:

In a letter ["A Manufactured Crisis," Connection, March 12, 2014] Jack Kenny states that the ObamaCare Medical Devices tax applies to fishing poles and tires, and that "the Department of Health and Human Services has asked retailers to not show the tax on your sales receipt."

I found this rather hard to believe and, as I do with many

emails I receive regarding supposedly outrageous governmental actions, I did an Internet search. Sure enough, according to many fact-checking websites, this incorrect assertion has been making the rounds for over a year. Briefly summarizing, the Affordable Care Act imposes a 2.3 percent tax on manufacturers and importers of certain medical devices, but it does not apply to fishing poles or tires. It appears this misunderstanding originated due to a mistake in software used by Cabela's, a seller of hunting, fishing and outdoor gear.

According to the Star-Herald, a Nebraska newspaper (Cabela's headquarters are in Nebraska), on Jan. 1, 2013, "A companywide glitch in Cabela's cash register system that added a 2.3 percent 'Medical Excise Tax' to customers' purchases — everything from boots to bullets — was an error and will be refunded, a company spokesman said Monday."

http://www.starherald.com/news/local_news/cabela-s-blames-glitch-for-jan-tax-error-promises-refunds/article_9ba2f422-5a0d-11e2-

b22a-0019bb2963f4.html

Unfortunately, a copy of one of the receipts showing the tax was posted on the Internet and the fun began.

I should note there are manufacturers taxes on a variety of items, including fishing poles and tires (IRS Publication 510; www.irs.gov/publications/p510/ch05.html), but they are not related to the Affordable Care Act.

Fred Siskind
McLean

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CALENDAR

Send announcements to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

TUESDAY/MARCH 18 & SATURDAY/MARCH 22

Great Escapes. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tues.-Sat. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Dozens of original artworks by artists throughout the region inspired by travel at home and abroad. Free. 703-319-3971. www.ViennaArtsSociety.org

THURSDAY/MARCH 20

William Bird at the Great Falls Library. Noon to 1:30 p.m., Great Falls Public Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The Great Falls Writer's Group will host William Bird, curator of the Division of Political History at the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian, for a light luncheon and forum. 703-757-8560.

Tom Principato Band. 8 p.m., The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. The Tom Principato Band features everything from harmonica-heavy rock to reggae and funk infused tracks, as well as a locally inspired instrumental song, "22042 Falls Church, Virginia." \$25. 1.877.WOLFTRAP or wolftrap.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

Celebrate the Cherry Blossom Festival. 1-3 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Taste the many styles beyond what is used in the Japanese tea ceremony in this fascinating tasting. Shade grown, roasted, twig style, are just a few examples. Experience Japanese teas



Catch your favorite superhero in action at McLean's Alden Theatre on March 22, Superman 2050.

and tea treats beyond the traditional and take home tea samples including a Cherry Blossom Blend. Advance reservations and payment (\$30 each) required through the Mill at 703-759-2771.

Superman 2050. 8 p.m. The Alden, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. The story is set in a fictional 2050

metropolis (with a remarkable resemblance to Chicago). The show's imaginative, resourceful cast members, using only their bodies and voices, create every prop, scene, sound effect and character in a battle between Superman and Lex Luthor for the future of the Midwest's beloved high-speed rail network.

Purchase tickets at www.aldentheatre.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 23

Jump for Joy! 2-4 p.m. Providence Baptist Church, 8980 Brook Road, McLean. A community event for elementary age children. Pre-school children accompanied by parents are

also welcome. The event will involve giant inflatables, the Providence House of Bounce, inside their gym.

Music from Oberlin at Oakton. 7:30 p.m. 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Music from Oberlin at Oakton hosts current Oberlin Conservatory students three times a year to provide top-notch music to the local community. In its 14th season, this program will feature two pianists, a violinist, clarinetist, and a bassoonist. Free admission. 703-281-4230.

MONDAY/MARCH 24

It's a Jungle Out There. 1 p.m. Emmanuel Lutheran Church on 2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna. Free and open to the public. Ayr Hill Garden Club will feature "Boka Joe" on how to grow a tropical garden in a non-tropical climate. Joe Seamone, a management consultant and horticultural with McFall & Berry Landscape Management, will detail how to create, grow and over-winter your own piece of paradise. He will reveal which plants are best and most dramatic, and show pictures of some amazing gardens in the Washington, D.C. area. If interested, contact Cherie Lejeune at Latripp24@gmail.com so the Club can adjust refreshments and seating.

TUESDAY/MARCH 25

Annual Children's Printmaking Workshop. 4-5 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. A dozen members of the Vienna Arts Society will assist children ages 7 - 12 as they create original prints, to include printing a fish, making relief prints and mono-prints, etc. Free. Registration required by contacting the Children's Librarian at 703-938-

0405.

FRIDAY/MARCH 28-SUNDAY/APRIL 20

"The Cripple of Inishmaan" Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Excitement ripples through the sleepy Irish community of Inishmaan abuzz with the news that a Hollywood filmmaker plans to shoot a movie on a neighboring island. When young Cripple Billy lands a screen test, the oddball citizens of Inishmaan mount a heartbreakingly hilarious campaign bursting with dark humor and touching devotion. General admission: \$27. Seniors \$22. Students and Military \$15. Purchase online at www.1ststage.com or 703-854-1856.

SATURDAY/MARCH 29

Great Falls the World Hub of Innovation & Invention. 1-3 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Students, hobbyists, and academics from around the world are competing and collaborating in development small robotic aircraft to help protect endangered species including rhinos, elephants, and snow leopards. Using computer aided design, 3D printing and simple arduino-based robotics kits, the teams are able to create unmanned aerial vehicles that are optimized for the mission, exceeding the performance of aircraft that cost thousands of times more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 30

"Capitol Steps" at James Madison High School. 4 p.m., James

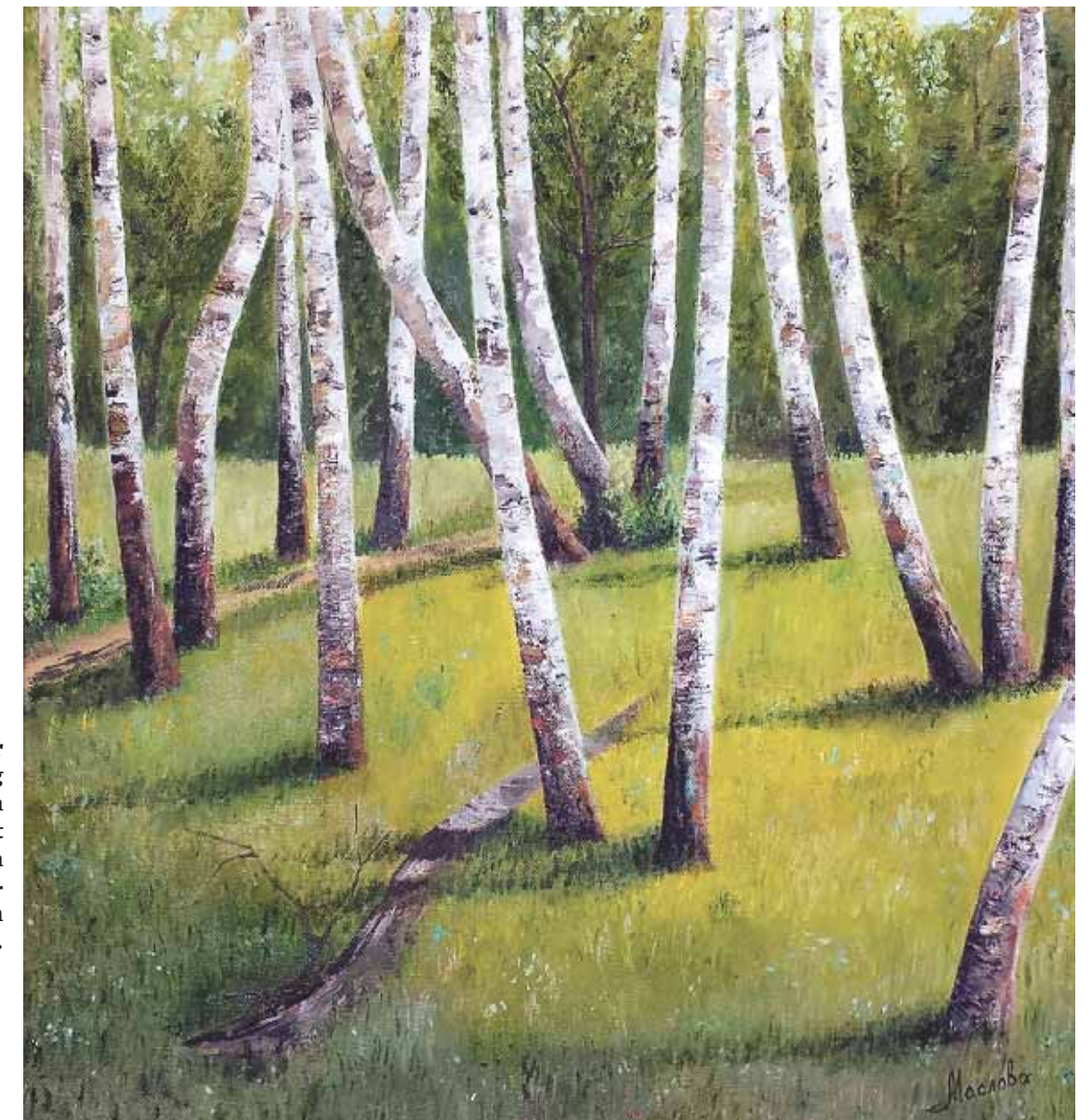
Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Dr, Vienna. Capitol Steps, the quick witted multi-faceted congressional staffers, will be performing their popular fast-paced musical political satire live. \$30. jmhscapsteps@gmail.com.

ONGOING

Straight Ahead Jazz. 8 p.m., at the Maplewood Grill, 132 Branch Road, Vienna. Every Monday drummer Karl Anthony hosts a night of straight ahead jazz featuring guest musicians and open to sit-in musicians. www.maplewoodgrill.com.

Personalized ebook/e-Reader Instruction.

Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Learn about your e-reader and downloading eBooks; event continues through March 31.



View "Birches near Kiev," an oil painting by Viktoriya Maslova and more great escapes at the Vienna Art Center. The exhibit runs through March 29.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY 2016 Programs
Wednesday, March 26, at 7:30 p.m.

The Governing Board of the McLean Community Center is **seeking input from residents** of Dranesville Small District 1A at its Public Hearing on Programs for FY 2016, which runs July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

The Board is interested in hearing residents' ideas for classes, community events, theatre programs, exhibits, tours and youth and teen activities.

If you would like to speak at the hearing, call the Center to have your name placed on the speakers' list. You also may submit comments in writing to: george.sachs@fairfaxcounty.gov

The McLean Community Center
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101
703-790-0123/TTY: 711
www.mcleancenter.org

NEWS

Literary Talent on Display

Great Falls Writers unite for 'An Evening With the Authors.'

BY CHRISTINA TYLER WEEKS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Kristin Clark Taylor

More than a dozen local published authors are joining together for "An Evening with the Authors," featuring many genres as the writers discuss with visitors how and why they journeyed into writing. The event will be Saturday, April 5, from 7 to 10 p.m., at the Great Falls Library and allows authors to sell and sign their works.

The event is hosted by the Great Falls Writer's Group (GFWG), which started last August – the brainchild of former White House Director of Media Relations, Kristin Clark Taylor.

"Until we came together to form the Great Falls Writer's Group six short months ago, I don't think anyone really recognized the depth and breadth of the tremendous literary talent we have right here in Great Falls," Taylor says. "I'm excited about this event not only because it recognizes and celebrates our local authors, but because it weaves together our community and our authors into one, whole cloth."

While the event features many of the GFWG members with published works, other GFWG members are learning the processes of publishing. Fifteen authors will have their published works for sale and signing at the event.

ONE OF THE EVENT'S featured authors, Jennifer Abernethy, has helped GFWG members build a social media presence and target audiences. Abernethy's book "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Social Media Marketing" uses non-technical language for novices learning how to navigate social media and build business.

Great Falls author Clarence Ashley will discuss what led him to write about a personal friend for whom he's named his non-fiction hardcover entitled "CIA SpyMaster," which details Cold War history and espionage.

B.W. DeCaro's "Grown Men Don't Cry" is a story of sacrifice, friendship, mortality, and

the will to persevere. The work of fiction is about how life changes and reshapes us. DeCaro, also of Great Falls, is donating a portion of his book's proceeds to causes supporting persons who suffer from depression and other anxiety disorders such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Working as a nurse for more than 20 years, author Nancy Hannan of Great Falls never intended a writing career, but she used her experience to help others and then wrote about her life as a means to help even more.

"A Way Out" is a memoir about an abusive relationship and offers information about how others can protect themselves physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually until they find a way out," said Hannan. In her second book, "A Mother Never Forgets," Hannan chronicles her real-life journey as she searched for the daughter she gave up for adoption at birth.

"The ABBA Tradition" is a spiritual book written by Dr. Michael Hattwick, who has a medical practice in Great Falls. In this book, Hattwick shares a topic he has lectured about around the world. "It's a spiritual and mystical tradition that lies deep within us and behind Judaism and Christianity," he explains. "Sometimes called the four-world tradition, this book reminds us that we live in four inter-related realities."

Susan Smith Blakely offers advice for female lawyers and women seeking law careers. Blakely's books "Best Friends at the Bar: What Women Need to Know About a Career in the Law" and "Best Friends at the Bar: The New Balance for Today's Woman

SEE LIBRARY, PAGE 13

Authors and Works Featured

Jennifer Abernethy, "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Social Media Marketing"
 Clarence Ashley, "CIA SpyMaster"
 Susan Smith Blakely, "Best Friends at the Bar: What Women Need to Know About a Career in the Law" and "Best Friends at the Bar: The New Balance for Today's Woman Lawyer"
 Patricia Britz, "Animals Need Zzzz's, Too"
 Burrus Carnahan, "Act of Justice: Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and the Law of War"
 Brandon DeCaro, "Grown Men Don't Cry"
 Lesley Hackman, "Bearabesque and the Humility Slippers"
 Nancy Hannan, "A Way Out" and "A Mother Never Forgets"
 Michael Hattwick, "The ABBA Tradition"
 Charles Mauro, "A Southern Spy in Northern Virginia; The Civil War Album of Laura Ratcliff," and "The Civil War in Fairfax County"
 Catherine Mathews, "My Family's Journey"
 Mindy Mitchell and Ed Land, "Lube of Life: A Tribute to Sex, Love and the Pursuit of Happiness in the Boomer Age"
 Sharon Rainey, "Making a Pearl from the Grit of Life"
 Bill Stamper, "Reality Checks"
 Kristin Clark Taylor, "The Forever Box"

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Local Art Educators, Galleries Celebrate Youth Art Month

Experts say art can teach valuable life skills.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Brightly colored self-portraits, landscapes dotted with spring flowers and hand-carved sculptures fill a gallery at the McLean Project for the Arts in McLean. All of the art was created by local school children. Meanwhile, in Alexandria, parents and tots dip their fingers in glue, clay and paint to create collages, sculptures and paintings.

“It is a true delight to see parents and children making things together in the studio. Joy is found in the stuff they make — the collages, paintings, drawings and sculptures — as well as the more intangible things we build: relationships, confidence, creativity, persistence and the many ways we make meaning through art,” said Kathryn Horn Coneway of Art at the Center in Mount Vernon.

These are just some of the local art activities for children. In fact, Youth Art Month is an annual ob-

servance held each March to emphasize the value of art and art education. This year’s theme is “Start With Art, Learn for Life,” which was chosen by the Council for Art Education, a sponsor of Youth Art Month.

Local art educators are using the month as an opportunity to emphasize the importance of art education and raise awareness about the important life skills it can build.

“We believe art is important to study for its inherent value, but art also promotes life skills, including creativity, problem solving, determination, concentration, collaboration and confidence,” said Samantha Marques-Mordkofsky, education and outreach manager for the Arlington Arts Center in Arlington. “Regardless of what field a child pursues later in life, these skills will translate and he or she will be better rounded because of ... art. We also offer multidisciplinary classes like Book Illustration, Amazing Architects & Engineers, and Murals: Big Art,



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MADEIRA SCHOOL

A student at The Madeira School in McLean enjoys art in the school’s art room.

Big Ideas where students have the opportunity to master technical skills in art while simultaneously learning about other subjects.”

“What our art educators have known for many years research is

now confirming,” said Benita Cathey, director of admissions at Grace Episcopal School in Alexandria. “Art helps develop critical thinking and reading skills. Art education is vital because it builds concentration, motivation and confidence.”

Jorge Luis Somarriba, art teacher and artist-in-residence at Norwood School in Bethesda, Md., says the school is a community of artists. “We believe in a process-oriented and child-centered philosophy,” he said. “Art nurtures self-confidence through self-discovery and personal visual expression. Art education is instrumental in the holistic development of a human being: spiritual, mental, emotional and physical. Art making develops the right brain, empowering individuals to become creative, problem-solvers who may think ‘outside the box.’”

Experts said art education also develops self-expression and an appreciation for the work of others. “Elementary school students create art with such unbridled enthusiasm for painting, drawing

and creating things,” said Dabney Cortina, communications director for the McLean Project for the Arts. “I think it’s because they haven’t been told that there is anything wrong with how they create art. Currently going on is our youth art show featuring Fairfax County Public Schools in the McLean area. It is incredible to look at. You see the talent they have. It is totally amazing.”

Stacie Steinke, chair of the Arts Department at The Madeira School in McLean suggests art education might not be taken as seriously as other disciplines. “Schools in general have been responding to trends that you need more science and math education and have been teaching to tests. Not at Madeira, but at some other schools, art education has diminished,” she said. “We look at arts as a process. Our students learn to work effectively with others. Our approach draws on a student’s natural curiosity, ability to perceive art in different forms and ability to think spatially. They develop cognitive growth, so they learn to see how parts relate to a whole.”

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SPORTS

Junior left-hander Maddy Witchey enters 2014 as McLean's No. 1 pitcher.



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

McLean Softball Blends Experience, Youth, Talent

Senior Geisler, sophomore Norton lead Highlanders.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The return of all-state center fielder Christi Geisler and a group of talented underclassmen have the McLean softball team thinking state tournament in 2014.

Last season, Geisler helped the Highlanders win 20 games and finish Liberty District runner-up. McLean fell one victory shy of advancing to the state tournament. Geisler, who batted over .500 en route to first-team all-district, first-team all-region and second-team all-state honors, returns for her senior season and will be key element in McLean's efforts to get to states.

"Christi Geisler, our center fielder, was all-everything last year," McLean head coach Maurice Tawil said. "... I'm expecting that and then some [this season]."

While Geisler provides varsity experience, McLean will also receive significant contributions from some talented younger athletes. Sophomore catcher Bella Norton, who is committed to Indiana University, is one of the team's best players and will be looked to for leadership despite being an underclassman.

"She's just growing. She's learning a lot," Tawil said. "We're putting a lot of responsibility on her right

now and she's handling it very well."

McLean has four freshmen on the roster, including starting first baseman Zoe Dobson, who hit an over-the-fence home run during a recent scrimmage. Kate Covington will see time in the outfield, Nicole Woolridge will see time at first base and catcher, and Abby Prather will see time at first base and in the outfield.

"Our four freshmen that came in are incredible," Norton said. "I'm really excited to play everybody. We're going to be really good this year."

Can it be tough for a talented freshman to compete with older teammates for playing time at the varsity level?

"There's definitely something to that if you're coming in as a pretty dominant player [and] have a name," Norton said. "There's definitely going to be some tension. [As a freshman], I just kind of went out there and did my thing, just played my own game."

McLean's ace pitcher will be junior left-hander Maddy Witchey, who saw some time in the circle last season.

McLean will open the season on the road against rival Langley at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, March 21. The Highlanders' first home game is March 28 against Marshall.

"We have a nice little team," Tawil said. "We expect to compete for a conference championship ... and we hope to go to the state tournament, as well."

McLean won the AAA state championship in 2010.

"We have a nice little team."

— McLean softball coach Maurice Tawil

McLean freshman first baseman Zoe Dobson figures to be a key contributor this season.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Shown holding their first place regular season and tournament championship trophies, first row: Allie Wakeman, Caitlyn Shumadine, Megan Baxter, Isabella Perkins, Lynley Birchard, Annabeth Holsinger. Second row: Devran Johnson, Fiona Barber, Oma Mere, Dani Grieco. Third row: assistant coach Mark Baxter and head coach Phil McConnell.

Great Falls Girls Win D1 Tournament

The Great Falls Goonies (9-2), the top seeded team in the league met the third seed team from Vienna (8-3) for the division 1 fifth grade girls basketball FCYBL Select tournament championship. Vienna had beaten the Goonies in their only matchup during the regular season. This was a battle of the smallest versus the tallest teams in the league. To get to the finals, the Goonies beat Forth Hunt 36-18 and SYA 25-16.

The Goonies started the game by hitting their first shot, but Vienna scored the next 6 points to take a 4 point lead. The Goonies went on a 17-2 run to take a 19-8 lead but Vienna fin-

ished the half strong by scoring the final 3 points to make it 19-11 in favor of the Goonies. Vienna also started strong in the second half by outscoring the Goonies 10-2 to tie the game at 21. From there, the two teams exchanged the lead several times before the Goonies pulled ahead for good with 6 minutes to go and won by a final score of 45-40 in a well played game by both teams, finishing the year with a 12-2 record. Oma Mere from the Goonies was named tournament Most Valuable Player. The Goonies also placed two players on the All League team, Megan Baxter and Isabella Perkins.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Playing to Stop Hunger Now

Great Falls and Colvin Run elementary schools participated in a sixth-grade charity basketball game that raised more than \$800 for Stop Hunger Now. Colvin Run won 57-52 in overtime. Colvin Run roster: Colin O'Connor; Lucas Gauthier; Luke Addington; Jacob Rose; John Kelly; Rex Kerrigan; Sam Sachtleben; Will Rissing; William Bean; Zachary Crumes; Zack Baskin; Coach Jim Rose; and Coach Rich Gauthier. Great Falls Roster: Andrew Walker; Bradley Carvajal; Cameron Dhillon; Carson Volanth; Cole Walmsley; Ian Walker; Jack Fitzgerald; Nate Mazich; Pierson White; Sam Maruca; Simon Medina; Tre Vasiliadis; Coach John Fitzgerald; Coach Doug White; and Coach Todd Walmsley.

Great Falls Library to Host Writers for 'An Evening With the Authors'

FROM PAGE 10

Lawyer” cover such topics as low retention rates for female lawyers, defining success, and work-life challenges – subjects this Great Falls lawyer and writer addresses at universities and conferences throughout the country.

Another legal-minded writer mixes his profession with history. In addition to lecturing about law at George Washington University and working with the U.S. Department of State, Vienna’s Burrus M. Carnahan is an expert about the life of Abraham Lincoln. Carnahan joins the “Evening with the Authors” with one of his books, “Act of Justice: Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation and the Law of War.”

LOCAL HISTORIAN Charles V. Mauro takes readers on historic journeys throughout Fairfax and Loudoun counties. In Mauro’s book, “A Southern Spy in Northern Virginia; The Civil War Album of Laura Ratcliffe,” Mauro brings to life secret events of a community once known as Frying Pan, now called Herndon. Mauro’s historic journeys include his books “The Civil War in Fairfax County,” “The Battle of Chantilly,” and “Mosby’s Combat Operations in Fairfax County.” Mauro’s also compiled histories up to the present in “Herndon: A History in Images,” and “Herndon: A Town and Its History.”

Revisiting her life during the Great Depression, witnessing World War II from the home front, joining the Foreign Service, and playing a role in America’s post-World War II expansion, Catherine Mathews of Great Falls penned her memoirs, “My Family’s Journey.” “I wrote the book to tell my grandchildren how life was different than what they are experiencing.” Mathews, who is 70 years older than her first grandchild, said, “By the time they are ready to ask questions, I may be unable to answer.”

Family history, love, and the enduring bonds of family and friendship are the central themes in “The Forever Box,” the fourth book published by former journalist and



Nancy Hannan



Patricia Britz



B. W. DeCaro

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Burrus M. Carnahan



Charles V. Mauro



Catherine Mathews, Author



Mindy Mitchell, Author



Ed Land, Author



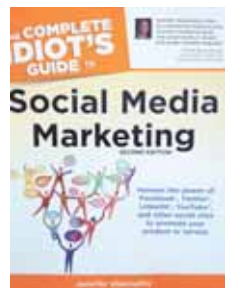
Sharon Rainey, Author



Bill Stamper, Author



Susan Smith Blakely, Author



Jennifer Abernethy's The Complete Idiot's Guide to Social Media Marketing" Book Cover

GFWG founder Kristin Clark Taylor, who embraces the importance of memories. For Taylor, cherished childhood items such as a perfume bottle and a church hat are mementos that still hold meaning in her life today.

In “Making a Pearl from the Grit of Life,”

Sharon Rainey of Great Falls hopes to inspire readers to gain inner strength and happiness through hard-won lessons. Says Rainey, “We learn how to see life from a new, higher perspective, by living in the solution instead of the problem – while practicing the compassion for people who

err.”

Authors Mindy Mitchell and Ed Land share their personal story of searching for love in mid-life and online dating. “Lube of Life: A Tribute to Sex, Love and the Pursuit of Happiness in the Boomer Age” reminds readers that age is just a number. Mitchell says, “Lube of Life is the emotional, physical, and spiritual juice that keeps us young, excited and open to possibilities.”

Completing his first novel was Bill Stamper’s life-long dream. Stamper’s fiction action thriller “Reality Checks” is about a crime’s witness whose circumstances make him appear as a perpetrator. Narrow escapes and grim reality then ensue.

While the event itself is intended for adults, children’s books will be featured, too.

Vienna author Patricia Britz’s non-fiction book “Animals Need Zzzz’s, Too” teaches children the importance of sleep and how many animals adapt their sleeping habits to their environment for survival. The book includes tips to help parents establish healthy sleep habits for children, too.

Lesley Hackman will talk about and sign a book she co-authored with Lin Story called “Bearabesque and the Humility Slippers,” an inspirational book about a bear in Ukraine who follows her dream to become a famous ballerina – a feat the bear learns requires more than talent, but also forgiveness, kindness, generosity, honor, patience, and humility.

The fifteen authors participating in “An Evening with Our Authors” represent a healthy cross-section of local talent, but Taylor is certain there are more out there: “It’s about time we celebrated the talent of our literary artists. We’re our own best-kept secret, and we shouldn’t be!” said Taylor.

In addition to the conversation, harpist Melissa Tardiff Dvordak is performing soft sounds for the evening. Among the event’s sponsors are Catering by Anna, providing the evening’s edibles; SunDesign, a remodeling and construction design firm based in McLean; Kate Holland, and Joe and Molly Reynolds.

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No Know. No Problem.



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I felt a bit of a dope this week when, after reading last week's column, "Whew!", multiple friends called to inquire specifically as to the "Tony-the-Tiger Great" news I wrote that I received from my oncologist, and I couldn't answer them in any detail: shrinkage, less fluid, "partial stable remission"? Nothing. And though I tried to get my oncologist to explain to me exactly what was so encouraging about this most recent CT Scan – compared to the one I took three months ago (as opposed to the one I had nine months ago which was mistakenly compared to this most recent scan and resulted in the "Some better, some worse. I'll explain more on Friday" e-mail I received from my doctor and talked about in "Whew!") – I was rebuffed. Rebuffed in the best possible way: being told instead how great I was doing, how great my lab results were (for this most recent pre-chemotherapy) and how I could live a long time like this (presumably continuing to be infused with Alimta) – it was almost disconcerting; especially when you consider the original e-mail assessment we received and our less-than-positive interpretation of it. Moreover, the oncologist's exuberance and smiling countenance, along with his offer of a congratulatory handshake led me away from the missing facts and immediately into these newfound feelings.

There's an old advisory among salespeople: "Don't be afraid to take a 'Yes.'" Well, I took a yes (figuratively speaking), and didn't feel compelled to press my doctor to further explain the reasons for his excitement. I became very happy taking the good news, and extremely fortunate that what Tuesday's inaccurate e-mail suggested: trouble, was turned completely on its figurative ear Friday when in person, my oncologist explained the semi-miscommunication. Believe me, when your oncologist gives you news with which you can live – pun intended, your reaction, at least mine, is not to question his judgment too much further in pursuit of some heretofore untold truth that could ruin what super-amazing-positive words you just heard. Call me naïve, "Simple Simon," whatever, but since I am still alive five years post-diagnosis, you can call me anything you want.

A week later, a few of these phone calls have given me pause for reflection. And though I've tried to answer their queries in a sort of intelligent way, I'm sure I've failed. But I'm moving on. I will enjoy relative peace over the three-month interval until my next CT Scan on May 28th and follow-up appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results – in person. Then, we'll do this all over again. For the time being, I'm very lucky to have received such good news, however incomplete it originally may have seemed. Nevertheless, I can certainly appreciate the message even if I was confused by the delivery.

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



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