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event at The Old Brogue in Great Falls.

We will be hosting Capt. Reid Nannen Children's Fun

The Old Brogue is located at the corner of Georgetown Pike and Walker Road in Great Falls.

Call (703) 759-3309 to reserve your table at either the 5:30 or the 7:30 seating.

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# News

## Bridge Replacement to Cause Road Closures

#### Summer-long detour on Towlston Road starts June 25.

he Virginia Department of Trans portation will close a portion of Towlston Road this summer to rebuild the bridge over Rocky Run while Fairfax County schools are on summer break. Crews will close the road to through traffic June 25 and open the new bridge in late August.

Plans were underway to replace the original 1949 bridge when it was washed out by Tropical Storm Lee in September 2011. Under an emergency contract, crews built five steel pipe culverts as a temporary structure to re-open the road to traffic as soon as possible. The current crossing is sound but does not have the hydraulic capacity to handle high water during storms.

The project also features:

- \* Additional two feet of shoulder on each
- \* Aesthetic treatments on railings and abutments

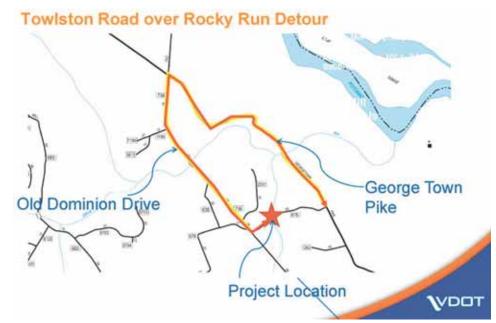
- Stream restoration to stabilize Rocky Run and guide the creek through the restored opening
- Overhead and underground utility coordination

Traffic Impacts:

Utility work May 19-21 - In preparation for the bridge project, the road will be closed 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 19-21 for Virginia Dominion Power to complete utility work. Through traffic will be detoured via Old Dominion Drive and Georgetown Pike (see detour map).

Summer-long detour starts June 25 -During the summer construction, through traffic will use the same detour.

The \$1 million project is being completed by Shirley Contracting Company. See more project details online at http:// www.virginiadot.org/projects/ northernvirginia/towlston road.asp.



Towlston Road detour map.

## Love for Becky on Mother's Day

### Inaugural Mothers for Mental Health event at Turner Park attracts 200 people.

By Reena Singh The Connection

ozens of people came to Turner Park for an intimate Mother's Day festival. Becky Love Foundation's inaugural Mothers for Mental Health fundraiser brought parents and children together to enjoy the weather, play in the bounce house and race each other in a 5K on Sunday.

The event was to raise money for Comfort Camps as well as raise awareness about suicide and sudden loss in the aftermath of Becky Love's death in August.

"She would have been pleased," said her mother, Sarah Kirk. "This was a great way to celebrate Mother's Day."

Becky, a mother herself, was 32 years old when she was found dead on a shooting range last year. About a month after her daughter died, Kirk and her family put her energy into the Becky Love Foundation to raise awareness about suicide and dealing with sudden

Kirk said the event raised about \$5,000, which will be donated to Comfort Zone Camp.

About 200 people showed up throughout the event, Kirk said. More than 45 people participated in the 5K and about eight walked the 1K. Additionally, another eight participated in the horse events.

The event boasted a cotton candy station, a bounce house and obstacle course, art station and even a visit from a local Fairfax County legislator.

"It's sad what happened, but a lot of good is coming from this very tragic situation," said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville).

He mentioned that representatives in Richmond are investing in mental health services for next fiscal year's bud-

"As a community, great people like Sarah and you are waking people up and making a difference," he said.

High, a school that lost two students recently to suicide, sent about 10 students to help out with the event in the morning.

Many of the event-goers were family members, all sporting periwinkle shirts wishing Becky a



From left, Charlotte Karanik, 9; Cecilia Love, 4; and Rosemary Love, 7; make spin art at Turner

happy birthday. However, there friend in need.

"Sarah's a friend of ours, and she's so active in the community," said Beth Keating, Great Falls, who came to the event with her own family. "Sarah tried to make a tragedy into something positive, and



Sarah Kirk and Supervisor John Foust make a few remarks during the event.

Photos by Reena Singh/The Connection



A volunteer club from Langley were many that came to support a **Beth Keating and Mary Ellen Keating, 12, listen to Super**visor John Foust speak at Becky Love Foundation's event.

we just wanted to help. We really hold it the day before Mother's can't wait to see this grow next year and in the years after."

Kirk plans on making the event an annual one, but said she might she said.

Day next year.

"We're so pleased with everyone that came and the generous spirit,"

#### News

A group of teachers at last year's golf tournament.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY CELEBRATE GREAT FALL

# Schools Win Big with Local Golf Fundraiser

Annual Celebrate Great Falls golf tournament on June 2.

> By Reena Singh The Connection

n upcoming golf tournament is a hole-inone fundraiser for three local elementary
schools.

The annual Celebrate Great Falls Foundation Colf Tournament will raise money for local

dation Golf Tournament will raise money for local students while giving grownups some fun in the sun at Reston's Hidden Creek Country Club on June 2.

"It's great seeing the communities rally around the schools," said Celebrate Great Falls Director Erin Lobato.

The first year when the charity tournament started, 12 people signed up for the cause. That has changed, according to CGF golf tournament Chairman Tim Burke.

"250 families participate now," he said. "We raised about \$20,000 last year."

That money has been divided up between Colvin Run Elementary, Forestville Elementary and Great Falls Elementary since the tournament began just giving the money to the schools six years ago.

This year, money raised will fund an online math program for Forestville, an abundance of library books for Great Falls and updated iPads and laptops for Colvin Run.

"They're extremely generous and we're happy they included us for the past five or six years," said Forestville Parent-Teacher Association member and tournament committee member Kari Lervick.

She said the fundraiser is the second biggest for the school.

Burke said he likes to know what the schools hope to use the money for every year.

"We've done Smart Boards and computer labs for Forestville and Colvin Run," he said. "While it may not pay for all of it, it helps."

He said schools in Great Falls do not receive as much money from the county because the tax base is higher in the village. To get the technology updates and books they need, they rely on fundraisers.



Longtime tournament sponsor Stephan Suib tees off at last year's event.

#### When & Where

Celebrate Great Falls Annual Tournament, June 2, 7:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Hidden Creek Country Club at 1711 Clubhouse Road, Reston.

Morning individual tickets cost \$140 and afternoon tickets cost \$150. Foursome tickets also available.

Lobato and Burke want the fundraiser to grow even more for this year's event. Lobato hopes new local families - in addition to the generation-after-generation locals - get involved.

"One of the things I'm always struck with is the sense of community," she said. "On the flipside, we have 250 families every year."

The foundation is also looking for 40 people to volunteer for the event, which is divided into a morning and afternoon playoff. Following will be a four-person scramble and an awards reception.

To sign up or volunteer, visit http://www.GreatFallsGolf.org/



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Activity table at the iSchool for the Future Environmental Action Showcase at George Mason University: Adam Fleming and Caitlin Tucker work with visiting students.

## iSchool Comes to Great Falls

#### Programs involve Forestville Elementary, Great Falls Library.

School for the Future demonstrated its unique STEAM SELTM approach to science education during Thursday's 2014 Annual School Environmental Action Showcase, generating interest from students and politicians alike.

The 2014 Annual School Environmental Action Showcase is sponsored by NoVA Outside and George Mason University and brings together schools, students, and environmental organizations from Northern Virginia to share ideas and share eco-projects. The event, held on Thursday, April 10 on the GMU campus, had over 44 schools and 520 students in 52 teams participating. Over 30 partner organizations were invited to lead hands-on science activities for students.

iSchool for the Future both led a hands-on activity and participated as a school team. iSchool's hands-on activities included a mixture of science, technology, engineering, math, arts, and social and emotional life skills (STEAM SELTM). Students used chemistry tools and the scientific method to hypothesize and test predictions of GMU's pond water quality, used math and problem-solving skills to estimate local tree sizes and calculate stored carbon, unleashed their inner artists as they drew a scientist, and discovered more about their own identity through a modified multiple intelligence activity designed to help them understand their own strengths.

This unique mixture of hands-on, place-based activities building both science and social skills attracted the attention of over 200 students and even a visit from Virginia State Senator Chap Peterson (34th District).

Several iSchool students from Forestville Elementary School participated as an Eco-Team to highlight their environmental projects. iSchool currently offers afterschool enrichment

See iSchool, Page 5



iSchool team - Anu Gupta, Nuria Gabitova, Rohan Alemblaseril, Natalie Hoffman and Ian Hoffman.

#### BULLETIN BOARD

#### SATURDAY/MAY 17

The Art of Wellness - a Health & Healing **Fair.** 1-5 p.m. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Explore allopathic and complimentary healing systems from over 40 vendors and attend lectures, workshops and book signings. Entrance fee: \$10. http:// www.unityoffairfax.org

#### MONDAY/MAY 19

McLean & Great Falls Celebrate Virginia will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The group will be discussing plans for their Aug. 24, 2014 event commemorating the bicentennial of the burning of the nation's Capitol during the War of 1812. If interested in taking part in the organization and its upcoming event contact Carole Herrick at 703-356-8223.

## iSchool Comes to Great Falls

From Page 4

programs at Forestville, and has been working with students on a year-long project to help Forestville enhance its outdoor science classroom spaces and improve its Eco-Schools USA status. The students used a display board to explain their project approach, which included learning foundational science, carrying out studies of Forestville's environment, and using study results to drive environmental action. Students highlighted a video they made that urges environmental action by Forestville's entire student body. Office Depot in Sterling, Virginia helped sponsor iSchool's participation in the Showcase.

iSchool for the Future also recently finished a 10-week session of STEAM SELTM classes for homeschooled students at the Great Falls Library. There students studied

the library and identified several environmental issues. During a final presentation on April 3, 2014, students addressed an audience of peers, parents, and library personnel and gave recommendations for improving environmental conditions at the library, including planting more trees, improving recycling, and highlighting biodiversity. Students also participated in environmental action projects for the library, including painting and donating a recycling bin to the library and planting flowers to mitigate climate change. The Friends of the Great Falls Library and Daniela Dixon, Library Manager, made this program possible.

iSchool for the Future offers afterschool programs and summer camps in the Northern Virginia area. Visit www.ischoolforthefuture.org for more information about the STEAM SELTM approach and program offerings.

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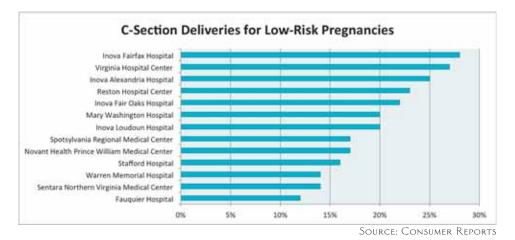


# Alexandria celebrated her 16<sup>th</sup> wearing her gown, not ours.

Alexx was diagnosed with bone cancer her first year of high school. Instead of going to an adult hospital, her family got help from a cancer treatment team focused completely on pediatric medicine. Watch how specialized care created a special day at JustRightForChildren.com/Alexx.



#### News



## C-Section Boom in Northern Virginia

Region has some of the highest rates of cesarean-section deliveries for low-risk pregnancies.

By Michael Lee Pope
The Connection

ehind the closed doors at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church and the Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington, a quiet change has been taking shape over the last few decades. Doctors at these two hospitals have been performing cesarean-section deliveries for low-risk pregnancies at a rate that far exceeds what happens at most hospital across America. Last week, the two hospitals landed on Consumer Reports' top 10 list for hospitals with high C-section rates.

"It's an alarming trend," said Dr. Michele Davidson, associate professor and coordinator of the PhD Nursing Program at George Mason University. "You have a much higher maternal mortality and morbidity rate when you perform a C-section versus a normal birth. So you're taking a surgical risk that does not need to be taken."

C-section deliveries have long been used for high-risk pregnancies, when the health of the mother or the baby is at risk. Since the 1960s, though, doctors have increasingly been performing C-section deliveries for low-risk pregnancies. These include women who have never had a C-section before, are not delivering prematurely or are pregnant with a single baby that is properly positioned. Critics say the procedures drive up costs and increase risks for mothers and babies, although hospitals say they are providing options to women.

"We work closely with expectant mothers and physicians to support choice, while providing a safe and personalized birth experience," said Maryanne Boster, director of corporate communications for the Virginia Hospital Center. "We are partnering with our physicians to constantly monitor

and balance the needs of the mother and baby while ensuring we work towards the best outcome for both."

**SINCE 1970,** the number of C-sections performed in the U.S. has increased 500 percent. Davidson said a number of reasons are driving the trend. One is fear of litigation, largely driving by high-profile lawsuits involving women whose uterus ruptured when they tried to induce labor in a pregnancy following a previous C-section delivery. Another trend driving the increased number is that more and more women are electing to have the procedure, a practice known as cesarian-on-demand.

"They're done with such frequency that they are a very safe procedure," said Del. Patrick Hope, who is a lobbyist with the American College of Cardiology. "Of course, what we are seeing is that the health plans are paying it. And so the health plans, which have everything at stake and are looking at the procedures and looking at the guidelines, they are clearly indicating it's appropriate."

Ultimately, though, the higher numbers may be related to money. Doctors can get higher rates of reimbursement when they opt for C-section deliveries. They also free up their schedule, allowing them to see more patients. The average labor time for a first-time baby is 16 to 18 hours, precious moments for doctors whose time is money. Davidson said she once worked at a hospital in Washington, D.C. where one doctor had a 100 percent C-section delivery rate.

"The only way one of his patients would delivery vaginally is if she walked in complete and he wasn't there," said Davidson. "He C-sectioned everyone because he didn't want to wait around for these women to deliver."

ANOTHER POSSIBLE explanation for Northern Virginia having higher rates of C-section deliveries for low-risk pregnancies has to with the culture in the region. Many professional women want to have a baby on their schedule rather than waiting around for labor. And military families are often under pressure to have babies on a

SEE C-SECTION, PAGE 9

# As I see it, this world is replete with many known and unknown hazards.

# YORK

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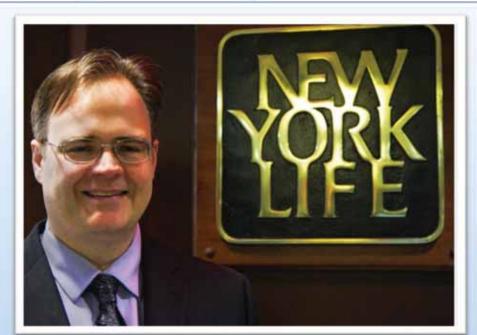
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## **OPINION**

## Virginia Proves Elections Matter

#### Health and economic issues are entwined.

ome people continue to assert, either with their words or by simply abstaining, that voting just doesn't matter. Here in Virginia, nearly every day we prove that is incorrect.

All of Virginia's elected representatives who are elected by the entire state are of the same political party. They are all Democrats: Gov. Terry McAuliffe, Lt. Gov. Ralph EDITORIAL Northam, Attorney General Mark Herring and Virginia's two U.S. Senators, Mark Warner and Tim Kaine.

None were elected by a landslide but the trend is undeniable; the results are tangible.

Herring won his race over Mark D. Obenshain (R) by fewer than 200 votes out of more than 2.2 million votes cast. But that slimmest of margins has cleared the way for a new approach on many issues, especially after the previous four years of Gov. Bob McDonnell and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli.

In January, Herring announced his office would support legal arguments that Virginia's

ban on same sex marriage is unconstitutional. Judge Arenda Wright Allen on Valentine's Day overturned that ban, and on Tuesday, May 13, the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond begins the process that should result in same sex couples being able to marry in Vir-

In April, Herring advised that Virginia students who are lawfully present in the United States under the Federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program qualify for in-state tuition, provided they meet Virginia's domicile requirements.

This week, Gov. McAuliffe began administrative processes to blunt the effects of restrictive regulations placed

on women's health centers that provide abortion, that would essentially have forced most to close by applying onerous standards intended for hospitals.

"I am concerned that the extreme and punitive regulations adopted last year jeopardize the ability of most women's health centers to keep their doors open and place in jeopardy the health and reproductive rights of Virginia women," McAuliffe said. He also began the process of changing the makeup of the Board of Health via appointments, including returning James Edmondson of McLean to the board. In the meantime, the gerrymandering of district lines for members of the General Assembly maintains the conservative, Republican

super majority there.

Those members of the House of Delegates in particular seem prepared to cut off their noses to spite their faces, to do almost anything to deny health care to more than 200,000 very poor Virginians who could be covered by expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Not only would this be fully covered by Federal funds for the first years and covered 90 percent thereafter, but it would bring enormous economic benefits to Virginia. McAuliffe is correct to look for ways to expand Medicaid administratively, bypassing the General Assembly. It has been done elsewhere.

"This is not just a health issue — it's an economic issue," McAuliffe said yesterday in announcing review of the regulations on women's health clinics, but the statement applies also to expanding health care in Virginia. "In order to grow and diversify our economy, Virginia needs to be open and welcoming to all."

— Mary Kimm, MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## No, I'm Not a Parent; I Just Act Like One

By Joan Brady

'm not a biological mother, an adoptive mother, a stepmother or a foster mother. But I have experienced some of the joys and heartbreaks of motherhood.

More than 12 years ago, I began as a homework tutor at a group home for foster kids. It was there that I met 7-year-old Dontae.

He would tell you that he tricked me into spending more time with him by pretending that he didn't know his letters. I would tell you that I was drawn to him in ways that I think mothers are drawn to their children. He needed someone. Maybe he needed me.

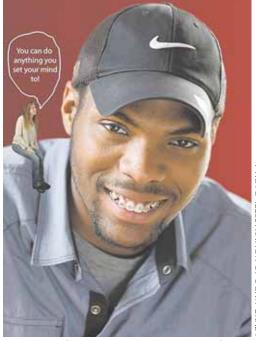
Within months, I began training to become Dontae's Court Appointed Special Advocate or CASA. A CASA is a volunteer who becomes the advocate for a foster child, representing a vulnerable child against the competing priorities of rotating social workers, lawyers and

Dontae had 23 placements in just under three years during his time in foster care. With a lack of stability and security, it was no wonder that his behavior was out of control. His anger was often frightening and sometimes put us both in danger

I quickly learned that he needed consistency and boundaries, but most of all, he needed unconditional, unwavering support.

My friends' kids were much younger than Dontae and social services and court appointed therapists didn't offer any meaningful insights or strategies. I operated on instinct, which sometimes served me well, but often did not.

I told Dontae over and over again what my parents had told me from the time I can remember: "You can do anything you set your mind to." While I might have gotten that per-



Joan Brady to Dontae: "You can do anything you set your mind to!"

sistent and caring motivational support right, there was so much I was getting wrong.

Fortunately, in my second year with Dontae. I met a talented therapist with a young child. In exchange for photographs of her daughter, she promised to meet with me weekly, the day after I saw Dontae.

Each week, I reported on our most recent visit. She would carefully explain where and why my instincts had betrayed me and sent me back out to do better the next time. Her insights were invaluable over the years.

Dontae returned to his mother's home after three years in foster care and she supported my continuing to be part of their lives. I helped to navigate the frustratingly complex educational system and was there to encourage Dontae. But at 14, Dontae was not really much different than he had been when I met him at 7. He was often filled with rage. The slightest thing could set him off. And one day after battering me with harsh and menacing words, he attempted to jump out of my car as I drove down the highway.

I remember my parents threatening to leave us, four kids at the side of the road, during a particularly bad road trip. I knew just how they felt. But I didn't leave Dontae at the side of the road. And three years later, he started to

In the past five years I have gotten to experience some of the joys of parenthood; first job, raises, good grades, school dances, wonderful trips and meals enhanced by interesting conversations. I have also struggled with the frustrating dilemma of trying to keep a kid on track, alternating between nagging, bribing, screaming, negotiating and supporting.

Dontae stayed in school well beyond what should have been his graduation date, cramming 12 years of education into just two. And next month he will graduate.

If you had asked me if I thought this was possible 12 years ago, I would have quietly shaken my head. But come June, I will be loudly cheering Dontae on at his high school graduation and embarrassing him by taking too many pictures.

No, I'm not a parent. I just act like one.

Joan Brady is a professional photographer; mentor and advocate for current and former foster children; volunteer with paws4People, Fairfax Families4Kids, and others; and a resident of Great Falls. Reach her at joan@joanbradyphotography.com

## Great Falls

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8 Great Falls Connection May 14-20, 2014

#### LETTERS

#### **Questionable Presumption**

The Fairfax County School Board has proposed four options for public discussion on changing school start times. None of the options includes the current school schedule. We are not in Russia, we must be given a fair choice, including the no change option. The presumption that if children start school later, they will get more sleep is questionable. They may simply go to bed later. The \$3M to \$7M cost to change the school schedule is a waste. Teachers are being laid off due to budget issues, we should not

spend millions of dollars on transportation at the expense of the teachers. Starting an hour later adds as much as two hour of commute time for the parents who live in the western end of the county and work in Washington, D.C. After school activities will start and end at later times, just in time for rush hour traffic and therefore may have to be curtailed. The current school schedule must be maintained.

> Yoram Carmi and Margo Rowles Great Falls

## C-Section Boom in Region

From Page 6

schedule that has a strict deadline related to deployment. In many cases, these women undergo selective induction, a process in which labor is induced on demand

"When you give someone the medication to start labor when her body is not really ready, you start to see failed inductions which lead to a C-section," said Davidson. "So that's another factor that we did not have in the 1960s at all."

In March, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine published in new practice guidelines designed to curtail the number of unnecessary C-sections. The two groups acknowledged that, in some cases, the procedure is medically necessary for the health and well-being of the mother or the baby. For example, the groups concluded cesarean delivery is firmly established as the safest route of deliver when when have conditions such as placenta previa or uterine rupture.

"Childbirth by its very nature carries potential risks for the woman and her baby, regardless of the route of delivery," the women's health organizations reported.

"For most pregnancies, which are low-risk, cesarean delivery appears to pose greater risk of maternal morbidity and mortality than vaginal delivery."

ALTHOUGH MOST of the increase in Csection deliveries came in the 1970s and 1980s, recent years have seen yet another spike. Since the mid-1990s, C-section deliveries have increased yet again. In 2011, for example, one in three women in the U.S. gave birth by cesarean delivery, a 60 percent increase since 1996. Some are concerned that the rapid increase in cesarean birth rates raises significant concern that cesarean delivery is overused without clear evidence of improved maternal or newborn outcomes. Some leaders in the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists are calling it a "epidemic."

"I like to use that word because it's dramatic," said Aaron B. Caughey, M.D., a member of The College's Committee on Obstetric Practice who helped develop the new recommendations. "I use that word because this is nationwide and worldwide. It's something that's occurring that we need to understand better, and in my opinion it's something that we should work to forestall."

#### FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to greatfalls@ connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

The Antioch Christian Church, 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna, will hold their annual Pet Blessing on Sunday, June 1, at 2 p.m. Each pet will receive a certificate and blessing and a small gift charm. For more information go to http://www.antiochdoc.org/ or call 703-938-6753. The public and all pets and caregivers are invited to attend.

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org.

McLean Bible Church Fitness Class at strength at 9:45 a.m. Mondays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered students. bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org.

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 1830 Kirby Road in McLean, holds a third Sunday service every month at 10:15 a.m. which allows children to play active roles in the music and as greeters and ushers. Traditional services are every Sunday at 8:15 and 10:15 a.m.

Vienna Christian Healing Rooms are open, every Saturday, 1-5 p.m., at 8200 Bell Lane. A team of Christians is available to anyone requesting prayer. Free and open to the public, 703-698-9779 or www.viennachristianhealingrooms.com.

Chesterbrook United Methodist Church is at 1711 Kirby Road, McLean. Worship service is at 11 a.m. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. for adults 703-356-7100 children. www.ChesterbrookUMC.org.

Centering Prayer Group meets Fridays, 9:30 a.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. The hour includes a brief reading related to Centering Prayer, followed by a 20-minute prayer period. E-mail Martha Thomas at mmthomas211@hotmail.com or call the church at 703-759-3509.

Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Participants include Sha'are Shalom, Congregation Beth Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. ShalomDC.org.







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## Home Life Style

**Empty-Nesters Spread Their Wings** 

A Springfield couple creates a personalized interior custom-suited to support everyday pleasures, using the existing footprint.

By John Byrd

sunny space; an uplifting view; a generous footprint that includes a sizeable breakfast zone, a food preparation island and easy access to a large back deck

On the surface, the kitchen of David and Cindy Kunzman's colonial-style home in Springfield had everything to recommend it. On the other hand: when the kids have moved on, transforming a kitchen into your everyday gathering place can become a personal passion. It's largely a matter of thinking creatively; and finding the right resources.

"We'd been thinking about a new kitchen almost from the day we moved in," said David Kunzman who had purchased the circa-1990s four-bedroom home about 10 years ago. "We didn't move quickly, partly, because the original floor plan worked pretty well. Fundamentally, we were developing our wish-list, going to home shows and waiting for the right opportunity."

That opportunity was meeting David Foster at a home his firm, Foster Remodeling Solutions, had recently renovated. Kunzman liked what he saw and heard. Shortly afterward, Cindy Kunzman was introduced to Foster's designer, Mimi Lee.

"That's when the project took off," Kunzman said. "Mimi really helped us shape our ideas."

**THE FIRST STEP** was a thoughtful re-examination with Foster of the existing floor plan: what worked and what could be improved upon.

The cooktop and clean-up were in the right place, the Kunzmans decided. The food prep island — while small — was a critical leg in effective work triangles. The breakfast nook was appropriately positioned, and there was lots of natural light. The main issues were in performance: more functional storage, some personal-use items begging for custom design, and, of course, ambiance.

It wasn't just that the existing interior was dated, or that it evoked qualities unquestionably associated with a suburban production house. The couple's larger goal was finding a design style that appropriately expressed their



Photo by Dimitri Ganas

While staying within the footprint of their existing 18-year old-kitchen, Dave and Cindy Kuntzman gained significant improvements in both function and design. Cindy Kunzman worked closely with designer Mimi Lee at Foster Remodeling Solutions in developing a warmly textured ambiance that combines selected hardwoods, tumbled marbles and granite. Foster increased storage capacity and introduced a much larger food preparation island without moving walls or adding square footage.

#### Details

Foster Remodeling Solutions periodically offers workshops on home remodeling topics. Call 703-550-1371 or visit www.fosterremodeling.com.

evolving tastes.

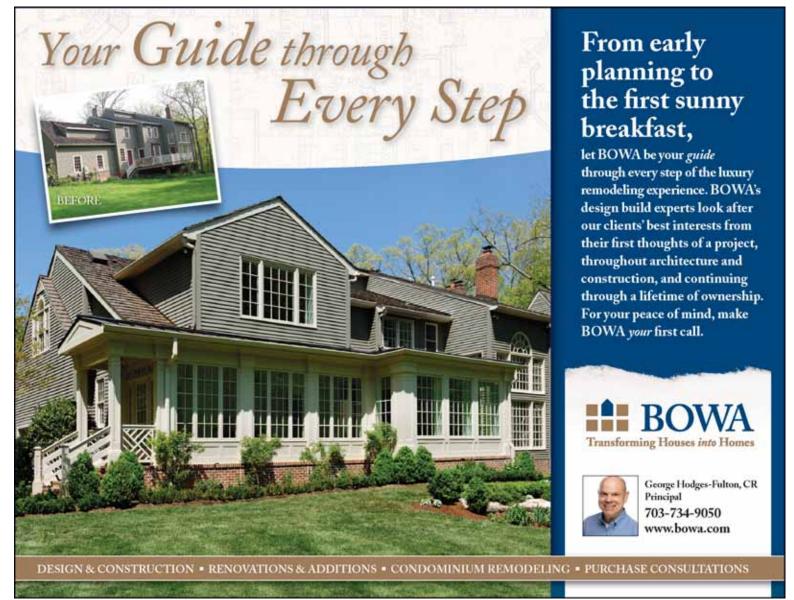
"The more we talked," Lee said, "the more we seemed to be naturally exploring ideas associated with transitional-style interior design."

Transitional style, Lee said, introduces traditional, often formal touches into an open floor plan. The style objective, thus, guided the selection process —cultivating a warmly textured feel appropriate for rooms often bathed in natural light.

**THE STARTING POINT**, however, was modifying the floor plan to gain useful square footage without moving walls.

Deleting a pantry tucked in an interior wall, for instance, enabled the Foster team to pick up just enough floor space to introduce a substantially larger food prepara-

SEE A SPACE, PAGE 13



## Local REAL ESTATE

In March 2014, 11 Great Falls homes sold between \$1,560,000-\$560,000 and 61 homes sold between \$2,850,000-\$184,900 in the McLean and Falls Church area.



# March, 2014 Top Sales in Great Falls and McLean



2 7614 Swinks Court, McLean — \$2,850,000







128 Commonage Drive, Great Falls — \$1,525,000

10101 Copper Court, Oakton — \$1,190,000

McLean

 Address
 BR FB HB
 Postal City
 Sold Price
 Type
 Lot AC
 PostalCode
 Subdivision
 Date Sold

 1 1614 KIRBY RD
 6 .. 7 .. 1
 MCLEAN
 \$2,850,000
 Detached
 0.60
 22101
 MCLEAN
 03/25/14

 2 7614 SWINKS CT
 7 .. 9 .. 2
 MCLEAN
 \$2,850,000
 Detached
 0.95
 22102
 SWINKS MILL WOODS
 03/28/14

 3 6707 IUPINE LN
 6 .. 6 .. 2
 MCLEAN
 \$2,560,000
 Detached
 1.25
 22101 PARKVIEW HILLS/LANGLEY FOREST 03/26/14

128 COMMONAGE DR ............. 4.. 4.. 0 ... GREAT FALLS .. \$1,525,000 .... Detached .... 6.57 ...... 22066 ............ SOUTHDOWN ............ 03/28/14

COPYRIGHT 2014 REALESTATE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE. SOURCE: MRIS AS OF APRIL 15, 2014.

Tysons Corner

## Home LifeStyle

## A Space Reflecting Who You Are

From Page 11

tion island, and dining counter which now accommodates seating for three. Moreover, while finding the square footage needed for a much larger refrigerator, a stacked double oven and even an Advantium range, the makeover still manages to provide more usable storage than the previous kitchen.

"This is David working some kind of magic," Kunzman said.

"We designed deeper cabinets with roll-out trays," Foster said. "The cabinets and drawers are designed for specific items, and positioned to facilitate a whole series of interlinked work triangles. It's a plan that emphasizes convenience and efficiency."

Naturally, in such a world, one expects cabinets custom-sized for large pots; roll-out spice racks; a side drawer for hand towels; and a dedicated spot for the espresso coffeemaker.

But this plan also introduces such originals as a pull-out drawer with his-and-her iPad charging stations; a slot to hold the RF Universal remote; and a TV mounted



The custom-designed wet bar — which is positioned for easy access to the back deck - includes a 40-bottle wine/ beer refrigerator, a clean-up sink and an icemaker. The glass-faced cabinets display David Kunzman's collection of beer mugs from favorite micro-breweries.

so that the screen points in any direction desired.

Carrying integrated home entertainment a step further, Foster positioned audio speakers above the cabinets and mounted the sound system in the basement.

The most personal built-in, however, is the 8-foot-by8-foot-by3.5foot wet bar on the interior wall of the breakfast nook. With a 40bottle wine/beer refrigerator, a clean-up sink and an ice maker, the console is convenient to the breakfast table and, more importantly, to the deck and outdoor play area just beyond the double French doors.

"The wet bar is a real step-saver that makes entertaining on the



The surface to the new food prep island/dining counter is more than twice the width of its predecessor and accommodates place settings for three. The design team choose granite in a hue known as Giallo Oatmeal, complementing a tumbled marble backsplash that incorporates glass tile accents.

deck much easier," Kunzman said. On the interior design front, Cindy Kunzman made full-use of Mimi Lee's talents and advice, often visiting Foster Remodeling's

Lorton showroom to look at cabi-

nets facings, marble samples or ideas for flooring.

What evolved was an interior that makes use of color-contrasted natural materials, decorative elements and finish work detailing: a cooktop hood faced in cherrywood that tapers upward to

ceiling-flush crown moulding; a Giallo Oatmeal granite surface mounted on the food prep island's espresso-stained cabinetry base; and a backsplash of tumbled marble that incorporates glass tile inserts as art deco-styled accents.

"You build this kind of interior one detail at a time; that's how you achieve distinction, "Kunzman said. "But more importantly, it's satisfying to be in a space that so completely expresses who you are. It's comfortable; it feels like home."

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### CALENDAR

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

#### THURSDAY/MAY 15 -SUNDAY/MAY 17

"The Pirates of Penzance." 7 p.m. Oakton High School. A satiric operetta about a group of inept pirates off the shore of Cornwall, England in the 1880s. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

#### FRIDAY/MAY 16

#### **2014 Future Fund Awards**

**Gala.** 8 – 11 p.m. The Cherry Blossom Charter, 105 N Union Street, Alexandria. Join members of the Future Fund, a giving circle of more than 100 young professionals at the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia, for a celebration of the 2014 Future Fund grantees – Linden Resources, Inc., and Quality of Life Foundation. \$75-\$95. https:// www.cfnova.org/our-programs/ future-fund/awards-gala

#### SATURDAY/MAY 17

**McLean Day 2014.** 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Now in its 99th year the event will feature amusement rides, a trackless train, pony rides, entertainment, field games, fair food, exhibitors, balloon twisting and

Tai-Chi & Stretch. 8-9 a.m. The Palladium Civic Place Green, 1445 Laughlin Avenue, McLean. Free. 703-



Doreen Montis, Bubble Vision, on exhibit at the Great Falls Library, April-June.

Emy Tseng. 5-7 p.m. The Palladium Civic Place Green, 1445 Laughlin Avenue, McLean. Free. 703-288-

#### McLean Day 2014: Celebrating our Hometown. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. A spring carnival for family and friends to enjoy.

www.mcleancenter.org/specialevents. Kilmer Center Run, Walk & Roll.

7:30 a.m. Kilmer Center, 8102 Wolftrap Road, Vienna. For children and young adults with significant intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities. Activities include a 5K Run, 1 mile Walk and

Roll (multi-terrain wheelchair accessible race course), and Wellness Expo/Community Resource Fair. Entry fee of \$20 per participant includes a t-shirt. To register, visit www.fcps.edu/kilmercenter/. To volunteer, contact Sarah DiGioia at sedigioia@fcps.edu. Vienna Choral Society for

Parodies and PDQ Bach. 7:30 p.m. UUCF, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. An evening of mockery, humor, and some gosh-darn sophisticated singing. Plus a few endof-surprises that you won't want to miss. Tickets are \$25 (adults) and

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15



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PHOTO COURTESY OF MCC

The McLean High School Jazz Ensemble will perform music of the classic big band era as well as contemporary pieces.

#### McLean to Celebrate Hometown

Residents of McLean welcome the happy return of fun in the sun each year with a familiar kickoff—their hometown festival, McLean Day. Sponsored by the McLean Community Center, the event is the perfect place for friends, neighbors, local businesses and organizations to come together to enjoy all that makes their community special. McLean Day 2014: Celebrating Our Hometown will be held on Satur-

day, May 17, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road. Admission is free.

For festival updates, driving directions, shuttle bus stop locations and a festival area map, visit: www.mcleancenter.org/special-events or call the Center at 703-790-0123/TTY: 711. The Center's telephone will be answered from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the day of the festival.



#### CALENDAR

From Page 14

\$20 (seniors/students) - available through http://
viennachoralsociety.org/events/ and at the door. (Youth 14 and below attend free with a paying adult.)

#### SUNDAY/MAY 18

Breakfast Buffet. 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Vienna's American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, N, Vienna. Adults \$8, children \$3: omelets, scrambled eggs, blueberry pancakes, bacon, etc. Open to the public, proceeds benefit Girls State. For more info, call 703-938-1379.

#### THURSDAY/MAY 22

Great Falls Writer's Group

**Meeting**. 12-1:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Kemal Kurspahic, editor of the Great Falls Connection, will address the group on "Life on Deadline—From the Frontline Sarajevo Daily to the Great Falls Connection," in which he will talk about his years as a foreign corespondent and international journalist, and his role at The Connection. Potluck lunch will be served. Writers of all levels are welcome, no registration necessary. Call 703-926-7457 for more information.

#### FRIDAY/MAY 23

Patriotic Campfire. 7 - 8:30 p.m.
WNC Campfire Ring - On Soapstone
Drive, between Glade Drive and
Lawyers Road. All ages. Celebrate
Memorial Day by singing patriotic
songs around a campfire. Roast a hot
dog on a stick and make a yummy
marshmallow treat. Play oldfashioned games and get a fun start
to your holiday weekend.

Reservations required by May 20. Fee: \$7/person RA members, \$9/person non-members. For more information, email naturecenter@reston.org, or call 703-476-9689 and press 5.

### SATURDAY/MAY 24 – SUNDAY/ MAY 25

Model Trains at Open House. 1-5 p.m. 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. 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. 703-938-5157. www.nvmr.org.

#### SATURDAY/MAY 24-MONDAY/MAY 26

ViVa! Vienna! 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Rides, food, entertainment, kids' activities and Memorial Day tribute celebrate community spirit. www.vivavienna.org.

 $Send\ school\ notes\ to\ greatfalls @\ connection newspapers. com\ by\ Friday.$ 

Ten Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students earned top 10 finishes at the DECA International Career Development Conference held recently in Atlanta.

SCHOOL NOTES

The following FCPS students earned a top 10 finish at the national level:

- Paige Ahmed, Sophie Eaton, and Lauren Fisher of Robinson Secondary School, Learn and Earn Project.
- Conor Boyle and Emma Heiden of Marshall High School, Marketing Communications Team.
   Sydney Applegate and Mason
- Hawkins of Oakton High School, Hospitality Services Team.
- ♦ Michael Briody and Wes Hammerschmidt of Marshall High School, Buying and Merchandising

Claire Heiden of Marshall High School, Principles of Marketing.

A total of 37 FCPS students were recognized as finalists at the 2014 competition.

Longfellow Middle School students **Aaditya Singh, Franklyn Wang, and William Sun** have qualified to the United States of America Junior Mathematical Olympiad (USAJMO) 2014. The USAJMO is an invitation only competition where the MAA invites the top scoring 230 students (10th graders and below across the US) based on a combination of their performance in the AMC-10 and AIME competitions. See more at: http://www.maa.org/node/79/#JISAMO

**Courtney Cross**, of Great Falls, graduated from Bishop O'Connell high school. She is a sophomore at Villanova University and was named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2013.

**Matthew Kent**, of Vienna, was named to the Dean's List at Carnegie Mellon University for the fall semester of 2013.

**Lindsay Weber**, a 2010 graduate of James Madison High School, has been named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2013 at Radford University.

**Julian Kell,** of Vienna, was named to the Dean's List at University of New England for the fall semester of 2013.

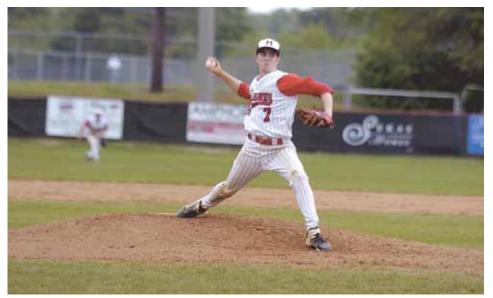


Vote now by absentee ballot and avoid the crowds!
View the candidate statements on the Center's Web site.
Call the Center or send an E-mail message to "elections@mcleancenter.org" to request a ballot package be sent to your home. Or, stop by the Center at 1234 Ingleside Avenue and pick one up. Completed ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14 to be counted.



The McLean Community Center
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www.mcleancenter.org

### **SPORTS**



Madison pitcher John DeFazio stuck out 10 in six innings while earning the win against McLean on May 9.



McLean catcher Caleb Beatty finished 3-for-4 with a double and a solo home run against Madison on May 9.

## Madison Pitcher DeFazio Shuts Down McLean

"I felt great tonight with all

consistent as it's ever been

this year. I was able to put my

fastball wherever I wanted it

– especially on the inside

— Madison pitcher John DeFazio

my pitches. My curveball,

especially, has been as

part [of the plate]."

Warhawks junior strikes out 10 against Highlanders.

> By Jon Roetman The Connection

riday's Madison-McLean matchup figured to be a pitching duel between a pair of future Virginia Tech right-handers. By the end of the second inning, however, Madison junior John DeFazio was the only ace left stand-

The Madison baseball team led 5-0 after one inning, 7-0 after two and cruised to an 11-3 victory over McLean on May 9 at Madison High School. DeFazio, a junior who is orally committed to the Hokies, earned the win, allowing two runs and seven hits over six innings. He struck out 10 and did not walk a batter, helping the Warhawks improve to 16-2.

"I felt great tonight with all my pitches," DeFazio said. "My curveball, especially, has been as consistent as it's ever been this year. I was able to put my fastball wherever I wanted it - especially on the inside part [of the plate]."

DeFazio, who pitched a perfect game against Washington-Lee on April 26, held McLean scoreless until the fifth inning, when reserve Billy Gerhardt and catcher Caleb Beatty led off the frame with backto-back solo home runs. Madison head coach Mark Gjormand said a 10-run lead contributed to DeFazio allowing the long balls. "I thought he was outstanding," Gjormand said. "I thought his offspeed stuff was better than on his perfect-game day two weeks ago. ... When you're up 10-0, you're really throwing in the middle of the plate and you're just trying to get out of here, so we got him off the corners and that's on [the coaches]. John understands the game and he did a great job pitching to a 10-run lead in that situation."

Trey Ramsey pitched the seventh inning for Madison, allowing one run and two hits.

#### Langley's McSteen K's 18

angley pitcher Jake McSteen struck out 18 batters during an 11-2 victory against Hayfield on May 10.

McSteen threw a complete game, allowing four hits and a pair of unearned runs while earning his sixth win of the season. McSteen, a senior left-hander, will play baseball for the University of Nebraska.

The win improved Langley's record to 11-7. The Saxons concluded the regular season against Madison on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Conference 6 tournament will begin Friday, May 16.

He walked one and struck out three.

While DeFazio was dealing, McLean starter Joey Sullivan struggled. The senior lasted just 1 1/3 innings, allowing seven runs — four earned — and five hits while walking two and hitting one batter. The Vir-

ginia Tech signee threw a firstpitch ball to seven of 13 batters faced before moving to shortstop.

McLean head coach John Dowling said Sullivan, who threw a five-inning perfect game against Langley on April 5, didn't have his best stuff against Madison.

"[Sullivan's]

fastball command was lacking," Dowling said. "His biggest asset is that when he commands his fastball down in the zone, he becomes very, very difficult [to hit]. Like any pitcher, when he doesn't do that and he has to pitch from behind, he becomes a base until the fourth inning and didn't score lot more hittable."

MADISON TOOK CONTROL early, batting around in the first inning while building a 5-0 lead. A sacrifice fly by shortstop Pete Nielsen, a Sullivan balk and an RBI

single by first baseman Jimmy Goldsmith gave the Warhawks a 3-0 advantage before designated hitter Matt Favero delivered a two-run double.

DeFazio drove in a run with a sacrifice fly in the second inning and Nielsen pro-

> duced an RBI single.

In the third inning, a wild pitch, another DeFazio sacrifice fly and another Nielsen RBI single put Madison up 10-0. Nielsen finished 2-for-3 with three RBIs.

"Joey's going to Virginia Tech, he threw a nohitter this season, we're very well aware,"

Gjormand said. "... Our kids actually like seeing a live fastball better than soft lefty or soft righty."

While Madison built a double-digit lead, McLean didn't have a runner reach third until the fifth, when home runs by Gerhardt and Beatty kept the Highlanders from suffering a five-inning, run-rule defeat.

"The whole team has been used to slow pitching," Beatty said, "and [DeFazio] came in with a little heat."

Gerhardt, who started early in the season before suffering an elbow injury, peppered the scoreboard in left field. Beatty followed with an opposite-field homer to left. The home runs seemed to fire up the Highlanders, but it was too little too late.

"That right there is what we need [Gerhardt] to be able to do, is when he is able to get in the lineup, take advantage of those opportunities," Dowling said. "That's exhibit A of what we're trying to get some of these guys to do because we, at times, don't go out there and play with that aggression that we need to be successful."

Beatty finished 3-for-4 with a double. Right fielder Colin Morse had an RBI single in the seventh inning.

McLean won its first five games and improved to 8-2 with a 16-3 victory over Edison on April 14. However, the Highlanders dropped seven of their next eight, including a 1-0 loss to Washington-Lee on May 10. "Some guys are starting to get it," Dowling said after the Madison loss. "Some guys are starting to go out there and they realize that they are skilled enough as a group that if they compete and they do it without any fear of failure, that they can be pretty darn good. Today, it took us 15 outs to get there, which is far too many against a team as good as Madison."

#### WHILE MCLEAN HAS STRUGGLED,

Madison has thrived, winning 16 of 17 after opening the season with a 3-0 loss to Stone Bridge on March 21. The Warhawks are looking to make a deep postseason run after an early playoff exit last season. Madison won 22 straight games in 2013 before losing to eventual region champion Lake Braddock in the region quarterfinals.

"We feel like we're capable every year," Gjormand said. "Last year, it was a tough break because we ran into Lake Braddock. They weren't even supposed to be on that side of the bracket. We win 22 in a row and it was bound to happen that we weren't going to play well. We played our worst game of the year in our last game."

The Conference 6 tournament begins Friday, May 16.

### **SPORTS**

Langley sophomore Morgan Kuligowski, right, battles for one of her many ground ball pickups against Stone Bridge.



## Langley Girls Lax Continues Solid Season

he Langley girls' lacrosse team concluded its regular season with a 13-6 victory over South Lakes on May 12. The Saxons will enter the Conference 6 tournament on Thursday, May 15 with a 7-4 record.

Langley started off the season strong, winning its first three matches, but then hit a tough period right before Spring Break when they played arguably three of the top teams in the state — reigning champion Madison, Westfield, and Oakton — losing to all three despite some spirited play. Then, between the week off and some rainouts, Langley didn't play another game for three weeks. So, two weeks ago, they were excited to take on Stone Bridge (11-2), and prove their mettle.

The Stone Bridge game on May 3 started off well for the Saxons, with Langley sprinting to a 7-1 lead behind a flurry of goals by sophomore Halle Duenkel and senior co-captain Lauren Clubb. But, the Bulldogs took a timeout, regrouped, and then proceeded to dominate the Saxons for the next half hour of the game, helped by a flurry of fouls handed out to the frustrated Saxons, including five yellow cards. Despite these challenges, the Saxons rallied and scored two goals and had a game-tying goal called back before dropping the tight contest, 11-10.

Going into a May 9 contest against the Marshall Statesmen, the Langley Saxons were looking forward to playing an opponent with a strong record (9-3) and proving they could beat a top team. The Saxons beat Marshall handily, 19-11, with close to a 10-goal lead midway through the first half.

Goals were scored by Duenkel (6 with 1 assist), senior Katherine Gallo (3 with 1 assist), freshman Anna Hofgard (3 with 1 assist), junior co-captain Aubrey Zarella (2), junior Nicole Lee (2), sophomore Morgan Kuligowski (2 with 1 assist) and Clubb (1 with 1 assist). Junior Bethany Bacso also contributed three helpers.

Freshman goalie Megan O'Hara played another strong game, saving close to 50 percent of the shots she faced.

"The team really played a strong game against a good opponent, and they really rebounded from the tough Stone Bridge loss last week," Langley head coach Rebecca Watkins said. "We continue to get scoring from a wide variety of players, and I feel we are in a good place before starting the playoffs."

#### Colvin Run Elementary Holds Fun Run

Inspired by the gorgeous day, and by the camaraderie of family and friends, participants in the 9th Annual Colvin Run Elementary School Fun Run, a Family Event for Charity, ran and walked the equivalent of 720 miles in a one hour period last Saturday morning.

Each Fun Run participant collected pledges or flat donations for the charity of their choice. Organizations benefiting included those that support the environment, animal welfare, medical research, treatment of disease, children and families in need, affordable housing, hospice, and more.

In addition to the focus on charitable giving, the Fun Run offers families an opportunity to come together for a morning of physical fitness in a fun, relaxed, nopressure environment. Participants walk or run as many loops of the half mile course as they can in the time allotted. This is the ninth consecutive year of the event, and the ninth year that Shouse Village, resplendent with late blooming cherry trees, has



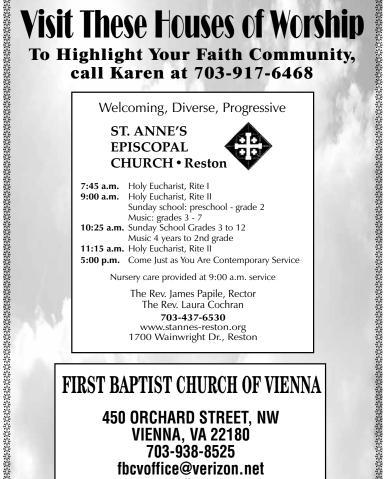
played host to the Fun Run.

Said Colvin Run ES school principal Ken Junge, as the crowd of eager children in the front of the pack raced past the start line, "It's heartwarming to see so many families out on this beautiful day, showing their compassion for others in such a tremendous way. The money raised this morning will

help dozens of charities around the country and right here in our own community."

The Colvin Fun Run is free to participants. It is organized and hosted entirely by volunteers from, and members of, the Colvin Run PTO, as part of Colvin Run's award-winning Character Education program.





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State Water Control Board Public Notice

An enforcement action has been proposed for Crystal Aquatics, Inc.. The Consent Order describes a settlement to resolve violations of State Water Control Law and the applicable regulations associated with the Kent Gardens Becreation Club Pool located in McLean, Virginia, A. description of the proposed action is available at the DEQ office named below or online at www.deg.virginia.gov. Daniel

Burstein will accept comments by e-mail,
Daniel.Burstein@deq.virginia.gov, fax, 703-583-3821, or postal mail, Northern Regional Office, 13901 Crown Court, Woodbridge, VA 22193, from May 15, 2014 through June 19,

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**ABC LICENSE** Williams acquisition LLC trading as Hearthstone Pizza Bistro, 507 23 St. S Arlington, VA 22202. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine

and Beer on & off Premises/Delivery permit, Mixed beverages restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Gregory

Williams, president NOTE: Objections to the ssuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later that 30 days from the publish ing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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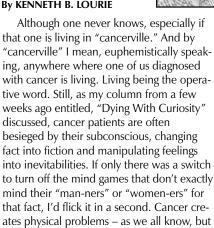


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#### Still Curious, **But Maybe Not Dying**

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



I have to tell you, it's the mental problems

that can be just as deadly.

It was in this column that I attempted to flesh out why I was – at this particular point in my cancer career - thanking people, people I had never previously thanked and people who quite frankly needed thanking. But was I thanking them ("I Thought You Were a Goner" and "Thanks, Coach") because it was the proper thing to do, or was it my subconscious cashing a check that I had not realized needed to be written - if you know what I mean? And if you don't, to clarify: did my subconscious know something that my conscious mind had yet to find out? Was I in fact getting things in order before it was too

Conversely (oddly enough), my columns published over the most recent two weeks were what we call non-cancer columns: "Father and Son 'Twogether'" and "A Tale of Two Seasons," as if a didn't have a cancer thought on my mind, subconsciously or otherwise, that needed to be written. No feelings - or facts for that matter, about cancer that one might interpret as creepy or curiously prophetic, given the terminal diagnosis with which I live every day. No. Just normal, everyday-type minutiae that those familiar with my first 10 years of columns published in this space (I guess we'll call them pre-cancer columns now), are likely familiar. Topics ranging from the mundane to the ridiculous, as if I didn't have a care in the world; certainly not a cancer care, that's for sure.

And so it dawned on me: were these two columns ("Father and Son 'Twogether'" and "A Tale of Two Seasons") examples of my subconscious mind once again exerting its power over my conscious mind and providing fodder for non-cancer columns because it could? Or was this my subconscious mind telling me to relax and not think so much, especially about the two "thank-you" columns: "I Thought You Were A Goner" and "Thanks, Coach")? Either way, it seemed to me an odd juxtaposition of material over a 4-week period: two columns that contemplated death (sort of) and two other columns which contemplated nothing, really, certainly not death, anyway.

The upshot of which has been to unburden me a little bit, to make me a little less focused on the presumptive path that lies ahead and instead direct me onto an alternative route, one that features more future and less past. I'd like to think I can live like that; I just hope my subconscious mind has no more to say about it.

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



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