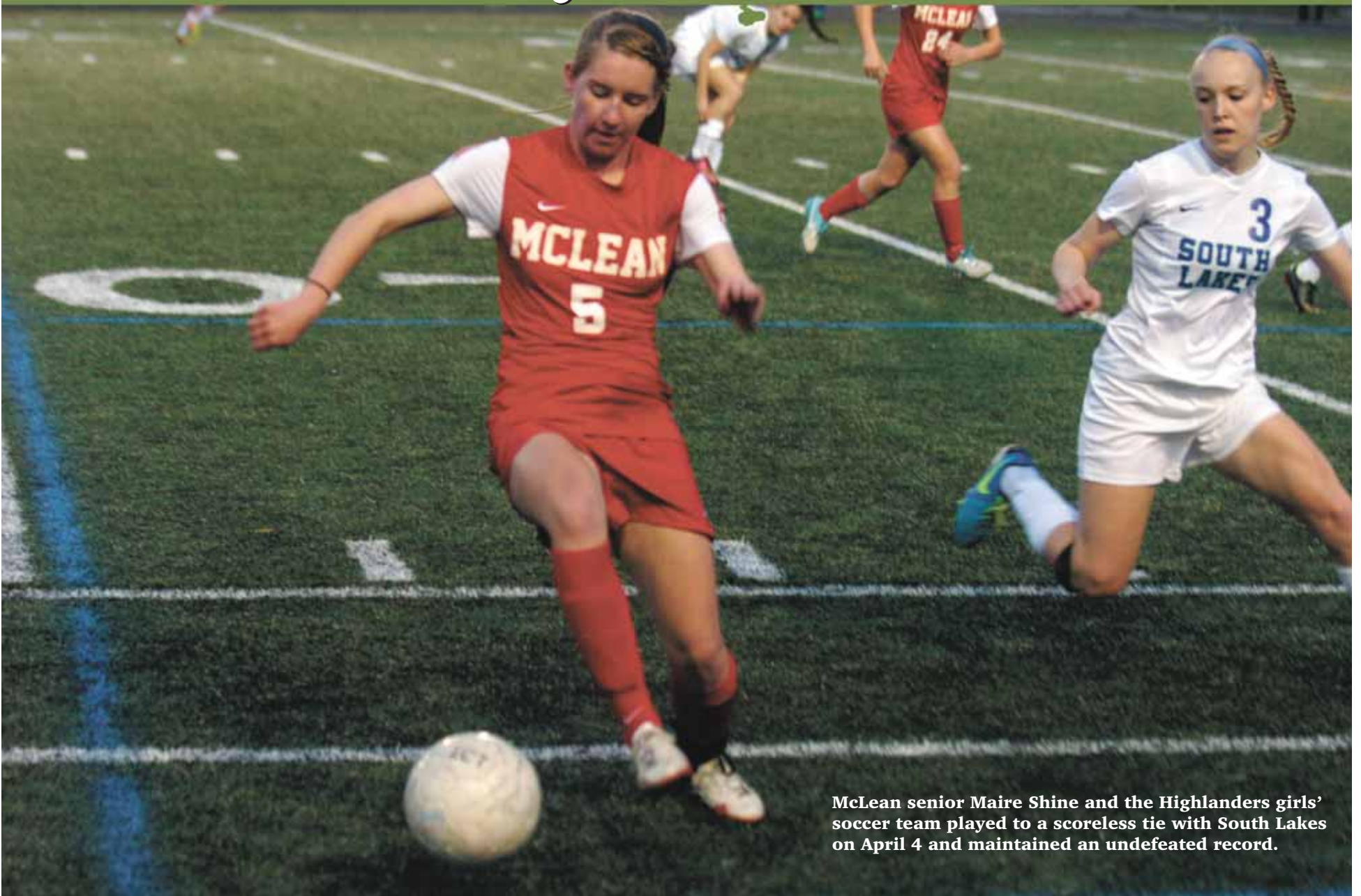


# McLean Girls' Soccer: 'Why Not Us?'

SPORTS, PAGE 16



McLean senior Maire Shine and the Highlanders girls' soccer team played to a scoreless tie with South Lakes on April 4 and maintained an undefeated record.

## Focus on Transportation

NEWS, PAGE 4

## How Healthy Is This Neighborhood?

NEWS, PAGE 3



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## How Healthy Is This Neighborhood?

New study reveals some parts of Northern Virginia are healthier than others.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

Alexandria has the lowest rates of smoking in Northern Virginia, but it also has the highest rates of excessive drinking. Fairfax City has the highest rates of physical inactivity, although Fairfax County enjoys one of the lowest rates of premature death. Manassas City has the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases in Northern Virginia. Arlington County has the highest rates of physical activity and therefore the lowest rates of obesity.

These are some of the findings of the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps program, a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

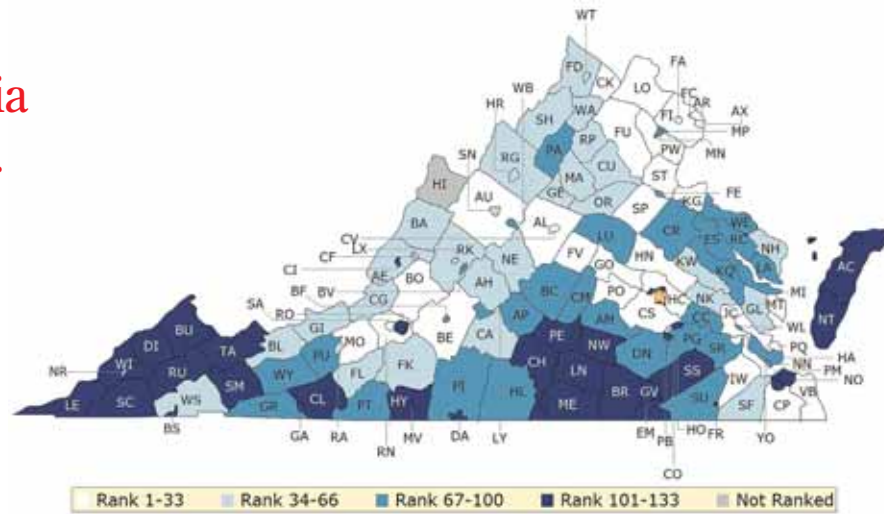
"This is an annual checkup of your community's health," said Julie Willems Van Dijk, deputy director of County Health Roadmaps at the University of Wisconsin. "It's a way to think about what we can do collectively to improve these areas."

"This is an annual checkup of your community's health. It's a way to think about what we can do collectively to improve these areas."

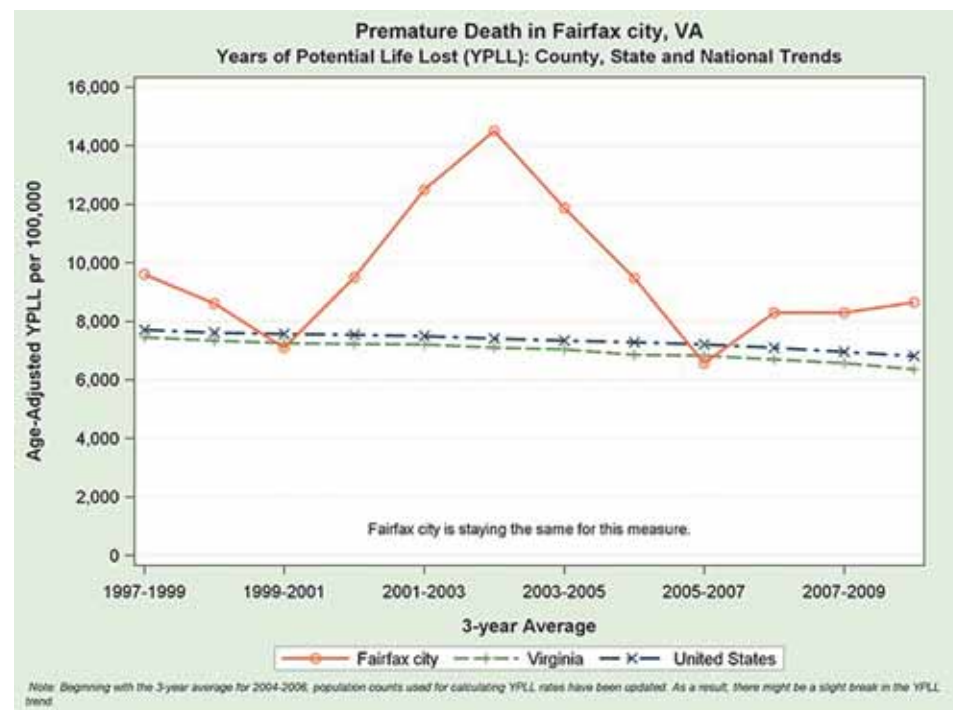
— Julie Willems Van Dijk, deputy director of County Health Roadmaps at the University of Wisconsin

The annual rankings measure everything from high-school graduation rates and obesity to smoking and unemployment. The goal is to reveal a snapshot of how health is influenced by where people live. Organizers say the point is to help communities have a discussion about how they can use the data to make changes. Even when the numbers are good — low obesity rates in Arlington and Alexandria, for example — that doesn't mean a community should become complacent.

"That's still one out of five people who are obese," said Van Dijk. "So



A map of Virginia rates health factors, including everything from high-school graduation rates and obesity to smoking and unemployment.



Premature death in Fairfax City is calculated by looking at years of life lost before age 75 per 100,000 people, but health officials in Fairfax City say the data is flawed.

while it's encouraging, I don't think we have a lot to celebrate there."

**SOME OF THE STATISTICS** are controversial, especially in Fairfax City. For example, one of the data points in the report measures premature death. That's a figure calculated by looking at years of life lost before age 75 per 100,000 people. According to the report, Fairfax City has the highest rate of premature death in Northern Virginia at 8,652 years lost. That's the highest rate in Northern Virginia, and one of the highest rates in Virginia. But is it accurate?

"The data on which the rankings are based is inaccurate for several reasons," said Louise Armitage, human services coordinator for Fairfax City in an email. "The main reason for the erroneous data is that the state health department continues to utilize ZIP code to assign jurisdiction of resi-

dency even though ZIP codes are not discrete to the city or to the county."

Armitage says an audit of deaths in Fairfax City shows serious irregularities. In 2008, for example, one audit showed 276 out of 417 recorded deaths in Fairfax City over a four-year period were actually city residents. As a result, only 34 percent of deaths that are reported to have taken place in Fairfax City actually happened in Fairfax County. Because of the small size of Fairfax City and the frequent confusion with Fairfax County, many of the statistics can be problematic. Armitage says she has raised these concerns with the researchers who compiled the report, who say they are hoping to refine the data in the future to make it better.

"I don't have any problems with her assessment," said Amanda Jovaag, an associate researcher with the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. "That

seems perfectly reasonable to me."

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA** fares well overall when compared to the rest of the commonwealth. The top three healthiest jurisdictions are in Northern Virginia: Loudoun County, Fairfax County and Arlington County. The top 10 includes Alexandria and Manassas Park City. Health officials warn that the statistics can be misleading, though, and that people should not become complacent.

"Many of us who work in human services get concerned when we sort of pat ourselves on the back and say, 'Oh look, our percentages are so low. Isn't that wonderful?'" said Marlene Blum, a member of the Fairfax County Health Care Advisory Board. "We are an affluent community, and we're a highly educated community. But not everybody is doing well."

"Better educated people often drink but don't smoke. Cocktails are more acceptable than cigarettes."

— Julie Willems Van Dijk, deputy director of County Health Roadmaps at the University of Wisconsin

Some of the health concerns in Northern Virginia are emblematic of the kinds of problems in other communities in America that have well-educated people. For example, Alexandria has the second-lowest number of people who smoke cigarettes in Virginia overall and the lowest number of smokers for Northern Virginia. But it has the sixth highest rate of excessive drinking in Virginia and the highest rate of excessive drinking in Northern Virginia.

"Better educated people often drink but don't smoke," said Van Dijk. "Cocktails are more acceptable than cigarettes."

**SOMETIMES THE NUMBERS** show trends in combination. For example, Manassas City has the highest rate of children who live in poverty in Northern Virginia. It also has the highest teen birth rate per 1,000 female population. Researchers say these two data points speak to each other.

There's probably some linkage there," said Van Dijk. "We know that if mom has a baby as a teenager, the likelihood that child will be raised in poverty will be much higher."



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## NEWS

# Focus on Transportation

McLean, Great Falls Citizens Associations meet with state Secretary of Transportation.

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**S**tate Secretary of Transportation Aubrey Layne Jr.'s firsthand experience with northern Virginia road congestion happened as he was running late to a meeting last week.

His excuse for arriving tardy to the March 31 McLean and Great Falls citizens associations' community hearing gave the 100-plus members in the audience some comic relief before he delved into more serious topics like the Route 7 expansion and increasing tolls.

"I misjudged the amount of time it took to get here," said Layne at the McLean Community Center. "While we have some traffic issues in [Hampton Roads], they are mostly confined to crossing bridges and tunnels."

Layne was appointed at the beginning of the year by Gov. Terry



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION  
**New state Secretary of Transportation Aubrey Layne Jr. talks traffic at a joint community meeting.**

McAuliffe as the Secretary of Transportation. A resident of Virginia Beach, he served on the Commonwealth Transportation Board representing his region

from 2006 until his recent appointment, according to <https://governor.virginia.gov/cabinet/transportation>.

"When I was asked to send an invitation to the Secretary, I thought it would be months before we heard from him," said Dranesville Supervisor John Foust during introductory remarks.

Layne said transportation decisions are best solved on the local level, and all issues should be faced head on.

"I learned when you don't deal with issues head on, you'll deal with them anyway," he said. "You'll have to deal with them later on."

This includes the plans to widen Leesburg Pike. He said the project, which includes other plans to relieve congestion before the Silver Line Metrorail is open, will cost \$300 million. How

SEE ROADS, PAGE 5

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## News

# Area Roads Discussed

FROM PAGE 4

ever, he noted, the entire project can be broken up and spaced out.

**ONCE STARTED**, the project would take about two years to complete.

By a show of hands, many of the audience members were a part of the Wolf Trap Woods Homeowners Association. They were worried that the possible roadwork would create entering and exiting their neighborhood a hazard.

"We'll have no safe means to get in and out of our subdivision," said association member Nancy Kessler. "In order to get into McLean, we have to maneuver through three lanes of traffic that's very congested. When we're coming home, say from Tysons Corner, we have to maneuver again through three lanes of traffic. That's a recipe for disaster."

Layne agreed with her suggestion to add traffic lights at major neighborhood intersections.

Not everyone felt their concerns were addressed, however. Stella Koch, of Great Falls, asked for lower speed limits through Tysons Corner.

"It's not a beltway," she said. "It's not a tollway."

Koch said there is a conflict with traffic moving at 50 miles per hour through the urban area.

"I don't think they resolved the issue at all," she said after the meeting.

**MANY CITIZENS** asked whether Layne could get the tolls reduced or eliminated on the Dulles Toll Road and the Greenway. However, he said the matter was not his to resolve.

"Unfortunately, both of these aren't owned by the state," he said.

After the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority bought the road, the tolls were never removed - despite the original plan to only have the toll until the road was paid for. Layne said he could try to negotiate with MWAA, but he did not want to make a promise on something he did not feel confident about.

"It's not a great answer, but it's a truthful answer," he said.

Foust said he was happy with how Layne handled the meeting.

"He's only been on the job for a couple months, and he's responsible for the entire state's transportation," he said after the hearing. "There's a lot going on at the county level."

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# OPINION

## Connection Papers Win Awards

Reporting, photography, design and editorial cartoons commended at annual Virginia Press Association meeting.

“Great work exposing serious challenges and obstacles in the way of the public’s access to public information. The articles are well written and well researched, providing concrete and compelling examples of the flaws in the systems.”

That was what the judge said when awarding first place for In-depth or investigative reporting to Michael Lee Pope in the Arlington Connection.

The Virginia Press Association announced its press awards for 2013 at the annual meeting on Saturday, April 5, in Richmond.

Pope also won first place for education writing, for business and financial writing, and awards for health, science and environmental writing and for government writing. Stories appeared in the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette and the Connection papers.

Bonnie Hobbs won first place for general news writing for her coverage of the proposed roundabout in Centreville. “Good work getting all viewpoints of the issue without assigning judgment to who is right and who is wrong,” wrote judges.

Jeanne Theismann won first place for public safety writing and for public service writing in the Alexandria Gazette Packet.

Connection Newspapers won first place for information graphics for the 2013 Insiders Guide to Fairfax County Parks, designed by Jean Card with photos by Renee Ruggles and Craig Sterbutzel.

First place for special sections went to the Connection’s HomeLifeStyle pullout.

Victoria Ross won for feature series/continuing coverage for coverage of foster care. Judges note: “Fantastic blend of fact and narrative, and it packs an emotional punch. The stories are very well-researched, tightly written and highly effective.”

Ross also won for personal service writing for her coverage of “digital legacy,” and control of one’s online content after death.

Cartoonist Steve Artley began cartooning for the Alexandria Gazette Packet in December 2013, with only three cartoons in the year, but two of them won awards. His cartoon on the threatened use of eminent domain in the City of Alexandria drew this comment from the judge: “One of the best examples of editorial cartooning I have seen in years and reminiscent of editorial cartoons poignant and relevant enough to still be included in history texts today. Wonderful use of the paper boat as the flagship of eminent domain with tons of little



Michael Lee Pope



Steve Artley



Bonnie Hobbs



Victoria Ross



Jean Card



Mary Kimm

touches which push the entry even higher.”

Alex McVeigh won an award for investigative or in-depth reporting in Great Falls. Donna Manz won for her feature stories in Vienna.

The annual Insiders/Newcomers edition of the Alexandria Gazette Packet won third place for special edition, including work by Steven Mauren, Jeanne Theismann, John Bordner and Jean Card.

Editorials written by Mary Kimm won second and third place awards.

For a complete list, see [www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com)

### Winners

#### FIRST PLACE

First Place for Investigative Reporting, Uncovering Secret Government. Michael Lee Pope, Arlington Connection — Judge’s comment: Great work exposing serious challenges and obstacles in the way of the public’s access

### Mother’s Day Photos

Mother’s Day is May 11, 2014, and every year at this time, we call for submissions to our Mother’s Day photo gallery. Send photos of mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, with children or without children. Please name everyone in the photo, the approximate date, describe what is happening in the photo and include your name, address, email address and phone number. (We will not print your full address or contact information.)

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Readers can also submit poetry, poetry about mothers and photos celebrating mothers directly through our website at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

to public information. The articles are well written and well researched, providing concrete and compelling examples of the flaws in the systems.

First Place for Education writing. Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Alexandria Education Dollars. Judge’s comment: This is by far the best entry in the contest. Michael Lee Pope wrote several strong articles on the cost of administration in his market. He did a very nice job of making a numbers story interesting.

First Place for Business and Financial writing. Michael Lee Pope, Mount Vernon Gazette — Judge’s comment: The story about car title loans offers an interesting look at this industry, which is proliferating due to a change in state law. Kudos for

looking at how much the industry contributes to state legislators’ political campaigns. Business taxes — is it fair to charge higher rates for certain professions? Pope provides a balanced look at the pros and cons. The story on a transit study covers the debate over urban vs. rural development in Mount Vernon. Pope combines thorough reporting with competent writing.

First Place for Public Safety Writing, Jeanne Theismann, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Judge’s comment: Creative, compelling ledes.

First Place for General News Writing, Bonnie Hobbs, Centre View — Judge’s comment: The creative lede pushed this one over the top. Good work getting all viewpoints of the issue without assigning judgment to who is right and who is wrong.

First Place for Personal Service Writing. Jeanne Theismann, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Judge’s comment: Each story is an interesting and vivid snapshot of the deceased with good use of quotes and anecdote to bring the subject’s personality to life and also convey why he or she was valued in the community. It is hard to write about someone who has died in a way that is upbeat and positive, but this writer has achieved this.

First Place for Informational Graphics for Insiders Guide to the Parks, Jean Card, Laurence Foong, Renee Ruggles and Craig Sterbutzel, Mount Vernon Gazette — Informational graphics: Fairfax County parks.

First Place for HomeLifeStyle, Mary Kimm, Laurence Foong, Geovani Flores, Marilyn Campbell, John Byrd, Tim Peterson and Jean Card, The Vienna/Oakton Connection — Specialty pages or sections: Judge’s comment: Clean design

SEE VIRGINIA, PAGE 7

McLean  
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## Virginia Press Association Awards

FROM PAGE 6

and easy to read. Choice of fonts work well together.

### OTHER AWARDS:

Steve Artley, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Illustrations — Eminent Domain. Judge's comment: One of the best examples of editorial cartooning I have seen in years and reminiscent of editorial cartoons poignant and relevant enough to still be included in history texts today. Wonderful use of the paper boat as the flagship of eminent domain with tons of little touches which push the entry even higher.

In-depth, investigative reporting, Alex McVeigh, Great Falls Connection — Judge's comment: Great work continuing to follow an important environmental story that had the potential for far-reaching impacts. These articles also do a good job explaining the nature of the underground contamination and, in understandable terms, the geology behind the way they spread.

Alexandria Gazette Packet, Insiders/Newcomers Guide. Steven Mauren, Jeanne Theismann, John Bordner, Jean Card, Geovani Flores and Laurence Foong, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Judge's comment: A good package of information for newcomers. A good array of photos of community members.

Health, Science and Environmental Writing, Michael Lee Pope, The Arlington Connection — Judge's comment: Good solid stories on interesting subjects. A lot of good historical background adds significantly to the sterilization story. The lead on the chicken story was very good.

Government Writing, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Judge's comment: We preach to our reporters to follow the money. Michael Lee Pope does great job of following the money trail to great news stories. Continue to keep them honest.

Feature Series/Continuing Story. Victoria Ross, The Burke Connection — Feature series or continuing story. Judge's comment: Fantastic blend of fact and narrative, and it packs an emotional punch. The stories are very well-researched, tightly written and highly effective.

Personal Service Writing, Victoria Ross, The Fairfax Connection. Judge's comment: Good job using the individual story and relating it to the wider issue. Would have liked more follow-up details about whether the social media companies are complying with the

law and what the parents found on the son's social media sites.

Jeanne Theismann, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Column writing. Judge's comment: These columns were well written and informative as well as entertaining.

Editorial writing. Mary Kimm, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Editorial writing. Judge's comment: Very well done. Writer does an outstanding job presenting the

paper's stance on the issues of the day.

Editorial writing. Mary Kimm, The Fairfax Connection — Judge's comment: These editorials were articulate and to the point.

Education writing: Michael Lee Pope, The Arlington Connection — Judge's comment: Concise, well put thoughts.

Page Design, Jean Card, Mount Vernon Gazette — Judge's com-

ment: Good job taking something that can be boring and hard to follow and making it interesting and easy to navigate.

Cartoon, Steve Artley, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Illustrations. Judge's comment: The shackles of the tea party! Ol' Ebenezer Elephant will be surely listening for the chimes of the hour after this ghost appeared before the foot of his bed. Fantastic work

all the way around.

Feature photo. Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet — Summer Fun. Judge's comment: Sweet found moment.

Feature writing portfolio Donna Manz, Vienna/Oakton Connection — Feature writing portfolio. Judge's comment: Powerful ledes (and a great one for the 'puppies' story) and captivating narratives. Well-informed and well-written.

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## NEWS

**MPA Spring Benefit co-chairs Sylvia Garfinkle and Laura Miller**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

# Spring Benefit to Support MPA

## Honored Guest and Co-Chairs announced.

**A**ward-winning USA Today sports columnist Christine Brennan will be the honored guest at McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) Spring Benefit. The annual fundraiser will be on Thursday, May 15, 7 - 9 p.m. at the home and gardens of Michelle and Chris Olson in McLean. Co-chairs for this year's event are Sylvia Garfinkle and Laura Miller.

The MPA Spring Benefit raises needed funds that support MPA's programs of professionally-curated exhibitions and art education which includes classes and programs for adults and children. It also helps fund the MPA's ArtReach program that works with Fairfax County Public Schools both in the schools and through special field trips

to the MPA galleries for tours and hands—on activities conducted by art educators that focus on art and the Virginia Standards of Learning. MPA also presents McLean's only outdoor arts festival, MPAartfest.

"McLean Project for the Arts adds so much value to the community through its art exhibition and education programs," Brennan said. "I'm proud to serve as the honored guest."

Brennan was the first woman sports writer at The Miami Herald in 1981 and the first woman to cover the Washington Redskins as a staff writer at The Washington Post in 1985. Twice named one of the country's top 10 sports columnists by the Associated Press Sports Editors, she has covered the last 16 Olympic Games, summer and winter.

For more information about McLean Project for the Arts and tickets to Spring Benefit, please visit [www.mpaart.org](http://www.mpaart.org) or call 703-790-1953.

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## CALENDAR

Send announcements to [mclean@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mclean@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 9

**Wildfire Toasts the Silver Line.** 6:30 p.m. Wildfire, 3rd floor, Tysons Corner, McLean. Toast the coming of the Silver Line and the great future for Tysons at Wildfire with a four course custom menu designed by Executive Chef Eddie Ishaq, each course paired with a sparkling wine from around the world. Michael Caplin, executive director of the Tysons Partnership, will be the guest speaker. Caplin will talk about plans for Tysons and answer questions. \$80/per person. RSVP Amanda or Erika at 703-442-9110.

### THURSDAY/APRIL 10

**How to Improve Your Front/Backyard with Natural Landscaping!** 7-9 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Natural Landscaping is a method of designing and installing landscapes that rests on an understanding of the relationship between plants and the rest of the environment. Using these native tree and shrub seedlings will result in having your property easy to care for and helps support bees and other insects and animals. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to [gfgsvp@gmail.com](mailto:gfgsvp@gmail.com) for aiding registration and snacks.

**"Gnomonic Tales of Thomas Jefferson (and other Founding Fathers)." 7 p.m.** Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The lecture will consider sundials in the lives of Thomas Jefferson and other prominent figures of early America such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turnerfarm/>

**Honoring Poetry Contest Winners.** 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors will hold a luncheon to honor 4th - 6th grade winners in their 31st Annual Poetry contest. The cost of the luncheon is \$21. Please make checks payable to GFFN and send them to Lisa Spoden at: 10917 Lake Windermere Drive, Great Falls, VA 22066. The deadline to register is April 5. Paypal is also available on the GFFN website at [www.gffnva.org](http://www.gffnva.org), members area.

**FRIDAY/APRIL 11-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.1ststageTysons.org](http://www.1ststageTysons.org) or 703-854-1856.

**FRIDAY/APRIL 11-MONDAY/MAY 5**  
**Six Artists Return.** 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. An exhibition and sale of paintings, drawings, sculpture and jewelry by local artists Jackie Elwell, Elaine Florimonte, Debbie Glakas, Lisa Neher, Sarah Swart and Barbara Wagner. [www.theframefactory1.com](http://www.theframefactory1.com)



PHOTO BY TERESA CASTRACANE/COURTESY OF 1ST STAGE  
 Josh Adams and Megan Graves in "The Cripple of Inishmaan" at 1st Stage, running April 11-20.

### FRIDAY/APRIL 11

**"Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind."** 8 p.m. The Alden, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. In this show, an underground New York City favorite, the eccentric New York Neo-Futurists race against the clock to perform 30 miniature plays in 60 breathless minutes. Tickets are \$20/\$15 for MCC district residents. [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org)

### SATURDAY/APRIL 12

**Train Club's 65th Anniversary Model Railroad Open House.** 1-5 p.m. 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. Celebrate the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders' 65th Anniversary. See and hear model trolleys and steam and diesel trains plus Thomas and some of his friends in the Historic Vienna Train Station along the W&OD trail just past the Caboose. The impressive layout reflects the mountainous terrain and towns of Western North Carolina with award winning structures. Free admission (donations accepted). For more information visit [www.nvmr.org](http://www.nvmr.org).

**Flea Market.** 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Vienna's American Legion 330 Center St. N, Vienna. Space \$20; tables-\$5. Contact Debbie at 703-938-9535 for more info.  
**Paws for Art Fundraiser.** Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. This April, your artwork can help us save more lives, and help us raise awareness of LDCRF. Donations of artwork in any media are still being accepted for the LDCRF Paws for Art Show and Sale.  
**"We're Going on a Bear Hunt."** McLean Community Center's The Alden, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. 2 p.m. A small group of intrepid adventurers are on a quest to find a bear. They wade through the gigantic swishy, swashy grass, the splashy splashy river and the thick oozy, squelchy mud on their journey.

**SATURDAY/ APRIL 12-SUNDAY/APRIL 13**  
**Spring Table Tennis Tournament.** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Saturday and 9



See and hear model trolleys and steam and diesel trains plus Thomas and some of his friends in the Historic Vienna Train Station's 65th Anniversary Open House on April 12.

a.m. to noon on Sunday. Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The fee to participate is \$5 per person, per event for The Northern Virginia Table Tennis Club members and \$10 per person, per event for all others. All events are round-robin, followed by a single elimination. Prizes will be awarded to the champion and runner-up in each of three divisions: beginner, intermediate and advanced. Semifinals and finals are best three out of five. All other matches are best two out of three. The tournament director reserves the right to modify or cancel events based on the number of entries. To register for the tournament, or for more information, visit [www.nvtcc.org](http://www.nvtcc.org)

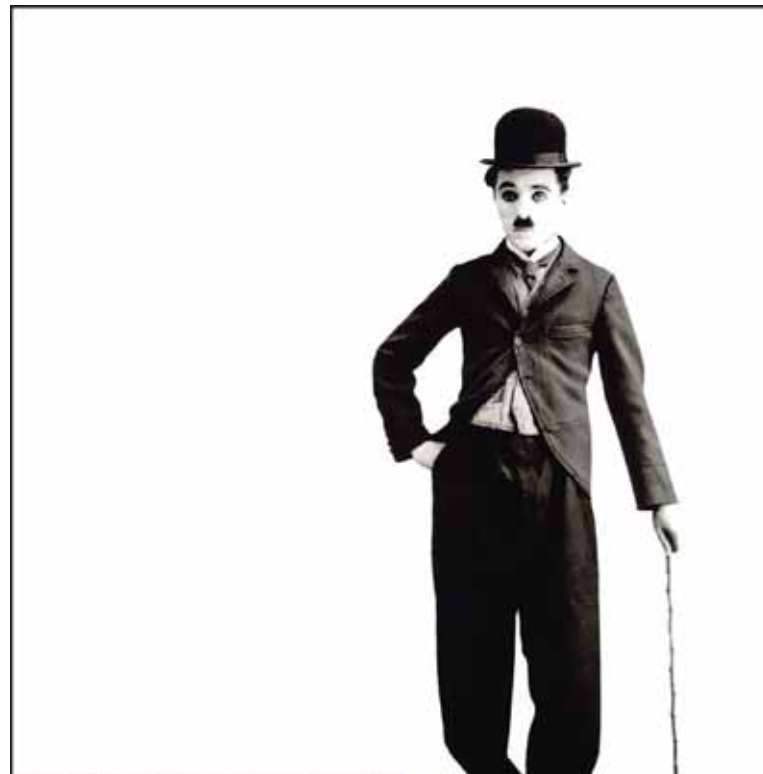
### SUNDAY/APRIL 13

**Photographing Chrysanthemums and other Floral Blooms.** 2:30 p.m. Falls Church Community Center, 223 Little Falls Street, Falls Church. Todd Brethauer, whose photographs of Mums are featured on the National Chrysanthemum Society

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Take your little one out for some excitement and adventure in The Alden's production of "We're Going on a Bear Hunt," playing on April 12 at the McLean Community Center.



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**SATURDAY, APR. 12 AT 2 P.M.**

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McLean Community Center  
 The Center of It All

## Here's What's Happening at MCC

**Old Firehouse Teen Center**  
**"Code 20: Proceed to Improv"**  
**Thursday, April 10, 7-9 p.m. • Free admission**



**New York Neo-Futurist**  
**"Too Much Light Makes The Baby Go Blind"**  
**Friday, April 11, 8 p.m.**  
 \$20/\$15 MCC district residents



**Bear Hunt Productions**  
**"We're Going on a Bear Hunt"**  
**Saturday, April 12, 2 p.m.**  
 \$15/\$10 MCC district residents

**McLean Spring Community Garage Sale & Recycling Event**  
**Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**  
 1420 Beverly Road

**Spring Break Day Trips**  
**Mon.-Fri., April 14-18 • Prices Vary**

**Silent Film Series**  
 Charlie Chaplin's 125th Birthday Celebration  
**Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.**  
 \$10/\$6 MCC district residents

**Spring Fest • For 3-8 year olds**  
**Saturday, April 19, 10 a.m.-noon**  
 \$5 per person; free infants to 36 mo.

**The McLean Community Center**  
**www.mcleancenter.org**  
**Home of the Alden Theatre**  
**www.aldentheatre.org**

1234 Ingleside Ave.,  
 McLean, VA 22101  
 703-790-0123, TTY: 711



# McLean Community Center 2014 Governing Board Elections

The Governing Board and staff of the McLean Community Center strongly encourage all qualified residents to vote **for members of the McLean Community Center 2014-2015 Governing Board**. Your vote sends a very important message of your support of the Center's programs and services.

## Requirements to Vote:

1. You must be a resident of the McLean Community Center tax district (Dranesville Small District 1A); however, you need not be registered to vote in the general election.
2. You must be at least 18 years old to vote for an adult candidate. Adults may vote for up to three candidates.
3. You must be 15 through 17 years old by McLean Day to vote for youth candidates. Youth voters have two votes, and may vote for one candidate in the McLean High School boundary area, and one candidate in the Langley High School boundary area. Youth voters may not vote for more than one candidate in the same boundary area.
4. You must bring identification and proof of residency, such as a driver's license. If you do not have identification, you may sign a sworn statement.

## Absentee Voting:

Want to vote, but can't make it to the McLean Day festival on May 17? Vote by absentee ballot! Call the Center or send a request by email to "[elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org)" to have a ballot package sent to your home. Or, stop by the center and pick up an absentee ballot package. Completed ballot packages must be received by 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 14**, to be counted.

### Write-in candidates are allowed.

Write-in candidates must have at least 10 votes from 10 residents of the Center's tax district in order to have their votes counted. For youth write-in candidates, the 10 votes must come from teens who live within the same high school boundary area as the candidate.

## When & Where:

Vote between the hours of **10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.** at the McLean Day 2014 festival on **Saturday, May 17**, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

## Meet the Candidates

### Youth Candidates—Two Positions Open

#### McLean High School Area



#### NATHANIEL BUCHWALD

I have loved every minute of my childhood in McLean. It has been a great place for me to grow up. Because it has been so good to me, I want to give back to the community so that others can enjoy it as I have. The McLean Community Center is a foundation of this fantastic community, and working on the governing board would be a great way to give back to McLean. If elected to the board, I will do everything in my power to make sure that the MCC continues to be a center of activities in McLean.



#### DEVIKA CHADHA

As a resident of McLean, a sophomore at McLean High School, I am qualified to be elected to the board. I have many happy memories of our community, whether it was taking dance or art or being a girl scout. I want to create the same and give back to our community, because being involved is important. My special interests include the arts and how they are showcased in our community. Additionally, I am involved with the Tartan Literary Magazine, Red Cross Club, Latin Club, and have organized a local toy drive for Inova Hospital. Thank you for your consideration.



#### MADISON KLOSTER

I would like to serve on the McLean Community Center Board as the McLean High School representative because I have always been interested in leadership. This would be a tremendous opportunity for me to try out a leadership position, which would prepare me better for the future. I would be a beneficial addition to the MCC board, because I am a youth and could represent their interests at MCC. I am also attentive and creative and could bring new ideas to MCC and will help as much as I can to make MCC better.



#### ANEESH SUSARLA

I am a sophomore at TJHSST, and as an active and involved member of the McLean community, am running to be a student representative on the MCC Board. My past leadership roles and experiences will allow me to assist the board in meeting the objectives. I have already served the community in many ways, such as tutoring kids, volunteering, and participating in events. I am passionate about this opportunity and the position will allow me to help even more people in our district. I am keen about giving back to the community that has given me the opportunities to succeed.



#### AMANDA WHITFIELD

Growing up in McLean has been a safe and nurturing experience. I am a junior at McLean High School. I play varsity basketball, serve as a freshman mentor, and also coach a McLean Youth basketball team. I am running for this position because I would like to have a voice in this great community where I have been so privileged to grow up and it is my responsibility to help improve the McLean community. Also, I believe that I can be an exceptional liaison to help voice the youth's ideas when working with other individuals.

#### Langley High School Area



#### TARUN KAMATH

I am a sophomore currently attending TJHSST. I have lived in McLean for over 10 years, and I have a good understanding of the community interactions. I also do volunteer work around the community: I participated in the annual flea market and tutored at my local elementary school. I also participate in Policy Debate, which specializes in the discussion of the pros and cons of policy making, a skill I hope to utilize on the MCC. I am committed to use MCC forum to help in getting schools involved in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics projects and competitions.

### Adult Candidates—Three Positions Open



#### THOMAS F. DONNELLY

I decided to run for the McLean Community Center Board of Directors to become more involved in community affairs. I have been a resident of McLean for 23 years and have served on the Board of Directors for McLean Little League since 1996 and as the league's chief umpire for the past 17 years. I have been active in community affairs, serving for six years as the president of the McLean Estates Homeowners Association and am currently with McEneaney Associates in the McLean office. I have been married to my wife, Joan, for 35 years and have one son, Evan.



#### SEAN A. DUNN

Over the last nine years, with the full support of my family, I've been elected by the McLean community to serve on the MCC Governing Board on three successive occasions. As Chairman, Treasurer, and in other roles, I have helped MCC restrain growth in expenses, negotiate with a key developer over options for downtown McLean, and liaise with our visual programming partner, MPA. I have led or supported initiatives to plan more strategically, manage a burgeoning cash reserve, and reduce the tax rate multiple times. I humbly offer my candidacy one last time and hope to win your vote.



#### DEBORAH S. SANDERS

Since 1982, I've been a resident of McLean District 1A and have a long history of serving the community. During this time, my family and I participated in many classes and community activities at MCC. I've served as President of Franklin Sherman PTSA and was on the PTSA of Cooper and Langley. I am a "veteran" of McLean Little League and served on the MLL Board for five years. I'm a loan officer with Everbank. My daughter, Hilary, served on the MCC Board as the Langley High School representative. Now it's my turn to serve. Thank you for your vote.



#### LATHAN TURNER

I moved to McLean in 2006 while an officer in the U.S. Air Force assigned to the Pentagon. I fell in love with McLean because of its strong sense of community. When I left active duty and became a strategy consultant, it was an easy decision to settle here permanently. As a Board member, I will protect and promote the programs, facilities, and the Center's impressive schedule of events. I want to ensure that the McLean Community Center remains a viable and vibrant venue that serves all of our residents. I respectfully ask for your vote! Please visit: [www.facebook.com/lathan.turner](http://www.facebook.com/lathan.turner).



#### CHAD QUINN

When I take my family to a show at The Alden, a gallery opening, pick my girls up from dance class, and even when I am knee-deep in MCC budget spreadsheets, I remark how lucky I am and how much I love serving this community! I thank my fellow board members for electing me Chair of the McLean Community Center Governing Board. Our work together advocates for ALL the interests of our diverse community. We are delivering tangible results today. I am asking for your vote to continue working with my peers to finish what we started. [www.votechadquinn.com](http://www.votechadquinn.com).



**The McLean Community Center**  
1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean VA 22101  
703-790-0123/TTY: 711  
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# Clean for Spring

Local organization experts offer tips to help with your spring cleaning.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**B**etsy Fein found herself in the middle of a spring fling in Fairfax recently. She wasn't at a festival or involved in a new romance, but in the midst of organizing a cluttered bedroom that was littered with piles of shirts, pants, shoes and books.

Spring often means renewal and local organizers like Fein are offering suggestions for clearing out winter clutter. From closets that are overstuffed with wool sweaters and down coats to kitchen drawers overflowing with batteries and appliance manuals, they offer suggestions for getting organized without getting overwhelmed.

"Spring is a time when you have all the winter stuff in your closet and you want to change it out for summer, so you're flinging it out," said Fein, of Clutterbusters!! (www.clutterbusters.com) in Rockville, Md.

"Because this child was younger, we suggested that they hang a lot of things," said Fein of her recent project. She also advised the parents to install a second rod in the closet. "They could have shirts on top and pants on bottom."

Fein recommended using photographs to help with organization. "They can take a picture of a pair of socks, for example, and put it on the drawer so the child can see that socks go in that drawer."

She even included an idea for outgrown clothes. "Keep a colorful bin on the bottom of the closet, so when you realize that clothes don't fit any more you can toss them in the bin and donate them."

The idea would work for adults, too. "Pack away all your winter clothing and unpack your spring and summer items," said Susan Unger, of ClutterSOS (www.cluttersos.com) in Vienna. "Be sure to evaluate each item and ask yourself ... 'Does it fit? Do I love it? Is it in good shape? Do I feel good in it?' If all these answers are 'yes' and it is a keeper, then place it in your closet or drawers."

"Be sure to group like items together such as skirts, dresses, t-shirts, [and] shorts. Decide if the discards should be tossed or donated depending on the condition," she said. "Be sure to keep a list of new items to buy."

When you store those bulky winter clothes, make sure you use sealed containers. "Store them in bins and make use of vertical space that is hard to reach or other rooms [like the] basement," said Jody Al-Saigh of Picture Perfect Organizing (www.pictureperfectorganizing.com) in Arlington. "Before storing clothes for next winter, be sure they are laundered first. A little-known fact [is that] moths don't actually go after the clothing fibers but rather the human perspiration and dander that build on clothes."

An easy place to start spring cleaning is your file (or pile or drawer) of appliance manuals and instruction booklets. "Store them all in an accordion file, by brands, by type of appliance, by room or area," said Al-Saigh. "Or look up the manual online, download and toss the paper one."

Be sure to purge often or when new items are purchased. "Don't

toss warranties or receipts for warranties or rebates. Keep those in your file," said Al-Saigh. "Keep the accordion file somewhere handy like the garage shelf [or on] top of fridge."

**NOW THAT THE END** of the school year is growing closer, piles of children's artwork are growing taller. "We did a family room that had a bookshelf and toys, kids' artwork and stuff all over the place," said Fein. "We had to help the parents make decisions about what to keep. We used a method called the three Fs: Frame-worthy, flush (or toss) and file. With kids' art, you have to be ruthless and realize that it is not all a Picasso."

For frame-worthy artwork, Fein suggests tape frames or inexpensive acrylic frames. "Tape frames are sticky on the back, but they look like real frames. You can swap out the artwork and reuse them."

For artwork that can be filed, Fein suggests using a keepsake box or creating a photo book. "You can take digital photos of the art work and put together a book on



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLUTTERBUSTERS!!

**Betsy Fein of Clutterbusters!! created order in this Potomac, Md., garage by grouping similar items together.**

## Tips for Spring Cleaning

"After a long winter such as this most recent one, it feels good to give a house a good, thorough cleaning. Start by walking through your home room by room and making a list of items to be completed."

"When you are finished, you may think the list in its entirety looks overwhelming and ... impossible to complete," she said. "Take one room at a time and then break the tasks for that room down into smaller tasks and estimate the time to complete the task. Determine how much time daily you can commit to the tasks and schedule it on your calendar. By doing it this way the project shouldn't feel so overwhelming. Be sure to finish each room before going on to the next."

—SUSAN UNGER

Snapfish or Shutterfly. ...Your child will be proud and you won't have stuff all over the place."

Spring's mild weather also makes it an ideal time to clean out

a garage. "It's not too hot and not too cold," said Al-Saigh. "Wait for nice weather, take everything out

SEE EXPERTS, PAGE 14

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Inexpensive frames  
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artwork and help  
eliminate clutter.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLUTTERBUSTERS!!

## Experts Offer Tips for Spring Cleaning

FROM PAGE 13

and sort it in the driveway.”

Al-Saigh suggests using sidewalk chalk. “Section off areas for piles for items to keep, donate and trash,” she said. “When putting back the keep stuff, group items together and create zones such as tools, gardening, sports equipment, camping, bicycles. The more you can hang on hooks on the walls or from the ceiling the better. Floor to ceiling shelving is good to maximize the vertical space.

“Get creative. Use old barrels to store hockey sticks upright, hang a mesh bag full of soccer balls,” she added. “Remove] things that don’t belong in your garage like photos, paperwork, fragile memorabilia.” Fein points to a Potomac, Md., garage that she recently helped a client reorganize. “It was a normal looking garage where stuff was everywhere,” she said. “Bikes and sports stuff were all over the place, so it was a matter of putting like things together.”

It helps, Fein said, to make organizing fun. “Don’t think of it as a chore. ...Play music and get the

whole family involved. Play games with your children, like beat the clock or beat the time.”

Start small. “A lot of times people think ‘I have to organize my whole basement and I have 40 years of stuff,’ said Fein. “If you have decided to spend the whole

weekend, three hours in you say this is too much and you quit. Maybe start with a drawer.”

Keep it simple. “With filing papers, sometimes a person’s filing system is so detailed that it is impossible to organize and maintain,” said Fein. “Let’s take bills. A simple system may be a file that says bills. It doesn’t need to be in alphabetical order. A lot of clients are disorganized because they are perfectionists. If they can’t maintain a complicated system perfectly, they’d rather just have it in a pile.”

Once a home is finally organized, keeping it that way can be challenging. “You have to be disciplined about maintaining it,” said Fein. “Even if you set aside 10 minutes a day to make sure you do a little maintenance in your kitchen, bedroom, office or wherever. Doing a little each day keeps it organized rather than letting it build up.”

Once a person develops such a routine, it becomes natural for even the messiest among us, said Fein. “It takes 21 days to change a habit,” she said. “For 21 days, put a reminder in your calendar phone, or leave yourself a voice message reminding yourself to do a little maintenance.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLUTTERBUSTERS!!

**Betsy Fein of Clutterbusters!! organized a child’s bedroom in Fairfax by suggesting the parents hang clothes on two rods in the closet and putting photographs on drawers to help identify where items belong.**

### Saint Ann Catholic Church

**SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE:**  
Saturday Vigil: 5:30 PM  
Sunday: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 AM  
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5312 North 10th Street  
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## McLean Baptist Church

*invites you to join us as we observe Holy Week.*

**APRIL 13 ~ PALM SUNDAY**  
Worship at 8:45 & 11:00 AM Christian Education at 9:45 AM

**APRIL 17 ~ MAUNDY THURSDAY**  
Worship at 7:30 PM Childcare available

**APRIL 18 ~ GOOD FRIDAY**  
Worship at 7:30 PM Childcare available

**APRIL 20 ~ EASTER**  
Easter Sunrise Worship at 7:00 AM  
MBC Park  
(corner of Chain Bridge Road and Brawner Street)  
Easter Worship at 8:45 & 11:00 AM  
EGGStravaganza for Children at 9:45 AM  
Christian Education at 9:45 AM

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## NEWS

# Capital One Headquarters Debated

Company wants a taller building in Tysons.

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**C**apital One wants to make its future headquarters office building the tallest in Tysons Corner.

McLean Citizens Association discussed the changes in the development plan at its April 2 Board of Directors meeting.

The Building 3 office building, if constructed as planned, will rise 470 feet - 32 stories - into the Tysons skyline due to the mechanicals that will be placed at the top. This will make it the tallest building in the urban center.

Their current McLean headquarters building is 14 stories. The new building is planned to be more than twice that size.

"This is going to be a monster of a building," said board member Mark Zetts during the zoning presentation.

This is more than the current zoning laws allow. To allow Capital One to have the building it drew up without it giving permission for other companies to ask for taller buildings, Zetts proposed to call it a "landmark gateway building," a title of distinction, he said, to announce "you have arrived." Because it will sit by the beltway and the metrorail station, he said it is in the perfect location to have the title.

The title also means that another developer cannot ask for a building to be constructed taller than the proposed Block B office building - keeping Tysons' skyline from turning into one that rivals Manhattan.

"Why are you moving to make it a gateway building rather than telling them to drop the height?" asked board member Francesca Gutowski.

She asked if the county was going to tell Capital One to drop the height.

However, Zetts was pretty confident that giving Capital One the distinction was the best plan for Tysons Corner because of its size and proximity to the beltway.

The new plans also included creating an \$11 million community center in the Capital One office park. The community center will remain there until it is



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION  
**McLean Citizens Association meeting on April 2.**

replaced by a larger office building, Building 11, in an undetermined amount of time. The center will then be moved to the bottom two floors of the building.

The office park is planned to be 65 percent office, 25 percent residential space, 8 percent hotel space and 2 percent retail.

Board member Jeff Barnett was worried that McLean homeowners would have to pick up the taxes for the community center because it is not going to generate taxes. However, board member Darren Ewing said this is the best plan to keep new Tysons residents in their community rather than pressing to use McLean's community center.

"This is what we want at the end of the day," he said.

The plans passed 31-1, with two members abstaining.

In other business, advertised Fairfax County 2015 budget plan was also approved by the MCA.

Also, McLean's centennial gala is tentatively Nov. 28 at the McLean Community Center.

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**Format:** Informal Reception

Five adults are vying for adult votes to fill three seats on the Governing Board. Five teens from the McLean High School boundary area and one teen from the Langley High School boundary area are vying for teen votes to fill one board seat from each high school boundary area.

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# SPORTS

## McLean Girls' Soccer Undefeated Through Six Games

Highlanders play to scoreless ties against South Lakes, South County.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

Neither team scored a goal during Friday's McLean Highlanders-South Lakes Seahawks girls' soccer matchup, but both came away feeling positive about how their respective 2014 seasons have unfolded.

The Highlanders and Seahawks played to a scoreless tie during a battle of unbeaten teams on April 4 at South Lakes High School. McLean entered the match as a program looking to continue its run of recent success, which includes a state championship in 2011. South Lakes is a group looking to take the next step in establishing itself as a contender.

Each team generated some offensive chances, but McLean squandered a golden opportunity in each half. In the 26th minute, senior Haley Mennes beat the South Lakes goalkeeper but failed to finish, hitting the side of the net. In the 50th minute, senior Maire Shine bounced a shot off the near post.

"I think we dug deep in the second half, especially," Shine said. "It was a hard-fought game. We just were a little off on some of the final passes. I think we could have won the game if we just finished a little better. ... I thought I had it on the chip. [South Lakes goalkeeper Sara Vigen] covered near post really well and I didn't have the angle for back post, so I knew I'd have to chip her and then it hit the inside of the post and, ugh, I thought I had it."

Shine, a first-team all-region selection last season, leads the Highlanders with four goals in six games. She's the primary offensive threat for a McLean team with a 3-0-3 record, including a scoreless tie against South County on Monday, April 7.

"I expect Maire to produce," McLean head coach Rob Bouchard said. "Everybody in the district voted her an all-region first-team [player] and we expect her to lead and play like an all-region first-team [player]."

Shine and senior defender Kaela Mahoney are team captains. Midfielders Caroline Meier and Megan DeGrafft, and defenders Audrey Freeman, Katherine Horenstein and Meaghan O'Reilly are also key contributors.

After opening the season with a scoreless tie against Robinson on March 21, McLean won its next three games, beating Oakton (2-1, March 24), Thomas Jefferson (4-0, March 28) and Langley (1-0, April 1).

"I think this team can go far," Shine said. "Everyone wants it and we've got a lot of talent, so I don't think there's any reason we can't go far."

The Highlanders finished runner-up in the Liberty District last season, losing to Stone Bridge 4-0 in the tournament championship game. McLean is competing in Conference 6 this season, which includes 2013 region runner-up Yorktown. While the Highlanders and Patriots don't face one another dur-

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



Senior Maire Shine is the McLean girls' soccer team's leading goal-scorer with four through six games.

**"My girls, they think they can beat anybody. There's a lot of hard teams out there, but they have that attitude [of], 'Why not us?'"**

— McLean girls' soccer coach Rob Bouchard



Caroline Meier and the McLean girls' soccer team is 3-0-3 through six games.

ing the regular season, each is a strong candidate to reach the conference tournament final.

"Our girls feel a little slighted because there has been talk about all these other teams in our district and nobody ever talks about us, so we take it personal," Bouchard said. "We want to go out there every night and beat everybody now because of that. ... My girls, they think they can beat anybody. There's a lot of hard teams out there, but they have that attitude [of], 'Why not us?'"

While the Highlanders have their sights set on continued success, the Seahawks are looking to take the next step under second-year head coach Mike Astudillo, who

coached the Chantilly girls' soccer team from 2004 to 2007.

In recent years, South Lakes suffered lopsided losses against top-tier teams, including an 8-0 defeat against McLean in 2011 and a 7-0 loss to Stone Bridge in 2012. In 2013, Astudillo's first as South Lakes head coach, the Seahawks finished with a 7-3-3 regular-season record, including ties against McLean and Stone Bridge. Astudillo was named Liberty District Coach of the Year.

This season, South Lakes opened with four consecutive victories, beating Wakefield (5-0, March 19), T.C. Williams (2-1, March 27), Marshall (3-0, March 28) and Thomas Jefferson (4-1, April 1) prior to tying McLean.

"This was our first real test of the season," Astudillo said. "We did what we were supposed to do for the first four games of the season. I scheduled two of the toughest scrimmages I could find and we played fairly well against Centreville and Chantilly, but McLean is just a team that has talented players ... [and] Rob runs a great program. It's just a really good test for us."

While South Lakes produced a winning season last year, the Seahawks failed to qualify for regionals, losing to Langley in the opening round of the district tournament.

"We need to improve on what we did last year," Astudillo said. "Last year, we showed up and we let the region know that we were here to play. We tied Stone Bridge last year and when we called in the score they were like, 'Boys' soccer tied Stone Bridge?' 'No, no, girls' soccer tied Stone Bridge.'

"The region was aware that we did some things last year. Now we've got to take that next step. We need to move to the next level. We need to qualify for the region tournament. I think that should be something that we need to do. We knocked on the door last year and we didn't get there. We need to get there this year."

One of the athletes responsible for South Lakes' early-season success is sophomore midfielder Meaghan Nally, who has been the Seahawks top offensive threat, producing four goals and three assists in five games. What makes Nally a good player?

"Her motor," Astudillo said. "Her engine never quits. She is an Energizer Bunny out there. She runs from goal line to goal line, she does everything we need."

Friday's result moved South Lakes' record to 4-0-1 and marked the second consecutive season the Seahawks managed to tie McLean.

"We know that we can hang in there with the best of the best," Nally said. "You just see how we can work together as a team, work hard. We can hang in there. We're good. Last year we tied them, as well, and we made a statement. We tied them again this year — they're better, we're better, so it made a bigger statement."

"... I think that last year, [Astudillo] was new, and so we were just getting used to his style. This year, we're kind of used to him. We know what he expects ... and we're stepping up to the plate because we know what we can do now. He's a really good coach. He motivates us, he keeps pushing us to the next level."

Bouchard has noticed the Seahawks' improvements.

"Their goalie [Vigen] is phenomenal and their field players have gotten so much better," Bouchard said. "First half, they took it to us and I was scared. Second half, we rose to the occasion and started making it more of a game."

South Lakes faced Mount Vernon on Tuesday, April 8, after The Connection's deadline. The Seahawks will host Stuart at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9.

McLean will host Fairfax at 7 p.m. on April 22.



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## "I Thought You Were a Goner"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

So has said my longtime oncology nurse, Ron, who has tended to me since June, 2009. Originally, I had been assigned to a different oncology nurse, Holly, with whom I developed an immediate rapport. She cared for me from the beginning, early March 2009, when I began my every-three-week chemotherapy infusion through June, when she transferred from the Infusion Center to a different unit (oncology does take a toll). Initially, after Holly's departure, Jane, another nurse in the unit, took me on as a patient. However, and this is where the details get sketchy, within a subsequent infusion or two, I was told one day upon my arrival at the Infusion Center, that Ron, still another oncology nurse, who I had certainly seen there previously but with whom I had minimal interaction, would be taking over for Jane - who was not transferring out - and henceforth would be my new oncology nurse. Apparently, I had been traded. For another patient? For future considerations? For a lunch-to-be-paid later? To this day, nearly five years later, I've never been able to uncover the truth. I got along fine with Jane; I'm a very low-maintenance patient/person; I don't think I did anything to precipitate such a decision. Nevertheless, a deal (my word) had been struck.

To the extent to which assigning nurses to oncology/chemotherapy patients is not random, given the ongoing and serious nature of the types of treatment, Ron's assignment - to me - was genius. We are alike in so many ways. We're the same age and have the same wise guy-type personality. We both use humor at every opportunity and love Yiddish and shtick as well; also we're both Jewish. In addition, we're both from the Northeast and love sports. He's interested in me and I'm interested in him. I know about his family. He knows about mine. Our relationship has evolved from nurse-patient to close friend. I trust Ron with my life.

That fact was never clearer to me than this past August 2nd, a scheduled infusion day for me, when I arrived at the Infusion Center for my usual chemotherapy. Ron noticed how ashen gray I was and after talking to me, further realized how much difficulty I was having breathing. Initially, he walked me around the unit while monitoring my oxygen levels; they were not merely low, they were no-chemotherapy-for-me-that-day really low. Immediately, Ron went to "Plan B:" assessment by a doctor in the Emergency Care Department. I needed medical help, that day. Ron then spent the next few hours coordinating care and managing the necessary steps to finding me a hospital bed. Later that day, I was "ambulanced" to Holy Cross Hospital where I was admitted. Two days later, I had 4.5 liters of fluid drained from my left lung which subsequently collapsed. I then spent the next five days recovering in S.I.C.U. In total, I was hospitalized for eight days before being released the following Friday. If not for Ron's hands-on and professional approach to my deteriorating condition, it's likely, as he's fond of joking, that I was a "goner."

But I'm not a "goner." I'm a "still here-er." In fact, at my last infusion, Ron told me that as of my five-year anniversary in late February, I'm now his longest-surviving cancer patient. And I'm still alive for many reasons, one of which is most definitely due to the depth of the relationship I have with my oncology nurse, Ron "Choo, Choo" Chubin (he's also a train guy). I wouldn't be here without him because, as he's also fond of saying, he's where I need him to be. Thank God!

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



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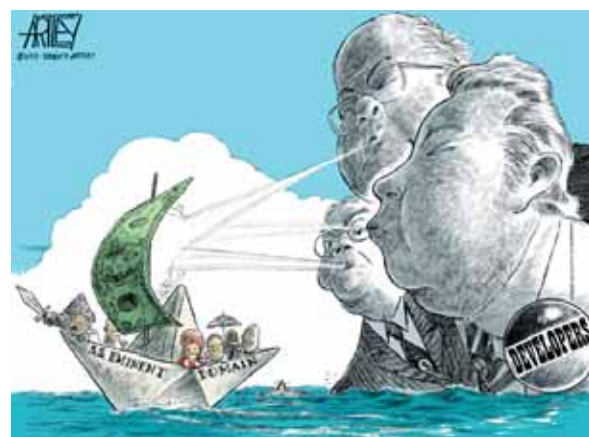
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