

Great Falls CONNECTION

Inside
PET CONNECTION

Loving Tina Maze

PET CONNECTION, PAGES 1-4

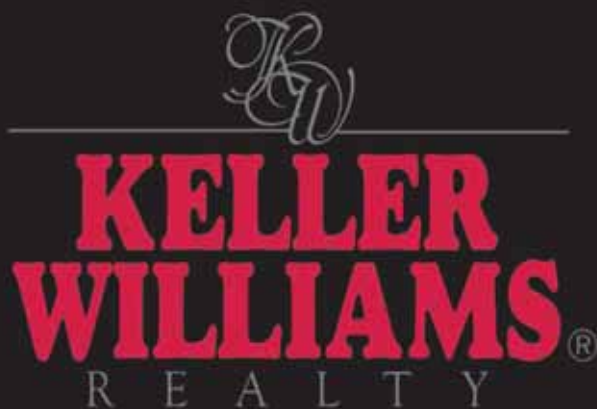
"This is my pet praying mantis Tina Maze. I named her after Winter Olympics gold medalist and alpine ski racer from Slovenia. My pet praying mantis Tina is 6 months old. I got her in January. She likes to jump and fly. In this photo she is climbing on my arm and getting ready to fly in my room. I will let her out in our garden soon. I love my praying mantis Tina so much!" writes Marta Anvelt, 7, of Great Falls.

Foust,
Comstock
Battle
Women's
Issues

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Drones to Help
Save Rhinoceros

NEWS, PAGE 4



Bob Nelson



Kelly Putz



Tim Heil



Michele Cornejo

The Bob Nelson Team

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Foust, Comstock Battle Women's Issues

Hot button topic is discussed in wake of Hobby Lobby decision.

BY REENA SINGH
THE CONNECTION

One of the hotbed issues of the last month was triggered when the Supreme Court decided that for-profit corporations can be exempt from a law if the owner objects for religious reasons.

The reason? Contraceptives.

Women's health issues are among the issues that Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) and Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) – candidates for 10th District Congressional seat — butt heads on.

"The court should not be deciding on women's health issues," said Foust. "Women should be making those decisions by themselves."

He said that women that choose to make their own health decisions are "constantly under attack" by their peers and lawmakers, and that these decisions should only be between a woman and her health care provider.

SEVERAL DEMOCRATIC LEGISLA-



John Foust

TORS, including state Sen. Janet Howell (D-32) and state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31), held a press call to talk about Comstock's record on women's health. The call was sponsored by the 10th District Democratic Committee.

According to Comstock's campaign press secretary, Johanna Persing, Comstock was not available for comment. Persing provided Comstock's record on contraceptives, stating that Foust is "running a negative campaign."

"As to Foust's playing of birth control politics: he is purposely promoting false information to divide women and politicize this



Barbara Comstock

issue instead of finding a common sense solution. In contrast, Delegate Comstock spearheaded the effort in Virginia to find a common sense solution to end birth control politics by making birth control pills available over the counter as recommended by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology."

During the press call, several of the forum speakers talked about other bills Comstock voted for, including one supporting a transvaginal ultrasound for women considering abortion. They claimed Comstock hopes to overturn Roe Vs Wade if elected. Comstock's press secretary did

not comment about these claims.

"Now, I'm old enough to remember what it was like in the bad old days, before Roe vs. Wade, and I think if anyone who thinks that overturning Roe vs. Wade would do anything positive for a woman's health, they're sadly mistaken," said Sen. Howell.

State Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33) said she hoped that women voting between Comstock and Foust do not believe that Comstock is in favor of women's health issues just because she is a woman.

"Barbara Comstock was right there at the center, kind of the standard bearer for those divisive social issues," said Wexton. "That is not what the government should be doing. People told me again and again that they do not want the government micromanaging women's healthcare and family planning decisions"

PERSING SAID that, in addition to helping women get contraceptives more easily over the counter, Comstock has passed legislation to secure job growth in technology fields and was awarded the "Competitiveness Award" and "Free Enterprise Award" for her competitive bidding bill.

"John Foust has never passed a single jobs bill or authored any jobs initiative," said Persing in the email statement. "Barbara also has authored major legislation to crack down on human trafficking, legislation to improve Lyme Disease testing and legislation to require lifesaving testing for congenital heart defects for newborns."

Realtors: Numbers Indicate Stable Housing Market

June home listings climb, with slight dip in sales

The Northern Virginia market recorded increased inventories, providing buyers with more choices. Nonetheless, buyers are challenged by affordability and accessing credit.

The June market in Northern Virginia continues the trend of sales numbers coming in just under those from one year ago at this time, but the signs of a stable market have led to an increase in sellers planting signs on their lawns.

"It is all about managing expectations," said Lorraine Arora, Managing Broker at Long & Foster Real Estate in Springfield. "Some buyers are nervous. When houses are priced correctly, homes will sell."

Arora explained that since there was

no activity in winter months, there was pent up demand for this region's early spring season. Now, she explained, prices are higher but not all sellers are getting their full price. Buyers are less willing to engage in bidding wars.

The housing affordability may continue to be a challenge in the region, said Mary Bayat, 2014 chair elect of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors. "While the slightly rising home prices indicate an improving market, people are just not making quick decisions to buy." Bayat, a broker/owner of Bayat Realty in Alexandria, also noted that the current tight mortgage regulations have been a drag on buyers' loan process. She noted that mortgage standards are under scrutiny by industry and housing groups at this time.

The Northern Virginia Association of Realtors reported on June 2014 home sales activity for Fairfax and Arlington counties, the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church and the towns of Vienna, Herndon and Clifton.

A total of 2,174 homes were sold in June

2014, a 12.90 percent decrease below June 2013 home sales of 2,496.

Active listings continued to show an increase this month compared with 2013. Listings were up 47 percent over last year, with 4,777 active listings in June, compared with 3,247 homes available in June 2013. The average days on market for homes in June 2014 was 30 days, an increase of 25 percent compared to the 24 days on market for homes in June 2013.

Average home sale prices increased slightly this June to \$580,013. This is up 3 percent compared to June 2013, when the average price was \$563,223.

The median sold price of homes this June, which is \$505,000, rose by 1 percent compared to the median price of \$499,900 in June 2013.

The 2,047 new pending home sales in Northern Virginia in June is a decrease of 9.62 percent compared with 2,265 contracts that were pending in June of last year.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

* Volunteer Advocates for Nursing Home & Assisted Living Residents

needed throughout Northern Virginia. Contact the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/, email or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-5861, TTY 711.

* **Meals on Wheels** needs drivers in Franconia, Reston, McLean and Falls Church and substitute drivers throughout the county. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

* **The Lewinsville Adult Day Health Care Center** in McLean needs a front desk volunteer on Wednesdays, 2-3 p.m. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

* **Fairfax County needs volunteers** to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

NEWS

Drones to Help Save Rhinoceros

Science, engineering and art take flight.

BY REENA SINGH
THE CONNECTION

While many teens are spending the summer socializing, a handful of them were tinkering with wires and 3D printing.

Kashmir World Foundation held a Build-A-Drone workshop at Great Falls Library Friday to help find a solution for rhinoceros being poached in Africa.

The Wildlife Foundation Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Challenge, a worldwide challenge, currently has 138 teams competing for a solution. However, the nature of the workshop was not competitive.

"I started the Da Vinci Challenge to get students interested in science, engineering and art," said KWF founder Aliyah Pandolfi. "We wanted to do a hands-on workshop, because that's different than having them listen or watch a video."

The four-day workshop has students create a quadcopter with additions like a camera so they can



Arthur Tisseront, 16-year-old intern for the Kashmir World Foundation, is the "drone expert" for the workshop.

shoot a video at events or just for fun.

THE WORKSHOP was targeted for ages 13 and up, but there were some students who were younger. Mark Mahdessian, 11, Great Falls, wanted to join the workshop when his 14-year-old brother, Leo, signed up.

"When he was signing up, he asked me if I wanted to come with him," said Mark. "I like that you have hands-on experience with building the stuff."

Leo said he has been interested in drones and electronics for a while. When he found out about the workshop, he knew it was right up his alley.



PHOTOS BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Brothers Leo, 14, and Mark Mahdessian, 11, are learning how to build a quadcopter from scratch through a Build-A-Drone workshop at Great Falls Library.

"I got interested in quadcopters after flying one at his baseball game," Leo said, gesturing at his brother. "I really wanted to build one. I really enjoy electronics and computers. I have a passion for building stuff."

Rather than using kits that already have all the quadcopter pieces in it, Pandolfi had the participants use 3D printers to create parts that fit the size they wanted

SEE SCIENCE, PAGE 9



Congratulations to all of the Outstanding Principals listed below.

They have been rated highest by our memberships in those schools

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Teachers Care!

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Jesse Kraft
(Providence)

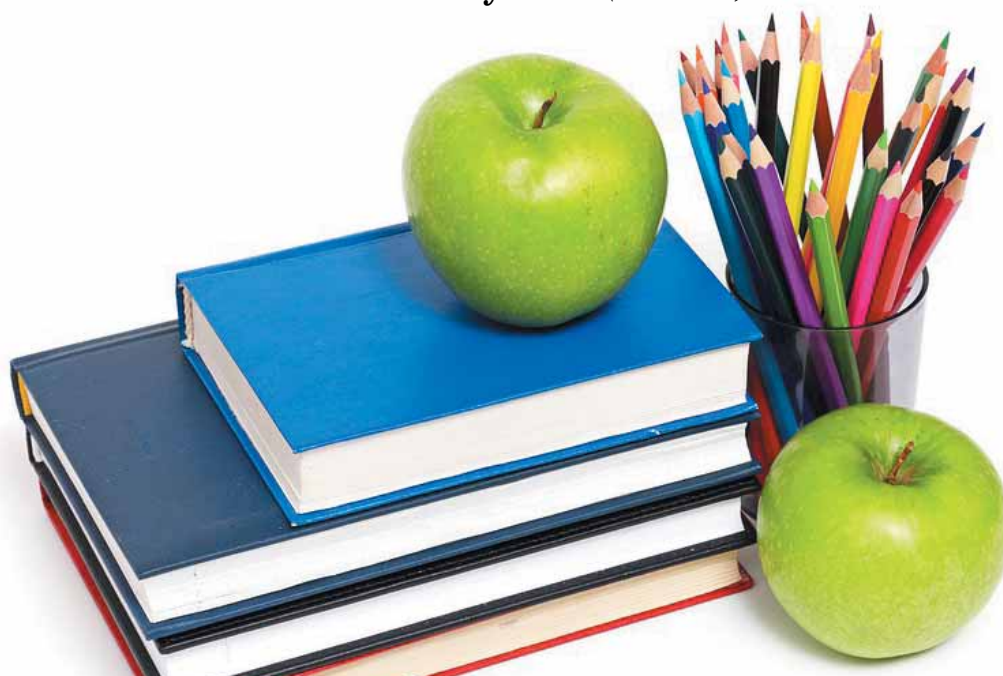
Michael Macrina
(Island Creek)

Suzanne Montgomery
(Laurel Hill)

Lindsay Trout
(Terraset)

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

Penny Gros (Glasgow)



HIGH SCHOOLS:

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(Chantilly)

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Michael Yohe
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Jeff Yost
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OPINION

Tragic Consequences

Money lost by refusal to expand health coverage, but also life, health and livelihood.

The Virginia General Assembly's refusal to expand Medicaid, extending health coverage to as many as 400,000 Virginians has resulted in the loss of about \$1 billion in direct payments.

But that understates the loss, failing to calculate the cost of the lost health of thousands of Virginians.

Consider one relatively young man, treated by the Health Wagon, who is losing his vision to untreated diabetes because he has no health coverage, his diabetes went undetected for years and can't afford monitoring or medicine. Once diabetes begins to take its toll, it cannot be reversed. Once the man is blind and unable to work, he will likely be covered by Medicaid because he is permanently disabled.

The Centers for Disease Control says chronic illnesses are "the nation's leading causes of death and disability, leav[ing] in their wake deaths that could have been prevented, lifelong disability, compromised quality of life, and burgeoning health care costs. ... Heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity, and arthritis are among the most common, costly, and preventable of all health problems."

EDITORIAL

Consider the hundreds or thousands of Virginians who are not receiving routine care or screenings of any kind, whose cancer or high blood pressure or heart disease or diabetes, or even mental illness, rob them over time of their ability to work, to care for themselves or their families. Many will die of illnesses that could have been prevented or treated. The human toll is incalculable, unbearable and unnecessary.

It is unfair that health coverage depends on what state you happen to live in, that an ideologically driven General Assembly can determine your fate. If you are poor and live in a state that has chosen to accept expansion of health care with Medicaid, you have health insurance, for example in the bordering states of West Virginia, Kentucky and Maryland. But if you are poor and live in Virginia, or one of the other states that has refused to expand Medicaid, you are out of luck, out of health and possibly out of life.

Business groups and chambers of commerce around Virginia, including the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, support the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia under the Affordable

Care Act. One persuasive factor for the business community is that expansion would create an estimated 30,000 jobs and pump hundreds of millions of dollars into Virginia's economy. Hospitals support expanding Medicaid which would offset many of the costs of caring for uninsured populations.

In Virginia, Medicaid eligibility for adults without disability is almost nonexistent, limited to parents with incomes below 51 percent of poverty, or about \$11,900 a year for a family of four, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. Adults without dependent children remain ineligible regardless of their income.

Under the Affordable Care Act, people with incomes 100 - 400 percent of poverty qualify for subsidies on their health insurance premiums when they purchase coverage through a Marketplace. Because the Affordable Care Act envisioned low-income people receiving coverage through Medicaid, people below poverty are not eligible for Marketplace subsidies. As many as 400,000 adults in Virginia fall into the coverage gap because they don't qualify for Medicaid under Virginia's rules, among the most stringent in the nation, but earn less than the poverty rate, so not enough to qualify for subsidies.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

'Living Wage' Tough to Achieve in Northern Virginia

Housing and job opportunities needed to relieve poverty.

BY MARY AGEE

NORTHERN VIRGINIA FAMILY SERVICE PRESIDENT AND CEO

On the surface, Martha Ordon is living the typical Northern Virginian life. She works as a medical receptionist at a doctor's office in Fairfax, and talks proudly about her 16 year-old daughter, a socially-active junior who plans to study business in college when she graduates. The reality is a little bit more complicated.

Martha and her daughter moved to Fairfax in 2008 from Louisiana. Her friend had urged her to make the move to Northern Virginia, telling her about the fantastic quality of life: the great schools, the strong job market and the sense of community. What her friend hadn't mentioned was the high cost of living. In Louisiana, Martha had worked as a cook in a Catholic school and always made



Training Futures is a free program for adults who are determined to gain the skills to excel in professional, administrative roles.

enough to pay her bills. In Fairfax, she took a full-time job as a cook making \$10.50 an hour and a part-time job as a retail sales associate making \$8 an hour. With two jobs, Martha could pay her bills, but she rarely got to see her daughter. When Martha lost her job as a cook, she began working retail full-time but could no longer make ends meet.

In 2012, Martha and her daughter were evicted from their apart-

ment. They lived in a hotel until a space became available at a local family shelter. Martha recognized that in order to pull her life back together and provide a stable home for her daughter, she would need a living-wage job. She also realized that her previous experience as a cook was not going to help her rise above the poverty line. During her shelter stay, Martha discovered Training Futures, the nationally-recognized,

workforce development solution of Northern Virginia Family Service.

Training Futures is a free program for adults who are determined to gain the skills to excel in professional, administrative roles. The 6-month curriculum not only teaches college-level administrative skills such as the Microsoft Office Suite, customer service,

SEE OPPORTUNITIES, PAGE 13

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U.S. News: Inova Fairfax Hospital Tops in D.C. Metro Area

For the third year in a row, Inova Fairfax Medical Campus has been ranked as the top hospital in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area by U.S. News & World Report. Inova Fairfax also jumped in rankings to second in the state, and earned national recognition as No.33 in the country in Gynecology and No. 42 in Neonatology. The annual U.S. News Best Hospitals rankings, now in their 25th year, recognize hospitals that excel in treating the most challenging patients.

"Three years in a row as No. 1 is an outstanding accomplishment and we are proud of our hospital's dedicated physicians and

staff who provide the best of care to our patients every day. I'd like to congratulate our staff, particularly within Inova Women's and Children's for their impressive and well-deserved national rankings," said Patrick Christiansen, PhD, chief executive officer, Inova Fairfax Medical Campus.

Inova Fairfax Medical Campus also earned high-performing rankings in 11 specialties:

- ❖ Cancer
- ❖ Cardiology and Heart Surgery
- ❖ Diabetes and Endocrinology
- ❖ Ear, Nose and Throat
- ❖ Gastroenterology & GI Surgery,

- ❖ Geriatrics
- ❖ Nephrology
- ❖ Neurology and Neurosurgery
- ❖ Orthopedics
- ❖ Pulmonology
- ❖ Urology

In the recently released U.S. News Best Children's Hospital Rankings, Inova Children's Hospital was named 42nd in the nation for Neonatology.

U.S. News publishes Best Hospitals to help guide patients who need a high level of care because they face particularly difficult surgery, a challenging condition or extra risk because of age or multiple health problems.

Objective measures such as patient survival and safety data, adequacy of nurse staffing levels and other data largely determined the rankings in most specialties.

The rankings are available at <http://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals> and will appear in the U.S. News "Best Hospitals 2015" guidebook, available in August.

All five of Inova's hospitals were recognized again this year in the top 15 best hospitals in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, and top 20 in Virginia. To learn more about Inova Fairfax Medical Campus, visit www.inova.org/ifh.

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NEWS

Science, Hands-on At Great Falls Library

FROM PAGE 3

their drone to be.

"This is to help them understand the internals of it," she said.

She said that, although drones have had a negative connotation, they can be used to spot poachers before they hurt animals. At Kruger National Park in Africa, she said, poaching has created a crisis. Just last year, 1,004 rhinos were killed for their horns, which can fetch \$100,000 in the black market.

"The number of poaching incidents keeps increasing," she said. "This allows students to understand global issues and the possible impact of these drones."

She also wants the workshop participants to understand the safety regulations and ethics of the machines they are building. At the next class, a representative from the Federal Aviation Administration is coming to the class to talk about the rules of flying in the area and safety procedures.

THE DRONE EXPERT of the workshop, Arthur Tisseront, is a rising junior at Thomas Jefferson High School For Science and Technology and a resident of Great Falls.

"I started playing with drones a while ago when they were a new thing," the 16-year-old intern said.

He showed a hexacopter - that means six propellers - to the workshop participants that took him more than two weeks to put together.

"I think in the next 12 months, drones will be scoping out poachers," he said. "That's one of the biggest applications it could be used for."

He plans on starting a small business as soon as the Federal Communications Commission puts out their new flight regulations next year. He sees drones becoming more commonplace in the future.

"Look to the future," he said. "There's going to be a lot of drones in it."



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CALENDAR

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

FRIDAY/JULY 25

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.

Kayak Tour Island Hopping. 5-7 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Explore the upper Potomac River islands by kayak. Ages 14+. \$59-\$74. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

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.

Look at the Stars! Observatory Open. 7:30-10:30 p.m. Turner Farm Park, Springvale Road, Great Falls. Come to the observatory park for Friday Night viewings! www.analemma.org.

SATURDAY/JULY 26

Cars & Coffee. 7-9 a.m. Katie's Coffee House, 760 Walker Road Great Falls. Come find an amazing gathering of antique, custom, hotrods, exotic and sports cars; they're all here. 703-759-2759.

Great Falls Farmers Market. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Great Falls Village next to the Wells Fargo Bank, 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. Don't forget to bring your recyclable bag! www.greatfallsfarmersmarket.org.
Colvin Run Dance for Everyone.



Multiple Washington Area Music (WAMMIE) Award-winner and bluesman extraordinaire, Tom Principato sets the tele-caster 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.

6:30-11 p.m. Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Beginner and Intermediate West Coast lesson and 'Dance for Everyone.' \$12. 703-435-5620.

SATURDAY/JULY 26 - AUG. 9

McLean AAUW 45th Annual Used Book Collections. 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Sun Trust Bank, 515 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Bring book, CD and DVD contributions for the 45th

Annual Used Book Sale in September. Email aauwbookfair@gmail.com or call 703-527-4206 for information.

SUNDAY/JULY 27

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>.

The Morrison Brothers 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 country and rock music. 571-293-0474.

MONDAY/JULY 28

The Barker of Seville. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Blue Sky Puppet Theatre presents this musical comedy for a howling good time! Please sign up each child and adult separately. All ages. 703-757-8560.

Great Falls Library Read to the Dog. 4:30-5:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Beginning readers can practice reading to a furry friend. Call 703-757-8560 to sign up.

McLean & Great Falls Celebrate Virginia Meeting. 5:30 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. The group will be finalizing plans for their August 24 event, An Afternoon with the Madisons, commemorating the bicentennial of the burning of the nation's Capitol during the War of 1812. 703-356-8223.

TUESDAY/JULY 29

Lego Club. 2 p.m. Great Falls Library,

9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop in and play with Legos. Ages 3 and up. 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.

Colvin Run Dance Lessons. 6:30-10:30 p.m. Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Weekly Dance/Lesson Series with Ed Cottrell & the NVA Dance Crew. \$12. 703-435-5620.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 30

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

THURSDAY/JULY 31

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.

Great Falls Rotary Club Weekly Speaker Series. 7:30-8:30 a.m. River Bend Country Club, 375 Walker Road Great Falls. Visit <http://www.rotarygreatfalls.org/> to join.

Artists Meet for Coffee. 8:30-10 a.m. Katie's Coffeehouse, Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Local Artists meet for Coffee; do drop in! 703-759-2759.

FRIDAY/AUG. 1

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>.

SATURDAY/AUG. 2

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

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>.
Natalie York Band at Jammin' Java. 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Vienna native Natalie York returns with her Brooklyn, NY-based band and second album PROMISES. Tickets available at www.jamminjava.com.

SATURDAY/AUG. 2 - SUNDAY/AUG. 3

Tyson's-Pimmit Library Book Sale. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tyson's-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Friends of the Tyson's-Pimmit Regional Library is holding a book sale to benefit the Tyson's-Pimmit Regional Library on August 2 and 3. Choose from a large selection of on Sunday, August 3, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Donations are welcome.

SUNDAY/AUG. 3

Intro to River Kayaking. 1-1:30 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. This introductory

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

McLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS

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CALENDAR

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>.

FRIDAY/AUG. 8

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>.

SUNDAY/AUG. 10

Tom Principato 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 blues and rock 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.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 13

Kayaking for Fitness. 5-7 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Four beginning kayaking classes that teach flat and moving water kayaking basics. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

Coty Dickson to Exhibit at Katie's Coffee House



Barn
by
Coty
Dickson

Oil paintings of Virginia landscapes by Great Falls artist Coty Dickson are on view Aug. 1-31 at Katie's Coffee House (The Old Brogue), 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Titled "Scenic Virginia," scenes show little known places within the Commonwealth. Dickson is a juried artist specializing in contemporary realistic oil paintings. A native of the Washington D.C. area, she resides in Great Falls, where she is a member of Artists on the Green, a Great Falls studio and gallery. She is also a member of Great Falls Studios, the premier local art consortium of

independent artists. Her work can be viewed at both organization's websites: www.artistsonthegreen.net and www.greatfallsstudios.com as well as her own website: www.coty dickson.com.

Her work has been displayed at the September 2013 Gallery Exhibit at the Torpedo Factory Art Center and the 2013 Spring and Fall and Spring 2014 Art at the Mill, Millwood, Va. She also exhibits work at the Red Barn, Waterford, Va., the Fairfax County Library and the Great Falls Studio Tour in Great Falls.

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SPORTS

Langley Grad Collier to Play Basketball at Denison

Q&A: Collier enjoys listening to Nas, watching Will Ferrell movies.

As a senior, Garrett Collier was an all-region wide receiver on the highest-scoring offense in Langley football history. He was also a defensive back and an all-conference kick returner and punt returner. A broken collar bone knocked him out of the final game of the season, but Collier played a significant role in helping the Saxons finish 9-3, including a playoff victory over Battlefield.

While Collier had a strong senior season on the football field, his future is on the hardwood. An all-conference basketball player at Langley, Collier signed to play hoops at Denison University in Granville, Ohio. Collier, a three-year varsity football and basketball player at Langley before his 2014 graduation, recently participated in a Q and A via email with The Connection.

*Connection: What made Denison University the right fit for you?

Collier: I developed a solid relationship with the coaching staff, it had the perfect balance of strong academics and social life, a beautiful campus, and I just felt at home when I visited.



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

Garrett Collier (22) was a standout on the basketball and football teams at Langley.

*Connection: What is your major?

Collier: Economics.

*Connection: At what age did you start playing basketball? When did you realize playing college basketball was a possibility for you?

Collier: As early as I can remember. From a very early age, I always wanted to play college sports, I just wasn't sure if it would be basketball or football.

*Connection: You were also a standout football player at Langley. Did you give any thought to playing football in college? If so, when did you make the choice between football and basketball?

Collier: I didn't expect to have the [senior] season I had in football, so I didn't give much thought to playing in college. By the time I received interest, I had already committed to Denison.

*Connection: You broke your collar bone during football season, correct? In which game did you break it?

Collier: I broke it during our regional quarterfinal game against Stonewall Jackson.

*Connection: How long were you out? How difficult was it to miss time?

Collier: I had surgery a couple days after the game, and was out for about six weeks. I missed the first 10 games of basketball, which was difficult for the team because we were so young. The slow start hurt some of the younger players' confidence, and I believe that was a big reason we weren't able to be as successful as we wanted to.

*Connection: What is your favorite memory of playing high school basketball? What is your favorite football memory?

Collier: My entire junior year basketball season was one great memory in itself. I could say the same about this past football season, but I'd say getting revenge on Chantilly and smashing crosstown rival McLean.

*Connection: If you could go back and

change one thing about your high school athletic career, what would it be?

Collier: I wouldn't have let [Wakefield's] Re'Quan Hopson shoot the buzzer-beater 3-pointer that knocked us out of regionals [in 2013].

*Connection: What are you most looking forward to about the transition from high school to college?

Collier: The step up in competition and the freedom of living on your own.

*Connection: Who is your favorite music artist? Why?

Collier: Nas. No explanation needed. The Rolling Stones are also a favorite.

*Connection: What is your favorite movie?

Collier: 'Pineapple Express,' any Will Ferrell movie and 'Django Unchained.'

*Connection: Do you play video games? If so, which one is your favorite?

Collier: FIFA is life.

*Connection: What is your favorite hobby outside of basketball and football?

Collier: I love to golf and just hang out with friends.

*Connection: What location is the farthest you have traveled from the Washington, D.C. metro area?

Collier: Russia.

*Connection: Are you a pro sports fan? If so, who are your favorite teams?

Collier: All D.C. sports teams. HTTR.

— JON ROETMAN

Madison's Koshuta Returned to Dominance After Torn ACL

Q&A: 6-2 post earned all-state in 2014, committed to Virginia Tech.

A torn ACL sidelined Kelly Koshuta for her entire sophomore season, but the injury didn't keep the 6-foot-2 Madison basketball standout from returning to dominance. After averaging 19.5 points and 10.8 rebounds as a freshman post, leading the Warhawks to a Liberty District title and a trip to the region semifinals, Koshuta injured her left knee during an AAU game in the summer of 2012. After sitting out as a sophomore, Koshuta returned for her junior campaign and earned all-state honors. Madison reached the region semifinals for the second time in three years, and Koshuta nearly willed the Warhawks to victory and a berth in the state tournament. Facing eventual region champion Stonewall Jackson and 6-foot-2 Wake Forest-bound Nicole Floyd, Koshuta scored a career-high 39 points and grabbed 19 rebounds, but Madison fell short, 78-72.

"She has great hands and she just has the determination to score," Madison head coach Kirsten Stone said about Koshuta entering her junior season. "She knows how to use her body. She's a little bit undersized for a post, but she knows



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

Madison's Kelly Koshuta scored 39 points and grabbed 19 rebounds during a loss to Stonewall Jackson in the 2014 6A North region semifinals.

how to position herself in a way that she can score."

Koshuta, a rising senior, will have one more season to try and lead Madison to the state playoffs. After high school, Koshuta will play for Virginia Tech after committing

to the Hokies during her junior year.

Koshuta recently participated in a Q and A via email with The Connection.

*Connection: You're committed to Virginia Tech. What made Tech the right fit for you?

Koshuta: Virginia Tech was the first school to offer me, and they called the day after I got injured and believed in me. VT Head Coach Dennis Wolff took over a struggling program and has made improvements every year. The coaches at Virginia Tech believe in me, and they think I will make an immediate impact in the ACC, and that is also attractive to me. I will be playing against some of the best players in the country, not to mention I absolutely love the school, and the campus.

*Connection: At what age did you start playing basketball? Have you always been a post player? When did you realize playing college basketball was a possibility for you?

Koshuta: I started in second grade. I have pretty much been a post player my whole life. I realized college basketball was a possibility when colleges started recruiting me in seventh grade.

*Connection: You missed your sophomore season due to a torn ACL. How has that injury and the work it took to get back affected you as a basketball player and a person?

Koshuta: It motivated me to never take basketball for granted. I realized how much I missed the game when I had to watch my

sophomore season from the bench. I kept training as soon as I could stand, and worked hard on my game all during rehab. As a person, I now reach out to other athletes who get injured and tell them to work hard, and things will get better.

*Connection: Was there ever a time during your rehab that you wanted to give up?

Koshuta: Never. I had a great surgeon, Dr. Chris Annunziata, and an awesome physical therapist named Sam Kang and they were both positive I would make a complete comeback. I also had support from my trainer, Mandy Ronay, and my family. If anything, I worked even harder after my surgery, both in rehab, and training for basketball.

*Connection: You stand 6 feet 2. How often does someone mention your height during a conversation or ask if you play basketball?

Koshuta: People talk about my height all the time, but it's funny: I am actually undersized for a college post player. I have played against girls who are 6-6 and 6-7 during AAU season.

*Connection: What is your favorite athletic moment from your first three years at Madison?

Koshuta: Two things come to mind: beating Paul VI in the Bulldog Bash my freshman year, and winning the Liberty District my freshman year.

— JON ROETMAN

LETTERS

Supporting Comstock

To the Editor:

Delegate Barbara Comstock has run a positive campaign that discusses her legislative accomplishments in the Virginia House of Delegates, her record as a small businesswoman, her time as a senior official at the Justice Department and as a senior aide to our current well-respected Congressman, Frank Wolf. She highlights common sense solutions and has engaged communities all across the 10th District.

Her campaign is built on a strong grassroots organization that delivers her positive message door to door. I have seen Delegate Comstock at events all around the 10th District. Her busy schedule shows that she has the voters best interests in mind and wants to hear from the constituents.

Her positive message of job creation and economic growth is just

what the District needs. In Richmond, she has made jobs a priority, and it has paid off—as Virginia has been highlighted as a top state for job growth. She has not supported tax increases unlike her opponent where

taxing seems to be his favorite pastime. She is an independent voice in the House of Delegates and will continue to be as our Congresswoman. We don't need another Nancy Pelosi/Barack Obama liberal in Congress who will be a rubber stamp and repeatedly support tax increases that will hurt our small businesses and families.

We need a Representative to fight for us and Delegate Barbara Comstock is the person to best serve the diverse interests of this District.

Uzma Hayat
Great Falls

Creating Opportunities

FROM PAGE 6

records management, medical terminology, business English and business math, but also through a partnership with Northern Virginia Community College, offers eligible trainees the opportunity to earn up to 21 college credits and a Career Studies Certificate in Business Information Technology.

Trainees come to Training Futures Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., and often arrive early and stay late to master course work. They are outfitted in the Training Futures Clothing Closet and expected to wear business professional clothes every day. Each trainee reports to a “supervisor,” or staff member, who coaches them around attitude and business habits, encourages them and above all else, holds them to high “corporate” expectations. When trainees arrive for their first day at their new professional, administrative job, they not only have the skills to add value, but also look and act the part of an excellent employee. Martha knew she had found the pathway to the life she imagined for herself and her daughter. Within five weeks of graduating from this exciting program, Martha landed her position as a medical receptionist, making \$14 an hour.

While at the shelter, Martha was also referred to the Bridging Affordability Program. Bridging Affordability is administered by Northern Virginia Family Service in partnership with Fairfax County Department of Housing & Community Development. The program combines rental subsidies and case

management supportive services with the intent of moving families forward toward self-sufficiency. Bridging Affordability has given Martha the time and financial breathing room to attend Training Futures and work towards a living wage. As Martha nears the end of her time in Bridging Affordability she is paying down debt which will allow her to purchase a car and further broaden her housing options. She has increased her income 57 percent since starting the program, thanks to the training and subsequent employment she found following Training Futures, but still needs to consider affordable housing options, which are rare in this area.

The comprehensive nature of NVFS programs, including Workforce Development and Housing Services, provide clients with a unique opportunity to achieve several substantial goals at one time. NVFS has made the investment to ensure that when clients who seek our services for one issue may access the full range of our programs to increase the odds of achieving self-sufficiency. In the community, NVFS has been working with partners in both the nonprofit and government sectors who recognize the cross section between these two service areas. Families will not be able to maintain stable housing without living wages, and our efforts to solve the housing program in Northern Virginia are contingent upon holistic solutions that address both of these issues, together.

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

OBITUARY



James E. "Butch" Miller, 76, of Burgess, Virginia went to be with his Lord on July 11, 2014. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Marlene Miller and their three children, Denise, Scott, and Teague Miller; and two grandchildren, Tristan and Bailey Miller. He is also survived by three sisters, Linda Casciano of Leesburg, Va., Bonnie Bolick of Radford, Va. and Becky Paul of Charlotte, N.C., and ten nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a brother Curtis Miller.

Butch was raised in Great Falls, Va. and graduated from Herndon High School in 1956. In 1960, he graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in Civil Engineering. Following graduation, Butch worked for and rose to become president of Moses-ECCO Construction Company, and he in the early 1970's went to work as Vice President of L.F. Jennings Construction Company, where he worked until his retirement in 2002.

In 2002, Butch and Marlene began their retirement years by moving from Leesburg, Va. where they had raised their family, to the Northern Neck of VA, where they settled in a home on the banks of The Great Wicomico River. It was important to Butch upon retirement to occupy his time in a worthy pursuit, so he began playing golf on a regular basis. He organized and ran Men's Golf Leagues at the Tartan and King Carter Golf Clubs. He was affectionately known at those two clubs as the "Honorable Commissioner of Golf".

Butch was a devout Christian his entire life and when he retired to the Northern Neck of VA, he joined the Wesley Presbyterian Church in Weems, Va., where he was a very active member, was chosen to become an Elder, and was Chairman of numerous church committees. He often said that the most important thing in his life was his faith in Jesus Christ.

In 2007 Butch became a consultant in the reconstruction of seven buildings on the Paxton Campus of the ARC of Loudoun, a charitable corporation which operates a school for autistic children. Butch spent countless hours on these projects, bringing all projects in under budget. The ARC of Loudoun recently honored the contribution and lasting legacy Butch made to the building and the children at Aurora school by naming the building and placement of a plaque which reads: "The J.E. "Butch" Miller Building, beloved friend of Paxton whose expertise, hard work, and generous spirit brought the dream of this building to life for the children."

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A Battle— Hopefully Not to the Premature Death

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



One of my ongoing major concerns is the origin of the miscellaneous symptoms I irregularly experience. Obviously I don't want to think they're cancer-related, so assessing them becomes minding what potentially matters. Moreover, since I don't want to believe the cancer is actually harming me, convincing myself that what I feel might be important to share with my oncologist is almost a fool's errand. Though I've been in this situation going on nearly five and one half years now, I am still stubborn and stupid about my reality. And though I further realize that pretending doesn't work, and denial is hard to maintain when you receive chemotherapy every three weeks, still, accepting the various symptoms as cancer has been too scary for me to consider; so I haven't/don't.

Perhaps it's the treatment (I tell myself constantly), and the cumulative effect on my body of non-stop chemotherapy every three weeks for five-plus years, save for a year when I was able to take a "targeted therapy" pill, Tarceva, at home every day, that is manifesting itself? As I may have joked, being a cancer patient is all it's cracked up to be. In one delivery system or another, I have been receiving treatment for almost 64 months. It seems only logical that my body would at some juncture begin to feel the effects from that kind of long-term exposure, though my lab work doesn't necessarily reflect it, other than for the kidney and liver issues with which you regular readers are familiar. I would imagine there has to be some wear-and-tear-type fatigue. I mean, 64 months of fairly toxic materials swirling around in your blood system and interacting with all your organs; not exactly a recipe for normalcy. It can't be one big happy family in there, if you know what I mean. There has to be some disagreements. So far, however, apparently not; at least as indicated by my labs and scans, which if certain levels changed would likely warrant a retreat of some kind.

Perhaps what I feel is simply my age. How would I know? I've never been this age before; but certainly it's possible, maybe even probable. For all I know, this is what age 60 feels like. Maybe all that I feel – and all that I worry about – is simply the aging process, and this allows me to rationalize away my worst fears. Or, and this is the worst-case scenario, the age symptoms could be masking the cancer symptoms, and yours truly continuing to do nothing about either is way past pretending and denying; it's almost irresponsible, and disrespectful even, to the efforts being made – by myself and others, to keep me alive. After all, keeping a stage IV, non small cell lung cancer/terminal patient alive for as long as I've survived doesn't exactly happen by accident. Stage IV lung cancer is a killer, almost always, and one's amazing good fortune shouldn't be taken for granted.

Shouldn't I be paying closer attention here? If I feel something, shouldn't I allow my oncologist the opportunity to evaluate me? Who am I, a writer/salesperson, to determine what is medically significant (cancer-related), and what is not (age-related)? As I've said a hundred times in my life, I know about two things: sports and chocolate, neither of which has much to do with cancer and its treatment. Concerning science and medicine, I know very little. Usually at least, I know enough to follow directions. Therefore, if I've been told to do something (by my doctor/health care team), maybe it's time I did. It's likely to be important living forward, especially considering I've reached an age no one expected me to be.

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

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.

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.

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.

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 30

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.

ESL Conversation Group. 2 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice English in this casual conversation group. Adult. 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.



SPECIAL PULLOUT TAB Community & Newcomers Guide August 27, 2014

The annual Newcomers and Community Guides for each of our 15 communities with inside facts on what makes each community special, their secret places, the real power players, how to get involved and more.

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PET CONNECTION

Lost and Found at River Bend Park

This is Snicklefritz, Snicky for short. He found me at River Bend Park on Father's Day weekend this year. We did all we could to find his owners, to no avail, so he adopted us! In the picture we are on one of our many walks in Great Falls Park. Snicky loves all people, big and small, and he gets no end of attention when we're out. We have a rather large extended family of all age groups and he fits right in with everyone. In this picture I've picked him up so he could see the falls. Snicklefritz is such a joy; we're so happy we found each other.

— ANNE AND HUGH MORROW,
GREAT FALLS



PHOTO BY MACKENZIE REAGAN/THE CONNECTION

Apollo, left and Athena: two toy poodles with very distinct personalities.

Meet Apollo and Athena

Great Falls poodles are quite the pair.

BY MACKENZIE REAGAN
THE CONNECTION

Apollo and Athena descend on the scene in a cloud of fury. The pair, owned by the Case family in Great Falls, are both 13-year-old toy poodles. While the two look similar — Apollo, with dark gray fur and Athena, with black — their personalities are quite distinct.

Apollo is “our ‘funny’ dog,” says Angela Case, vice president of Case Consulting Services in Great Falls, who’s currently in charge of the dogs who were originally Christmas presents for her children. “[Athena is] the more ‘astute’” of the two dogs,” she said.

While Athena can be “very particular” about things, she also has a “sweet personality,” which Case attributes to her daughter, Natalie, who raised her from puppyhood. Apollo, the more laid back of the two, takes after Case’s son, Benjamin, who was in charge of taking care of him.

Although Apollo acts tough, “he’s really not,” says Case. “[He’s] the big chicken.” It’s Athena who’s really the brave one. “She’s a tenacious little dog,” says Case, noting Athena’s speedy recoveries from both a severe allergic reaction and a torn ligament in her

knee. When walking around the neighborhood, “[she] thinks she’s as big as the Great Danes.”

The dogs, who are from two different litters, were born one day apart. Eleven years ago, the two had puppies, named Mario and Luigi.

While they’re both slowing down some as they age, the two used to accompany Case on long, five-mile walks at their old home in North Carolina. “They’re great company,” she says. Nowadays, they go for much shorter outings — and never one without the other. “Apollo won’t walk without Athena,” according to Case.

Great Falls
CONNECTION

PET CONNECTION

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Meet Ms. Parrot

This is my praying mantis named Ms. Parrot. In this picture she is on my hand outside about to go out into the bush behind me. I raised her since she was a nymph. She is an adult female praying mantis now. Ms. Parrot is 6 months old. I have learned so much from her, like she prefers to eat at night. Ms. Parrot is a girl so she doesn't need to fly and her wings are used for when she jumps. She usually spreads out her wings and uses them like parachutes. This skill is useful in the wild. It looks like she really liked it outside when we let her go. I love having her as a pet.

— MIINA ANVELT, 9,
GREAT FALLS

Independence Day

In the July 4th spirit, Daisy Whitworth of Great Falls.



PHOTOS BY JOAN BRADY/JOANBRADYPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Baby photos of future assistance dogs

Puppies Destined for Important Work

Bred, donated and/or rescued for assistance dog training by paws4people.org, these “baby pictures” will be shared with the children and veterans matched with each dog.

But until then, the puppies will receive comprehensive training. Training begins at the Training Center in Wilmington, Del. The specific training is proprietary, but includes learning how to navigate different surfaces and challenges and how to handle stress. At around 6 weeks, they curl up in a transport van and make the drive to the Puppy Development Center, currently in Georgia. There, they continue with socialization training as they work students who are autistic at the Lionheart school, with both puppies and students getting more comfortable with new situations and people.

At 16 weeks, they pile back into the van and are met by inmate trainers at Lakin Correctional, in West Virginia. It is here that the core of “command set” training happens. Each dog will learn 110 commands before being matched with a “client.”



After 12 - 15 months of socialization and command training, they will each be matched with either a child or a veteran. From that point, the puppies will be trained specifically to meet their new “handler’s” needs.

During that specialized training, the dogs remain in prison. These pictures will help the newly matched children and adults get through that initial separation.

Read more about paws4people assistance dogs at joanbradyphoto.wordpress.com

— JOAN BRADY

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



Joan Brady and the paws4people puppy named JOAN

PET CONNECTION



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Sharon Bulova with her cats. 'Animals add so much to your life!' – Bulova says.



A Good Citizen

Abby is an 8-year-old Sheltie, an AKC Therapy Dog and Canine Good Citizen, who lives in Great Falls with Kathi and Dan Baker. Abby loves people and most of all visiting with residents at the Sunrise Assisted Living in Reston. Abby and Kathi volunteer there with Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc. It is the highlight of her week to go and check on all her friends.

Becoming Best Friends

Frodo and Sam have become best friends – sort of. My husband and I adopted Frodo from Home Alone Cat Rescue several years ago. He is part Maine Coon and part American Bobtail, with a funny short tail. He may have been mistreated by a previous owner because he is afraid of everything, especially ceiling fans. He quickly became comfortable in our home as an "only cat".

We adopted "Sam" in September of 2012. She was an adorable tabby kitten, part of a feral litter living outside of a restaurant in Washington D.C. Lee District School Board Member Tammy Kaufax and her two high school aged kids, Halle and Matthew, were fostering the litter as part of a school project.

Tammy showed me a photo of the kittens in August of 2012 during the Springfield Bridge Walk and I fell in love with the smallest kitten with tiger markings. As soon as Sam had gained enough weight to be adopted we brought her home as a companion for Frodo.

It took a few weeks for the two cats to get used to each other, but now they play together and chase each other around all the time. They are so cute together, especially when Sam hides behind the bedroom door and ambushes Frodo when he walks into the room. Animals add so much to your life!

— SHARON BULOVA, CHAIRMAN,
FAIRFAX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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PET CONNECTION



Pet Watson, a cockapoo rescue, with children, from left: Cole, Caroline and Max Morehouse, of Great Falls.

The Best Christmas Gift Ever

Watson is a cockapoo rescue who came to the Morehouse Family of Great Falls on Christmas Eve 2013 and remains the best Christmas gift the family has ever received.



Mr. Giant

Mr. Giant is a 9-year-old tabby acquired from the Fairfax animal shelter when he was 18 months old. Mr. Giant weighs a svelte 20 pounds. He spends his day moving from sun patch to sun patch in the house for his naps. He follows me up and down the stairs in the morning and is in the window to greet me every evening when I come home from work. This is usually accompanied by a series of meows, purrs and coos as he rolls on the floor. He loves to sit and curl up in his basket even though it is way too small. The cry of “outside” makes him run for the back door to be let out where he can rollick in the buffalo grass and unsuccessfully stalk whatever is around like he was home on the Serengeti Plain. Mr. Giant also likes to have his toys thrown in the air where he catches and knocks



them down and sometimes returns them. Mr. Giant is a beloved and essential member of the family, a beast who enriches life every day.

— JACK O. NUTTER,
GREAT FALLS



Meet Gloria's 'Puff'

Gloria Boos, 10, of Great Falls, and her dog, “Puff the Magic Pom Pom” or better known as “Puff.”

