

Great Falls Pride on Display

NEWS, PAGE 3

Unicyclist Lisa Polinari put on a juggling act while simultaneously leading the Bike Brigade during the Great Falls July 4th parade.

NASA Comes to Colvin Run Elementary

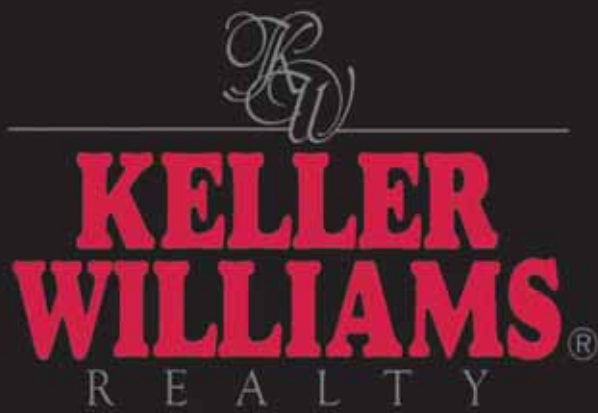
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'Let's Dance!'

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Bob Nelson



Kelly Putz



Tim Heil



Michele Cornejo

The Bob Nelson Team

VA/DC/MD

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PHOTOS BY NIKKI CHESHIRE/THE CONNECTION



Great Falls citizens of all ages were encouraged to take part in the parade and participate in the celebration.



Eighteen-month-old Everett Palmer pauses to pet Canine Companions for Independence dog Romer III before lining up for the parade.

Great Falls Pride on Display in July 4th Parade

BY NIKKI CHESHIRE
THE CONNECTION

Despite the threat of rain early in the morning of July 4, the Great Falls festivities went off without a hitch. With a 5k run, followed by the annual parade and many more events throughout the day, there was no shortage of activities for citizens of all ages.

The parade, led by local Boy Scouts, included floats from the town's sports teams, businesses, organizations and politicians. There were also horseback riders, antique cars, dog-walkers and bicyclists.

"It's a little bit unique," said parade participant and Great Falls Historical Society member Rick Turner, "that a relatively small community can have so many people get together with good will."

The post-parade activities featured inflatable attractions, live music, food and more on the Village Centre Green. However, there were no fireworks in Great Falls this year. According to Celebrate Great Falls Board Member Malou Rennert, no local organizations volunteered to sponsor the fireworks this year.



This woman on stilts exuberantly waved to spectators as she led the second portion of the parade.



Great Falls Historical Society member Rick Turner dons a full Confederate colonel uniform, representing the history of both Virginia and the USA.



The Post Office was represented by this antique Ford mail truck, clad in American flags.



The mascot for the Great Falls Eagles rugby team danced alongside the team car.

You Can Run, But You Can't Win?

Fairfax County fires attorney for winning city council seat.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Like many lifelong City of Fairfax residents, Nancy Fry Loftus is proud of her hometown's character and charm — a Norman Rockwell postcard of small-town life in the heart of an increasingly urban, diverse and bustling region.

After winning a seat on the six-member City of Fairfax Council in May, Loftus was looking forward to celebrating Independence Day with her family and participating in the city's annual old-fashioned July 4th extravaganza, which includes a colorful hometown parade, firefighter's competition, and the largest fireworks display in the area.

But as she sat in historic Old Town Hall on Friday, July 4 — during the annual meet-and-greet luncheon with city leaders — Loftus started to tear up.

What she thought would be a moment of pure celebration had turned bittersweet.

A week earlier, on June 27, Loftus had been abruptly fired from her job as a Fairfax County assistant attorney by County Attorney David Bobzien.

"My computer was shut down, and I was locked out of the office ... I had worked there for 17 years, and I always had great reviews. This was just humiliating," Loftus said.

So why was Loftus terminated?

According to her attorney, state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), winning the non-partisan election — which comes with a \$4,500 salary — cost Loftus her \$85,000-a-year county job.

In fact, her termination followed two warnings from the County Attorney's Office — the first on April 17, just 19 days before Election Day.

THOSE WARNINGS, Petersen said, stated that Loftus would be terminated unless she either withdrew from the election or declined the office.

Petersen released correspondence with the Fairfax County attorney's office, which includes Bobzien's 12-page dismissal letter. In the letter, Bobzien acknowledges that Virginia State Law allows Loftus to be a candidate, but claims the same law does not provide her with the right to actually hold office.

If Loftus accepted the will of the voters in the City of Fairfax — and held the office to which they elected her — it would create a terminal conflict of interest in matters that involve both the city and the county, according to the County Attorney's office.

"I find that distinction to be an absurdity which would nullify the state law which

specifically permits local government employees to be 'candidates' for public office," Petersen said. "Nancy was terminated solely for being elected to the Fairfax City Council while being employed by the county. It's bizarre. I mean, if someone gets too active in their church, are we going to fire them next?"

A former Fairfax City council member, Petersen said he called Bobzien several times to discuss alternatives to firing Loftus, but Bobzien never called him back. Petersen said he took the case for several reasons.

"I've known Nancy since we were elementary school students together in the 1970s. I have great respect for her honesty and integrity," Petersen said. "I also think that the county attorney's actions are wrong, both as a legal matter and as a matter of fairness and consistency."

Petersen said the core issue is one of "free speech."

"Localities in Virginia cannot arbitrarily fire employees who exercise their First Amendment rights of political speech and participation. I am disappointed and frankly surprised that the county attorney's office would ignore the law, especially after the County Attorney himself authorized Nancy's candidacy back in February."

Loftus said she approached her boss when she first thought about running for the seat. "If David had said no, I don't think I would have run...He hired me as a clerk when I was in law school. He would ask me how the campaign was going, and we would joke about it in a friendly way, like 'don't campaign in your county uniform ...' I thought he was totally fine with it."

Loftus said her first inkling that Bobzien might not be completely fine with her campaign came in a Feb. 12 email.

"He said, 'I'm having some thoughts about conflict of interest, maybe we can meet one day next week.' I called the office immediately, but it was during a snowstorm and the offices were closed. I emailed him that this was really, really important, and I said there are ways to deal with (any concerns), and state law was clear ... Even if you work for the county, you don't waive the right to the rest of your life ... I asked him to please call me back," Loftus said Friday, adding that Bobzien emailed her a note that night stating there was "no need to discuss this further. I see and accept your point."

Loftus said her interactions with her boss after that exchange were cordial, and there



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Newly-elected Fairfax City council member Nancy Fry Loftus, a former Fairfax County assistant attorney, attended the annual Independence Day luncheon at the city's historic Old Town Hall with her husband, Connell, and two daughters, Anastasia, 9 and Colleen Marie, 12.

was nothing out of the ordinary.

Until April 17 at 8:30 a.m., when she received a 30-page memo from Bobzien informing her that she would be fired if she did not withdraw from the race.

"I was completely blindsided. It was just a few weeks before the election and the campaign had gotten heated ... I thought I would be sick," Loftus said Friday.

Loftus was concerned enough about the ethical questions Bobzien raised to contact the Virginia State Bar's ethics hotline that same day. She received an email reply later that day from James M. McCauley, Ethics Counsel of the Virginia State Bar.

"You have asked '[i]s it unethical for me to be an Assistant County Attorney for Fairfax County and also serve on the Fairfax City Council?'"

"The short answer to this question is 'no' it is not per se unethical for a lawyer to be employed in a law firm or government attorney's office and concurrently hold a public position or office. Many lawyers have served in public office while practicing in a law firm at the same time, especially when the public position is only a part-time endeavor. To hold otherwise would mean that no lawyers could ever hold public office and practice law in a law firm. Obviously, that is not the position of the Virginia State Bar, Ethics Counsel or the Standing Committee on Legal Ethics.

Loftus also asked if it was unethical for the county attorney to "threaten to fire me if I participate in statutorily protected political activity?"

McCauley wrote that the question was "beyond the purview of the Rules of Professional Conduct and therefore I am not authorized to render an opinion on that issue."

"I was satisfied that I was not violating VSB ethics," Loftus said.

"They threatened her with her job. She had this ax hanging over her head for the rest of the campaign," said Connell, Loftus' husband, who brought Loftus a plate of food Friday at the Old Town Hall luncheon as she sat with well-wishers.

Connell Loftus, who also grew up in the City of Fairfax, said he had just started a new job when his wife was fired from hers.

"It was a catastrophic economic event for our family. We lost our insurance, and 50 percent of our family's income. It's been a stressful time," Connell said.

Bobzien was not available for comment, but several county officials, who asked not to be named, said Bobzien's concerns over a conflict of interest are justified and they supported his move to fire Loftus.

Bobzien's correspondence shows he consulted with the Virginia state bar's ethics counsel who advised that if Loftus won the election, a conflict of interest would be "imputed to every attorney" in the county attorney's office.

For example, if Loftus — as a city council member — could not lobby the state legislature, then no one in his office could lobby in Richmond. He also listed potential legal conflicts between the city and the county, such as tax and zoning disputes.

Bobzien also mentioned the recent epic legal battle known as the "water wars," triggered when Fairfax County enacted an ordinance in 2011 to regulate the city's "high" water rates, and the city — seeing the ordinance as a blatant power grab for water systems the county didn't own — sued the county.

THE SHOWDOWN ultimately embroiled the City of Fairfax, Fairfax County and two other government bodies, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a billion-dollar utility company, who all spent a significant amount of time and money on legal counsel and PR campaigns battling each other for control.

In the end, Fairfax County won.

Loftus acknowledged she publicly talked about the "water wars" during the campaign, and she said she wonders if those statements — on such a prickly subject — caused her job to be in jeopardy. But Loftus said that if that's true, then Fairfax County should be pleased, since she stated she did not think the city should have sued the county.

As Loftus finished her Independence Day lunch, one well-wisher, Steve Caruso, a part-time City of Fairfax employee, came up to Loftus and said he wanted to shake her hand. "I just read about your plight in the paper. I think it's totally unfair," he said.

"That makes me feel good to know there are people supporting me in this," Loftus said.

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NASA Comes to Colvin Run Elementary

BY VERONICA BRUNO
THE CONNECTION

NASA came to Colvin Run Elementary in Vienna on June 17. Students got a real hands-on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) experience by linking directly with the NASA international space station. Part of the school's newly created STEM lab program at Colvin, lab students prepared questions for the astronauts in advance. They got to pose the questions to astronauts Steve Swanson and Reid Wiseman, currently orbiting Earth aboard the International Space Station.

Some of the questions had surprising answers. One student was curious about how birthdays are celebrated in space. Swanson and Wiseman went on to explain that since they didn't have the option to go out and get presents, they focus on a favorite meal instead.

Elementary students were also surprised to hear about the plants both astronauts have grown in the space station, including lettuce and onions. Another participant asked them how long it takes to



PHOTOS BY VERONICA BRUNO/THE CONNECTION

Former astronaut and guest of honor, Dan Tani, visited Mrs. Blackwell's STEM lab prior to the event. Also visiting were John Steuder (after-school program director), Katie Connolly (PTA VP of membership), Tom Culligan (Congressman Wolf's office), Ken Junge (principal), and Maribeth Luftglass (FCPS Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Technology).

go back to adjust once they land. The astronauts told the audience that the adjustment period varied anytime between fifteen minutes to a few days.

In addition to the ones orbiting the earth, Colvin Run was also treated to meeting another astronaut in person: Dan Tani, a local resident who gave a brief presen-

tation and introduced the current astronauts to the audience. His presentation included several pictures taken from the space station including shots of the northern lights, lightning storms, and erosion patterns that delighted the audience.

He described the sight of the northern lights from above look-



Students participated in the link to the space station, where they got to talk to the astronauts Steve Swanson and Reid Wiseman directly.

ing "like a ghost flying below you." Prior to attending the NASA link event, Tani also took time out to visit the STEM lab and answer some questions as well, including "what is a spacewalk," "were you nervous," and "do you have fun up in space?"

The NASA link was broadcast on the NASA television station and

many other Fairfax County public schools. NASA is an education partner with Colvin Run Elementary and the event was part of NASA's Teaching From Space curriculum, which promotes learning opportunities through NASA's human spaceflight program. For more information visit <http://www.nasa.gov/education>.



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Hurray for Full Day Mondays

Hoping that later start times for high schoolers follows quickly.

For decades, Fairfax County schools have sent elementary school students home after half a day on Mondays. This was never a good idea, and it has been more damaging to family schedules and student learning with the increase over the years of two-income households and greater economic diversity.

That is about to change. Karen Garza, superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools, has demonstrated in several ways that she understands tackling the challenges of educating all of Fairfax County's students will require deviation from the status quo.

Not only will half day Mondays come to an end, but it will come to an end in two months, in September, 2014, a remarkable accomplishment for a bureaucracy the size of Fairfax County Public Schools.

The change will also come with

20 minutes of recess a day. Research shows (and common sense confirms) that recess and physical activity benefit student learning.

It's an important step showing responsiveness to the needs of families and students. Nearly one third of the county's kindergarteners are poor. How do we think those parents are managing the need for child care on Monday afternoons? FCPS has resisted meeting the needs of the whole child, but cannot expect to successfully educate its 186,785 students without this kind of change.

Programs to identify gifted and talented students among poor and minority students, summer school, year-round modified calendars for some schools, and many other changes will need to be considered and fast tracked for the county school system to succeed.

Consider: About 50,000 of the county's public school students are poor enough to receive subsidized meals. About 30,000 of the county's public school students are receiving specialized instruction to better learn English. More than 25,000 of the county's public schools students are receiving spe-

cial education services. White students make up 42 percent of the student body; 23 percent are Latino; 19 percent are Asian American; 10 percent are African American.

Fairfax County is by some measures the wealthiest county in the nation, or at least in the top five.

If success educating this population of students is possible anywhere, it should be here, but there is nothing simple about it and will require much more change.

More Sleep for Teens

Later start times for high school is slated as another top priority for change in FCPS, and we agree.

New research continues to pile up about sleep deprivation and the damage it does to teens. A rigorous study published in February demonstrates that reduced quantity of sleep in adolescents increases risk for major depression, according to research at the University of Texas School of Public Health.

The Centers for Disease Control: "Sleep is increasingly recognized as important to public health, with sleep insufficiency linked to mo-

tor vehicle crashes, industrial disasters, and medical and other occupational errors. ... Persons experiencing sleep insufficiency are also more likely to suffer from chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, depression, and obesity, as well as from cancer, increased mortality, and reduced quality of life and productivity."

According to Judith Owens, M.D., director of Sleep Medicine at Children's National Medical Center: "The scientific evidence is irrefutable: chronic sleep loss and disruption in circadian rhythms associated with early high school start times are associated with negative consequences including poor academic performance, increased sport-related injuries, and potential long-term increases in cardiovascular and metabolic (i.e., type 2 diabetes) health risks. We know that delaying high school start times increases total sleep time and positively impacts academic achievement and school attendance. There are also documented mental and physical health benefits for students that include reductions in rates of depression and fewer drowsy driving crashes."

— MARY KIMM,
MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Later Start Times Can Benefit Community

To the Editor:

To set the record straight, there is nothing worse for traffic than a car crash, and sleepy teen drivers are like drunk drivers in terms of performance behind the wheel. Later high school start times are safer for teens and also for the rest of us as they have been shown to significantly decrease car crashes in young drivers.

When you read letters opposing this effort, please ask yourself whether the letter-writer has a personal vested interest in retaining the status quo. Last week's letter, "Later Start Times Affect Commuters," was filled with misinformation and scare tactics.

The letter made it sound as if there are only a small number of children impacted by the morning start times that are among the earliest in the nation. Fairfax high schools start classes at 7:20 a.m. Only 10 percent of schools in the nation start before 7:30 in the morning. Seventy-two of 95 counties in Virginia start high schools at 8 a.m. or later. Perhaps the letter writer would prefer that FCPS start school at 5 a.m. to ensure that our children are all out of the way before his morning commute? The

reality is that Fairfax County Public Schools are a massive part of the traffic flow for the entire morning commute. It will remain that way with any of the new schedules as well.

The majority of FCPS high school students are sleep deficient. Only 15.5 percent of seniors get 8 hours of sleep per night on school nights and medical experts recommend about 9 hours for adolescents. In 10th grade, only 25 percent are getting at least 8 hours of sleep per night. The letter writer seems to be suggesting that 75 percent or more of our students pay for unnecessary medical tests and ask doctors to write medical excuses for a problem that is the norm, not the exception to the rule. Perhaps he is unaware that there is compelling medical and educational evidence that very early school start times are a problem and that the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics has a position in favor of later high school start times for students in Virginia as does the Medical Society of Virginia and the Medical Society of Northern Vir-

ginia.

For more than a year, FCPS has partnered with Children's National Medical Center and has met with stakeholder leaders from more than 45 different organizations, agencies, and community groups. Transportation experts and stakeholder leaders studied about 20 scenarios before the school board selected four potential scenarios to bring to the community for input. The School Board has been extremely slow and deliberate in this process. Children's National Medical Center has been working to include input from all stakeholders, including principals, social workers, leaders from the teacher organizations, PTA's, the athletic council, the Park Authority, School Aged Child Care providers, the middle school after school program, Safe Routes to School, and others. In July, there will be a work session with a report to the board. School board members have suggested that the Blueprint for Change may be one of the four options or it may be a hybrid based on the community input.

Montgomery County's Superin-

tendent delayed implementation of any high school start time changes, but he will not be able to close the door on the need for later morning schedules because it is critical to his desire to close the achievement gap. Seventy-eight percent of the parents polled in Montgomery County supported the change despite what seems to be an inflated cost estimate.

Abundant research on this topic is clear: When schools have delayed the start of the school day, students have shown improved physical and mental health, less depression, reduced car crashes and improved performance in the classroom and on the field.

Multiple organizations have studied and support this change and community members who care about child health and safety as well as their own commutes should support this change as well by signing the petition at sleepinfairfax.org.

As Dr. Owens from Children's National Medical Center says, "To do nothing is to do harm." I firmly believe that.

Phyllis Payne
Fairfax



Home LifeStyle

A New Work Order

Local designers help create organized and stylish home offices.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Whether it's a nook, in the kitchen or a designated room, a home office is the place where ideas come to life. Local designers dish about the secrets to creating a workspace that is organized and functional yet stylish.

"You're going to spend a lot of time in it so aesthetics do matter," said Patricia Tetro of BOWA Builders Inc., in McLean.

Thinking about how a space will be used is the first step in the design process. "An office is as unique as a person," said interior designer Julie Sproules of the Art Institute of Washington in Arlington. "Each person has a different way of working and therefore a different

set of needs. If you are working from home, you'll be spending a lot more time there than if you are using it to keep the household paperwork in order."

There are a series of questions that one might consider: "How will you use the office? Is it just for you? Do others come in and meet with you? Do you tend to do most of your work on the computer?" asks Tetro. "Do you do things by Skype? If so, the placement of the computer becomes more critical."

Storage and the placement of it is one of the most important home office design decisions. "Where do you want to keep things?" asks Tetro. "When sitting in a chair, do you need to have your entire realm within arm's reach?"

Getting creative with storage supplies is a technique that Sallie Kjos of Grey Hunt Interiors in Chantilly, uses to avoid compromising style for order. "A floating shelf will help to keep a clean look, but have it organized," she said. "You can also get decorative boxes in a variety of colors."

Sproules uses labeled storage bins to create home office space

that has a place for everything. "There are a million different kinds out there, from wood to rattan to linen," she said. "Get a bookshelf that you can fit the bins in. ... Leave some room ... for a filing binder and books, but anything small should go in a bin. This way you can just throw all the markers, yarn, buttons and [other miscellaneous items] into their bin and not have to worry about them being misplaced."

Don't forget to save a space for smart phones and tablets. "You might need charging spaces with electrical outlets that are easily accessible," said Tetro.

To create an orderly appearance, stash files, papers and other office supplies out of sight. "A lot of people use an extra bedroom as a home office. Take the doors off the closet and create a storage area," said Bart Goldstein of Bart Goldstein Interior Design in Potomac, Md. "Add closed storage on the bottom that works as file cabinets, but looks like a piece of furniture" such as a chest or a credenza.

SEE DESIGNING, PAGE 11



PHOTO COPYRIGHT GWIN HUNT PHOTOGRAPHY

The office of this Great Falls home features an abundance of storage and workspace. Designers at BOWA Builders, Inc. combined natural and recessed lighting to bring organization and style to the space.



PHOTO COPYRIGHT GWIN HUNT PHOTOGRAPHY

This Vienna home office designed by BOWA Builders, Inc. features natural and recessed lighting, custom crown molding and wood flooring.

SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to
vienna@connectionnewspapers.com
by Friday.

Grayson Smith, of Great Falls, earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in accounting, cum laude, during the spring commencement exercises at Auburn University. He is currently enrolled in Auburn's Master's of Accounting Program.

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.

Curtis A. Khol, Jr., of Vienna, graduated from the United States Naval Academy in May 2014 and was commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy. Ensign Khol graduated with Distinction (top 10 percent) and received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the Systems Engineering Honors Program.

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Local REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

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1 8112 Spring Hill Farm Drive, McLean — \$4,000,000

2 1239 Daleview Drive, McLean — \$3,600,000



3 6810 Wemberly Way, McLean — \$3,337,667



8 9012A Old Dominion Drive, McLean — \$1,808,000



6 1332 Woodside Drive, McLean — \$2,150,000



4 1015 Millwood Road, Great Falls — \$2,900,000



Address	BR	FB	HB	...	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot	AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 8112 SPRING HILL FARM DR	5	5	3	.....	MCLEAN	.....	\$4,000,000	Detached	0.88	.....	22102	SPRING HILL FARM	05/09/14
2 1239 DALEVIEW DR	5	7	3	.....	MCLEAN	.....	\$3,600,000	Detached	1.53	.....	22102	WOODSIDE ESTATES	05/15/14
3 6810 WEMBERLY WAY	6	5	2	.....	MCLEAN	.....	\$3,337,667	Detached	0.58	.....	22101	LANGLEY FOREST	05/09/14
4 1015 MILLWOOD RD	5	6	2	...	GREAT FALLS	..	\$2,900,000	Detached	4.68	.....	22066	DIFFICULT RUN	05/05/14
5 1917 MACARTHUR DR	5	5	1	.....	MCLEAN	.....	\$2,250,000	Detached	0.46	.....	22101	KENBARGAN	05/30/14
6 1332 WOODSIDE DR	5	5	1	.....	MCLEAN	.....	\$2,150,000	Detached	1.22	.....	22102	WOODSIDE ESTATES	05/29/14
7 1125 WALKER RD	4	4	2	...	GREAT FALLS	..	\$2,010,000	Detached	2.81	.....	22066	PINEY RUN	05/29/14
8 9012A OLD DOMINION DR	4	5	1	.....	MCLEAN	.....	\$1,808,000	Detached	1.36	.....	22102	OLD DOMINION	05/23/14
9 10001 HIGH HILL PL	5	5	3	...	GREAT FALLS	..	\$1,750,000	Detached	2.12	22066	FALCON RIDGE	05/27/14

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Home LifeStyle

Designing Stylish Home Offices

FROM PAGE 9

"You can make it look like a built-in," said Goldstein. "Closet companies ... are able to make it look like a real working office with nice furniture."

GET CREATIVE when selecting a desk to add interest and express your personal style. "You can use an old writing table, side table or console table to use with a nice parsons chair," said Kjos. "This makes more inviting space that is decorative but functional."

Choose seating that incorporates style and comfort. "This doesn't have to mean a task chair," said Sproules. "Task chairs are great if you're sitting in them many hours a day, and there are some attractive options, but I prefer ... a small lounge chair to give it more of a homey feel. Just make sure it can be pushed under the desk or table when not in use. ... I have even used small metal side chairs or stools like an old classroom."

A person's occupation and work style should be considered. "Stools are especially great if you get up and move a lot as a part of your working routine," said Sproules. "You can swivel from one side of the table to another and being on a bar-height stool means you're more likely to get up and walk around routinely. If you do choose a bar-height stool, make sure your desk or table is either height-adjustable or standing-height."

Proper lighting is another key component of a well-designed home office. "Consider overhead lighting" said Goldstein. "[It] will not take up space like a lamp. You can run an eight-foot [lighting] track though the middle of the room and turn the lights toward the desk."

Incorporate more than one lighting source into a room's design.

"This helps you modulate the light for the task that you're doing," said Sproules. "You should have one general light: an overhead light or a floor lamp that ... provides general, diffused light and a task light for more focused work," such as a small, adjustable lamp with dimming capabilities.

When it comes to maintaining a sense of home in a home office, designers suggest getting personal. "You can mix interesting accessories like family pictures and a plant here or there to give



PHOTO COURTESY OF GREY HUNT INTERIORS

Sallie Kjos of Grey Hunt Interiors created a home office for herself in the corner of her kitchen. She personalized it by adding plants and family photos.

the office aesthetic appeal as opposed to just function," said Goldstein.

ROOM DESIGN should reflect one's profession and personal needs. "Are you dealing with paperwork, mail and working on the computer, or would you be better off with a set up that is more like an artist's studio, with a clean table for 'making' and another area for the 'office' side of things [with a] bookshelf, table and storage?" asked Sproules. "How many hours a day or week to you plan on being in that space?"

Sproules believes that one's occupation can be a source of design inspiration. "As an interior designer, I have an excessive collection of pens and markers that are organized in small boxes along a wall, like an art store," she said. "It's a nice way to personalize the

space with your specific type of work without having it get too messy. And there's always a pen when I need one."

"In my own home office I have my desk against the wall with floating shelves," said Goldstein. "As an interior designer, I have a lot of catalogues that I'm always pulling from. I have a seating area in my office because people are always coming in. We can have a conversation while I'm working."

"There is one accessory that no home office should be without," said Sproules. "Everyone needs a tack board," she said. "If you're more of the artistic type, use cork board tiles. They come in all sorts of colors, and you can paint them too. [You can] cover a whole wall or a large section to use as an inspiration board. If not, you should still tack up images that you find inspiring, or at least peaceful."

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Snap, Crackle and Pop at Langley High

Thousands view fireworks at high school.

BY REENA SINGH
THE CONNECTION

The first crackle in the night sky always has everyone running to their seats to get the best view of the fireworks on Independence Day.

Thousands of people sprawled on the grass and perched in the stadium at Langley High School [LHS] came to watch the fireworks on Friday, July 4.

The 30-minute show began around 9:15 p.m., but the gates opened at 8, giving early visitors the chance to snack on chili dogs and popcorn before the grounds got crowded.

"Between 6,000 to 8,000 people attend every year," said McLean Community Center Director of Special Events Sam Roberts III in a previous interview. "This will be our last year at Langley High School because they are going under construction for five years."

The fireworks show will move to Cooper



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Thousands of people came to Langley High School on July 4 to watch the fireworks.

Middle School next year.

Since Great Falls did not have its own fireworks show that night, many of its residents showed up in the stands at the high school football field. Additionally, several of this year's local visitors had never come to LHS to view the fireworks, but relished an excuse to not celebrate in the nation's capital, which they feared would be overcrowded.

"We live in McLean for two years, and we usually go to the beach," said McLean resident Franck Journoud. "We didn't want to be with a million of [our] closest friends at the [National] Mall."

He said his family spent the holiday listening to Americana, going to a barbecue and spending time at a lake.

McLean residents Lisa and Brett Korade said they went to the National Mall last year to watch the fireworks and did not want to face the crowds again this year. They came to Langley High School early to claim the grassy space with a blanket and folding chairs.

"We're active duty military, and we move a lot, so we don't have a lot of fourth of July traditions," said Brett.

'Let's Dance!' Classical Ballet Theatre brings women together

BY EMMA HARRIS
THE CONNECTION

Four mornings a week, at least a dozen ballet students can be found hard at work perfecting their pirouettes, strengthening their cores with arabesques and practicing their legwork on the bar at the Classical Ballet Theatre in Herndon. Here's the catch: they're adult, working women. Ballet isn't only for little girls in pink tutus.

The ballerinas make up a diverse group. They range in age from mid-40s to mid-60s. Some have decades of dance experience while others began dancing in their late 40s. One student is a minister, while another is a healthcare administrator. The single similarity between the members of the class is their love for and dedication to ballet, said Marisa DiLauro of Reston, adding that it brings them together.

"This is my creative outlet," said Natalie Hall of Fairfax. "I'm desperate to learn and work ... I feel like I'm flying when I dance," she said. Hall, like many of the other students, did not dance as a child, but instead began dancing in her early 30s, she said. "I just fell into it. It makes me incredibly happy."

"We all fell in love with ballet," said Robbin Smith of Great Falls, who danced as a young woman, then picked it back up in her mid-20s.

"Ballet is my passion," said Maureen Berk of Great Falls. Having danced when she was little, it was her young daughter who brought Berk back into the ballet world.

"Through deaths, tough times, anything, ballet helps," she said.

THE CLASSES are taught by Alisher Saburov, a graduate of the Bolshoi Ballet Academy in Moscow, former Principal Soloist of the Moscow Festival Ballet and Kremlin Palace Ballet Theatre and Artistic Director at the Classical Ballet Theatre of Northern Virginia. He has been teaching for 12 years, back and forth with dancing, he said.

Saburov's classes are intense, his students said. Beginning with a series of legwork exercises on the ballet bar, they are sweating five minutes in. "To the fourth, and twist, twist, twist, twist, twist," he explained before letting his dancers repeat his movements.

"We dance a different combination of moves every time, and we have to be focused," Smith said. "You can't make a grocery list while in class."

After about 45 minutes and a break to stretch, the ballerinas moved to the center of the room. "Let's dance!" Saburov said, coaching the ballerinas to fly across the floor time and time again.

SABUROV is the reason many of the students enjoy dancing so much, Berk said. "Alisher emanates joy when he teaches," she said. "He is the best ballet teacher in the world," Hall added. "He never gives a bad class, and we all absolutely adore him," she said.

SEE DANCING, PAGE 13

PHOTOS BY EMMA HARRIS/THE CONNECTION



Alisher Saburov, artistic director at the Classical Ballet Theatre, shows his class the movements for the next musical set.



Ballerinas Marisa DiLauro, Robbin Smith and Natalie Hall dance at the Classical Ballet Theatre in Herndon.

PHOTO BY EMMA HARRIS/THE CONNECTION

Carmen Liebeler, Maureen Berk and Natalie Hall begin class at the ballet bar, working to perfect their arm and leg movements.



Dancing for Fun, Friendships

FROM PAGE 12

Attending up to four classes a week, the women don their leg warmers diligently. “You hate yourself if you’re not consistent in coming to class,” Smith said. With hectic lives to balance, some students’ schedules revolve around ballet during the week, Berk said. “I get up at 5 a.m. to go to work, come to ballet class, then go back to work,” Hall said. “It’s that important to me.”

And with the work comes the play — through their love for ballet, the women have become a great group of friends, Berk said, mentioning how they plan monthly lunches and occasional trips to Wolf Trap to see ballet performances.

“We’re best friends, really social and really fun,” Hall said, adding that the group is incredibly supportive and accepting. “It’s about finding something you love with people you love, and this is it,” Berk said.

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The entrance to America Eats Tavern, located in the Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner. Opened last month, the restaurant offers up breakfast, lunch, and dinner inspired by American cultural traditions with a modern twist.



PHOTOS BY VERONICA BRUNO/THE CONNECTION

A tray of Stone Crab Claws awaits, one of the many chilled fresh seafood selections from the restaurant's seafood bar, selected from local shores.

America Eats Tavern Opens at Tysons

American cuisine and culture on display at the Ritz-Carlton.

BY VERONICA BRUNO
THE CONNECTION

America Eats Tavern (AET), the new restaurant helmed by Spanish-born and award-winning celebrity chef José Andrés and business partner Rob Wilder, opened in the Tysons Corner Ritz-Carlton last month. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, AET offers favorite American dishes such as Eggs a la Benedict, a beef rib-eye dish Roseda Farm Delmonico Steak, and Chicken Pot Pie. In addition to the main menu, there is a seafood bar that offers fresh chilled catches from local farms including Littleneck Clams, Poached Shrimp, and King Crab.

AET was born out of Andrés' fascination with American cuisine. "Yes I am a chef but I am also a storyteller and America Eats Tavern is the story of a Spanish chef paying tribute to the country that welcomed me with open arms. It's about celebrating the traditions of the local farms and producers of Virginia, and Pennsylvania and the rise of the Virginia wine country, which I think is the next big wine-producing region," said Andrés in an email.

In fact, the entire beer and wine menu is all-American. Wines come from the California, Oregon, New York, Michigan, and Washington states in addition to Virginia. According to Daniella Dixon, the beverage manager for the restaurant, "we have a number of Virginia wines and we did extensive research in Virginia. The U.S. has incredibly excellent wines and we



Used for intimate gatherings and business meetings, AET offers a private dining room that seats up to 18 guests.



The main dining hall includes a direct view of the bright, open kitchen where diners can view the chefs at work. Framing the kitchen is a bold excerpt from the U.S. Constitution

wanted to feature Virginia. Our focus is on the best things the U.S. has to offer."

TRUE TO FORM, the patriotic fervor doesn't stop there, but also extends to the cocktail menu as well. The local urban influence can be seen with cocktail names such as Tractor Pull and Green Acres, an interesting concoction that includes vodka, cucumber, fennel, lime, and grapefruit bitters, all-natural ingredients chosen from

local farms. Dixon works with over 25 small farms in choosing what goes in the specialty drinks. "We are going for flavor and working with what's in season. We support the local farmers."

The beer section of the menu even begins with the statement "In 1789 George Washington presented a policy referred to as 'Buy American' stating that he would only drink American made beer... who are we to disagree."

If you are familiar with America

Eats, you may have seen the temporary version of it in the Washington, D.C. Penn Quarter district. A collaboration with Foundation for the National Archives, AET was conceived after research of American recipes and stories. Named after the Works Progress Administration (WPA) writers project of the 1930s, America Eats celebrates American classic dishes with a modern twist, showcases native ingredients, and works to bring back some long-ago forgotten dishes as well.

It has now found a permanent home at the Tysons Corner Ritz Carlton. New York-based firm Celano Design has created a comfortable and engaging layout that includes a classic 65-seat main dining room with colonial touches, a view of the kitchen, and excerpts of the U.S. Constitution as graphic art along the wall.

AN OPEN, airy 55-seat bar occupies the front space of the restaurant for casual dining and a private dining room that accommodates 18 completes the construct.

"We are excited to have America Eats Tavern open within the hotel," said Raj Khubchandani, General Manager of the Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner, in a prepared statement. "The vibrant design and atmosphere is the perfect addition to our lobby complex. Initial feedback from the hotel guests and local community has been very positive."

"As a chef, I learned about the world through food and with America from very early on I became fascinated to learn about the melting pot of this country by collecting old early edition American cookbooks like 'The Virginia Housewife' by Mary Rudolph and 'The Joy of Cooking' by Irma S. Rombauer," explained José Andrés, recently awarded an "Outstanding American by Choice" by President Obama.

CALENDAR

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

FRIDAY/JULY 11

Kayak Tour – Moonshine & Mayhem. 5-7 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. What is now Riverbend Park once was a safe haven for illegal whiskey-making operations during the 1920s; kayak past river islands and discover its shady past. Ages 14+. \$59-\$74. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

Playdate Cafe. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Play area and toys for children. Coffee and conversation for grown-ups. For ages 0 and up with a parent or caregiver. 703-757-8560.

Drop-In chess and Backgammon. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess and backgammon. All skill levels welcome. School-age, teen, adult. 703-757-8560.

SATURDAY/JULY 12

Great Falls Farmers Market. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Great Falls Village, 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. Don't forget to bring your recyclable bag. www.greatfallsfarmersmarket.org.

Da Vinci Challenge - Build a Drone Workshop. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Learn about building drones. Other dates in this series are July 12 and 19. Registration required. Adult, teen, school-age. 703-757-8560.

SUNDAY/JULY 13

The Remedy Celebrate Great Falls Concert on the Green. 6-8 p.m. Great Falls Village Centre Green, Georgetown Pike and Walker Road, Great Falls. Come out with your picnic baskets and chairs for an evening of live, free, rock music. 571-293-0474.

Tysons Farmers Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. NADA Campus, Greensboro & Westpark Drive. www.tysonspartnership.org

Intro to River Kayaking. 1-1:30 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. This introductory level course covers river hazards, water safety and paddling basics. Ages 14+. \$28-43. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

MONDAY/JULY 14

A Bailar. 7 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Salsa, cha cha and more - fun Latin dance and music for the whole family with Cantaré, Latin American Music. All ages. Please sign up each participant separately. 703-757-8560.

Sara Bareilles. 7:30 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. "Brave" singer/songwriter infuses her piano-based pop rock with sincerity and moxie from breakthrough "Love Song" to romantic ballad "I Choose You." Tickets: \$25-\$60. www.wolftrap.org/

TUESDAY/JULY 15

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

CALENDAR



Multiple Washington Area Music (WAMMIE) Award-winner and bluesman extraordinaire, Tom Principato sets the telecaster on fire and makes having the blues so good. See him at McLean's Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park on July 27 at McLean Central Park.

Be Part of The July Pet Connection

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Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, and identify all people and pets in photos. Submission deadline is July 17.

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For more information go to CelebrateGreatFalls.Org

FROM PAGE 14

Reading Buddies. 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Grab a book. Grab a buddy. Teen volunteers available to read to or with beginning readers. Preschool, school-age. 703-757-8560.

THURSDAY/JULY 17

Read Yourself Silly with Flow Circus. 2:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Take a trip to the circus with juggling, magic, and more. Age 6 to 12. 703-757-8560.

Teen Volunteer Sign-up for Reading Buddies. 4:15 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Please report at 4:15 p.m. Teen. 703-757-8560.

Reading Buddies. 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Grab a book, grab a buddy! Beginning readers and teens practice reading together. School-age. 703-757-8560.

Evening Book Group. 7:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call branch for title. 703-757-8560.

FRIDAY/JULY 18

Kayak Tour – Sunset over Riverbend. 5-7 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Experience the end of the day with a tour of the upper Potomac. Ages 14+. \$59-\$74. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

Playdate Cafe. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Play area and toys for children. Coffee and conversation for grown-ups. For ages 0 and up with a parent or caregiver. 703-757-8560.

Drop-In chess and Backgammon. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess and backgammon. All skill levels welcome. School-age, teen, adult. 703-757-8560.

SATURDAY/JULY 19

Ballroom Dance. 8 – 11:30 p.m. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Rd, Great Falls. Samba lessons until 9, then dance to tunes from '30s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, everyone welcome. \$15. 703-759-2685. www.colvinrun.org

Sunrise Kayak Tour. 7-9 a.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Paddle with a naturalist and learn about the historical and natural beauty of the Potomac. Ages 14+. \$59-\$74. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

Ballroom Dance. 8-11:30 p.m. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. 8-9pm°Samba lesson; 9-11:30pm°dance with favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual. \$15. 703-759-2685.

Da Vinci Challenge - Build a Drone Workshop. 9 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Learn about building drones. Registration required. Adult, teen, school-age. 703-757-8560.

SUNDAY/JULY 20

Ruthie & The Wranglers Celebrate Great Falls Concert on the Green. 6-8 p.m. Great Falls Village Centre Green, Georgetown Pike and Walker Road, Great Falls. Come out with your picnic baskets and chairs for an evening of live, free Americana country music. (571) 293-0474.

Intro to River Kayaking. 1-1:30 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. This introductory level course covers river hazards, water safety and paddling basics. Ages 14+. \$28-43. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 23

Pokemon League. 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Come play Pokemon with your friends. 703-757-8560.

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Join the McLean Players' Facebook Group

SPORTS

World Cup Fever

Area soccer coaches, players share 2014 World Cup viewing experiences.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Even on his wedding day, Robinson boys' soccer coach Robert Garza couldn't escape World Cup fever. Garza married his wife, Jennifer, on June 21 at the Hendry House at Fort C.F. Smith in Arlington. During that Saturday in Northern Virginia, Garza and a group that included his best man, West Potomac boys' soccer coach Andrew Peck, watched the Ghana-Germany match in the groom's suite. Later, when the group was taking pictures, Peck had the match streaming on his cell phone.

What was Jennifer's reaction?
"She laughed when she found out," Garza wrote in a twitter message. "She married a soccer coach."

Garza is among the local residents who have closely followed the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. As the competition nears an end, soccer coaches and players from Northern Virginia and Potomac, Md., shared their memorable experiences from the month-long event, and their predictions on who would emerge victorious from the tournament's final four teams: Brazil, Germany, Argentina, and the Netherlands.

"This has been," Churchill girls' head coach Haroot Hakopian wrote in an email, "the most interesting/exciting cup in years."

Garza wasn't the only one making an effort to watch the World Cup. Oakton boys' coach Todd Spitalny, who owns a kitchen and bath company in Manassas, said he had DirecTV installed in his office specifically to watch the World Cup. South Lakes girls' coach Mike Astudillo took in some of the action at Reston Town Center, and Lucas Belanger, a 2013 Mount Vernon High School graduate and rising sophomore goalkeeper at American University, watched the United States matches at National Harbor in Washington. T.C. Williams rising senior Eryk Williamson downloaded an app on his phone to receive live updates if he wasn't able to watch.

Along with following the action at home — and on a cell phone during his wedding day — Garza, a 1991 Hayfield graduate, has watched the World Cup at the Bungalow and Lucky's Sports Theatre in Kingstowne.

"The atmosphere has been phenomenal," Garza wrote, "with so many fans coming out to watch."

MUCH EXCITEMENT centered around the performance of the United States men's national team, which competed against Ghana, Portugal, and Germany in Group G, nicknamed the "Group of Death." The U.S. emerged from group play with a 1-1-1 record, including a 2-1 victory over Ghana on June 16, and advanced by virtue of a goal-differential tiebreaker over Portugal.

The United States' World Cup appearance ended on July 1 with a 2-1 loss to Belgium in extra time in the round of 16.

"Like we all should, I've been supporting the U.S.," Joe McCreary, a 2014 Yorktown graduate and future James Madison University soccer player wrote in an email. "I think soccer in America the next four years is on the rise after team USA advanced from the group of death."

While the USMNT fell short against Belgium in the round of 16, goalkeeper Tim Howard produced a record 16 saves, holding Belgium scoreless until the 93rd minute.

"Sixteen saves in a game is hard to do in high school soccer," Hakopian wrote. "I have never seen that happen at the professional/World Cup level."

It wasn't just the USMNT or its players generating interest, however. Along with rooting for the U.S., Hakopian, who was born in Iran, also followed the Iranian team. Iran finished last in Group F with a 0-1-2 record, scoring their lone goal of the World Cup against Bosnia and Herzegovina in a 3-1 loss on June 25.

Hakopian, who has coached at Churchill High School in Potomac, Md., for 12 years, also said he would like to see Argentina star Lionel Messi win a World Cup. He also cheers for the Netherlands, which has been his favorite team since age 7, thanks to their "cool" orange jerseys — though Hakopian added "[forward Arjen] Robben's consistent flopping annoys the hell out of me ..."

"I think soccer in America the next four years is on the rise after team USA advanced from the group of death."

— Joe McCreary,
a 2014 Yorktown graduate

"I was born in Iran so I am always interested in how they perform, considering their players have difficulty playing outside the Middle East," Hakopian wrote. "My wife was in the Peace Corps and traveled extensively in South America. Although she spent most of her time in Paraguay, she always roots for Costa Rica and Chile, which has made this year's cup even more fun."

Washington-Lee rising junior Maycol Nunez scored 37 goals in 2014 and helped the Generals advance to the Group 6A Virginia state final. Nunez lived in Honduras before moving to the United States four years ago at the age of 12. He cheers for his native country during the World Cup, along with Belgium and Argentina.

Honduras finished last in Group E with a



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE CONNECTION

T.C. Williams rising senior Eryk Williamson, left, has followed the action closely during the 2014 World Cup.

0-3 record, scoring its lone goal in a 2-1 loss to Ecuador on June 20, but that hasn't stopped Nunez from enjoying the experience.

"Honduras is probably one of worst teams in the World Cup, but the fact that they are there means a lot," Nunez wrote. "... Honduras [scoring] their first and only goal in the World Cup against Ecuador has been definitely one of my favorite moments in this World Cup so far. ... Words cannot describe what watching Honduras in the World Cup means to me. It's just such an amazing feeling that I can't even describe."

Astudillo, who has coached the South Lakes girls' team the last two seasons and used to coach at Chantilly, has extended family from Colombia. Along with cheering for the U.S., Astudillo followed the Colombian team that won Group C with a 3-0 record, and defeated Uruguay 2-0 in the round of 16 before falling to Brazil 2-1 in the quarterfinals.

"Best tournament in our history," Astudillo wrote. "[I'm] so proud and we have so many young players. Look out Russia 2018!"

Williamson, who led T.C. Williams to the 2014 Group 6A Virginia state championship, said he is a passionate supporter of host Brazil, though he also cheers for the U.S.

"I'm a huge Brazil fan," Williamson wrote. "I just love the way they play. However, growing up I always used to cheer for France. Now that they've been knocked out, I've been all about Brazil. ... Both of my parents are American so, at heart, I cheer for the U.S."

Belanger was a goalkeeper on Mount Vernon's 2013 state championship team. He made a pair of key saves during the Majors' penalty-kick shootout victory against Cosby in the state final. Belanger said he has enjoyed watching goalkeepers perform during the World Cup.

"I have always been a huge U.S. fan, even though they have been disappointing up until this World Cup, but I've also been rooting for a few individual players (mostly goalkeepers) such as Gianluigi Buffon for Italy and Thibaut Courtois for Belgium," Belanger wrote. "Being a goalkeeper my-

self, I have learned to appreciate the difficulty [of] some of the saves they make, and I always enjoy watching a goalkeeper have a great game.

"... I always love watching penalty-kick shootouts, but I have enjoyed watching all the games where the goalkeepers performed well, like Costa Rica, Nigeria, and especially the United States."

THE SEMIFINALS had yet to be played when coaches and players were interviewed. The first semifinal match, Germany versus Brazil, was played Tuesday. The Netherlands and Argentina faced one another Wednesday. The majority said Germany would win it all. Williamson said Brazil would have a tough time getting past Germany in the semifinals without star forward Neymar (back injury) and captain Thiago Silva (cards).

Nunez picked Argentina to win "because they have Messi and the other teams don't." Astudillo had far less praise for the Argentine star.

"I know I sound like a hater, but I'm not a Lionel Messi fan," Astudillo wrote. "I grew up watching Diego Armando Maradona single-handedly carry [Argentina] to a World Cup championship in Mexico in 1986. Teams would triple team him because he had zero help on that squad, but it didn't matter. He always found a way to make those around him better. If Lio can't deliver a World Cup to his native Argentina, I think we should hold off on considering him one of the greatest ever."

The championship match is scheduled for Sunday, July 13, providing the final opportunity for a memorable World Cup viewing experience.

"This World Cup, we saw so many come together — friends, family, strangers — all to see the world play," Garza wrote. "Compared to previous years, this World Cup has been huge. Every U.S. game I have watched with family and friends and fellow coaching colleagues from the high school ranks. Each time, we easily took up quite a few tables, getting to the pubs quite early to secure space."

NEWS

Great Falls Scouts in National Independence Day Parade

Troop 55 Scouts of Great Falls are entertained by George Washington during the National Independence Day Parade. Scouts pictured: Adrian Merrill, Lucas Andersen, Drew Dudzik, Daniel Reuss, Charles Sampson.



Troop 55 Scouts serve as the Honor Guard. Pictured here behind the vocalist singing the National Anthem (left to right): Jason Jin, James Ye, Mitchell Pan, Charles Sampson, Valin Singh, Nick Hodge, Corey Hodge, Drew Dudzik, Daniel Reuss, Lucan Andersen, Adrian Merrill, Daniel Zeng.

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Not That I'll Ever Be Out, But...

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



"Just when I thought I was out...they pull me back in." Although this quote is from Michael Corleone from "The Godfather: Part III," it very much characterizes my daily struggle being a terminal cancer patient; non small cell lung cancer, NSCLC, is like that, almost always. Even though I don't want to think about the fact that I have cancer, or not let it affect my judgment on life – or perspective; or let it impede my path to a happier existence, more often than not, it does.

Not that I'm morose or depressed or a dismal Jimmy, I am however, as Curly Howard of The Three Stooges so regularly said: "I'm a victim of soycumstance." And not that I dwell on having lung cancer either; it is what it is, and of course, I am extremely happy to still be alive. Nevertheless, having lived post-diagnosis now for five years and nearly four months, (after initially being given a "13 month to two year" prognosis by my oncologist), doesn't necessarily make my circumstances any easier.

I won't bore you with the details, both mentally or physically, facing cancer patients as they/we endure a rather difficult set of challenges. Suffice it to say, there are good days and bad days – and many in the middle, to be honest. I've been fortunate to have many more good days than bad. And it's those good days that we try to hang on to and harness somehow when the inevitable bad days begin to overwhelm. And as often as I try to compartmentalize the cancer effect, it still manages to rear its ugly head: consciously, subconsciously, literally, figuratively, generally, specifically; and/or any other word or phrase you can imagine. As much as I don't want to feel its effect, emotionally I do.

Practically speaking then, how do I forget that I have cancer? How do I control the uncontrollable? Given my daily routine of pills, supplements, special drinks, food choices and lifestyle changes and alone time, how do I not let the fact that I have an incurable form of cancer dominate how I live and breathe; especially when my breathing is often compromised and my life is one continual set of immune-system boosting, anti-cancer activities and behaviors? Believe me, it's not easier written that it is said and certainly neither is its doing. And it certainly beats the alternative, if you know what I mean? However, it is something that I am mostly able to do. I give myself a "B," because I'm able to remain/"B" positive.

But, and it's a huge but, to say the process is not one gigantic emotional ball and chain would be denying the very reality in which I'm immersed 24 hours a day. Still, how much additional good would it serve to focus on it more exclusively than I presently do? However, if I don't focus on it, perhaps I don't consistently do the things that I need to do to stay alive and maintain the reasonably good health with which I've been blessed. As much as I'd like to be "out," I'd just as soon not have the cancer "pull me back in" every single day.

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

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BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to mclean@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

FRIDAY/JULY 11

English Conversation Group. 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Practice your English conversation skills in a group. Adults. 703-938-0405.

MONDAY/JULY 14

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 finalizing plans for their 2 p.m. Aug. 24, 2014 event, An Afternoon with the Madisons, commemorating the bicentennial of the burning of the nation's Capitol during the War of 1812. Roger Mudd will be the Honorary Chair and the event will be free of charge. If interested in knowing more contact Carole Herrick at 703-356-8223.

Spanish Conversation Group. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice Spanish as a foreign language in this casual conversation group. Adult. 703-757-8560.

The Frisbee Guy. 2:30 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Freestyle Frisbee Champion Gary Auerbach shares stories and tricks so you can master the Frisbee, too. School-age. 703-938-0405.

ESL for Intermediate Students. 10 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join Juanita's Monday conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Practice conversational English in a group setting. Adults. 703-356-0770.

TUESDAY/JULY 15

Toddlin' Twos. 10:30 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Early literacy enhanced story time featuring stories and songs. Age 2 with adult. 703-938-0405.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 11 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Work with a volunteer tutor to learn about using the Internet, setting up an email account and using basic software. Adults. 703-938-0404.

E-Readers for Seniors. 11 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Hands on help with e-readers. Older adults. 703-757-8560.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 12 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Work with a volunteer tutor to learn about using the Internet, setting up an email account and using basic software. Adults. 703-938-0404.

English Conversation One-on-One. 1:30 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. English practice for a non-native speaker with a library volunteer. Call for appointment. Adults. 703-242-4020.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 16

Morning Book Group. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call branch for title. 703-757-8560.

Computer One-on-One. 11 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Adult. 703-242-4020.

English Conversation Group. 1 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Practice your English in a conversational setting. Adults. 703-356-0770.

ESL Conversation Group. 2 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice English in this casual conversation group. Adults. 703-757-8560.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 2 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Work with a volunteer tutor to learn about using the Internet, setting up an email account and using basic software. Adults. 703-938-0404.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 3 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Work with a volunteer tutor to learn about using the Internet, setting up an email account and using basic software. Adults. 703-938-0404.

Pokemon League. 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Come play

Pokemon with your friends. Ages 5 to 15. 703-757-8560.

FRIDAY/JULY 18

English Conversation Group. 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Practice your English conversation skills in a group. Adults. 703-938-0405.

SATURDAY/JULY 19

McLean Child Safety Inspection. 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Lewinsville Center, 1609 Great Falls Street, McLean. The McLean District Police Station holds child safety seat inspections once per month.

MONDAY/JULY 21

English Conversation. 10:30 am. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. English practice for non-native speakers. Adults. 703-242-4020.

Spanish Conversation Group. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice Spanish as a foreign language in this casual conversation group. 703-757-8560.

TUESDAY/JULY 22

Improve Your English Skills. 11 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Get focused help with reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Adults. 703-356-0770.

Computer One-on-One. 11 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Adult. 703-242-4020.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 11 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Work with a volunteer tutor to learn about using the Internet, setting up an email account and using basic software. Adults. 703-938-0404.

English Conversation One-on-One. 1:30 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. English practice for a non-native speaker with a library volunteer. Call for appointment. Adults. 703-242-4020.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 23

Computer One-on-One. 11 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Adult. 703-242-4020.

English Conversation Group. 1 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Practice conversational English in a group setting. Adults. 703-356-0770.

English Conversation Group. 2 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice English in this casual conversation group. 703-757-8560.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 2 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Work with a volunteer tutor to learn about using the Internet, setting up an email account and using basic software. Adults. 703-938-0404.

THURSDAY/JULY 24

Computer One-on-One. 11 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Adult. 703-242-4020.

FRIDAY/JULY 25

English Conversation Group. 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Practice your English conversation skills in a group. Adults. 703-938-0405.

MONDAY/JULY 28

English Conversation. 10:30 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. English practice for non-native speakers. Adults. 703-242-4020.

Spanish Conversation Group. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice Spanish as a foreign language in this casual conversation group. Adult. 703-757-8560.

TUESDAY/JULY 29

Computer One-on-One. 11 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Pl., Oakton. Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Adult. 703-242-4020.



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